Book Reviews

John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II* (New York, W.W. Norton, 1999).

Jerry Sweeney*

The War between the States is unarguably the most defining moment in American History. The war altered the United States in a manner so fundamental that Americans continue to cope with effects of that internecine quarrel and the occupation effort that followed. Americans are fascinated, mayhap mesmerized, by what occurred betwixt 1861 and 1865. However, Americans are unconcerned, indeed inclined to ignore, what occurred after the successive surrenders that began in Appomattox Court House. The occupation years seldom engage the attention of most Americans in a literary or theatrical fashion.

Admittedly, historians do not ignore the occupation effort initiated by the Congress of the United States. It cannot be said that the period during which the victors sought to reconstruct their former foes in their own image escapes analysis. Nevertheless, one cannot gainsay the fact that it is not widely examined. This is unfortunate, in that the root causes of many the dilemmas that continue to bedevil the nation are the manifold failures of the occupation.

For their part, the Japanese do not neglect the conduct of the Pacific War, but the occupation period is the most fertile ground for scholarly enterprise and popular analysis. The experience of defeat and the occupation period are constantly addressed from every conceivable perspective. To the extent that *Embracing Defeat* allows an exclusively English-speaking audience access to material previously unavailable this work is essential to those seeking commercial opportunities in Japan. The manner in which a people interpret the most unfortunate periods in their past is crucial to an understanding of how they approach the future. It is quite likely that relative neglect of the

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occupation period between 1865 and 1877 by Americans is not altogether unconnected with persisting social problems. To a similar extent, the occupation years constitute the bedrock for most Japanese with respect to their national identity and personal values.

In the twentieth century Japan seemingly put lie to the assertion that the urbanized industrialized phenomenon was necessarily limited. Confined, it was widely averred, to those nations of northern Europe or their colonial clones in North America. Those peoples who possessed a significant skin pigmentation, it was asserted, could never sustain such an economic state of affairs. The Japanese appeared to be the exception that presumably exists for every rule. Furthermore, as significant portions of the globe were subject to European imperialism, the Japanese were enthusiastic participants in the process. Then came the final throw of the dice and the catastrophic defeat in 1945.

It was all so ironic. American warships were the precipitating factor in Japan's rise to power as well the instrument of its crushing destruction. First the American navy arrives bent on commercial opportunity and then as the avenging instrument of people intent on retaliation. Still, victory was not enough, the nation that conceived the attack on Pearl Harbor must be transformed. This was not a surprisingly development. Americans are frequently wont to perceive the world as in need of drastic improvement by a disinterested party inclined toward the benevolent. However, although defeated, the Japanese were not suddenly rendered culturally *tabula rasa.* Furthermore, those who would put matters straight must needs possess a linguistic and cultural entry to the society destined for alteration. Otherwise, well-intentioned programs will produce results slightly askew. The Japanese response to the democratic process, pacifism and remilitarization are only the most visible manifestation of the interaction between victors and vanquished. Additionally, the Japanese response to the American occupation is exactly that, a Japanese rejoinder.

The American occupation did not abolish free will, nor impose alien models on a defeated and dispirited people - the claims of nationalistic extremists notwithstanding. The Japanese bureaucratic apparatus, of necessity, acquired extensive power during the war. Inasmuch as those selfsame persons were later selected to execute directives from the occupation government it is not surprising that they extended their man-

date. Imperial Japan mobilized for total war and the resulting institutional arrangements survived and flourished in peacetime. Survived and flourished insofar as what passed for a postwar economy demanded their continuation. Moreover, employee security, corporate subcontracting and dependence on a small number of private banks for financing met with the overwhelming approval of the occupation authorities. If Japan remained unchanged by its defeat it was not solely because they were resistant to change. Rather, genuine societal reform was forsaken for the path of least resistance.

This is not to say that the occupation was totally ineffectual. At the close of the millennium, even the most skeptical must recognize that Japan was dramatically affected by war, defeat and then occupation. The Japanese attitude toward war and militarism is exceptional within the human community. Paradoxically, the same occupation-inspired pacifism that consigns Japan to diplomatic subservience fuels a single-minded pursuit of economic growth. It also undergirds the national mercantilist mentality, and engenders networks of protectionist defenses. However, the occupation legacies are under assault and Japan may yet find new avenues to explore. Nonetheless, as John Dower aptly concludes: "The lessons and legacies of defeat have been many and varied indeed; and their end is not yet in sight."

James Dower's previous work, *War without Mercy*, is widely recognized as a study of exceptional significance. He fundamentally altered the manner whereby the Pacific War is perceived. *Embracing Defeat* is an equally magisterial examination of a subject about which Americans believe they are thoroughly conversant. Yet, as Professor Dower so deftly demonstrates, what they know is in point of fact far from the case. Although this work is easily accessible, even to those who do not specialize in this subject, at more than 500 pages it is a bit of tome.

Sudipta Sen, *Empire of Free Trade* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).

Santhi Hejeebu*

Sudipta Sen's *Empire of Free Trade* explores the meanings of markets and marketplaces at the time of the English East India Company's political ascendancy in India. He retells the famous story of Plassey and Buxar, of treachery and takeover. His is a cultural history of the changes in the economy of eighteenth century Bengal wrought by the political leadership of Europeans. Although he writes often of "individualist monetary gain and loss," the book is not an economic history preoccupied with the changes in supply and demand. Instead Sen's work complements that of economic historians by shooting an image of North Indian marketplaces through the lens of moral economy, power-relations, and ritual. Sen illuminates native meanings of gift giving, market places, and what he calls the "politics of prestation." Sen's concern is with specificity of meanings, as of the significance of a court messenger throwing down his turban. He sees the eighteenth century Bengal economy as a China shop of delicate social wares and the East India Company as the bull.

Chapter One describes the cultural world of traders of Mughal Bengal, a society of overlapping political authorities. *Zamindars* and local potentates exercising their "rights over passages of wealth" often interrupted the movement of traders and their goods. The ruling classes were disdainful of the trading classes, maintaining a clear social distance, and exhibiting none of the mobility between commerce and land exhibited in eighteenth century English society. Their worlds did overlap along trade routes and trading places such as *bazars*, *ganjs*, and *hats*. As expressions of their prestige, aristocratic families often sponsored marketplaces whose layout and architecture Sen details. They controlled river routes and ensured the safety of pilgrims and traders upon payment of tolls. Part of the proceeds of taxes on marketplaces and trade routes subsidized places of worship, such as tombs of saints, and went to other charitable purposes. In this way the landed elite upheld the spiritual and cultural aspirations of the larger community through their "exactions" on businesses.

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Wanting to evade all inland taxes, the English appealed to their *farman* or imperial order from the Mughal Court in Delhi. Sen argues in Chapter two that the *farman* was read as a permanent and binding contract with a supreme political authority rather than as an expression of temporary favor by an authority whose writ was not easily enforced. They interpreted the document broadly, as suited the needs of Company servants in pursuit of their private trade, and did not hesitate to use their army to ensure their trading privileges. As such, the Company flag assumed a "viable alternative insignia of power and authority." The Company monopolized trade in salt, betel nut, and tobacco- "merchandise of honor" – and exercised "historic practices of exploitation reserved for powerful *zamindars*." Sen asserts that the Company resorted increasingly to violence to settle commercial disagreements in the half-century before Plassey.

After the military conquests at Plassey and Buxar the Company was awarded the *Diwani* of Bengal, the right to the tax revenues of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. In Parliament Clive justified the Company's military exploits in terms of the financial windfall which would accrue to the Company and to the English treasury. Chapter three demonstrates how translating the award into a steady stream of revenue required the English to make their domain governable. The new rulers made their domains manageable by amassing new (non-native) forms of empirical knowledge, writing new histories, making new maps, and representing Bengal's economic and political landscape in contemporary English idioms. Sen believes that the Company successfully (through administrative orders buttressed by force of arms) grafted on to indigenous norms of trade contemporary economic ideas peculiarly summarized as a commitment to free trade. The abolition of inland duties, the practice of levying customs by value rather than by weight, and the uniform treatment of all classes of merchants were among the changes instituted by the Company. Such practices were met with confusion and resistance, argues Sen, as they upset the "stubborn norms of authority inherent in the traditional order of Northern India."

Chapter four extends part of the discussion of chapter three: the creation of a new economic terrain. Sen does two things: (a) "illuminate the specific nature of administrative intervention. . . in the realm of market places and market exchange"; and (b) attempt to show how the state-economy relation prevailing in late eighteenth century England informed the analogous relationship pursued by the Company Raj. The first is done through

a very informative discussion of the abolition of *sa'ir* or inland tax. The second depends in large part on Ranajit Guha's famous analysis of the permanent settlement of land. Sen likens British policies toward marketplaces with their policies toward the collection of tax revenue from land.

The analogy works awkwardly. The early administrators were besotted by wealth derived from land, not wealth from control of marketplaces. They were understandably infatuated with freeing the tiller of the soil on whose efforts the government's revenue really depended. Sen does not show why the government should be equally moved by the humble trader. On the contrary, the Company's monopolizing of key commodities, its preferential taxing of its own investment goods vis-à-vis other traders, and its inability to reign in the excesses of private trade all point to lack of commitment to free inland trade.

It is hard to believe Sen's portrayal of the Company servants as disinterested constructors of a new - call it Smithian - political economy. Despite their obvious disgust with native control over trade routes and trading places, the eighteenth century administrators shared none of the doctrinaire allegiance to free trade that their Victorian counterparts had. They were, through most of the eighteenth century, themselves merchants and active participants in inland markets. Despite Parliament's censure and the Court of Director's impotent directives to the men in the field, the Company's official rules toward free trade seem half-hearted at best. In England the Company fought bitterly to retain their monopoly status and for their corporate rights to the Bengal revenues. English fathers and uncles longed to obtain for their younger sons and nephews a Bengal post, thought to be tremendously lucrative. The Company's monopoly status was believed to be the cause of its economic success for both the corporation and the individuals who managed it. This should suggest that official encouragement of free trade was disingenuous. If, as Sen convincingly suggests, the moral economy of a redistributive society was leveled, it was another type of moral economy rather than the principle of free trade that was the steamroller.

The main plot of *Empire of Free Trade* argues by omission that ideas other than the principle of free trade were unimportant in the "making of the colonial marketplace." The stripping of ancestral privileges and rights was as much an attempt to consolidate the nascent state's power as it was an implementation of economic principles. The abolition of market duties de-

prived the "aristocracy" of economic resources and conferred them upon the representatives of the Company, whose incentives were often at odds with corporate goals. Another narrative, consistent with the "colonial archive" and unexplored by Sen is that the immigrant administrator's commitment to his own self preservation and self aggrandizement, his greed and desperation, motivated such socially devastating economic policies as the prohibition of all river and road dues. Sen's account would have been more compelling had he more fully demonstrated others to be inadequate.

Sen begins to do this toward the end of Chapter five, which reemphasizes many of the themes of loss and struggle discussed earlier. He criticizes here (and elsewhere) the interpretation of English ascendancy put forth by Christopher Bayly as failing to put sufficient emphasis on the measures taken by the Company to subvert indigenous forms authority, particularly regarding market places and market exchange. Sen sees the transition to colonial rule as fraught with contradiction, conflict, and resistance. He wants to emphasize "the deeper differences in mercantile culture that threatened to create a gulf between local merchants and the officers of the Company working for the regulation of internal trade and customs." This is Sen's strength: his eye for fissures. He has impressively used Bengali, Persian and Urdu sources to illustrate the conflicting meanings of trade and rights over traders. The abolition of riverine duties for example may have made the flow of goods less expensive but it also dispossessed numerous *zamindars* of their outward signs of political privilege. He does not want to smooth over the agony of the transformation by readings that somehow resolve cultural conflict. While I do not share some of his interpretations of economic change, I read the book with great profit. Sen breathes new life into one of the most important episodes of Indian history.

David S. Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some So Poor* (London, Abacus, 1998).

Andre Lambelet*

David Landes' recent book, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, is an ambitious attempt to grapple with one of the most important questions facing us today: the gap between rich and poor nations. "We live," he tells us in his introduction,

> in a world of inequality and diversity. This world is divided roughly into three kinds of nations: those that spend lots of money to keep their weight down; those whose people eat to live; and those whose people don't know where the next meal is coming from.

As the title suggests, Landes' argument is influenced by the economic thought of Adam Smith. Like Smith, Landes believes that the self-interested actions of the many help create a greater good. The basis for that self-interested action is the right to private property. Private property provides incentives to people to innovate and change. Property rights, Landes argues, are the central reason Europe was able to develop as rapidly as it did from the fifteenth century forward; conversely, the absence of institutional property rights condemned otherwise promising societies (like China) to stagnation.

Yet while Landes' focus on the importance of private property will confirm the views of economic liberals, he warns that liberal trade cannot make up for geographic disadvantages. "The economist," he warns, "whose easy assumption that every country is destined to develop sooner or later, must be ready to look hard at failure." For the most part, though, this is the account of success: for it is the success of Europe in creating an Industrial Revolution that accounts for the differences between rich and poor.

There are two agents in Landes' story: geography, which provides the basis for social organization, and culture, which shapes the attitude of society to the acquisition and use of knowledge. Geography, Landes notes, is not egalitarian. Europe was blessed by geography. It could grow food all year round, but parasites could not survive the cold winters. Its mod-

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erate and well-distributed rainfall, along with its network of rivers, helped it avoid the kind of political centralization that riverine civilizations such as Egypt endured because no one could easily control access to rivers. Where authority could easily be imposed, despotism flourished, and property rights did not develop.

Geography, though, was not a sufficient condition for European dominance. As Landes repeats, "Culture matters." He means that a culture's attitude toward knowledge matters: cultures willing to acquire and use new knowledge (and new means of acquiring knowledge) prosper, while cultures that are unwilling do not. Europe was different from other societies because it fostered a kind of pluralism and openness to knowledge absent in other cultures. Religion was separate from secular authority, and secular authority was itself divided:

> The Church succeeded in asserting itself politically in some countries, notably those of southern Europe, not in others; so that there developed within Europe areas of potentially free thought. This freedom found expression later on in the Protestant Reformation, but even before, Europe was spared the thought control that proved a curse in Islam.

All this led up to the crucial development: the Industrial Revolution, which Landes situates in the mid-eighteenth century, after the age of discovery and centuries of warfare between Islam and Spain. Islam turned inward and stagnated, while Spanish willingness to adopt new technology of war not only helped in the *reconquista* (the expulsion of Moors from Spain at the end of the 15th century) but also gave Spain an insurmountable advantage in its conquest of the Aztec and Inca empires. Similarly, Portuguese willingness to systematize navigation, make use of new instruments, and try new routes enabled them to sail farther and make inroads in Asia.

Eventually, of course, both Spain and Portugal were supplanted as world powers, first by the Dutch, then by the British. Landes offers an explanation rooted in culture. Even as the Spanish triumphed against the Moors in Iberia, the seeds of their collapse were laid. "First, fanaticism and intolerance triumphed in Spain, leading in 1492 to the expulsion of the Jews (later on to a similar expulsion of Muslims)." Spain turned to the Inquisition, closing itself off from foreign influence and from the discoveries and intellect of its own minority populations. While the Spanish turn toward a Catholic orthodoxy deprived it (and later Portugal) of foreign influences and ideas, the Dutch

and the British developed a new kind of intellectual openness, rooted in the Protestant Reformation.

In the Reformation, Landes declares, "People read and started thinking for themselves, and laymen joined divines in rebellion." Following Max Weber, Landes argues that the Reformation created a work ethic that made Industrial Revolution possible. It created a "new kind of man—rational, ordered, diligent, productive." (Interestingly, Landes also attributes Meiji Japan's rapid rise in the late nineteenth century to the existence of a "Japanese version of Weber's Protestant ethic.")

The "distinctively European sources of success" have to do with knowledge: more autonomous intellectual inquiry, the development and wide-spread adoption of a new (scientific) method of reasoning, and "the invention of invention, that is, the routinization of research and its diffusion." At its core, then, the Industrial Revolution, like the Age of Discovery, is the consequence of a particularly European mode of knowing. Just as the European way of knowing was superior to the mode of knowing practiced in Islamic countries, China, Aztec Mexico and the Inca Empire, so the British (Protestant) way of knowing and learning was superior to the rest of Europe's, especially to Spain's. When it came to catching up, the German way (setting up a comprehensive system of formal education) and the American way (mass production, or the "American system of manufactures") were both to prove better than the British.

On its surface, Landes' argument is plausible and stimulating. It makes sense that open attitudes toward knowledge, and the rise of scientific method, would result in greater economic success. It makes sense that cultures that equate work with virtue would succeed economically. But there are nevertheless important problems with the book. One of these is that Landes is intolerant of other interpretations, and while this sometimes makes for vigorous reading, it too often comes across as shrill and closed-minded. More important, perhaps, than the deliberately provocative tone that Landes often takes, are the omissions in his argument that result from his dismissal of alternate points of view.

Landes does not believe in historical accident, as he tells us over and over. Attitudes toward knowledge shape our destiny: open societies flourish, where closed ones founder. But he is telling only half the story. Openness may predispose a nation to economic success, but there are other important factors. One of these is the role of the state. An important example is Britain's

economic rivalry with and triumph over the Dutch in the second half of the seventeenth century, which was not predicated on "cultural" factors alone. The aggressive mercantilist policies of the British crown helped destroy foreign (mainly Dutch) rivals to the British carrying trade, while British laws forbade not only the export of certain kinds of technology, but the emigration of people with important skills. This matters because the implication of Landes' initial argument about British dominance is that hard work and intellectual openness created British success. Examine the record, though, and it will be apparent that the hard work was matched by hard measures: the principle behind mercantilism was to *avoid* a level playing field. States today that complain about the enforced liberalization of their markets might well see Landes' argument as yet another bit of self-congratulatory neo-liberal ideology. (To be fair, Landes does later mention some of the protectionist policies pursued by the British state, but he does so not in the discussion of Britain's rise to power, but only in a later discussion of other countries' attempt to catch up to Britain.) So what, in the end, does Landes make of the state?

> The record, then, is clearly mixed. State intervention is like the little girl who had a little curl right in the middle of her forehead: when she was good, she was very, very good; and when she was bad, she was horrid.

One might say something similar about Landes' argument: when he is good, he is very, very good; when he is bad, he is insufferable.

Robert David Johnson, *Ernest Gruening and the American Dissenting Tradition* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1998).

Lawrence Gelfand*

In the history of American liberal reform, Ernest Gruening deserves a high ranking. If that was not previously apparent, this magnificent biography by Robert D. Johnson, who teaches at Williams College, makes a powerful case. My evaluation is all the more remarkable because I suspect that few present day Americans outside Alaska and possibly Puerto Rico are at all familiar with the name Ernest Gruening. Whatever other recognition would likely be limited to Gruening's courageous stand in 1964 as U.S. Senator, his was one of only two votes case (Senator Wayne Morse's was the other) against the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which afforded the legal basis for President Johnson to escalate U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. Gruening's strongly worded orations at conferences and "teach-ins," and his numerous letters and articles marked him as one of the most vociferous foes of the Johnson Administration's Southeast Asia strategy. This example of his impassioned struggle for a cause was but the climax of a career whose leitmotif was dissent –dissent from the fashionable, the popular, politically safe policies and trends. Gruening, a journalist and editor by profession, followed in the liberal tradition of his friend, mentor, and fellow editor, Oswald Garrison Villard, and the politically independent senator from Nebraska, George W. Norris, when preferring to fight for causes rather than supporting the otherwise expedient measures favored by a political party.

Robert Johnson has honored the memory of Ernest Gruening but not with a biography brimming with accolades. After all, Gruening was a professed critic, someone who seemed to thrive on controversy. Anything less than a balanced biography mixing sympathy with careful analyses would be unworthy. Johnson's research was by no means limited to the Gruening papers and diary housed at the University of Alaska. His end notes reveal the extent of his investigations into a vast array of relevant manuscript sources and secondary literature. Because Gruen-

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ing's life extended into the early 1970's, Johnson wisely turned his attention to the large number of surviving persons in Alaska, in Washington, D.C. and elsewhere whose lives intersected with Gruening's. Skillfully, he wove the oral history sources with the literary documents. The end product should appeal to a wide range of readers anxious to understand an American whose political education began in the trenches of political dissent and a champion of certain unpopular causes but who later managed the transition to political incumbency as governor then as senator for Alaska.

Born in 1887 of German-Jewish descent (the family observed no organized religion), Gruening was the youngest child to a father who was an ophthalmic surgeon at Mt. Sinai in New York. Apparently, little is known about Ernest's mother, the former Phebe Friendenberg. From an early age and continuing throughout his early years, young Ernest and his sisters enjoyed cultural advantages that came with an affluent household and parents anxious to enrich their children's lives: travel to Europe; a musical training; edifying table talk at meals; instruction in foreign languages; education in private schools. All these advantages were intended to prepare Ernest for matriculation at Harvard College. Then, as if foreordained, he proceeded to the Harvard Medical School where he earned the M.D. mainly to satisfy his father, but Ernest decided that medicine was not the right calling for him. Instead, he turned his attention to the then exciting opportunities opening in the world of journalism. He was intrigued by the vogue of muckracking and the exposures of corruption in government as well as exploitation of consumers by trusts and huge conglomerates that were feature articles in many magazines and newspapers. Gruening came to believe that in a democratic society the electorate had to be well informed, and the formidable job of informing fell to the lot of editors and journalists.

Following his father's death on the eve of the European war in 1914, Ernest and his sibling s learned that they would be beneficiaries of substantial bequests. For Ernest, this legacy of independent income meant he would feel secure to perform his writing and editing not subject to the whims and restrictions imposed by publishers and others who managed publications. Here was probably an important turning point in the life of a serious dissenter.

Over the course of his career that extended for nearly a half century, Gruening's political values evolved and even shifted.

During the early years of the 20th century, he was attracted to the banners of Theodore Roosevelt's New Nationalism. By 1916, however, he was won over to Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom and his international rhetoric. By 1920, Gruening was hoping that Herbert Hoover would win a nomination for the presidency. In subsequent years, he was supporting Robert LaFollette and Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. Biographer Johnson claims that the one cause on which Gruening never wavered was his steadfast opposition to monopolies and the concentration of wealth. Throughout the early decades of this century, Gruening learned many lessons. Perhaps none was more important than his realization that for a dissenter or reformer to be successful in running against the tide, it would be essential to work with the media in creating a public awareness of the needs for reform or the justification for dissent. In the absence of an effective alliance with the press (later also radio and television) the cause of reform would probably be doomed to failure.

Among the causes to which Gruening devoted his time and energies during the 1920's were campaigns against the denial of civil rights to citizens of color in the United States and his opposition to U.S. imperialist policies particularly towards Latin America. He denounced racist policies in America and in foreign lands as well. A member of the NAACP, he campaigned against racism. No longer content to sit on the sidelines and write critical pieces, he longed to participate in the frontlines where government policies were being shaped. His articles were sharply critical of the Republican administrations' support for corporate and military interventionist policies in the Caribbean and in Mexico helped position him for an appointment. Given his fluency in Spanish and French, he actively sought a diplomatic appointment from the Hoover Administration in Haiti but to no avail. He taught classes at the New School of Social Research in New York and lectured extensively on Latin American topics in cities across the United States.

With the election of Franklin Roosevelt, he and his network of influential friends including Edward House and Felix Frankfurter again pressed forward on behalf of Gruening. Just at the time when Latin American was receiving top billing on the agenda of U.S. foreign policy in the aftermath of the Japanese advance into Manchuria and the establishment of Hitler's dictatorship in Germany, Gruening hoped the new administration in Washington would view his credentials favorably. This time, he succeeded, and Gruening was appointed adviser to the U.S. dele-

gation to attend the Seventh International Conference of American States meeting at Montevideo, Uruguay. Soon, his pleasure on receiving this appointment was tempered by his realization that President Roosevelt was prone to appoint advisers having varied policy agendas. During the early years when the "Good Neighbor Policy" was publicized, certain officers sharing Gruening's anti-imperialist views were appointed, but there were others, like Sumner Welles, who placed a higher priority on stability than on encouraging democratic institutions in such countries as Cuba. Roosevelt's appointment of Welles to serve as Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs was a bitter disappointment for Gruening. His experience in government administration would provide other lessons for the journalist and editor.

Consistency may be a standard favored by pundits, but Gruening soon discovered that occasions arise where consistency no longer serves a country's or a politician's interest. Early in the 1930's Rafael Trujillo, a product of U.S. military education, came to power forming a dictatorship in the Dominican Republic. Like other tyrannies, Trujillo's government soon conducted a reign of terror against the country's sizable Haitian minority. This posed a dilemma for liberals like Gruening who had opposed military interventions in the domestic affairs of American states. On this occasion, however, he urged that a multi-national military intervention be mounted against the repression practiced by Trujillo's regime.

For a person who believed that democracies should not possess dependencies, Gruening accepted President Roosevelt's offer in 1934 to serve as director of the newly established Division of Territories and Island Possessions (DTIP) that would henceforth operate under the U.S. Department of the Interior (previously this fell under the jurisdiction of the War Department), a position he held from 1934-1939. Given his special interest in Puerto Rico, Gruening persuaded Roosevelt to allow him also to direct the Division's Puerto Rican Reconstruction Administration, which he did during 1935-1937. Although Gruening was overjoyed with these new responsibilities, he quickly discovered that he would encounter numerous detractors in the Interior Department as well as in Puerto Rico. Still, it was with Puerto Rico that he took greatest pride in the many economic reforms that were intended to improve the quality of living for the population. Gruening had long believed that the United States could through management of Puerto Rico and other territories serve

as a model for the Americas, encouraging self government and improving the ways in which wealth was distributed.

By 1939, Gruening was becoming weary of government service and talked of returning to some editorial post. When he learned that the President had appointed him Governor of Alaska, he thought it was a reward "for his outstanding abilities." According to Johnson, who quotes Interior Secretary Harold Ickes: "Roosevelt believed that Gruening had 'not done an effective job at the DTIP.'" But Ickes was no friend or admirer of Gruening, so his testimony on the President's motive for sending Gruening to Alaska should not be accepted unconditionally.

Once in Alaska, Gruening quickly became involved in grass roots politics. He learned about the antagonisms between the Indians and Eskimos. He came to realize the political power in Alaska exercised by Seattle fishing and lumber barons. For someone with liberal credentials, Gruening was probably an unlikely official to be pressing hard for generous federal aid for the Territory. Throughout his tenure as governor, he scrambled for federal funds, which he may have thought would endear him to the Alaskan constituency. With the onset of the Cold War, the governor was quick to stress the Soviet military threat to North America via Alaska in order to support his requests for federal grants. Later in the 1940's, he was arguing that Washington should not answer appeals for foreign aid in Europe and Asia until Alaska's needs were met. He regarded foreign aid as wasteful, "taking away dollars that could be better spend in Alaska." More than other positions, his view of foreign aid alienated him from the Washington establishment.

Until the 1940's, Gruening had made few comments about Communism. But as the Cold War hardened, Johnson asserts, he began articulating an "anti-Communist framework as strongly as any prominent official in the Truman Administration." In spite of such views, Gruening was accused, as were others in the Truman Administration, of being "soft on Communism." His response to such charges was to favor ever tougher measures against those charged with being un-American. In order to meet the allegations that the Truman presidency was shielding Communists in government positions, the President authorized a federal investigation of people in the executive branch who were being accused of pro-Communist allegiance. In due course this special agency also investigated Gruening's supposed connections. Johnson quotes one witness who thought Gruening favored the Communists "because he was friendly

with a member of the Alaskan legislature, Al Owens, who 'pounded on the table to emphasize his points.'" There was little support for the charges, and Gruening's reputation was not seriously affected. However, Johnson notes, Truman aide John Steelman "recommended that Truman distance himself from the Alaska governor as much as possible anyway."

As governor, Gruening's embrace of a nationalist, anti-Communist agenda may seem to be a contradiction to his earlier positions as a dissenter. As an incumbent official appointed by and presumable responsible to the U.S. president, Gruening also felt a responsibility to serving the well being of Alaskans, not the special interests that lobbied for benefits often at the expense of the public welfare. Earlier in his career as journalist-dissenter, Gruening enjoyed a reputation as an anti-militarist; in Alaskan politics, he became a staunch advocate for military spending. The Alaskan Gruening seemed a far cry from the spokesman for liberal causes of earlier years. But the Governor enhanced his popularity among the rank and file by leading the movement for Alaskan statehood.

Even before Alaska won statehood in 1958, Gruening decided to seek election as "senator," a largely honorary office that would chiefly involve lobbying efforts for statehood. His success at the polls was especially sweet inasmuch as this was the first time he sought popular election. Once back in Washington, he worked tirelessly for statehood, but he also indulged in discussions of foreign affairs. Here were the occasions when Gruening offered a critique directed this time at the Eisenhower Administration against its support of militaristic dictatorships in the Cold War's struggle against Communist power. Later, Gruening would refine his argument, but he urged that the United States should not pin foreign aid funds into right wing regimes whose only claim was their opposition t Soviet and Communist threats. Instead, Gruening maintained, the United States should siphon its foreign aid programs to democratic groups that promised long range reforms.

Here was the crux of Gruening's critique of the Kennedy Administration's Alliance for Progress in Latin America, the critique of American foreign aid in the Middle East following his tour of that region in 1962, and even his critique of the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. There were obvious variations in each of these dissents, but the general them is clear. By U.S. support for dictatorial and militaristic regimes in Latin America and the Middle East, the U.S. was discouraging meaningful economic,

social and political reforms. Whatever short run benefits there might be for Cold War strategy, in the long run the United States would likely pay a heavy price.

In his arguments against the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution in 1964, Gruening added another important reason. He questioned whether the Congress should confer upon the President of the United States the decisive power to decide whether conditions warranted the sending of American armed forces into war zones. Gruening doubted whether the United States had important vital interests in Vietnam that justified the sacrifice of American lives and treasure. Fundamental to his brief was his conviction that the South Vietnam regime was not worthy of American support. With the escalation of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam, Gruening's criticisms of the Johnson and Nixon policies became increasingly trenchant. Author Robert Johnson states that by 1972, Gruening was comparing American involvement with Hitler's aggressions. "The only difference, he claimed, was that 'we do it in the name of liberation,' thereby 'adding hypocrisy to our sins.'"

In 1968, at age 81, Gruening sought reelection to his Senate seat. Although he displayed incredible energy, he went down to defeat in the primary. But the indomitable political warrior would not accept defeat lightly. He mounted a fruitless write-in campaign against both Republican and Democratic opponents before bringing his career to an end. In retirement, he took special delight in observing Richard Nixon's political demise. But his greatest satisfaction must have come from his feeling of vindication in dissenting on important questions affecting his country's national life. When Ernest Gruening died in 1974, American forces had withdrawn from the tragic war in Vietnam. Robert Johnson has given us a vivid portrait of an American whose career as journalist, editor, and politician merits careful public attention.

Walter LaFeber, *Michael Jordan and the New Global Capitalism* (New York, W.W. Norton, 1999).

David R. McMahon*

Conventional wisdom suggests a new era began with the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. The contest between American capitalism and Soviet communism, a battle that raged for much of the century, especially during the cold war, 1947-1991, ended in the United States' favor. In a new book, "Michael Jordan and the New Global Capitalism," Walter LaFeber argues a new era had already begun in the 1970s with the development of new technologies, especially new media, that collectively created a new form of global capitalism as exemplified by transnational corporations like Nike that differed from the multinationals of an earlier era. American popular culture, a threat to Canada and Europe for much of the century, swiftly conquered the world as American transnationals took advantage of new technologies and sold America's image abroad. In short, the "swooshifying" of the world showed that America adapted to the new economic order while the Soviet Union did not.

LaFeber's book is notable for more than its contribution to historical periodization. This slim volume challenges three deep-seated biases of the historical profession. The first is the profession's deemphasis of foreign affairs in current historical writing and in the history curriculum of colleges and universities generally; the second is the long-standing tradition of not giving serious, scholarly attention to sports; the third is the profession's insistence on talking amongst itself without reaching out to other disciplines and larger audiences. LaFeber's book boldly shows how a noted scholar can reach beyond the confines of a discipline to tell a story of interest to everyone, especially those with an interest in the issues and problems of global trade. In his book, LaFeber is adamant that the exercise of American influence and power is more fascinating and important today than in the past, and we must study it carefully if we are to understand the hidden dangers of our economic success in this new age. Most strikingly, he draws our attention to the growing power of transnationals by writing a mini-biography of one of

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the world's most recognizable human beings, Michael Jordan. By so doing he shows how sports has become the common culture of the world today.

Two storylines dominate the writing of this book; the author alternates each to illuminate the major problem: the selling of the American way of life across the globe and the coming cultural backlash. The most important part of the story is the spread of transnationals and technologies across the globe under American domination since the 1970s. He tells this story by focusing on the rise of Michael Jordan, the world's greatest basketball player and a world-wide celebrity. The story of Jordan is of a man perfectly matched with his times. Jordan achieved greatness and earned championships for the Chicago Bulls at a time when communication technology and transnational corporations made it possible to send his image across the globe. This rising tide lifted many boats, especially the new entrepreneurs like Phil Knight of Nike and the now-famous media moguls Ted Turner and Rupert Murdoch. David Stern, the commissioner of the National Basketball Association (NBA), is also a key player. He lead a moribund league out of the doldrums and into a fantastically profitable era of sports promotion. Big-time advertising and the new media all came together to make basketball, and Michael Jordan, a global phenomenon. Basketball, symbolic of the American way of life, represented the power of America's transnationals and the seductiveness of American popular culture abroad.

According to LaFeber, the good old days of the cold war pitted two rival ideologies, capitalism and communism, against each other. In the new era the struggle is between capital and culture. LaFeber suggests capital will win but at a high cost for the United States. In so successfully permeating other cultures through the means of global capitalism, America has undermined global stability. A backlash against American culture is growing that could signal a century of conflict as bloody as the one we left behind.

LaFeber exposes the dark side of this new economic era by revealing how other nations have responded negatively to America's growing cultural influence. He also shows how the new global capitalism entails risk for those who practice it. LaFeber explains the "Faustian bargain." Those same corporations and individuals who profit handsomely from the new global media can just as easily be destroyed by it. Michael Jordan's first departure from basketball came as the media closed

in around him to scrutinize his personal life—telling the world about his apparent gambling addiction and his father's tragic death. For Phil Knight and Nike, stories about Asian labor problems and urban violence associated with expensive Nike shoes, damaged the company's credibility and hurt sales. Both Jordan's and Knight's setback at the hands of the new media made them poster boys of the corrupting influence of American popular culture and the new global capitalism.

Overall, LaFeber tells an interesting story. The book confirms that an old dog can learn new tricks. LaFeber's use of sports to tell the recent history of transnationals updates his list of books on the topic of American imperialism by adding to them a study of cultural imperialism. LaFeber began his career under the tutelage of William A. Williams, the great critic of American empire. In the years since the early 1960s when he published his first book, LaFeber has become one of the most prolific and influential of the radical revisionists. While his new book is destined to find its way onto the shelves of many serious readers (and into many classrooms), his hostility to capitalism and lack of credible advice will leave some readers unsatisfied. I am not convinced that the growing popularity of basketball is simply a sign of American hegemony.

LaFeber's discussion of labor abuses committed by transnationals like Nike is worthwhile, but others might cite the democratizing influences of American capitalism as well. Afterall, the United States has given birth to the major reform movements of our day, from civil rights and feminism to the environmental movement. One might read this book as another contribution to the long-standing debate over American exceptionalism. LaFeber does not deal with the problem explicitly, but by raising the question of American exceptionalism we can place his work in its proper context. He agrees with most other scholars that in recent years America has influenced the cultures of other nations more than the cultures of those nations have influenced our own. Perhaps not every cultural change in foreign lands signal a victory for greedy American businessmen. American values and American sports are attractive for reasons other than the fact we sell them well. While there is much to complain about in American popular culture, something about the American system seems to be working. Perhaps it is because more than any other nation we have come to terms with capitalism. As the political parties of other Western nations come to resem-

ble our two-party system's acceptance of capitalism, that point becomes evident.

Shortly after the fall of communism, Pope John Paul II advised the nations of eastern Europe to turn toward capitalism if it meant an economic system placed in the service of mankind, but not if it meant a system that held the interests of capital above all others, resulted in alienation and consumerism, and denied individuals their right to become a whole person. Clearly, contemporary economics is made of "defective machinery," as LaFeber's litany of abuses committed by transnationals against Asian wage laborers suggests. But where do we go from here? How will we make the machinery more effective and less pernicious, thus ensuring an ever-improving quality of life for more of the world's peoples?