

marvelous piece of scholarship, but it is a moving and highly readable account of issues that continue to shape our world today.

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Fanny Kemble: A Performed Life. By DEIRDRE DAVID. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007. xix, 350 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95.)

This very lively and engaging volume is a wonderful introduction into the world of one of the nineteenth century's most celebrated theatrical performers. From Fanny Kemble's debut at Covent Garden in 1829, where she was an instant sensation, until her death in 1893, by which time she was a beloved friend of Henry James, she became an acclaimed actress and author on both sides of the Atlantic.

David begins her chronicle by promising to pay "tribute to that bright abundance" of Kemble's "vivid occupation of the moment," and the book delivers on these grounds (xix). David takes her cue from Henry James, who suggested that Kemble was "dramatic long after she ceased to be theatrical," and this biographical portrait offers a bounty of material on Kemble's theatricality (287).

As David's subtitle indicates, she seeks to highlight Kemble's life as a kind of performance art. At times, her interpretation stretches this idea to its limit, such as when she notes that, "From this moment onward, a time that coincides with the beginning of her married life, she begins even more consciously to assume attitudes of her own making, to wear masks, and to assume a variety of roles" (131). But David, like many Kemble biographers, is ensnared by Kemble's autobiographical writings—she published nearly a dozen volumes of memoirs and several books of poetry in her lifetime. David explains that, "She worked on the memoirs as if she were performing in repertory; in the mornings she sorted the letters and proofread what had been cleared (by herself) for publication, and in the evenings she wrote her interpolated commentaries. Disturbing material was excised by a disciplined, theatrical hand and what remained was fashioned into a rhetorical spectacle of impressive historical and cultural scope" (274). David's interpretive framework, bolstered by footnotes that exhibit an impressive command of the literature, only occasionally seems to overwhelm.

More often, David provides riveting insights into Kemble's character, such as when she suggests that early in Kemble's life she absorbed lessons from her legendary aunt, Sarah Siddons, whose retirement from the stage did not allow her to enjoy a "vent for her private sorrows which enabled her to bear them better" (47). David's rereading of Kemble often puts her subject on the couch, observing that, "symptomatic of a masochistic self-destructiveness she displayed when at

her most unhappy" (177) and "homoerotic attractions never mentioned in the memoirs are given voice in verse" (244). She suggests that later in life Kemble wore her clothes in a rigid rotation "partly as a means of keeping her life in order" (212). David notes that, upon returning to England from America, "Kemble then mingled masculine bravura and feminine tenderness into an androgynous persona" (245).

The Fanny Kemble persona continues to fascinate. As a Kemble biographer myself, I have to confess that I sat down with this book with trepidation but found it was like listening to a new acquaintance describe how an old friend was doing. David's book is a distinctive and welcome addition to the literature and an evocative and perceptive biographical study.

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CATHERINE CLINTON

Carnegie's Model Republic: Triumphant Democracy and the British-American Relationship. By A. S. EISENSTADT. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007. xv, 204 pp. Notes, index. \$59.50.)

Readers of this book will soon realize that its principal figure was not only a world-famous industrialist but also an accomplished writer and political activist. Andrew Carnegie, a self-educated man with only one year of formal schooling, produced an important book, *Triumphant Democracy*. It took four years to write and was described by one critic as a "valuable essay in comparative political sociology" (xv).

In his study, *Carnegie's Model Republic*, A. S. Eisenstadt effectively demonstrates that the canny Scot from Dunfermline believed that knowledge and scholarship were the tools required to advance social welfare. He further notes that Carnegie considered socialism to be a spurious doctrine that appealed to the dregs of society and taught dependence rather than independence.

A citizen of America and Britain, Carnegie became known as the "star-spangled Scotsman" because he carried his perpetual message to the United Kingdom. Carnegie believed—and he proclaimed—that American society was democratic and humane and provided a useful model for Britain. Carnegie's book encouraged each nation to identify its problems and to look to other societies for ways to solve them.

Eisenstadt's work will find a place in international discourse because it emphasizes a better understanding between American and British people. Americans were citizens of their republic, while, to Carnegie, the British were subjects of their monarch and inferiors in the royal aristocratic order. The opening paragraph of *Triumphant Democracy* sums up the theme of his volume of principled instruction: "America already leads the civilized world" (15).