

Only some "laboratories" are suitable to test this image. The census of the United States throughout the period studied did not keep data on ethnicity, religion, etc., and neither do such data exist in England and Scotland. But New Zealand, Australia and particularly Canada received significant numbers of Irish immigrants and kept careful records. After examining the data, Akenson concludes that in all three countries, not only is the stereotype false in almost every particular, the Protestant and Catholic Irish abroad exhibited almost no significant differences when measured by standard tests. He is, therefore, satisfied that, reflexively, there are no causal cultural distinctions of any significance between the two communities either at home or in the diaspora. Where then does this leave Professor Akenson? How does he account for the obvious fact that in Ireland there are two communities defined by religion who, for decades, have faced each other in apprehension and hostility?

He resolves the paradox in two ways. In both Catholic and Protestant communities in Ireland, the institutional mechanisms of endogamy and separation of the youth have maintained the boundaries between the groups. Proscriptions against "mixed" marriages and insistence on denominational, if not clerical, control of education by both sides have segregated Protestants and Catholics into two uncomprehending polarities. This has led to group self-definitions that negate communication and belief systems that are incompatible. It also accounts partly for the "tragedy" of partition in 1922: "a natural consequence of the intersection of constitutional change with the polarized mindsets of the Irish people." It was, in the end, the Freudian notion of the narcissism of small differences which divided the Irish Protestants and Catholics. But let Akenson sum up: "In imaginatively calendaring the ways in which they differed, one from another, in dwelling on details too minor to matter but too delicious to forget, they kept alive by the great god of contrast, their own sharp and treasured self-definitions."

*Small Differences* is a book of compelling logic, methodological clarity and felicitous style. There is more hard-headed analysis here than we are accustomed to seeing in historians in Canada. Unhappily, though, it must be said that for a McGill-Queen's book, it is rather sloppily edited. There is a typo on p. 103, for example, that distorts the meaning of the next three sentences. But that aside, this book is a joy to read.

J.E. Rea  
University of Manitoba

\* \* \*

Abraham Ascher — *The Revolution of 1905: Russia in Disarray*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988. Pp. viii, 412.

Abraham Ascher has written the finest account in English of the major stages of the 1905 Revolution to appear since the 1960s. This is the first of a two-volume study treating the Revolution from 1905 to 1907. The book divided the Revolution judiciously into "the Old Regime under Siege" and "the Assault on Authority and Revolution and Reaction." A strength of the book is the detailed examination of the tsarist autocracy reacting to the Revolution. The reviewer, in contrast to Ascher, agrees with Lenin that the Revolution of 1905 was the "dress rehearsal" for 1917. The second volume is awaited to see if Ascher's thesis that the 1905 Revolution opened up several paths for Russia is convincing. However, the first volume ends on a pessimistic note concerning Tsar Nicholas as a constitutional monarch.

Ascher documents well the case that the tsarist government never seized the opportune moment to conciliate the opposition from 1904 till October 1905. The failure of Witte to accommodate the Liberals, in 1905, is well shown. The reviewer questions the criterion used in extensive reliance on foreign diplomats to illuminate the pages of the Revolution. Accounts of individual peasants or workers are missing. A weak point is the lack of attention to the Russian peasantry. One hopes that the second volume will clarify the role of men, women, young and old peasants in risings in

European Russia. Despite Ascher's conclusion that a coalition of liberals, workers, peasants and national minorities might have toppled the autocracy, the work indicates that divergent goals made such a coalition unlikely. The work is a needed corrective to Soviet accounts stressing Lenin and the Bolsheviks in 1905, but more attention is needed on the Bolsheviks prior to November 1905. The growth of anarchism as a movement during 1905 is not adequately treated by Ascher.

A veritable flood of new works concerning the 1905 Revolution in Russia have appeared in the last three years which were absent in Ascher's bibliography. They include works by Ian Nish and J.N. Westwood on the Russo-Japanese War. *Specific Studies on 1905* include: Theodor Shanin, *Russia 1905-1907: Revolution as a Moment of Truth*, MacMillan, 1986; Henry Reichman, *Railwaymen and Revolution: Russia 1905*, California 1987; Joseph Sanders, *The Moscow Uprising of December 1905*, Garland, 1987; and Robert Edelman, *Proletarian Peasants: the Revolution of 1905 in Russia's Southwest*, Cornell, 1987. Missing is the fine Italian study by Valdi Zilli, *La Rivoluzione del 1905*, 1963.

Gary Hanson  
University of Saskatchewan

\* \* \*

Virginia Berridge and Griffith Edwards — *Opium and the People: Opiate Use in Nineteenth-Century England*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987. Pp. xxx, 370.

According to one well-known prescription, the quickest way out of nineteenth-century Manchester and the desolations of its industrial regime was by bottle — yet, according to this welcome paperback reissue (first published in 1981), the bottle was just as likely to have contained opium as alcohol. In various forms of pills, tinctures and powders, the "black drop" was widely and cheaply available for over-the-counter sales at corner shops, street markets and indeed pubs, where it was available not as a competitor to strong drink but as a reputed cure for hangovers.

Then, paregorics were taken for a wide range of purposes besides their euphoriant relief of social pain. Opiates were recommended for treating innumerable ailments, great and small, by internal or external application, from cholera to flatulence, earache to piles. They were, of course, regularly administered to infants in such legendary concoctions as Godfrey's Cordial, a soothing syrup based on laudanum (opium mixed with water and alcohol) that solved problems of child minding in the working-class home. While taken to relieve aches and fatigue after work, opiates were also taken to fortify men and women before work.

It is this very diversity of usage, together with the problems of evidence (extensive, but patchy), that makes the reconstruction of distinct patterns of opium eating particularly difficult. To meet this problem, the book offers amid its general account a detailed picture of opium use in the Fen country. Here, consumption was as high if not higher than in Manchester, due to the unhealthy marshy terrain, negligible medical assistance and a traditional resort to the indigenous poppy. Instructive here and offered as the probable pattern of popular use elsewhere is the common practice of self-medication and the control of consumption by informal social mechanisms with only minimal medical and legislative intervention.

The book also sets well-known instances of opium taking in literary and middle-class society — its use as a creative stimulant by De Quincey and Coleridge — in a wider context of self-medication and tolerance. Gladstone spiked his coffee with laudanum before addressing the Commons, though his sister Helen was a laudanum addict. A new biography of the Queen's physician indicates problems of addiction in the court, but this account again suggests the efficacy of normative or cultural controls on consumption. The balance of the book is concerned with the decisive changes