Robert O. Paxton’s
The Anatomy of Fascism
reviewed by Ramajana Hidi Demirovi

History Becomes a Social Science:
New Perspectives in History
by Peter S. Gray
The collapse of democracy and the abandonment of liberalism was the major theme for American historians of modern Europe after World War Two. In the decades that followed, many historians sought to develop the typology of totalitarianism as a category for historical understanding. Carl J. Friedrich's and Zbigniew Brzezinski's attempt to devise a six point criteria which could be applied equally to Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia was followed with other, less taxonomical approaches. Hannah Arendt approached the study of totalitarianism from a standpoint of a political philosopher, producing work that continues to influence researchers across different fields. The study of totalitarianism further transformed into the study of fascism. However, as these transformations took place, two constants become apparent. Historians and other social scientists have begun to use the epithet fascist in many ways that do not conform to any guidelines. Secondly, the focus on ideology and leaders remains present in many works.

Aware of these two components, Robert O. Paxton in his study *The Anatomy of Fascism* attempts to transform the debate on fascism. As the author claims, his objective is to provide a fresh look at fascism rescuing the concept for meaningful use and accounting more for its attractiveness, its complex historical path, and its ultimate horror. The purpose of the book thus has two main components. The first deals directly with the definition of a fascist movement and the use of that definition. Paxton redefines fascism as a form of political behavior marked by obsessive preoccupation with community decline, humiliation, or victimhood and by compensatory cults of unity, energy, and purity. Further, this behavior takes place in a mass-based party of committed nationalist militants, working in uneasy but effective collaboration with traditional elites, abandoning democratic liberties and pursuing, with redemptive violence and without ethical or legal restraints, goals of internal cleansing and external expansion. Second, Paxton examines the role of individuals, or ordinary men and women in the formation and consolidation of fascist regimes, by exploring, "... the interaction between Leader and Nation, and between Party and civil society." The author looks at, as he calls them, fascist "actions" instead of an ideology in order to explain and redefine the meaning of
the term fascist, since as the author believes "...what fascists did tells us at least as much as what they said."

The Anatomy of Fascism is divided into eight chapters. Paxton gives his arguments for writing the book, his thesis and a layout of the book in the introduction. The author spends the first five chapters examining the creation of various fascist movements, their rooting in the political system, their seizure of power, the exercise of power, and its long duration, during which, Paxton claims, a fascist regime chooses either radicalization or entropy. Thus, Paxton separates five stages in order to compare several fascist movements and regimes at equivalent degrees of development. In turn, as the author claims, these five stages help the reader to see that fascism was a succession of processes and choices. In chapter seven, Paxton turns to cases that have appeared and have been branded as fascist movements in Eastern Europe in the recent times. While Paxton spends little time describing and analyzing a large number of cases, his conclusion supports his idea that the epithet fascist given to some of these regimes in fact has little grounding in what he regards to be the fascist movement. In the last few pages of the book, the author offers a Bibliographical essay in which he presents and briefly describes various works on totalitarianism and fascism that have appeared since the end of World War Two. The Bibliographical essay is divided into nine categories of books based on their theme and purpose. Thus, the reader can find extensive lists of works whose primary concern is the interpretation of fascism or the lives of its main leaders. Paxton uses many of the works listed in the Bibliographical essay in his own study. These secondary sources are further supplemented with a long list of primary sources which Paxton collected throughout his career, while researching and writing on Italian and German fascist regimes as well as in his previous work involving the Vichy regime. However, he has also obtained and used archival documents that deal with some lesser known fascist movements that appeared in Europe before World War Two.

Paxton examines various political movements, parties and their leaders that he describes as fascist. Furthermore, Paxton examines various types of regimes in order to distinguish between these regimes and fascist regimes that appeared in the period between two world wars. Therefore, his work can be regarded as the work of a political historian attempting to disentangle the story of the fascist movement's creation, while focusing more on participants' "actions" rather than ideologies.

Paxton's work certainly adds to the study of fascist regimes which in itself has a long tradition. While not quite focusing on the role of the individual in various fascist movements as promised in the introduction, Paxton does set standards that can be used for the purpose of determining whether any movement that shows signs of fascism is in fact a fascist movement. Moreover, the study itself is a comparative study of different fascist movements that appeared in the interwar period throughout Europe. Thus, the author does not attempt to give us an essence of fascism. Rather, Paxton compares fascist movements in order to derive common characteristics. The fascist movements' characteristics which the author derives are the result of historical research and analysis at its best. Furthermore, Paxton's standards will certainly help in clarifying many misconceptions present in the study of fascist movements and the use of the term fascist. Whether or not these standards will hold depends upon further research, sparked by Robert Paxton's research and his findings.

NOTES
3 Ibid., 218.
4 Ibid., 9.
5 Ibid., 10.

BOOK REVIEWS
History Becomes a Social Science:
New Perspectives in History

PETER S. GRAY

In an essay in the *American Historical Review* in 1948, Thomas Cochran argued that the previous "fifty years of rapid growth in the social sciences have had surprisingly little effect on the general content and synthesis of American History." While referring specifically to American history, Cochran noted that this applied to American historians of Europe as well (historians of the rest of the world did not merit a mention). By contrast, the following fifty years of American historiography have seen a revolution in the use of the social sciences. One can even say that by the beginning of the twenty-first century, history was at last becoming a social science. Historians, in integrating the social sciences into their analyses, have not adopted a single social science theory or relied on a single social science discipline. Instead, there has been an eclectic use of varying theories and concepts adapted from the other social sciences. This has led to a variety of approaches from quantitative economic works to meaning-oriented cultural anthropological works. Whatever the disciplinary source of a particular historical work's theoretical or conceptual basis, historians have refashioned what history is, moving from narratives of political events to the socio-cultural processes underlying these events. By turning to the social sciences for theoretical inspiration, historians have also opened up new fields of historical investigation. While the creation of the new histories of gender and race was certainly inspired by changes in modern society and politics, the very conceptualization of such fields would have been impossible without the social sciences. Further, the absorption of social science thinking into history has led to historians formulating problems on a world scale as economic, social, and cultural processes are seen as transcending political boundaries. This has led to the new field of world history. In what follows, several recent historical works that are representative of this integration of the social sciences into historical writing will be discussed in the context of this shift in historical knowledge.

The modern social sciences were essentially a creation of the late nineteenth century, when the separate disciplines of the social sciences were created, though they have their origins in the Enlightenment. The way of doing history that was formulated at that time was different than what
constitutes history today, and it is this kind of history that Peter Burke calls the "Rankean" or "old" history. While it would be unfair to say that historians in the nineteenth century were unaware of social theory, professional history writing at the time — the 'old' history — was primarily about politics and thus concerned with the nation-state and relations between nation-states. The histories of nation-states were mainly written as narratives of events and primarily concerned with individuals in the elite. Events were explained in terms of those important individuals formulating intentions and acting on them. These histories were based on analyses of written documents, usually official documents produced by the governments being studied and preserved in their archives. Historians writing the "old" history put a high premium on absolute objectivity — that the results of their investigations did not have bias as they were disinterested investigations based on documentary evidence. Finally, history was created as its own discipline, separate from the other social sciences, with its own object of study and methods. It did not borrow from the other social sciences.

Before World War II, there were challenges to this "old" history by professionals (for example, the members of the Annales school, starting in the 1920s) and non-professionals (for example, Marxists) but it was not until after World War II that the writing of history really began to take on the social sciences. Almost everything in history writing changed. First, the object of historical study was broadened to include virtually any human activity. If it was human or related to humanity, it had a past and thus could be studied historically (as long as there was surviving evidence). The most important new object of study was society. Instead of studying important individuals, historians began studying social collectivities, especially the lives of common people — what is now commonly called "history from below." This led to a focus on analyzing economic, social, and cultural structures rather than narrating events, as well as to explanation by structural causes rather than individual intention. This shift also called for new forms of evidence, and not just written evidence outside of the archives: oral testimony, visual representations, statistical data, etc. Historians became more concerned with the subjective aspect of history writing and, while not giving up on objectivity (with a few contentious exceptions), began to account for the historian's subjectivity in historical writing. Finally, all this meant that history became an interdisciplinary project, as it borrowed theories and methods from the other social sciences and even the humanities.3

This transition from the "old" history to the "new" history took place primarily after the Second World War. Before that, there were attempts to make history social scientific, especially in France. The Annales school, founded around a journal in 1929, was created by French historians who sought to turn history towards the study of society by integrating theories and methods from economics, sociology, and demography. Later, they added a quasi-anthropology through their theory of mentalités. However, the work of the Annales school was not widely disseminated outside of France at first and it was not until the late 1960s that their approach had any impact on American historians. Fernand Braudel's major work on the Mediterranean, originally published in France in 1949, was not translated into English until 1972. In fact, there was some hostility to the Annales approach, especially in Britain, and in the United States it has been usually only used by historians writing on non-United States topics like Europe.

This is not because American historians have been hostile to integrating the social sciences into their work. In 1948, in the article referred to at the beginning of this essay, Thomas Cochrane lamented the absence of social scientific theories, methods, and results in American historical works. He called for a new synthesis, one that brought the social sciences to bear on

**BOOK REVIEWS**
subject matters where their use was appropriate. Cochran argued that the "old" history was inadequate in dealing with the types of problems found in modern societies, by which he meant industrial societies. He argued that the traditional emphasis on narratives of presidential acts — what he called the "Presidential Synthesis" — was unable to account for changes in society. The "old" history relied on narrative which was "often valid when applied to the actions of a single individual but [is not] usually suited to the analysis of mass phenomena."4 Instead, social phenomena were more effectively explained in terms of structures. Cochran argued that "while the historical analysis itself must...be concerned with concrete physical, political, or social changes or events, these should be assigned place and importance on the basis of their estimated relation to underlying social forces."5 This strategy of moving from the intentions of individual actors to causal structures was an important development in historiography. Though it has its problems, as will be seen, it represents a fundamental break with the "old" history.

Integrating the social sciences into history required the formulation of a new epistemology, one that took into account traditional historical concerns and developments in philosophy and the social sciences. Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman's Denying History provides a schematic outline of this development. Their purpose is to refute the Holocaust Deniers by showing that the Deniers, who claim to be doing legitimate historical work, are not really doing history at all but rather are motivated by ideology. To do this, Shermer and Grobman discuss what they consider history actually to be and outline three stages of epistemological development in historiography: historical objectivism, historical relativism, and historical science. In the nineteenth century, historians adhered to an objectivist epistemological paradigm which held that historical events happened independently of documentary evidence for them and interpretations of them and that these events were recorded in the documentary record in an accurate and unbiased way. Further, the historian was an objective, disinterested investigator of these documents and the product of the investigation was an objective account of what happened. Shermer and Grobman point out that this epistemological paradigm did not allow for the historian's subjectivity and thus for bias and interest. Around the turn of the twentieth century, a new epistemological paradigm arose in historiography based on the popular relativistic philosophies of the day. This paradigm, historical relativism, holds that history is a subjective creation which historians make out of the evidence available to them: "History exists in the minds of historians."6 In this view, what really happened in the past is ultimately inaccessible. The problem with this epistemology is that historians, in order to do history (and not fiction), have to assume at some point that they can know something about the past. It follows that neither of these paradigms turned out to be satisfactory, as historical objectivism rules out the subjectivity of historians and historical relativism rules out any certain knowledge about the past. In the last few decades, historians have developed a newer epistemological paradigm out of the American pragmatic movement in philosophy which Shermer and Grobman call historical science (others call it "pragmatic hermeneutics"). This epistemological paradigm holds that history is both subjective and objective; history exists inside and outside the historian's mind. Historians both discover elements of a really extant past and describe that past through their subjectivity. Historians do have biases but these can be ameliorated by various methods and, more importantly, by the convergence of evidence in the documentary record. In this new paradigm, the past has its own existence upon which historians work based upon the available evidence and their own subjectivity. Historical accounts are always subject to revision as new evidence is discovered or new
and better interpretations of existing evidence are offered. While Shermer and Grobman’s historical science is the dominant view among historians today, it has had its challengers, most recently among poststructuralist postmodernists who advocate a return to a kind of historical relativism.

Shermer and Grobman do not take this subject far enough. Alan Megill expands on their notion of “historical science” (Megill does not call it that) and argues that the writing of history embodies four interrelated aspects — explanation, description or “recounting,” interpretation, and justification. Social scientists and historians using the social sciences previously have favored explanation over description, interpretation and justification. They have been concerned with explaining surface events by underlying causes. This is essentially what Cochrane calls for in his article when he argues for placing events within the context of underlying social forces. In its most extreme form these explanations take the form of a covering-law model where universal laws are hypothesized and conclusions are deduced from these laws. Historians have rarely followed this rigid form, correctly recognizing that history does not normally conform to this type of explanation. Instead, Megill argues that an historical investigation begins with what he calls “recounting” — a kind of descriptive narrative — upon which explanations arise. Both recounting and explanation presuppose interpretation and justification. Megill discusses two types of interpretation. The first, or pre-Heideggerian, characteristic of historical objectivism, holds that texts are interpreted by an objective observer relating the part to the whole and the whole to the part. The second, or post-Heideggerian, holds that the interpretation of texts occurs not only within the text but between the text and the perspective of the interpreter. Here, the perspective in the text and the perspective of the interpreter meet — there is a “fusion of horizons” to use Gadamer’s term. While Megill follows Heidegger, he does not argue that all interpretations are of equal validity; a conclusion draw by some vulgar followers of Heidegger. Interpretations must be justified in that evidence of various kinds has to be provided by the interpreter in support of the interpretation offered.

Megill’s article shows some influence from a recent development in historiography — poststructuralist postmodernism. The adoption of this view by certain historians in the last three decades was perhaps a reaction to the increasing use of the social sciences in history since 1945. This view has its origins in the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger, both of whom were profoundly influential on Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, the “gurus” of the poststructuralist postmodernist historians. The Nietzsche connection is important here because it links these recent developments with one of the figures who was indirectly responsible for the development of what Shermer and Grobman call historical relativism around the turn of the twentieth century. These relativistic Nietzschean views returned with a vengeance in the 1960s, particularly in France, and in the next two decades became influential in American universities as the left turned away from Marxism.

There are two important elements to this approach. The first is the assumption that, ultimately, the only thing real is language and language thus constitutes consciousness. In a strategy similar to Hegel’s dismissal of Kant’s “thing-in-itself,” poststructuralist postmodernists argued that since everything we know is known through language it is impossible to know anything outside of language (and even if there is anything outside language). Thus, everything we take for granted as real is actually an effect of language and the ultimate ontological status of anything non-linguistic is unknowable. Sometimes poststructuralist postmodernists seem to assume that there is something beyond language as when Foucault talks about the body and seems to be indicating that it really has
a corporeal existence. Unfortunately, among his followers, such as sense is often lost and even denied and thus everything becomes language.

A consequence of this view is that some poststructuralist postmodernist historians have abandoned the social sciences for techniques derived from literary studies. Thus, primary sources are seen not so much as repositories of evidence about what may have been in the text but rather as texts to be analyzed in literary terms. In doing this, the interpreter leaves behind the manifest content of the text in favor of “interpretation,” of discerning multiple interpretations of the text that have equal value but no necessary relation to the past. For example, the Magna Charta could be read the way a literary scholar might read Joseph Conrad's The Secret Sharer. In some readings of Conrad's novella, the "secret sharer" is a figment of the narrator's imagination; in other readings, the "secret sharer" is real. Both are equally valid interpretations of the novella in terms of literary theory. For historians, such divergent readings of the Magna Charta would be incoherent.

The epistemological assumption about language of the poststructuralist postmodernists leads to one important conclusion. Since all there is is language, there can be no truth (at least as it is commonly understood) and that there are only truth claims or "effects." In other words, someone can make a claim about something being true but in reality there is nothing outside of language to validate the truth of that statement. Foucault spoke of various and differing truth regimes and the transition from one to another (or what he calls the "rupture"), but when challenged about what that meant for the truth status of his own position, he failed to give an adequate answer. In these truth regimes, what makes a statement "true" is the ability of the individual or individuals to get others to accept it as true either by consent or coercion. Even within language itself, there can be no guarantee of truth. The point of Derrida's deconstructive strategy is to show the radical instability of texts, i.e., that texts, when carefully analyzed, always contradict themselves and always reveal meanings that were unintended by the author. In fact, these thinkers question the very existence of an author of a text. Instead, they argue that there are only discourses which speak through a subject.

These ideas filtered into historical writing starting in the 1970s and until the mid-1990s they were considered by some to be the cutting edge in historical technique, though this was hardly accepted by all historians. Their influence has ebbed since the mid-1990s but they have left a positive trace despite the many real inherent problems in these views. Historians are now more aware and more concerned with language and its multiple connotations. Historians no longer take it for granted that language is essentially transparent to its object (to be fair, not all historians used to do this, but many seemed to operate under this assumption). Another legacy of poststructuralist postmodernism is the adoption of the idea of discourse. This term has many definitions and is often used as if everyone knows what exactly it means. The way current historians use it seems to be that a discourse is an institutionally, socially, or culturally produced set of categories, definition, statements, and theories about some aspect of reality. In any given society, there are multiple discourses which often contradict each other but when taken together constitute what that society considers to be reality. These discourses are internalized by individuals of society as they grow up in that society and they powerfully shape the way people see their world. What separates the current historian's use of the term discourse from the poststructuralist postmodernist's is that the current historian does not reduce reality to these discourses but rather sees them as produced by an actually existing non-linguistic reality (even if knowledge of that reality presupposes language). It is also important to note that the current usage of the term discourse by historians has shifted from a

AND HISTORIOGRAPHY
term of literary analysis to essentially a term of social analysis. Discourse, like language, is social, and to talk of discourses is to talk about a social phenomenon. Shorn of its more literary connotations, discourse is a useful term for social analysis. Indeed, it seems to have replaced ideology as the preferred term for internalized social and cultural beliefs (this is primarily due to a general turn away from Marxism in the last two decades).

Several recent historical works illustrate this integration of the social sciences into the writing of history. In fact, the integration of the social sciences has now reached probably the last holdout of the "old" history — diplomatic history. Diplomatic history is "old" history par excellence. Concerned with the relations between states, it relies mainly on the intentions and actions of elite individuals for its narratives. While nations, societies, and economies exist in diplomatic narratives, they are mainly assumptions and are never really analyzed. For example, in nineteenth-century diplomatic history, the fact that Germany's rise as an industrial power led to its becoming a force to be reckoned with in the international arena is taken for granted. Diplomatic historians never go much beyond the mere statement of the fact. All the economic, social, and cultural developments that other historians analyze in depth are merely assumed by the diplomatic historian as if everyone knew what terms like the nation-state, nationalism, industrialization, and so on meant. In fact, historians are constantly debating the meaning of these terms and how these aspects of social reality work themselves out in history.

Michael Connelly's *A Diplomatic Revolution* has two aims: first, to look at the Algerian revolution from an international prospective and second, to reconceptualize traditional diplomatic history by integrating into it the social sciences. While the work argues that the Algerian revolution was won in the diplomatic sphere, it puts this diplomacy in a social scientific context heavily influenced by the *Annales* school. The *Annales* school arose in France in the 1920's and the *Annales* specifically wanted to make history more social scientific by integrating the most recent developments in economics, sociology, demography, and anthropology. The *Annales* school tended to downplay political events, arguing that long-term economic and social structures and conjunctures (trends) were more important causally than political events. In fact politics was determined by these economic and social structures and conjunctures. Even though Cochran shows no knowledge of the *Annales* school, he was essentially making the same general argument that they did. While later the *Annales* became associated with attempting total history (not to be confused with world history) as in the works of Fernand Braudel, many *Annales* worked on smaller subjects and Connelly's book is an example of this. Connelly argues that long-term demographic trends in Algeria combined with the failure of French attempts modernized Algerian economy and society (attempts which were mainly aimed at the French colonists there rather then the indigenous population) ultimately led to a situation where many Algerians saw a revolt for independence as the only solution to their situation.

Even Connelly's diplomatic history has a warrant from the *Annales* school. Nineteenth-century history writing was overwhelmingly national in orientation, but Braudel, in his work on the Mediterranean, encouraged a regional (and in later writings, a global) approach. While nations certainly had their importance (at least within a world view that took them seriously), economic and social structures and conjunctures were not limited by arbitrary national boarders. Connelly situates the Algerian revolution internationally because while ostensibly an internal problem for the French, the revolt had international ramifications during the Cold War, especially because of the concerns of the United States over military bases in the region to counter a perceived Soviet threat.
Additionally, the Algerian revolutionaries realized early on that the international struggle was decisive — in order to gain independence, the Algerians had to drive a wedge between France and the United States over the Algeria. For the United States, the stakes were geostrategic but also related to the long-term structures and conjunctures on a world scale. The Algerian revolution was one of several struggles for independence at the time that all reflected the end of the social and economic structures created by the European Imperial powers in the previous four centuries. A new world social and economic system was coming into being and the United States was desperate to control its creation and ultimate form.

Not all histories that utilize the social sciences are as ambitious as Connelly's and instead of attempting an Annales school total history, they restrict themselves to adopting specific theories that seem to fit the subject being studied. One such book is William Harris's Restraining Rage. This book focuses on the discourse of anger control in the ancient Greco-Roman world. It is a work of classics and so the hallmarks of the classics approach to writing history are everywhere. This approach is rooted in the "old" history discussed above in that it emphasizes textual analysis. A great deal of Restraining Rage is devoted to analyzing the meanings of the Greco-Roman words relating to anger and to explicating the Greco-Roman texts on anger and anger control. Even so, Harris wants to explain why a discourse of anger control developed in the Greco-Roman world and here he relies on a sociological theory of Norbert Elias. Elias argued that the development of civilized society or civil society in the West starting at the end of the Middle Ages occurred due to a rise in emotional self-control. Individuals restrained their aggression not only out of self-interest but also because individuals internalized doctrines of restraint propagated by educated elites. Harris argues that this process can be seen at work in the ancient Greco-Roman world in the discourse of anger control and thus transposes Elias's theory to the results of his discussion of the Greco-Roman discourse of anger control. Harris's theoretical strategy is different than that of Connelly (and the Annales school). He takes one specific theory designed to explain a specific development in one time and place and then transposes it to another time and place. This is an eclectic strategy that is common in modern historical writing. Historians usually do not have the time to master even one of the other social science disciplines (let alone all of them) and so they often fish around for theories and concepts which seem useful for what they are investigating.

Other social sciences come into play in Harris's work, notably psychology and anthropology. When Harris discusses anger, he does not define it as much as offer various understandings of it from the Greco-Roman world and, for comparative purposes, modern psychological theories. This is essentially an anthropological approach in that anger control is seen as the different rules that different cultures construct regarding the appropriate and inappropriate expression of anger. There is no "essence" to anger here, except perhaps that something like it is found in all cultures, but only cultural beliefs and roles.

Anthropology is a seemingly endless source of ideas for historians. James Brooks's Captives and Cousins brings together anthropology with another new type of history writing derived from the social sciences, Microhistory. Indeed, Microhistory is heavily influenced by anthropology. It seeks to reduce the scale of historical investigation while not losing sight of the interconnections between the local and the global. As Giovanni Levi writes, Microhistory "is essentially based on the reduction of the scale of observation, [its] a microscopic analysis and an intensive study of the documentary materials." This makes Microhistory similar to an anthropologist's intensive study of a small community except instead of living in that

AND HISTORIOGRAPHY
community for an extended period of time and intensely observing how that community operates, the historian intensively studies the surviving documentary evidence. Microhistories tend to be influenced by the ideas of Clifford Geertz and his notion of "thick description." In this approach, the observer does not try to impose a law-like theory on his observations (as in Megill's understanding of explanation) but rather tries to fit signifying signs into an intelligible structure. Here, the historian is concerned with meaning. This approach is related to poststructuralist postmodernism but Microhistorians never leave the basics of historical method for literary analysis. The concern here is like that of most anthropologists, i.e. with cultural meanings rooted in economic and social structures.

Brooks takes as his subject the interactions of the different cultures in the Southwest borderlands of North America and the distinctive system of slavery and kinship that developed there. In a nod to "thick description," Brooks begins his book with a description of a ritual common in the Southwest borderlands that combines a Christmas ritual with symbolic bride-stealing. This leads to a discussion of the slave system in the region. This slave system grew out of the exercise of power between Native American and Euramerican inhabitants there. To protect and preserve their power within their families and communities men from these cultures negotiated interdependency and maintained power by acknowledging the exchangeability of their women and children. It is commonplace in the anthropological literature (so much so that Brooks does not feel obligated to cite a particular theoretical tradition in anthropology in support of it) that cultures establish links with each other through the exchange of women either willingly or by force. In the Southwestern borderlands, the method was force and the captured women and children were enslaved. At the same time that they were enslaved, these women and children were integrated into the capturing culture, primarily through intermarriage. The new members of the community brought their original culture with them and over time elements of these cultures were integrated into the capturing culture.

Anthropology is not the only way to approach culture. European Marxists have developed analyses of culture out of Marx's works as well as traditional European Kulturkritik. The work of cultural Marxists builds off of Marx's incomplete oeuvre as Marx made only passing comments about culture. Instead, Marx was concerned with the structure of capitalist society, particularly its economy. Marx argued that societies were structured by classes and marked by class struggle. In the most abstract sense, societies consist of the direct producers of the society's wealth (whether in agricultural or industrial societies) and a class who appropriates the results of the labor of the direct producers. Each society has its own structure which has its own specific historical development. Marx argued that the specific way a society structures this basic relationship conditions almost everything else in that society. This is not an economic determinism. What he was talking about were social relationships that structure how people provide for their needs and how these fundamental relationships are refracted throughout the society.

Cultural Marxists of the twentieth century have been less concerned with the structure of modern capitalist societies — there are (or were) plenty of Marxists working on that — and have been more concerned with how the above basic abstract idea works itself out in other areas of human life, especially culture. Many of the aspects of these theories are esoteric and arcane but historians working in this tradition have put some of it to good use. An example of this is Timothy Burke's *Lifebuoy Men, Lux Women.* Burke analyzes the development of a commodity culture in modern Zimbabwe beginning in the late nineteenth century. The central theory here is Marx's notion of commodity fetishism as de-

**BOOK REVIEWS**
veloped in the twentieth century by cultural Marxists out of a chapter in Marx’s *Capital*. In a capitalist society or a society impacted by capitalism, commodities assume an independent life from their production and use and relations between things accompany, control, or displace the actual state of relations between people. In a capitalist society or one under capitalist domination, the relation that is displaced in individuals’ consciousness is the class relation. Commodity fetishism is more than the meanings invested in goods, it is also the accumulated power of commodities to actually constitute, organize, to contain within themselves the forms of consciousness through which capitalism manufactures its subjects. In this process, the properties ascribed to commodities become “natural” properties with no history. In effect, capitalism becomes the natural state of affairs — while things were different back then, in effect they were always the same. Burke borrows Gramsci’s understanding of “common sense” to exemplify this point. For Gramsci, “common sense” is a manufactured artifact consisting of dicta lodged in the public memory of a given society that everyone “knows” to be true, dicta that act to reproduce relations of domination as “natural” occurrences, thus serving the interests of the ruling class. This does not happen without resistance and these meanings are negotiated, though one side in the negotiations has a preponderance of power in the definition of “common sense.”

Another new perspective in history is that of gender. Gender as an object of study has grown out of women’s history. Women’s history itself is a recent creation, coming out of the long struggle for women’s emancipation but not really becoming a part of the historical profession until the 1960s with the arrival of the “Second Wave” of feminism. At that time, women historians put women’s history on the agenda in the historical profession. This led to numerous debates over professionalism and politics, and history and ideology, all of which were more than tainted by the male historians’ desire to control the writing of women’s history, though there were some principles at stake. By the 1990s, women’s history had become gender history. This was because practitioners of women’s history realized that in order to integrate women into history they needed to reconceptualize sexual “difference and how its construction defined relations between individuals and groups.”

Women were not strictly separable from men in analysis as both existed (and exist) in relation to each other. Thus, gender as a social category arose to capture the social and cultural relationships between men and women. Joan Scott has offered a definition of gender as a category: “gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power.”

As such gender involves four interrelated elements: (1) culturally available symbols that evoke multiple (and often contradictory) representations, (2) normative concepts that set forth interpretations of the meanings of symbols or that attempt to limit and contain their metaphorical possibilities, (3) economic and political aspects beyond kinship, and (4) subjective identity.

Mary Renda’s *Taking Haiti* is an example of this new gender history. It is not a work of women’s history but rather about the construction of a particular kind of masculinity. Renda argues that the American occupation of Haiti contributed to the creation of a new masculine imperial culture in the United States in the early twentieth century. The American occupation of Haiti called forth a new discourse based on paternalism which contributed to a new masculine imperial culture in the United States. Paternalism was “an assertion of authority, superiority, and control expressed in the metaphor of a father’s relationship with his children.” This discourse was internalized by many Americans, not only the United States Marines who occupied Haiti but also in the United States as it filtered into popular culture through works of literature and travel writings (some of these writings were meant to

AND HISTORIOGRAPHY
subvert the discourse, e.g. the writings of Zora Neale Hurston). Its function was to justify and facilitate the occupation of Haiti and, more broadly, any less-developed country which the United States' government chose to occupy. Paternalism itself is a specifically gendered concept in that it is the masculine father that is in control. The Haitians were an "inferior" children who needed the authority of the United States as a "father" in order to have any chance of becoming a developed nation — an "adult."

In Taking Haiti, race also plays a role as Renda never forgets that the Haitians were seen as a different and "inferior" race by the Americans. Race is another category which transcends any particular social science discipline and is a central new perspective in historiography. Like gender, recent attention in race is a result of political events — Nazi racial ideology and its corollary the Holocaust, the Civil Rights movement in the United States, and the national liberation movements that occurred throughout the world after 1945. While now biologists usually agree that race as a biological concept has no reality, historically it has been a powerful concept that has been used to explain many things but usually why one "race" should be subordinate to another. As such, race is a discourse — a powerful one — a set of beliefs about how to classify human beings and to rank-order them in their level of "civilization" or "development" by their apparent physical characteristics.

Ada Ferrer's Insurgent Cuba analyzes the discourse of race in Cuba during the Cuban revolution from 1868-1896. Ferrer's main concern is with how both sides in the conflict attempted to shape the discourse of race to achieve their goals. The rebels developed a conception of a raceless nationality in opposition to the race-based discourse of the Spanish regime. Their goal in doing this was to overcome differences among Cubans in order to bring them together and overthrow Spanish colonial rule and establish an independent Cuba. Ferrer argues that this new discourse was crucial to the ultimate success of the revolution. This new conception of a raceless nation was revolutionary in its own right. For European and Americans in the nineteenth century, as well as for many who lived under their rule, race and racial hierarchies were a fact of nature supported by the best science. One thinks of Gramsci's notion of "common sense" here. For the Cuban revolutionaries to claim that there were no races in Cuba but only Cubans was to attack directly a central pillar of Spanish rule there. For the Spanish rulers, race was linked to nationality and they believed that only certain races were equipped to rule themselves. Since most Cubans were black Africans, there could be no Cuban nation because black Africans were incapable of self-rule. Thus, Cuba had to remain a Spanish colony not because Spain needed Cuba for economic or political reasons but because the Spanish thought that it was best for the Cubans. Unfortunately, as Ferrer points out, the discourse of race proved to be very strong among the revolutionaries who had formulated the discourse of a raceless nation. Some black Cubans in the rebel movement towards the end of the rebellion used the discourse of a raceless nation against their fellow insurgents and accused them of being, in effect, racists who discriminated against Cuban revolutionaries of African ancestry. This shows the power and persistence of discourses even among those who are consciously trying to overcome them.

The books dealt with so far here have had modest goals. They generally take a small subject and try to analyze it thoroughly. Only A Diplomatic Revolution had a truly ambitious goal but even there the author stepped back from his ambitious integrative goals and ultimately came up with a more human sized book. The final book discussed here stands out for its theoretical ambition as well as its scope as it is a work of world history. When history became a discipline in the late nineteenth century, the European powers ruled most of the world through various formal and

BOOK REVIEWS
informal means. Europeans wrote histories of the countries they controlled, not all of which were designed to support that rule (though some were), but these historians never really thought about the overarching processes at work around the globe. This is a little surprising given that there was an imperial system and a world market by the end of the century, but it is less surprising when it is remembered that historians at the time did not really think in terms of social processes. Instead, they thought in terms of narratives of political events, nations, and international relations. After 1945, as historians turned towards the social sciences historians began thinking in terms of macro-processes involving the whole world. Economics, sociology, and even culture led historians to think not only beyond politics but also beyond national borders to socio-cultural processes transcending nation-states. It can be said that Marxists had a role in this in that their discussions of imperialism always saw imperialism as a worldwide system (whatever the merits of their specific theses).

Mike Davis’s Late Victorian Holocaust exemplifies this new world history because it treats its subject in a world scale by analyzing an aspect of the world imperial system of the late nineteenth century. Further, it integrates the social sciences with history from a Marxist point of view while also seeking to integrate the natural sciences, specifically climatology, within its narrative. Davis argues that the severe droughts that occurred in various parts of the globe in the late nineteenth century — India, China, and Brazil are the main examples — were the result not only of natural factors but also of social and historical factors. One element was the El Niño phenomenon which, while unknown at the time, has subsequently been discovered and analyzed (though it is not yet completely understood). In itself, the El Niño phenomenon had probably caused some hardship in the centuries before the late nineteenth century but the societies affected by it had developed methods with which to cope. What was different in the late nineteenth century was that these societies were under the control, either formally or informally, of the European imperial powers and had recently been integrated into the new world capitalist economy which was, naturally, controlled by Europe. At its crudest level, this meant that food surpluses which previously would have been distributed by the central governments of these countries within these countries to alleviate famine were instead sold on the world market where they went to those who would pay the most for them. Thus, countries suffering extreme exported surpluses from other regions to Europe because Europeans offered the highest price for those commodities. This was justified in terms of an ideology of free markets and free trade which was seen by the Europeans as the “natural” way the world worked and would ultimately benefit all involved (Gramsci’s “common sense” again?). They maintained this position (their heirs still maintain this position) despite all evidence to the contrary. In the course of roughly 30-40 years of on-again, off-again famine, millions died in these countries.

The most important conclusion that Davis draws from this is that what we have come to call the Third World was essentially created at this time. Famine not only meant a massive loss of life but also a massive loss of productive capital as peasants consumed the livestock they normally would have used productively in order to survive the famine. Peasants also sold land they owned or gave up their leases on lands they tilled in order to gain some means by which to buy food and survive. All of these taken together represented a massive dispossession of peasant wealth. Those who survived had much less than they had before and found that wealth was now even more heavily concentrated in fewer hands. While Davis does not draw the parallel, it is strikingly similar (in effect if not cause) to the dispossession of the peasantry in Europe in the early modern era. Unlike Europe, however, the countries Davis discusses had been integrated

AND HISTORIOGRAPHY
into a world economy designed to favor Europe (and later the United States) and thus could not follow the European development path (let alone the path the United States followed). In Davis's view, the famine of the late nineteenth century created the structural imbalance in the world economy that we have today. The world outside of Europe was not always poor and underdeveloped; it was made that way by European imperial domination.

In the Cochran article referred to previously, he argued that traditional narrative and social scientific explanation were essentially incompatible. Several decades later, Bernard Bailyn argued that the integration of the social sciences into history had created several narrative challenges for historians. He argued that:

there are...at least three general trends in motion, three lines of development generated by the force of scholarship itself, which in varying ways will enrich, but also complicate, any comprehensive narratives that are written: the fusion of latent and manifest events, the depiction of large-scale spheres and systems organized as peripheries and cores, and the description of internal states of mind and their relation to external circumstances and events.\(^ {22} \)

Unlike Cochran, who seemed to call for the abandonment of narrative, Bailyn sees the new social scientific history as a challenge for historians. While not an explicit response to Bailyn's article, Paul Cohen's *History in Three Keys*\(^ {23} \) deals with the narrative problems laid out by Bailyn. Cohen's purpose is to discuss the writing of history itself through the example of the Boxer Rebellion in China in 1900. He argues that there are at least three ways an historian can write the history of an event: as a narrative of events, as the lived experience of the participants in that event, and as the past constructed by what he terms mythologizers. The major portion of the book is taken up by looking at the Boxer Rebellion through each of these approaches.

Cohen's first approach, the narrative of events, is the usual strategy taken by historians. Here, the historian tells the story of what happened by explaining its causes and putting it within a broad context. What troubles Cohen is that this is a construction of the historian who knows how the event came about, how it developed, and how it ended because it has already occurred in the past. Further, the historian has a broad sense of the context within which the event took place. This gives the historian a different perspective on the event from those who actually participated in it. They did not know all that went into the initiation of the event, what caused it to develop as it did, and they had no idea of its outcome. Neither were they usually conscious of the wider context.

None of this is meant to deny the value of the historian's account as there is more to an event than what the participants are conscious of. Nevertheless, the historian's account downplays the lived experience of the participants. This leads Cohen to propose that historians need histories of people's lived experiences of events which takes into account their limited knowledge of what was happening and the undecidedness of the outcome. In Cohen's own account of the lived experience of the Boxer Rebellion, he relies heavily on anthropology, showing that even in a book about narrative strategies, the social sciences are still central to the historian's work.

For Cohen, there is a third type of narrative that historians can write. This is the narrative of the narratives of the event as written by later writers (historians are not included in this category). While these writers often believe that what they write is true, as do their readers, they process the event through a predetermined agenda influenced by their current circumstances designed to score political points. Cohen calls this kind of writing mythology and its writers mythologizers. What Cohen argues is that the historian can write an account of these mythologies by recounting how and why they develop.

**BOOK REVIEWS**
What is important is that these mythological accounts can be very powerful and persuasive in the societies in which they are formulated. This alone makes them worthy of study.

At the beginning of this essay it was suggested that history in the early twentieth century was finally becoming a social science. The brief survey of eight recent works of history that followed more than show this to be an accurate statement. The books addressed a wide variety of topics covering the globe and while they focused more on the last few centuries, the ancient world was not excluded. They are eclectic in the social scientific theories and methods that they use, which was pointed out as one of the characteristics of the new history at the beginning. What is clear is that history can no longer be written without the social sciences. While still a discipline unto itself, history is at the same time inseparable from the other social sciences.

NOTES
3 Ibid.
4 Cochran, 731.
5 Ibid., 788.
14 Marx, 163-77.
17 Ibid., 1067-68.
19 Ibid., 15.