

lightenment and Industrial Revolution. Throughout his analysis, current historical thinking on multiple topics is thoughtfully addressed such as the role of Puritanism and the idea of British exceptionalism. Mokyr concludes with a comparison of the conditions found in Western Europe and China. Rejecting the Eurocentric “triumphalist” view of the economic divergence that occurred, the analysis demonstrates how similar economic and technological conditions could lead to widely different outcomes.

While reading *A Culture of Growth*, it quickly becomes apparent why the Nobel committee selected Mokyr for their 2025 Economic Sciences prize. The historical and economic analysis is detailed, comprehensive, and compelling. Few historical works are filled with as many references to the writings and impact of notable intellectuals, scientists, and writers of the period alongside modern scholarly work on evolutionary theory, the economics of culture, and the comparative history of Western Europe and China. Throughout, he thoughtfully advances his arguments while addressing and considering competing historical viewpoints – a process all scholars should emulate. Historians of the Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution should read this work while scholars of early modern Europe will particularly benefit from the discussion of the *Republic of Letters*. More broadly, Mokyr shows the benefits of applying evolutionary theory and the idea of cultural entrepreneurs to explore how cultural traits and beliefs spread amongst populations. *A Culture of Growth* is an important contribution to the fields of both economics and history.

Scott Beltz

Richard Bell. *The American Revolution and the Fate of the World*. New York: Riverhead Books, 2025. Pp 416. Hardcover \$35.00.

University of Maryland Professor Richard Bell argues that the Revolution was not an expression of American exceptionalism but instead addresses the interactions between the Thirteen Colonies and the international world beyond the British Empire by showing that the American Revolution was a global event with worldwide theaters and

repercussions. Organized thematically in fourteen chapters, Bell outlines how the world changed based on the catalyst of the Revolution. Employing both a top-down and bottom-up approach, Bell writes about well-known characters such as King Louis XVI, the last monarch of *Ancien Régime*, Baron von Steuben, as well as the economic policies surrounding the East Indian Tea Company. The bottom-up approach includes perspectives of ordinary people such as Harry Washington, the former slave of George Washington, and William Russell, the unfortunate Boston teacher who spent years as a British prisoner of war. Combining both methods creates a complete picture of the war's global impact.

King Louis XVI supported the United States to spite the British, hoping to weaken their empire's global influence. Bell discusses this partnership in detail, from how the French monarchy offered loans and material support, to how the excessive spending exacerbated France's struggling finances. For Britain and its imperial rivals, the American Revolution was a high stakes game. France may have backed the winning side of the Revolutionary War but ultimately lost the imperial game against Britain. With their funds running low and the wheels of revolution turning, the people of France rebelled against the monarchy, toppling the *Ancien Régime* in 1792.

As part of the discussion of the war's impact on slavery in the Thirteen Colonies, Bell explores the life of Harry Washington. Many enslaved people, including Harry, were loyal to the British crown because leaders such as Lord Dunmore promised anyone freedom who fought for the British Crown. Like many enslaved people, Harry used the chaos of the war to escape bondage when he joined the British army in 1775. Eventually he was exiled to Canada with other loyalists at the end of the war. His fate after 1800, when he was court-martialed, is unknown.

Bell analyzes many primary sources such as the national archives of Britain, the writings of French diplomats, and Spanish and Dutch shipping reports, pamphlets and newspapers. These sources effectively portray the American Revolution as a global conflict with long-lasting and often unforeseen consequences.

This monograph seeks to expand the scope of early American Intellectualism by decentering the story of American indepen-

dence from the ideas of American Exceptionalism. Instead, it shows how the U.S. gained independence largely because of the rivalry between the global powers of the time. Bell also shows that the United States was not only shaped by British influence but a global surge in Enlightenment thought. The country's revolutionary ideas were therefore not original but the result of that melting pot. Historians of all backgrounds looking for a global perspective on the origins of the United States would be well served by reading this book. Non-academics, meanwhile, will appreciate the book's approachable writing and use of idioms.

Jayden Feliciano

Molina, Natalia. *A Place at the Nayarit: How a Mexican Restaurant Nourished a Community*. University of California Press, 2022. Pp. 312. Hardcover \$29.95.

Natalia Molina, Professor of American Studies and Ethnicity at the University of Southern California, examines the people who created a foundational public space and the community dynamics that emerged from sustained social connections rooted there. This work sheds light on everyday life around the Nayarit, a former restaurant on Sunset Boulevard in Echo Park, and argues that marginalized people developed social cohesion and fostered mutual care because Doña Natalia Barraza, the owner and operator from 1951 to 1976, helped recently immigrated Mexican nationals build human capital through employment, settlement support, and introductions to professional networks that enabled them to thrive in their adopted society.

The book employs a mostly thematic structure while tracing change over time in general chronological order. A synopsis of the history of Echo Park establishes the geographic scope of the study before addressing the concept of *placemaking*. The reader follows the growth and spreads of influence that stemmed from the strictly run operation on Sunset Boulevard as former employees of the Nayarit went on to build their own restaurant businesses. Molina argues that these gains contributed to a rise in political power and societal influence that became transnational.