

especially when backed by crown and parliament and the cooperation of interested tenants. As they show, its eventual victory in the minds of those who most mattered was almost complete; a cultural shift of enormous significance. By 1650 there was no counter argument against improvement of comparable power, even when the outcome of confidently advanced improvement projects was ambiguous (as in Bowring's fens, where inadequately maintained drainage works caused new problems and failed initially to achieve the major shift to arable cultivation envisaged) or even utter failure (as in Strathspay, where rental income declined, eventually precipitating the wholesale clearance of the small farms established on former shielings).

Custom had formerly provided such an argument, and the contributors have much to say about the initial battles fought over the nature of customary practice; emphasizing how present interests and anxieties shaped narratives of past practice (Whyte); how memory involved selection and suppression (Falvey); how litigation over custom turned on what Hoyle calls "rival attempts to control memory" through the advancement of "rival memories, both self-serving" (p. 63). Some attempted to fix custom in writing – a tactic vividly illustrated in the cases of James Taverner (Hoyle) and Anthony Bradshaw (whose remarkable fifty-four stanza "Comendac[i]on of Duffield Frith", intended to aid the memories of the "poorer sort and ignorant", is printed in full by Falvey). It was a long struggle, and if 'improvement' eventually carried the day decisively, it was never wholly lost. As Whyte puts it, "memories of a former customary landscape . . . became integrated within local narratives of place" (p. 125). By then, however, new landscapes had been created, and with them a mental re-mapping of the entire national territory through which, as Warde argues "the whole land was divided into the improved and the unimproved, a distinction of great significance which has persisted to the present" (p. 142). This collection does much to explain how that came to be.

Finally, congratulations to Ashgate for providing footnotes rather than endnotes: a small but very welcome victory for custom.

Keith Wrightson  
Yale University

JASANOFF, Maya – *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World*. New York: Knopf, 2011. Pp. xvi, 462.

For obvious reasons, scholars and popular writers often turn to the year 1776 when describing the birth of the United States. Less often chronicled in what are too often modern hagiographic accounts is the fate of the roughly sixty thousand colonials who remained Patriots to the British Empire and fanned out across the globe in the years after the Continental Congress broke with the Crown. Maya Jasanoff, the author of the admired *Edge of Empire: Lives, Culture, and Conquest in the East, 1750-1850*, here combines her own archival research with hundreds of monographs, articles, contemporaneous pamphlets, published diaries, and memoirs to explore the myriad reasons why colonists opted for a life of exile rather than remain part of the new American republic.

Such a complicated story requires a large canvas, as Jasanoff demonstrates again and again that no single rationale explains why tens of thousands of Loyalists made the difficult choice they did. Some found the new republican order dangerously egalitarian, while others simply sought liberty and freedom in a different manner. Indeed, the stories told here of the brutality inflicted on many of those who resisted independence reveals that the Revolution often silenced dissenting voices as much as it encouraged free debate. Since colonists routinely identified themselves as both Americans and British subjects, the question of who opted to remain loyal, she observes, generally depended on region, occupation, land, religion, friendships, and family connections.

The exception, and the one group that fits but uneasily into Jasanoff's analytical framework, was those Africans and black Americans enslaved in what, at the end of the Seven Years' War, were fifteen British mainland colonies. Jasanoff frequently writes of "choices," but of the approximately twenty thousand blacks who took up arms during the conflict, only a minority had anything approaching an option. In the slave societies of Georgia and South Carolina, where state assemblies stubbornly voted not to arm slaves—even after the cities of Savannah and Charles Town were occupied by British forces—those slaves who wished to become free rightly saw only one path to liberty. Native Americans, Jasanoff observes, had more of "a choice" (p. 37), although here too not as much of one as white Americans. A Patriot victory was sure to erase the Proclamation Line of 1763, although some Natives had as little faith in policy makers in London as they did in Philadelphia and suspected that the ban on white settlement was temporary regardless of the war's outcome. Yet the Mohawks, Jasanoff argues, saw themselves not as "allies" but as "Loyalists," and their connection with the British—exemplified by men such as William Johnson and Joseph Brant—was old enough to eliminate any discussion in their settlements.

One of the many virtues of this book is that Jasanoff does not merely tell stories of individuals or groups of Loyalists. She examines the impact this diaspora had on imperial policy. The loss of so much real estate forced a reevaluation on Parliament, and the result was what Jasanoff dubs "the Spirit of 1783." In London's view, their empire needed constitutional restructuring along the lines of what had already been done in India and Ireland. That meant reasserting the authority of the crown and its advisors over provincial assemblies. But it also meant governing with a light enough touch to avoid further episodes such as those faced in North America in the 1770s. In Canada, that required privileging the British community over the French, but also to assisting the Mohawks at Grand River or the black Loyalists in Nova Scotia while, ironically, protecting them from angry white Canadians. The new variety of "imperial liberty in contrast to the republican liberty of the United States," Jasanoff insists, helped forge the foundation "of the distinctive liberal order discernible in Canada to this day" (p. 180).

There were limits to this new form of liberty. After Saint Domingue erupted in revolt in 1791, free blacks in the British Caribbean faced constant reminders that their empire trafficked in humans. George Liele, a Georgia-born preacher who had settled in Jamaica, was jailed for spreading the gospel to enslaved Africans. Freed blacks had fled the slaveholding South in search of liberty but ultimately were silenced by William Pitt's increasingly repressive ministry.

Some of the stories that Jasanoff tells, such as the tragic wanderings of the black Loyalists who vacated Manhattan in early 1783, will be familiar to many scholars.

(Interestingly, *Liberty's Exiles* is the third book in as many years to feature John Singleton Copley's *The Death of Major Peirson* on its cover.) But if the lives of Thomas Peters and Harry Washington, an African who escaped Mount Vernon when the British sailed up the Potomac, have been chronicled in recent years, Jasanoff weaves her larger Atlantic tapestry together in a fresh way. Among those who arrived in Sierra Leone was William Augustus Bowles, a Maryland-born white who had married the daughter of a Creek chief but had been imprisoned in Havana for plotting to create a British-Creek alliance in Spanish America. Bowles vanished from Jasanoff's narrative several chapters before, and he returns later still, if only to die after again being jailed in Cuba's Morro Castle.

Early on, Jasanoff suggests that the Loyalists' global dispersal "has never been completely restructured," thanks in part to the fact that so many historical monographs are "framed within national boundaries" (p. 10). Scholars, of course, have been crafting Atlantic studies that dissolve or even ignore state borders for quite some time, and a quick glance at Jasanoff's impressive bibliography reminds us that important historians such as Carol Berkin and Mary Beth Norton have been writing on the exile of Loyalists since the early 1970s. Jasanoff does, however, pull this vast tale together in an elegant and fascinating way, and the many captivating people depicted here—and their often tragic stories—make this readable volume a natural for courses on the Atlantic world.

Douglas R. Egerton  
*Le Moyne College*

KARL, Rebecca E. – *Mao Zedong and China in the Twentieth-Century World: A Concise History*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010. Pp. 216.

This remarkable book accomplishes what few other succinct accounts of major historical figures are able to do. In readable prose that is both accessible to students and engaging for the specialist reader, Rebecca Karl produces a compelling narrative of the political thought and actions of Mao Zedong that is deftly situated within the local and global historical conjunctures of the twentieth century. Attentive to the complexity of the historical and theoretical struggles in which Mao Zedong participated, the book smoothly transitions from accounts of military encounters and strategy, revolutionary Marxist theory, Chinese Communist Party (CCP) power struggles, details of Mao's personal life, and critical insights into the historiography on Mao Zedong and twentieth century Chinese history. The result is an informative work that refuses simplistic or sensationalist understandings of the People's Republic of China; a work that instead insists that the reader take seriously the ideological positions and social goals – and their failures – that animated Mao Zedong.

The book is a welcome addition to existing biographies and intellectual histories of Mao Zedong. First, it is characterized by sustained attention to feminism and women's liberation, alongside world historical developments. Second, even while Mao Zedong occupies centre stage in her narrative and analysis, Karl never insinuates that Mao Zedong orchestrated a revolution on the people of China as per 'great man' approaches to history that locate power in a leader and presume acquiescence by the people. Whether