

generals, *tazo* (malaria) and *hazo* (the dense lowland rainforest). These defences proved very costly to the French colonial army, but lack of transport routes hindered Malgache modernization. When the French invaded in 1895, generals *tazo* and *hazo* did their job, but the conscript army refused to fight and simply melted away. There were massive desertions even as the vulnerable French struggled up the escarpment. Campbell attributes the French success to the “implosion of the Merina Empire” and the presence of Senegalese troops, who were less troubled by malaria.

After the controlled opening of 1861, the Malgache profited from European demand for Malgache products. Autarky had, however, had its effect. It meant that domestic capital formation was limited and there was no possibility of raising foreign loans. Campbell argues that economic growth depended on the export of human capital, which in turn hindered economic growth. The major form of taxation was conscription. Money income depended on import taxes. There was a limited development of currency. Credit was dependent on Indian finance, which was better developed in ports outside the control of the Merina. During the second half of the century, exports increased, but there was little investment in industry or wage labour.

In all this, one theme is missing. Radama encouraged missionaries and eagerly sought education. The result was the creation of a literate class, a written language, and the ability to read Western books. Merina did travel, but there was not the kind of effort to travel in and study Europe that we find in Egypt, Thailand, or Japan. Autarky limited any modernization because the capacity to modernize was financially constrained. Development of capitalist enterprise was also very limited. For example, a portage syndicate using slaves who were paid wages was more efficient than the state at moving commodities into and out of the highlands.

This book would be useful not only to scholars interested in Madagascar, but also to any interested in responses of African and Asian countries to European imperialism and early efforts towards economic modernization.

Martin Klein  
*University of Toronto*

CLARK, Elizabeth A. — *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004. Pp. 325.

During the past several years, historians have published a number of books that attempt to come to grips with the implications of post-structuralism. The tone of these works is distinct from the polemics of earlier decades: theories and approaches that once seemed dangerous now appear to be simply different, the province of other disciplinary specialties, potentially useful if mounted within a properly historical framework. This is not to say that historians have adopted much from post-structuralist theory. To the contrary, as Elizabeth A. Clark argues in her new book, the potential uses of post-structuralist theory for historians remain to a great extent unexplored.

*History, Theory, Text* is a defence of post-structuralism and a survey of its past and potential impact on historiography. The book begins with framing chapters on the rise of modern conceptions of objectivity and relativism in historical scholarship and on the project of Anglo-American philosophy of history. These are followed by several chapters on structuralism and post-structuralism, and a concluding chapter on the uses of such approaches in patristic studies. Though her book examines a very broad field of historiography, philosophy, and literary theory, Clark self-consciously addresses herself to her close colleagues: her principal goal, she says, is to “persuade scholars of Western pre-modernity (and especially those of ancient Christianity) that the texts they study are highly amenable to the types of literary/philosophical/theoretical critique that have excited — and indeed, have now transformed — other humanities disciplines under the rubric of post-structuralism” (p. ix).

According to Clark, theory came particularly late to patristic studies, but for largely circumstantial reasons; she argues that this delay in reception created the false impression that the application of theory in her field might be difficult. Clark explains that in the 1960s and 1970s, while other historians were engaged with the social scientific models that post-structuralism would effectively critique, historians of ancient Christianity still worked principally within the framework of confessional theology. In the 1980s and 1990s, when historians became aware of the challenges of critical theory, scholars of early Christianity were still struggling to confront the challenges of historiography itself. This is nowhere clearer than in her own 1986 collection, *Ascetic Piety and Women's Faith: Essays on Late Ancient Christianity*, which, together with this new book, makes a fascinating historiographical bookend. “What is the present state and probable future of historical theology in the field of patristics?” Clark asks in the earlier volume. “The question can be succinctly answered: less theology, more history” (p. 3).

Clark’s prediction could not have been better formulated: in the following two decades, she writes, “The rapid passage from theological-philological to social-scientific approaches to texts obscured for many practitioners of late ancient Christian studies (myself included) the benefits attending post-structuralist theory” (p. 158). That this would be the case is a striking irony. According to Clark, the tools of anthropology and sociology enlivened studies of late antiquity; at the same time, however, “these social-scientific appropriations obscured the fact that scholars of late ancient Christianity deal not with native informants, nor with masses of data amenable to statistical analysis, but with texts — and texts of a highly literary, rhetorical, and ideological nature” (p. 159). Such artifacts, Clark argues, lend themselves particularly well to the approaches offered by recent literary and critical theory.

Given its framing argument, the composition of *History, Theory, Text* proves surprising: only a very small section of the book directly addresses the implications of post-structuralism for ancient history. Most of the work takes the form of a survey of critical and historical thought organized around themes such as Anglo-American philosophy of history (Popper, Hempel, Danto, Putnam, Rorty); language and structures (Lévi-Strauss, Barthes, Ricoeur, Derrida, Perry Anderson, Pierre Macherey); the territory of the historian (Febvre, Bloch, Braudel, Veyne, Ginzburg, E. P. Thompson,

Althusser, Hobsbawm); narrative and history (Danto, Barthes, White); the new intellectual history (Lovejoy, Collingwood, Koselleck, Foucault, Certeau, Chartier, LaCapra); and texts and contexts (Derrida, Gadamer, Skinner, Pocock, Geertz). In each section, Clark outlines a debate, as, for example, over the relationship between underlying historical structures and narratives of everyday life provoked by the historians of the Annales School. Each chapter focuses on an issue of historiographical significance (though not always within the realm usually considered that of “theory”), and any could be used easily in a graduate or an undergraduate historiography seminar as a source for bibliography and as a structure for discussion.

Ironically, for non-specialists, the most interesting section of this book is the final chapter on new approaches within the historiography of the ancient Christian world, from pioneers such as Peter Brown to recent scholars such as Andrew Jacobs, whose work Clark holds up as a model of “how postcolonial discourse theory can illuminate texts pertaining to situations of power in the Roman Empire” (p. 8). This section could have been substantially expanded. For the non-specialist, it would be useful to know how such arguments have been received within the field, whether they are indeed changing the general character of the historiography, and whether significant counter-arguments have been mustered.

To many readers, Clark’s account of the literature of post-structuralism will be familiar and persuasive, but most compelling are her digressions into the ways in which an understanding of ancient theology may change how we view what is called theory. It is certainly not uncommon to find literary theorists themselves dilating on old theological texts: a new book edited by John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon entitled *Augustine and Postmodernism: Confessions and Circumfession* (Indiana University Press, 2005), for example, includes essays by Jacques Derrida, Geoffrey Bennington, and other theorists, along with Clark herself. Given Clark’s defence of the achievements of the earlier social scientific work in her field, it seems important to know not only what makes the historiography of ancient Christianity now such a fertile field for post-structuralist criticism, but what makes this historiography different from criticism that emerges from within literary studies.

It would also be interesting to know more about earlier theoretical and historical cross-pollinations. It is worth observing that key figures among Clark’s postmoderns such as Paul Ricoeur and Michel de Certeau were themselves deeply immersed in the literature of her field, and it would be helpful to know more about how their specific engagements with patristic theology might or might not be assimilated into the new historiography that Clark promotes. It would be equally interesting to know, for example, what Clark would say about Certeau’s account of his own confrontation with the framework of confessional theology in 1968, or about the later assimilation of a theological thinker such as Emmanuel Levinas into the post-structuralist pantheon.

Daniel Rosenberg  
University of Oregon