

History, Geography & Area Studies

CC 55-1807

DS557

CIP

Adas, Michael. **Everyman in Vietnam: a soldier's journey into the quagmire**, by Michael Adas and Joseph J. Gilch. Oxford, 2017. 264p bibl index ISBN 9780190455873 pbk, \$24.95; ISBN 9780190647605 ebook, contact publisher for price

In her back-cover endorsement for this book, the late and eminent historian of the war in Vietnam Marilyn Young calls it “a perfect vehicle for teaching the current generation ... what Vietnam was all about.” This reviewer can do no better. With the format masterfully used by David Maraniss for *They Marched into Sunlight* (2003), Adas and Gilch (both, history, Rutgers Univ. New Brunswick) develop parallel narratives of the post-WW II years: postcolonial battle lines were forming in Vietnam, as well as the sociopolitical culture of small-town middle-class New Jersey. Both would bring the book's central character, Jimmy Gilch, author Gilch's nephew, to the threshold of the military draft. From there, the venue shifts to Vietnam. The authors use Jimmy's letters home as primary documents for a ground-level account of infantry combat operations around Cu Chi. While retaining the intimacy of Jimmy's personal narrative, they keep it contextualized in the political and strategic maneuvers coming from Washington, Hanoi, and Saigon. The authenticity of Jimmy's experience as captured by Adas and Gilch surpasses anything this reviewer has seen—a credible piece of ethnography, it is. The history of the war itself is solid, if less densely documented. With maps, photographs, and excellent writing, this is the book to read. **Summing Up: ★★★★★** Essential. Undergraduates through public intellectuals.—*J. Lembcke, College of the Holy Cross*

55-1808

DF591

CIP

Kaldellis, Anthony. **Streams of gold, rivers of blood: the rise and fall of Byzantium, 955 A.D. to the First Crusade**. Oxford, 2017. 440p bibl index ISBN 9780190253226 cloth, \$39.95; ISBN 9780190253240 ebook, contact publisher for price

This narrative history of the Byzantine Empire (955–1081 CE) will appeal to a very wide academic audience. Undergraduate history students will find extremely useful its summary of the (primarily political/military) personalities, people, and events in what the author cogently argues is a transformative period of Byzantine history. Medievalists of western European history will appreciate the presentation of a context for understanding the interactions of Romania's western imperial outposts with Lombards, Sicilian Arabs, and Normans. Byzantists will discover embedded in the narrative a convincing revisionist view of the long-held (and tendentious) assertion that an Anatolian aristocratic class “feudalized” the Byzantine state (and impoverished small landholders), as well as a critique of the notion that “internal rot” preceded the disaster at Manzikert. Military historians will enjoy the refreshing (and long overdue) view of the First Crusade from an Eastern, rather than Western, perspective. If statements are often qualified, if some explanations seem open-ended, both attest to the author's scrupulous honesty in discussing the primary sources. A glossary of technical terms and offices, maps, genealogies, and a brief listing of the important sources round out this very useful and readable book. **Summing Up: ★★★★★** Essential. Upper-division undergraduates and above.—*R. T. Ingoglia, Saint Thomas Aquinas College*

55-1809

GN406

CIP

Miller, Peter N. **History and its objects: antiquarianism and material culture since 1500**. Cornell, 2017. 300p bibl index ISBN 9780801453700 cloth, \$39.95; ISBN 9781501708237 ebook, contact publisher for price

In this exploration of paths taken for collecting and using artifacts, Miller (Bard Graduate Center) examined Renaissance antiquarianism, the University of Göttingen's historical and archaeological curriculums from the late 18th century, and, finally, the development of local historical societies that had spawned the cultural-history museum movement in early- to mid-19th-century Germany. When, in the second half of the 19th century, history became a discipline in the German academy, the professoriate preferred research materials from the library with its texts, rather than the museum with its artifacts. That textual preference held in Western universities' history programs throughout the 20th century. Only in that century's last several decades have some US historians—often from the fields of art history or industrial archaeology—focused significantly on artifacts, although texts also existed. As suggested by the earlier museum movement, the new cultural historians have used objects as documents to provide evidence concerning a number of social and aesthetic dimensions—such as taste, fashion, customs, and work practices—beyond those revealed by texts. Miller brings to the surface a “submerged history” of things—a context useful to historiographers, anthropologists, and archaeologists. **Summing Up: ★★** Recommended. Graduate students/faculty/professionals.—*J. L. Cooper, DePauw University*

55-1810

HQ1154

CIP

Olcott, Jocelyn. **International Women's Year: the greatest consciousness-raising event in history**. Oxford, 2017. 334p bibl index ISBN 9780195327687 cloth, \$34.95; ISBN 9780199716647 ebook, contact publisher for price

This essential book, meticulously researched and elegantly written, captures a key historical moment in the development of transnational feminism. Olcott (Duke) recounts the politics that led to the creation of the 1975 “International Women's Year” in a way that reclaims the significance of the now-vanished “Second World” of the Cold War era. This “Eastern bloc” claimed for itself a special role in advocating more than merely civic and political rights, while “Western” voices found the association with socialism threatening, mobilized actors from the developing world, and managed the first conference in Mexico City in a structure designed to encourage contacts and debates that crossed not only national but class borders. Undoing the dominant narrative of this UN event as a “failure,” Olcott shows the continuation of such conferences up to Beijing to be a crucial success constructed in and through this first event. By following the money and exploring contestation as well as celebration, the study illuminates the complexity of NGO-ization for feminist movements. Necessary for every serious research library, but great reading for any student of transnational history, feminism, or non-governmental organizations. **Summing Up: ★★★★★** Essential. Upper-division undergraduates and above.—*M. M. Ferree, University of Wisconsin-Madison*

Africa

CC 55-1811

DT1949

MARC

Adebajo, Adekeye. **Thabo Mbeki**. Ohio University, 2017. 187p index ISBN 9780821422748 cloth, \$14.95; ISBN 9780821446058 ebook, contact publisher for price

Adebajo (Univ. of Johannesburg) argues that Thabo Mbeki, South African president (1999–2008) and Nelson Mandela's chief policy maker, was enigmatic but principled and influential, the most significant African leader of his day. The author's readable style summarizes the contours of Mbeki's life from his childhood with activist parents to student defiance of apartheid, then exile to Britain and across Africa, where Oliver Tambo

groomed him for leadership. With the shift in global power and the negotiated end of apartheid, Mbeki abandoned Marxism for conservative economic policies, aiming to build a black middle class. Adebajo pulls no punches explaining Mbeki's failures: authoritarianism, errors on AIDS, inability to erode substantially apartheid's economic inequality. Yet he measures this astutely with successes: helping defeat apartheid, macroeconomic stability, social protections, pan-African partnerships. Adebajo, a South African-based Nigerian foreign policy specialist, crafts new angles and emphasizes more than other biographers Mbeki's Nigerian stay and partnerships with that country. Some may read this as overdrawn, while there is much reliance on earlier biographies and "confidential correspondence," but the book succeeds as a balanced, easy-to-read, yet insightful biography. Like other titles in the "Ohio Short Histories of Africa" series, students will benefit from the book's succinctness, though researchers will also turn to more detailed works.

Summing Up: ★★ Recommended. All public and academic levels/libraries.—*P. C. Limb, Michigan State University*

55-1812 DT448 MARC
Markle, Seth M. **A motorcycle on Hell Run: Tanzania, black power, and the uncertain future of pan-Africanism, 1964–1974.** Michigan State, 2017. 265p bibl index ISBN 9781611862522 pbk, \$39.95; ISBN 9781609175344 ebook, \$31.95

The title suggests an unusual book, linking the Tanzanian liberation and nation-building struggle to Marxism, US black power, and the role of the African American and Afro-Caribbean diasporas in early independent Africa. President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania is a key protagonist. So are the likes of Abdulrahman Mohamed Babu of Zanzibar; President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana; Stokely Carmichael, Malcolm X, and Bill Sutherland of the US; Walter Rodney of Guyana; and C. L. R. James of Trinidad. But for a book on pan-Africanism and its role in the African independence struggle, it is curious that George Padmore's name nowhere appears. Likewise, for a book ostensibly about Tanzania's founding years and its relations with the African American diaspora, Oscar Kambona, an influential founder and early liberation struggler, is omitted. Instead, there are chapters about "the seeds of Solidarity" (Malcolm X and his disagreements with Nyerere about Nkrumah); relations between Tanzania and the US Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC); Rodney and higher education in Tanzania; and African publishing (with but one mention of *Transition Magazine*). **Summing Up:** ★★ Recommended. Graduate students/faculty.—*R. I. Rotberg, Harvard University*

55-1813 GN658 MARC
Oba, Gufu. **Herder warfare in East Africa: a social and spatial history.** White Horse Press, 2017. 357p bibl index ISBN 9781874267966 cloth, \$95.00

In an excellent companion to his *Nomads in the Shadows of Empire* (2013), Oba (international environment and development studies, Norwegian Univ. of Life Sciences) examines the confluence of environmental, political, and cultural factors contributing to seven centuries of warfare among pastoralist societies in East Africa. Giving special attention to the origins of the Oromo people's hegemony, followed by their 19th-century economic and political collapse and the enslavement of a large portion of their population by Darood Somali, Oba considers the ecology of warfare through the effects of drought, disease, famine, and demographic decline in combination with the roles played by cultural and political institutions. In addition to voluminous historical sources, including both original documents and secondary interpretations, the author relies on interviews he conducted between 2008 and 2014 with many descendants of participants in military conflicts. The book is richly illustrated with maps and other material,

which Oba uses to explain convincingly that herder wars were not merely "ragged frontal charges" but were well-coordinated, ritualized, and fought by trained and experienced combatants. He also presents valuable evidence for considering contemporary identity politics by demonstrating how the processes of clientage, absorption, intermarriage, and migration and adaptation to new environments have affected ethnic affiliations and distributions. **Summing Up:** ★★ Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and above.—*B. Tavakolian, Denison University*

Ancient History

55-1814 DR431 CIP
The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia: from the end of late antiquity until the coming of the Turks, ed. by Philipp Niewöhner. Oxford, 2017. 464p bibl indexes ISBN 9780190610463 cloth, \$125.00; ISBN 9780190610470 ebook, contact publisher for price

The editor's intent to bring together in one place the archaeological evidence for the Byzantine Empire pre-Battle of Manzikert was a good one. And in some ways, Niewöhner has succeeded. The 38 chapters summarize the evidence from more than 20 Anatolian sites from an international panel of scholars who actually worked on those sites. Niewöhner's introduction to the topic could have made it clearer what time period was being covered. The editor has not provided a concluding chapter summarizing what all this tells readers. He has also neglected to provide an index, a quite serious flaw. If one wants to know how often, for example, Justinian shows up in the text and in what context, one cannot do that. The same is true if a reader wants to know at which sites a particular Turkish name might appear. This diminishes the book's value quite a bit. The bibliography is extensive, as one would expect from such a large panel of authors, and the illustrations are of good quality. **Summing Up:** ★★ Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates and up.—*D. A. Slane, University of Maryland University College*

55-1815 NB130 CIP
Early Cycladic sculpture in context, ed. by Marisa Marthari, Colin Renfrew, and Michael J. Boyd. Oxbow Books, 2017. 508p bibl index ISBN 9781785701955 cloth, \$59.99; ISBN 9781785701986 ebook, contact publisher for price

Marble figurines from the Early Bronze Age Cyclades (c. 3000–2000 BCE) have long been prized for their aesthetic qualities and, to a lesser extent, interrogated as to their meaning. Their minimalist rendition of the human form in white island marble presaged and influenced modernism. Picasso and Brâncuși were among the admirers of their abstract simplicity (although the figurines were, in fact, once painted). Due to the ravenous appetite of collectors, hundreds were dug up in the late 19th and 20th centuries without regard for their provenience, a circumstance spawning forgeries as well. The 35 papers in this volume represent the most complete collection of scholarship to date addressing early Cycladic sculpture recovered from controlled archaeological excavations. Thirty leading scholars trace the scholarship on, as well as the varieties of, figurines themselves, from Neolithic precursors in the fourth millennium BCE through their residual survival in later settings. In between, context-based studies treat the materials from settlements, cemeteries, and sanctuaries, respectively, contributing considerably to the interpretation of their significance. The volume concludes with technical analyses. Copious documentation includes 471 black-and-white illustrations and 16 color plates. **Summing Up:** ★★★ Highly recommended. Research libraries, advanced undergraduates through faculty and professionals.—*B. A. Ault, University at Buffalo, SUNY*

Reproduced with permission of copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.