

contradiction was possible. His focus on Dickinson's moderate perspective reveals both the varied currents of thought in the debate that led to the Declaration of Independence and the risks involved in participating. The act of signing was both a measure of patriotic brotherhood and an act of treason punishable by death and confiscation of all property. In this context, the gravity of Jefferson's last sentence becomes clear: it contained the last words signers read before pledging to one another "our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

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*The Marquis: Lafayette Reconsidered.* By LAURA AURICCHIO. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2015. 409 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$30.)

*The Marquis: Lafayette Reconsidered* is a fascinating biography about the prominent transatlantic military leader, the Marquis de Lafayette. Author Laura Auricchio's major purpose is to describe and assess Lafayette's contributions to the American and French Revolutions. She superbly accentuates significant themes of Lafayette's career: he became an ardent proponent of American republican tenets and later an active supporter of constitutional monarchy and liberal sociopolitical and economic reforms for France. Auricchio, who is an eighteenth-century specialist, investigates Lafayette's involvement in the Enlightenment's republic of letters and explains his transatlantic dialogues with other reformers and revolutionaries. Highly attuned to the pertinent issues of the day, the eminent general was also aggressive, shrewd, reasonable, and talkative. Chronologically and topically arranged, this biography contains four sections and eighteen interesting chapters that reveal penetrating insights into his thinking and his revolutionary activities.

Chapters in the book's first part illustrate both the frustrations and successes of his early life. The son of Julie and Gilbert du Motier, Lafayette was born on September 6, 1757, in the family's eighteen-room Chavaniac Castle. The child, who first assumed the name of Gilbert, experienced problems: his father fought in the Seven Years' War and was killed at the Battle of Minden (1759). Lafayette's mother exhibited minimal interest in him, and his grandmother reared him in Paris. After his mother's death in 1770, he became one of the wealthiest aristocrats in France. Lafayette was well educated, developing interests in history and the physical sciences. In 1772, he graduated from the Parisian College du Pléssis. Two years later, his arranged marriage to Adrienne de Noailles made him a member of one of the most influential families in France. He cultivated connections in leading French military, social, and cultural groups.

After Lafayette's marriage, other developments shaped his life. He fought in the Noailles Dragoons and spent time at the court of Versailles, where he cultivated friendships with ranking nobles. Auricchio also suggests that the

Enlightenment ritualism of Freemasonry and Lafayette's friendships in the order explain his desire to be admitted to the Parisian lodge of Saint-Jean de la Candeur in December of 1775. Auricchio also describes his friendships with Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and other American revolutionaries in Paris, maintaining that, by 1776, Lafayette supported the cause of republicanism.

Section two is the book's strongest, for its chapters describe Lafayette's activities during the American Revolutionary War. He used his own monies to come to America in 1777, then served under General George Washington. The two developed an enduring friendship. Lafayette aggressively participated in and was injured during the Battle of Brandywine (1777), then rendered help to American soldiers at Valley Forge (1777–78). Auricchio provides vivid accounts of his involvement in the battles of Monmouth (1778) and Yorktown (1781).

Auricchio also discusses how Lafayette was involved with America after 1781. During negotiations over the Paris Peace Treaty (1783), he persuaded France's foreign minister, the comte de Vergennes, to endorse the proposals of Benjamin Franklin and John Adams. Lafayette thus contributed to the creation and recognition of the new American republic. He stayed active in American cultural life, participating in the American Philosophical Society and the Society of the Cincinnati.

As discussed in sections three and four, this transatlantic revolutionary general was also involved in the French Revolution. He failed during the 1787 Assembly of Notables to convince French nobles to cede their tax-exempt privileges. Auricchio details Lafayette's work with the National Guard and in favor of citizenship rights, natural liberties, and constitutional monarchy. As power shifted from moderate to radical leaders, Lafayette left France, only to be arrested and imprisoned until Napoleon secured his release in 1797.

Last, the author describes Lafayette's career in the nineteenth century. Lafayette continued to correspond with John Adams and other American revolutionaries. He was lauded during his 1824 trip to America, which included a visit to Easton, Pennsylvania, where two years later a college bearing his name was established. In 1830, he supported Louis-Philippe as the new French monarch. Thereafter, he backed republican revolutions in Belgium, Poland, and Latin America until his death in 1834.

*The Marquis* is an imaginative and synthetic biography of a transatlantic revolutionary. Auricchio's themes are lucidly explained and supported with extensive evidence. This incisive biography incorporates primary sources found in American and European archives and libraries. It also has detailed endnotes and a comprehensive bibliography. Along with Louis Gottschalk's and Lloyd Kramer's studies regarding Lafayette, this splendidly written work will be recognized as a classic in the field.