

lengthier essays on each building, footnotes for the essays, and even more comparison and synthesis. Still, as it is, this volume makes a distinct contribution to our understanding and appreciation of fifty significant houses of worship in Philadelphia and their role in the history and architecture of the city.

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The Dominion of War: Empire and Liberty in North America, 1500–2000. By FRED ANDERSON and ANDREW CAYTON. (New York: Viking, 2005. xxiv, 520p. Illustrations, notes, index. \$27.95.)

The Dominion of War is a timely and provocative work that reinterprets the course of American history through the lenses of war and empire and their uncertain relationship with Americans' changing notions of freedom. In this articulate and thoughtful book, historians Fred Anderson and Andrew Cayton set out to remedy the myth of American exceptionalism by placing the quest for empire and war's unintended consequences at the heart of American history. This is not the tale of a peace-loving people who have made war reluctantly, only when it is "forced upon them by those who would destroy their freedom" (p. xiii). It is, rather, the story of a people and nation in which war, imperial aspirations, expansion, and their often-uneasy connection with freedom have always been central to the "grand narrative" (p. xii).

By presenting imperialism as the central theme of American history, Anderson and Cayton ask the reader to step away from the comfortable and well-worn morality tales at the heart of so many versions of that history. They define empire building as the "progressive extension of a polity's, or a people's, *dominion* over the lands or lives of others, as a means of imposing what the builders of empires understand as order and peace on dangerous or unstable peripheral regions" (p. xv). Thus, American history emerges as the story of an imperial republic and its quest for political and economic sway. It is the story of Americans' relationship with power—its use and extension—and their quest to expand the republic's dominion. It is also the story of challenges, losses, and reconsiderations of American power and its nature.

There is much to recommend about *The Dominion of War*, from the breadth and depth of its research, to the clarity, soundness, and persuasiveness of its argument. For many readers its chief virtue will be its narrative structure centered on the lives of Samuel de Champlain, William Penn, George Washington, Andrew Jackson, Antonio López de Santa Anna, Ulysses S. Grant, Douglas MacArthur, and Colin Powell. Their stories drive and humanize the narrative while casting light on the tensions, ambiguities, opportunities, limitations, and challenges of their respective ages. However, embedded within the narrative is a cautionary tale

on the unintended consequences of even the most catastrophically successful of wars. Britain's triumph over France and Spain in 1763 unwittingly laid the groundwork for a revolution that would end the first British empire while laying the groundwork for an American empire.

Although war is at the heart of this book, it is not military history in the traditional sense of battles and campaigns. For the authors, wars have been opportunities for national debates on the nature and expression of the republic's ideals. Wars, accordingly, "have furnished crucial occasions for Americans to debate who they are and to express what they hope their nation represents" (p. xxiv). *The Dominion of War* is a most important book. It brings war and empire to center stage, highlighting their role in expressing the will of the United States, in shaping the nation and its people, and importantly exposing the limitations and unintended consequences of American power. It deserves to be read.

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