

The primary source texts and images could have supported and enhanced the main text, instead they awkwardly hang on. Despite these minor limitations, Butler's *New World Faiths* should be imminently useful in the classroom, as well as an easily digestible read. Butler accomplishes both an accessible general synthesis and an argumentative narrative—a difficult feat.

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Christof Mauch and Thomas Zeller. *Rivers in History: Perspectives on Waterways in Europe and North America*. (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008. Pp. ix, 229, illustrations, notes, index. Cloth, \$60.00; Paper, \$27.95.)

Landlocked though it may be, Pennsylvania encompasses a remarkable forty-five thousand miles of streams and rivers. Any historian of the mid-Atlantic knows well the significant influence these waterways have had on every period of this region's past. From Washington crossing the Delaware to Fulton's earliest hopes for the steamboat, the Commonwealth boasts its share of famous river stories. But beyond the icons, there are also important stories to tell about how Pennsylvania rivers have shaped settlement, mediated cultural conflict, forged economies, and nurtured ties to the Atlantic World. These stories figure in important state and regional histories, but outside coffee-table glossies, rarely do the rivers themselves play leading roles.

*Pennsylvania History* readers who wish to fill this gap will find an instructive template for a new river history in Christof Mauch and Thomas Zeller's edited collection, *Rivers in History: Perspectives on Waterways in Europe and North America*. The editors' goal is to reposition rivers as dynamic entities, not just backdrops, within historical studies. Rivers, they argue, are significant indices of the cultural forces—such as fur trading in the American west or mountain forestry throughout the world—that alter waterways over time. Purposeful efforts to control rivers receive special attention throughout the volume, especially where the work of hydrologists demonstrates the determination of emerging nation states to link the social meaning of rivers and water quality to political agendas. It will come as no surprise that echoes of James C. Scott's *Seeing Like a State* ring throughout.

#### BOOK REVIEWS

Mauch and Zeller position their volume within a historiography that, as they see it, has been hitherto dominated by either a concern with the politics of water access or a lament for the ecological demise of the pre-industrial river. They see rivers as live agents in a complicated cultural system of humans, water, and technology wherein state power is neither as hegemonic nor as nasty as others have argued. And that system, Mauch and Zeller remind us, is not uniquely American. They offer their collection as a corrective to the disproportional attention granted American rivers by historians. *Rivers in History* offers a comparative history of European and North American waterways toward demonstrating how “national identities have shaped perceptions and designs of rivers in different regions and countries” (7).

That said, the burden of comparison lies largely with the reader as most of the essays in this collection focus on a single river or region. There are exceptions. Dorothy Zeisler-Vralsted, for example, explores how similar hydrological goals motivated American and Soviet planners during the 1930s. Her comparison of the Moscow-Volga Canal and the Upper Mississippi River lock and dam system reveals a common “high-modernist” impulse to deploy natural resources in what have since proven to be environmentally destructive nationalist projects. Charles E. Closmann compares governmental responses to the impact of rapid industrialization on Britain’s Yorkshire River and Germany’s Ruhr since 1850 and finds that, to be effective, water management policy must respond quickly to environmental and economic flux. David Blackbourn’s nicely-crafted essay, although primarily concerned with modern Germany, charts new territory for river historians and lays out a broad model for equating the remaking of rivers with the refashioning of national memory over time. His essay will interest Pennsylvania historians curious about the ideological meanings German immigrants may have associated with rivers on this side of the Atlantic.

Elsewhere the editors have grouped essays that, though not individually comparative, ask similar questions of disparate riverscapes. From Isabelle Backouche, we learn that between 1750 and 1850, an intellectual and economic shift away from urban planning and toward nation building effectively alienated Parisians from the Seine, which had previously defined life in their city. Timothy M. Collins, Edward K. Muller, and Joel A. Tarr identify a similar transformation in Pittsburgh where, beginning in the 1850s, industrialization denatured rivers and encouraged a reconceptualization of the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio as infrastructural components of one massive industrial complex. Unlike the Seine, however, Pittsburgh’s rivers have since been reintegrated into the post-industrial urban landscape

as sites of environmentally-responsible economic development. This note of optimism about the future of degraded rivers continues in Thomas Lekan's study of the Rhine, where post-World War II German scientists developed rational responses to water pollution earlier than typically recognized.

The collection concludes with two essays concerning rivers and tourism. Ute Hasenöhrle explains how post-World War II German conservationists struggled against hydroelectric power companies whose dams and reservoirs satisfied tourists' visual expectations of Romantic pre-Alpine gorges. Steven Hoelschers describes how Gilded Age photography, particularly the work of Henry Hamilton Bennett, effectively cleansed Wisconsin's working rivers of ethnic, environmental, and class tensions that might otherwise deter white Victorian tourists. These essays, though insightful, are too narrowly focused to encourage easy comparison. What's more, Hoelschers' skillful demonstration of the power exerted by ordinary people on the cultural meaning of rivers highlights the absence of this observation elsewhere in the volume. Jacky Girel's exacting description of how nineteenth-century French and Italian engineers converted Isere River valley wetlands into habitable communities, for example, leaves us wondering about the responses of people whose homes were destroyed in the process. Similarly, this volume would have benefited from some discussion of the ways that rivers have shaped race and class identities over time.

Although *Rivers in History* may fall short in this regard, its editors have done well to select an array of essays that remind us just how long rivers and humans have been shaping and reshaping one another. In this light, we must wonder if there is such a thing as a "natural" river. Can rivers, like historic buildings, really be restored to some purer, more authentic version of themselves? Within these questions lies a path toward a new comparative river history that promises special rewards for devotees of Pennsylvania's rich riparian past.

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Mary Niall Mitchell. *Raising Freedom's Child: Black Children and Visions of the Future After Slavery*. (New York: New York University Press, 2008. Pp xii, 324, illustrations, notes, index. Cloth, \$49.00.)

Mary Niall Mitchell has produced a book that is nuanced and yet simple in its argument. In the years immediately before and after the Civil War, all the