

# NERWHA NEWS

New England Regional World History Association Newsletter

Sep 2020

## David Northrup

David Northrup is a past president of the World History Association, current Vice-President of NERWHA and Emeritus Professor of History at Boston College. David was WHA Pioneer in World History in 2017, WHA Vice-President in 2002-3 and WHA President in 2004-5.

In this issue David talks about his new book, *Africa's Discovery of Europe* published by Oxford University Press (2013).

"I was a tenured full professor at Boston College when I contemplated writing *Africa's Discovery of Europe*. I had published scholarly monographs on pre-colonial Nigeria and the eastern Congo and ventured into world history with a monograph on the global trade in indentured laborers and as a co-author of the college textbook, *The Earth and Its Peoples*. My goals for the new book were twofold. The first was to tell the story of the first four centuries of sub-Saharan Africans relations with Europeans primarily from the African side and as much as possible in the words of individual Africans. I wasn't sure there were enough sources to do that, but I gradually uncovered enough to do what I intended and even to add an illustrated chapter about Africans in Europe between 1750 and 1850 that was not part of the original plan. Using African voices made it clear that Africans were active and willing participants in these cross-cultural encounters. Europeans were not excluded, but emphasizing the African side made it clear that, far from being dominant, Europeans were partners in joint enterprises, quite often junior partners.

"My second goal was to write a book that was not only original and scholarly but also written in a way that would be accessible and appealing to readers with no special background in the topic. Like the first goal this was a tall order. I

—Cont'd on p. 4



David Northrup in Arles, France (2012)

### Book Review: Stefan J. Link's

#### Forging Global Fordism: Nazi Germany, Soviet Russia and the Contest Over the Industrial Order (Princeton University Press, 2020)

Professor of History at Dartmouth College, Stefan J. Link, has taken on the subject of how the Ford Motor Company brought mass-production technology to both Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia during the 1930's and facilitated the transformation of our global economy.

Created by admirers of Henry Ford, the term Fordism was not just a new system of production but a historical shift in the relationship between the economy and society. The term, however, wasn't consistently interpreted: The Soviets sought to emulate the "American organization of production", while American unions of the 1930's used Fordism to describe the "quasi-fascist regime of shop floor oppression." Whatever the true definition, there's no denying that Ford's system of mass

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# The Global Middle Ages

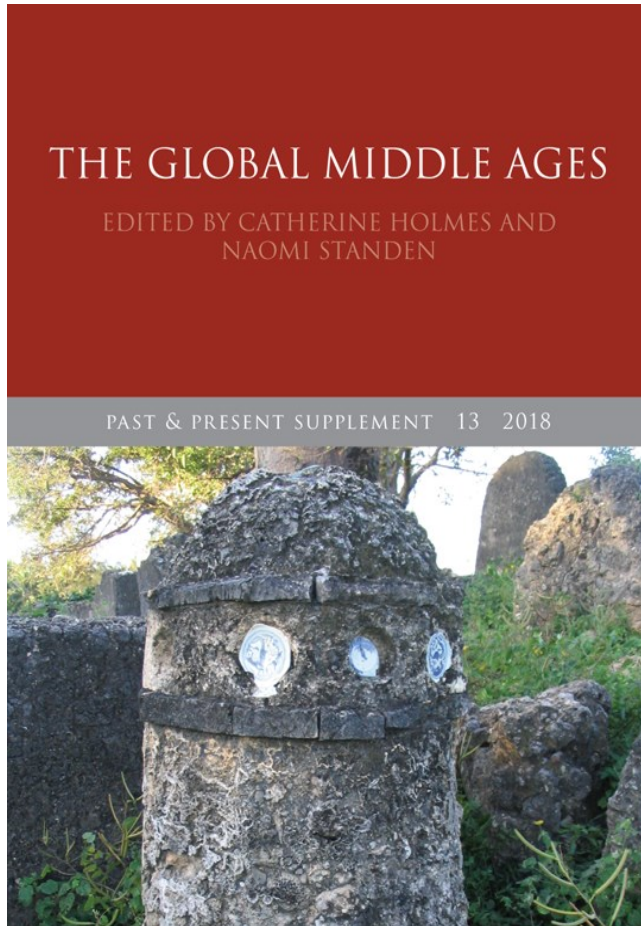
By Alfred Andrea, Professor Emeritus of Medieval History, University of Vermont & Past-President of the World History Association

Most historians who specialize in medieval Europe are ambivalent about the term “the Middle Ages.” While proudly calling themselves “medievalists” (from the Latin *medium aevum*—middle age), they insist that the millennium or more separating late Roman antiquity from the so-called early modern period was not a middle period in any meaningful way. And it certainly was not a valley of darkness between two lofty golden ages.

Even more problematical or worse in the eyes of many medievalists is the term “the Global Middle Ages.” How, they ask, can one apply such a questionable label as Middle Ages, itself the misbegotten product of out-of-date historical thinking, to the rest of the world? What did India’s Gupta Empire (ca. 320-ca. 550) have in common with the roughly contemporaneous Visigothic Kingdom or China’s Tang dynasty (618-907) with the Carolingian dynasty? What possible connection was there between the twelfth-century Toltecs of central Mesoamerica and the Hohenstaufens of central Western Europe, or between Mali’s Epic of Sundiata and the Nibelungenlied? Although historians who promote study of the Global Middle Ages might claim that finally medieval history has been shorn of its Eurocentrism, conceivably their critics could counter that applying an obviously Eurocentric label to non-Western cultures is another example of Western academic imperialism.

Resistance to the Global Middle Ages is reminiscent of similar attacks on world history and its advocates in the 1980s and ’90s, and yet today world history is entrenched in the curricula of most schools, even though it still has its disparagers and apparently is in retreat in some regions of Europe and the USA in the face of assaults by counter-revolutionary Western exceptionalists.

From the beginning, the practitioners of world history have largely come from the ranks of modernists, their argument being that world history began in and around 1492, with the creation of a global *ecumene*, or connected community. The minority of world historians who specialized in medieval studies respectfully disagreed, and since the early years of the current century, they have been increasingly promoting the Global Middle Ages.



In 2018, Catherine Holmes and Naomi Standen co-edited *The Global Middle Ages*, which appeared as an open-access supplement of *Past & Present* and should be read by all world historians, not just medievalists. Also coming out of England is the on-line Bloomsbury Encyclopedia of the Global Middle Ages (2019). Additionally, two peer-reviewed journals are exciting quite a bit of attention. The older, which published its eleventh volume this year, is the Austrian Academy of Sciences’ open-access *Medieval Worlds: Comparative and Interdisciplinary Studies*. Focusing on the period 400-1500, but not rigidly so, its stated mission is “to overcome disciplinary boundaries, regional limits and national research traditions in Medieval Studies” The University of California Press’s

on-line *Journal of Medieval Worlds*, which published its second volume in 2020, focuses primarily on the period 750-1600 with the goal of fostering innovative, multidisciplinary research and approaches to pedagogy “that explore interconnections across regions or build meaningful comparisons across cultures.”

Medievalists from across the world, but primarily from the U.S. and Western Europe, have annually gathered in cohorts of thousands at two international medieval congresses, an early May meeting at Western Michigan University and an early July conference at the University of Leeds in England. The cancelled 55th International Congress on Medieval Studies (2020) at Western Michigan had scheduled two (of its three) plenary addresses on topics relating to the Global Middle Ages. Anticipating it by two years, the 2018 International Medieval Congress at Leeds offered thirty-three panels devoted to the Global Middle Ages. Even more emblematic of the

coming of age of the Global Middle Ages was the 94th annual meeting of the venerable Medieval Academy of America at the University of Pennsylvania in March 2019. Once a bastion of conservative academia, the MAA showed its twenty-first-century consciousness by devoting the entire three-day meeting to “The Global Turn in Medieval Studies.”

Moving from learned publications and academic conferences, the Global Middle Ages are finding a home within several universities. In 2004, the Medieval Studies Program at the University of Texas at Austin introduced collaborative, team-taught, interdisciplinary graduate seminars on “an interconnected medieval world.” In 2016, faculty at the University of Sydney inaugurated a multi-disciplinary group dedicated to a non-Eurocentric Global Middle Ages, and in February 2019, the University of Michigan sponsored a two-day symposium titled “De-centering the Global Middle Ages.” Yes, as this triad suggests, medieval global history still has a long way to go before it is an everyday part of the curricula of schools, colleges, and universities. But that fact does not deter those historians who labor in the vineyard of the medieval past, working to make the Global Middle Ages a fully accepted subset of both world history and medieval studies.

Global medievalists approach world history before 1492 along three pathways. Mindful that students of world history should have a basic grasp of the principles and historical evolution of the major cultural traditions around the globe, these historians have created courses of study that explore the early histories of multiple discrete peoples and polities. In this way, they lay down basic introductions to ways of thought and action that originated in antiquity or the Middle Ages but continued to influence behavior for centuries or millennia thereafter. Such an approach is based upon their response to questions such as: can one understand China in the twenty-first century without first knowing of its foundational philosophies and early history? This cataloging of multiple histories, however, is not world history at its best, and global medievalists have realized that fact. Modes of analysis are necessary to give coherence to history, especially a history as vast and unwieldy as world history. For this reason, global medievalists (and global classicists, who are an even rarer breed) have adopted the dual perspectives of trans-cultural exchange and comparative analysis, both of which enable them to present a coherent vision of the pre-modern world.

Focusing on the vast networks of interchange across and around Afro-Eurasia and the Americas that served as pathways for the transit of peoples, goods, and ideas long before 1492, medieval global historians have greatly enriched our understanding of how trans- and inter-continental exchange

functioned long before the Age of Globalization. But there is a problem with this approach. Although irrefutable evidence exists for Polynesian contact with coastal South America and Norse contact with coastal North America well before the age of the Columbian Exchange, these contacts had little or no long-term impact on the cultures that met ever so briefly (except for the introduction of the American sweet potato into Polynesia). The fact is, concentrating on cross-cultural contacts and exchanges before 1492 forces the global medievalist to look at Afro-Eurasia and the Americas as two isolated “world islands.”

The third method, comparative analysis, offers the best means through which historians of the Global Middle Ages can look at Earth and its peoples holistically, and it is that mode of investigation that most global medievalists have elected to employ.

NERWHA’s Spring 2021 symposium, a digital Zoom affair, will focus on the theme “Holy War in World History,” so let us imagine how a historian studying holy war in the Global Middle Ages might approach the subject. The standard Euro-medieval approach to medieval holy war would be to engage in a comparative analysis of crusades and jihads. Perhaps a more ecumenically minded but still traditional medievalist might add Byzantine wars and address the controversial issue of whether or not Byzantium ever waged holy wars. But that is as far as the Euro-centered medievalist would go. The global medievalist, however, would range so much wider.

The millenarian Dacheng Rebellion of 515, waged to cleanse China of its demon monks and foreigners, could be profitably compared with the millenarian Shepherds’ Crusade of 1320 that sought to rid France and Aragon of corrupt clerics and Jews. Similarly, the eighth-century unsuccessful Jewish rebellion led by Abu Isa al-Isfahani to rid Iran of its Sunni Muslim leaders deserves comparison with the Red Turban Rebellion (1351-68) that successfully drove the Mongol Yuan dynasty out of China. The warrior saints of Christendom, such as George, who is the protective patron of Ethiopia, Lithuania, Greece, Catalonia, England, and myriad other lands, certainly merits comparison with Buddhism’s terrifying protector bodhisattvas, such as Vajrapani (holder of the thunder bolt). The wars of conquest and conversion in the name of Inti, the sun god, that Pachacuti Inca conducted in fifteenth-century South America offer interesting similarities and striking differences with the Baltic Crusades that Germans, Scandinavians, and others carried on in the name of the Virgin Mary from 1147 to about 1525. Examples can be multiplied many times over, but that would be unholy overkill.

David Northrup, Cont'd from p.1

tried to be balanced and to keep a clear focus, but my dead African co-authors kept dragging me into controversial topics I might have avoided on my own. One such topic was interracial marriages, both in Africa and in Europe. Another was African merchants' dominance in the slave trade and the doctoral dissertation written in Latin by an African in 1742 that defended the compatibility of enslavement with Christian theology. A third was the often passionate African embrace of Christianity and Western education. I

let my sources tell their stories, (What else could I do?) and they provided me with a plausible defense against critics who expected the story to be only about European dominance and African victimization. To my delight the book found readers from high school classes in AP history to graduate colloquia and seminars. The largest

audience was in college courses on various subjects. It is unusual for any book to find readers at so many different levels. It is very unusual for a serious book about pre-colonial Africa to go through three editions (so far).

"My professional development as a historian is one line of explanation for such a book, but there are others. How did someone of German and British ancestry come to write about Africa? The briefest answer is that, having managed to get a college diploma, I did something else that my parents had been unable to do: I crossed the Atlantic. I spent two years as a Peace Corps Volunteer teaching in a new secondary school in the rainforest of eastern Nigeria. Being of service to others was a part of my motivation, but curiosity was a larger explanation. Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, was a place that had never been mentioned in my formal education—nor indeed had any other part of Africa, except ancient Egypt. I

was so richly rewarded by the diligence of my students, the friendliness and cultural richness of the rainforest villagers, and what I learned about their history that I ended up devoting my life to spreading the word. And it was Africans' stories that I wanted to tell, stories that deserved to be included in the history books.

"My quest down that path naturally led me to embrace world history as well. While the focus of the history I had been taught in school was exclusively

about Europeans, the emerging field of world history was by nature inclusive and comparative. It intoxicated me. In a globalizing world it provided a roadmap and a structure for telling the story of humanity (and perhaps a bit more). Once I gained familiarity with the history of the second largest

continent (Africa, the homeland of humans), it was natural to explore Africa's connections with Europe, with the American continents, and with the Indian Ocean and Pacific lands."

Besides teaching in Nigeria, Emeritus Professor David Northrup also taught at Tuskegee Institute (1968-70, 1972) and Boston College (1974-2012). Since retiring from the classroom he has written *How English Became the Global Language* (2013) and *Seven Myths of Africa in World History* (2017), contributed chapters on highly diverse subjects to *The Cambridge World History* (Volume 1), *The Cambridge World History of Slavery* (Volume 4), and *The Oxford Illustrated History of the World*, and written essays for *World History Connected*, the *Friends of Nigeria Newsletter*, and the *World History Bulletin*.



David Northrup (Center) Teaching staff photo, Central Annang Secondary School, Nigeria 1966.



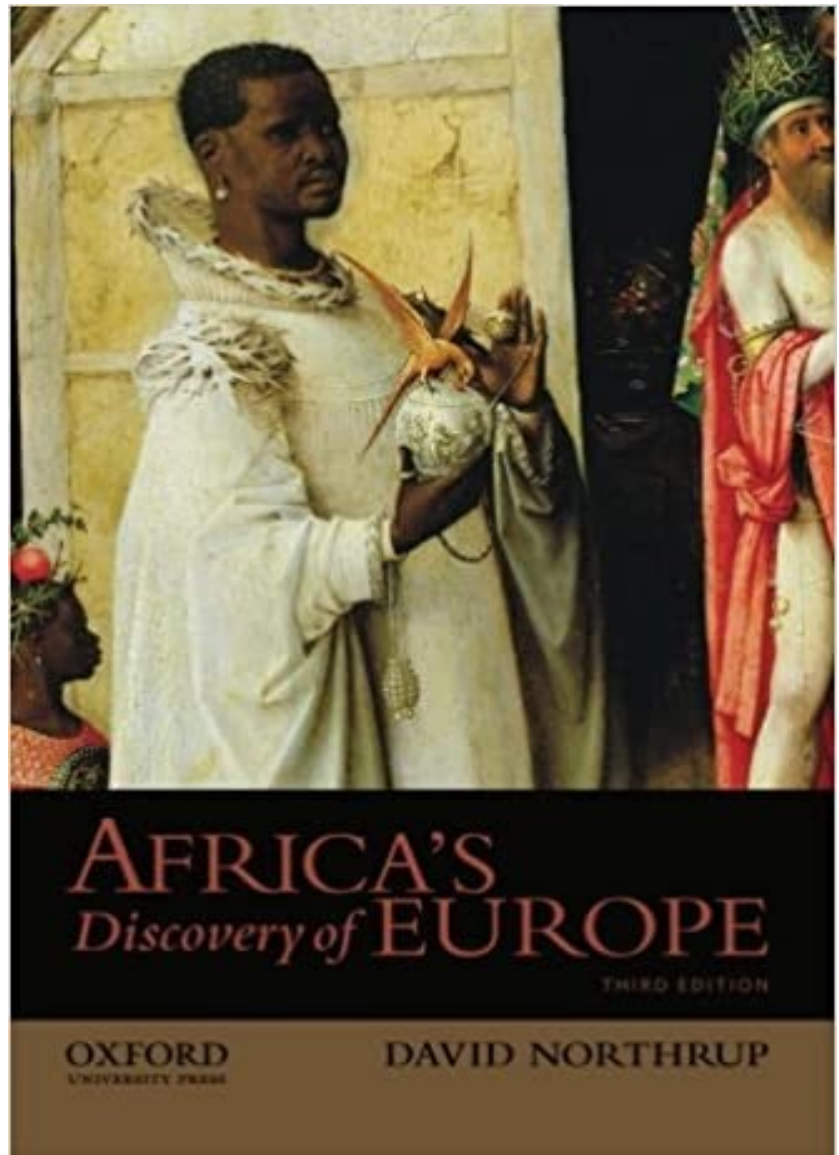


**September 26th Book Discussion:**  
**David Northrup's**  
***Africa's Discovery of Europe***

Recent events have once again exposed the many threads of racism both in the United States and around the world. Unfortunately, ideas about race and the consequences of race thinking and the insidious role of racism on human interactions, cultures, and public policies are central to the history of the past five centuries. The importance of engaging the history of racism needs to be a central component of history education, but to do so we need a transformation in how we approach the study of racism from K-12 to Higher Education. In the hopes of offering opportunities to engage the history of racism, the New England Regional World History Association (NERWHA) is launching a colloquium series to engage educators and all other interested persons.

The first colloquium will be a Zoom video conference on David Northrup's *Africa's Discovery of Europe* and is scheduled for Saturday, September 26 from 1:00 to 2:30 PM. The book is currently in its third edition with Oxford University Press. Registration is free and can be accessed from this link: [NERWHA Book Forum \(Colloquium Series\)](#) The discussion will be moderated by Kerry Vieira, WHA Executive Director and led by the author, David Northrup (Boston College), with discussants Violetta Ravagnoli, (Emmanuel College), David Burzillo (the Rivers School), and Luke Scalone (Graduate Student, Northeastern University). A discussion of *Africa's Discovery of Europe* is an excellent opportunity to engage the history of Africans during the first four centuries of direct contacts between sub-Saharan Africans and Europeans. This is not a book about the Atlantic Slave Trade; it is an examination of the history of African cultures and societies and their encounters with Europeans with agency given to Africans. To engage a discussion of the history of racism requires us to first understand the rich historical traditions that racists tell us did not exist in Africa. Northrup's book counters those views and offers an insightful examination of the interactions between African and European societies.

Please join us on September 26 as we begin our analysis of the era that led to the Atlantic Slave Trade and the persistent legacy of racism in our world.



## Cont'd from Page 1 - Forging Global Fordism

production combined with mass consumption shaped our global industrial order. Link reveals how Ford's technological exchanges with Stalin's Russia and Hitler's Germany laid the infrastructure for the spread of Fordism throughout the global economy and by doing so, transformed the process by which businesses develop international influence. In other words, Ford transformed globalization.

Forging Global Fordism enriches our understanding of the lesser known histories of the multinational corporations that have forged the structure of our modern global economy. A subject I've written, and continue to write, about at length.

Already involved in extensive research on the topic of the Western technology transfer to Soviet Russia, I was excited to find a fresh tome that broaches the rare theme of industrial archeology, and by a local author. Not available until September 29th, I dropped Professor Link an email, or two, to pester him for an advance copy, which he was kind enough to provide.

I expected to suffer through dry, occasionally confusing and tedious prose to unearth some buried multinational secrets. But Link's a gifted writer! His explanations are not only clear, but dynamic. Forging Global Fordism is an enjoyable read. He doesn't repeat himself ad nauseum or waste the reader's time with repetitive explanations or highfalutin jargon. Link's writing is concise and energetic.

Link's research didn't disappoint either. His investigation is thorough and filled with the details of undisclosed negotiations and little-known contracts between the Ford Motor Company, Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany. Few historians tackle industrial archeology, especially concerning the technology transfer between US firms and some questionable regimes around the globe, but Link does it with gusto.

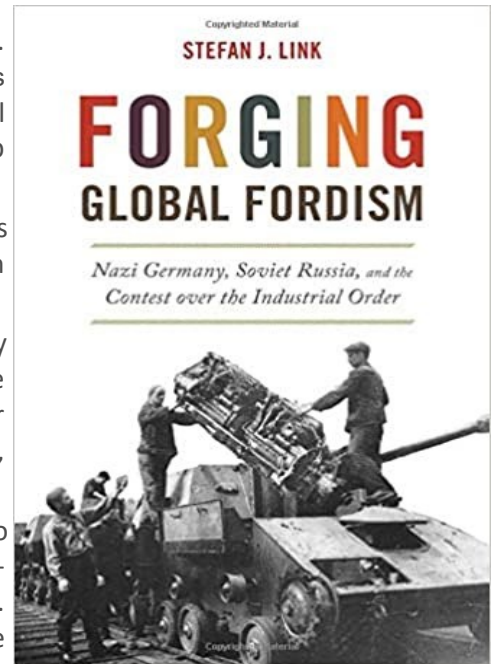
Just one of 170 western firms doing business in Soviet Russia during the 1920's, Ford participated in the post WWI military buildup of both Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany. In the author's own words, Forging Global Fordism "explores how the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany strove to acquire American mass production technology to create their own versions of Fordism in the Thirties (chapters 3 and 4)."

What spurred these transfers, Link suggests, was the desire of both Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union to rectify comparative underdevelopment vis-à-vis the U.S. Spurred by global Depression, Ford's participation with the Soviet and Nazi regimes triggered competitive industrial development across the world. "The global context is crucial:" Link writes, "by heeding it, this book delivers a new account of the rise and spread of mass production regimes in the first half of the twentieth century and suggests a novel framework to understand the interwar period at large—not as a retreat from globalization, as is commonly held, but as an era of furious and consequential attempts to transform its very structure."

Link touches upon one of Ford's largest investments in Soviet Russia in 1929, Nizhny Novgorod (later known as GAZ) Auto Plant, which was a key part of Stalin's 1st Five Year Plan. A replica of Ford's River Rouge Plant in Dearborn, the Soviet auto plant was designed by an American architect and built by an American construction firm during the early Thirties. But where Link truly excels is his coverage of how Fordism built Nazi Germany's Aviation industry and how that led to successful mass production of aircraft during the 1940's and helped Nazi Germany develop the largest and most powerful air force in Europe by the start of WWII.

Just one of a long list of American multinationals involved in every major aspect of the German economy, Ford was unequivocally one of the most important. (IBM, Gillette, Woolworth, Standard Oil, Singer Sewing Machine, General Electric, International Harvester and General Motors to name a few others.) Ford's auto factory (as are all auto factories) were dual use capable, meaning that while it was normally used for civilian purposes, it could be easily converted to military applications. This dual use ability of automotive factories led the Ford Nizhny Novgorod Plant to quickly churn out everything from civilian vehicles to farm tractors to tanks by simply retooling the machinery.

Link explains that in 1935, Ford AG began participating in the Nazi Germany's export and foreign exchange management allowing the German plant in Cologne to ship auto parts to Dearborn and receive dollars in return. The German authorities required Ford AG to exchange these dollars into marks and include a 25% export bonus. In 1936, Dearborn shipped tires and iron ore to the German Plant, supplying Cologne with indispensable imports without requiring transactions in hard currency. Ford AG complied with the Nazi government to sell shares of these "sensitive imports" to other German factories at favorable prices. Such cooperation earned Ford AG the official designation as a "German firm" and in



1938, a major government contract followed with the German Military ordering over 3,150 V8 trucks. By the outbreak of the war, Ford was responsible for almost one-fifth of German Truck production and GM, two-thirds.

It was not a question of morality for the multinationals, “the Nazi rearmament boom presented them with a solid growth market.” (p. 137) says Link. Similar growth markets were found in Japan, France, Britain and Russia.

A joint-venture between Ford Dearborn and the Berlin firm Ambi-Budd which operated from 1938 through 1941 (2 years into WW2), where Ford sent engineering staff, built machinery and set up assembly, put out more than 1,800 troop transporters and personnel carriers. But Ford’s participation in the rearmament of the German state was dwarfed by that of GM’s Opel, as GM’s Brandenburg plant expanded during the 1930’s to become Western Europe’s largest automotive manufacturer. (p. 158) GM’s Opel Brandenburg Plant was simultaneously pumping out similar military-use vehicles, but on a much grander scale.

In 1938, Hitler “decorated two prominent businessmen with an award that the Nazi regime bestowed on foreigners who ‘had been of service to the Reich.’” “One of the recipients was GM’s overseas chief executive James Mooney, who accepted the Nazi Order of Merit...First Class, on August 17. The other awardee was Henry Ford who accepted the award at the Dearborn Laboratory, where “two German diplomats pinned the Grand Cross of the German Eagle, the award’s highest rung, to Ford’s chest.” A year earlier, Thomas Watson, IBM’s chief executive, had received a similar decoration at a Berlin conference.

As Germany initiated its invasion of Poland, German tanks were rolling off the assembly lines at the Ford’s Cologne Plant and GM’s Opel Plant—which had been outfitted with “cutting-edge mass production facilities with military adaptability.” GM’s ownership of the Opel Rüsselsheim Plant had brought GM’s American leaders contacts (and lucrative contracts) in the German Aviation Ministry (p. 154), which oversaw the Luftwaffe’s sprawling bomber development complex.

Chapter 5 entitled “War of the Factories,” traces the early career of American-born engineer William Werner, who lead a group of German vehicle and production designers to the American auto capital in Michigan in 1937 to learn production expertise from American auto manufacturers Ford, Chevrolet, and Pontiac. Almost as soon as Werner returned to Germany, he went on to lead the Nazi government’s Industrial Council in charge of “Germany’s wartime industrial complex.” Seeking to bind industry to the war economy, Werner pressured German automakers to adopt Ford’s flow production techniques to quicken production, lessen the need for skilled workers and lower production costs. Soon BMW, Messerschmitt, Opel (GM) and Ford’s Cologne factory were mass producing German combat aircraft. (So while Ford’s Willow Run bomber factory, financed and run by the U.S. government, was pumping out American fighter planes, Ford’s German Cologne Plant and GM’s Brandenburg Plant were mass producing German bombers to knock them out of the sky.)

Werner not only compelled German firms to adopt Ford-style flow production, especially in the aviation industry, he also oversaw the introduction and widespread use of forced labor. Since Ford’s flow production required the majority of workers to do little more than repetitive tasks along a conveyor belt, as German workers were drafted into the war, by the fall of 1944, more than 7.9 million foreign laborers and POWs—about one-fourth women—were forced into the production of German war equipment used against their countrymen. One-third of the entire labor force became forced labor as Ford’s “flow production became a supreme tool to exploit the labor power” of unskilled workers. Two-thirds of the work force at Daimler-Benz aircraft engine plant using Ford flow production used forced labor as “foreign and forced labor became a pillar of the armament effort.” Prisoners from the nearby Dachau Concentration Camp toiled on BMW construction site and on the factory floor producing aircraft engines and laboring “twelve to seventeen hours a day under the supervision of German foreman and SS guards” the “assembly line achieved its disciplinary strength.”

Fordism contributed greatly to the Nazi Armaments Miracle as German aircraft production shot up from 10,826 in 1940 to 39,807 in 1944” as “the work week increased from fifty-four hours in late 1940 to sixty-nine hours in March 1944, peaking intermittently at seventy-two,” (p.193) says Link. Although he makes no mention of how profitability rose exponentially under the system of forced (unpaid) labor working so much overtime, one can imagine.

After the war, Werner went on to contribute to the West German Economic Miracle, based on auto production as “between 1950 and 1962, America’s share of global auto production sank from over 8 percent to below 50 percent, while Western Germany’s rose from barely 3 percent to over 15 percent.” Moreover, “thanks to Washington’s low-tariff policy, American consumers now began buying German cars.” By the 1950’s, “approximately half of West Germany’s balance of payments surplus was earned by Volkswagen alone.”

The industrial development competition that spread Fordism (or that Fordism spread) “through the world in the 20th century will continue to be with us,” says Link, “shaping a global economic order that is ever contested, never finished.”

# THE EMANCIPATION OAK



**U**nder this tree in Hampton VA on January 1, 1863, southern Freedpeople first heard the Emancipation Proclamation. Designated one of the world's 10 great trees, The Oak is most impressive in its own right, and still more so given the epic events associated with it. Visiting nearby Fort Monroe too is essential for the full historical experience. In 1861 "Freedom's Fortress" was the first place where Union soldiers refused to return fugitives, thus the beginning of the end for American slavery.

When one first approaches, The Oak's immense size is hard to fathom; it looks like an entire grove of trees. Visitors can't see inside its foliage, but once underneath/inside we can look outside. It stands apart from its surroundings in a far corner of the Hampton University campus, its tranquil summer setting enabling worship or reflection.

When visiting in August 2018, I performed a modified African ritual: pouring libations at four corners of outer limbs, then four more at the base of the trunk. (Only Gatorade was on hand, but any liquid will serve if we are properly respectful.) This honors those who struggled for liberty, for themselves and for humanity. The Oak further witnessed worshiping, teaching, learning, dozing, smoking, courting and strolling under its welcoming branches. It is truly a Tree of Life and a site of genuine spiritual power. One feels the presence of past, present, and future too. If we come with reverence and modesty (plus some knowledge of history), it can be an awesome, unforgettable occasion.

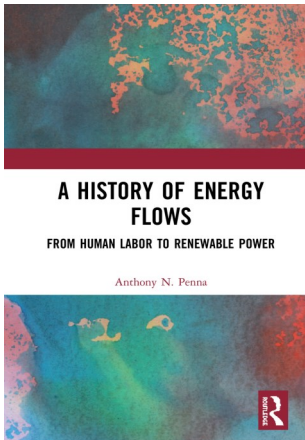
Visitors --better, pilgrims --are encouraged to learn more about the area, including contemporary struggles to preserve parts of Fort Monroe not protected from residential and commercial development. For lovers of freedom, the Emancipation Oak and Fort Monroe are reason enough by themselves to travel to Virginia.

*A luta continua.* Lest we forget. —Prof Tom Johnson , History/UMass Boston



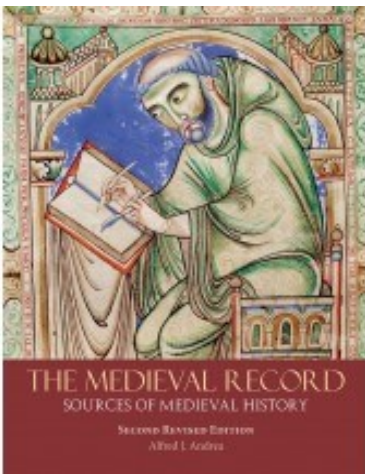


# New Books



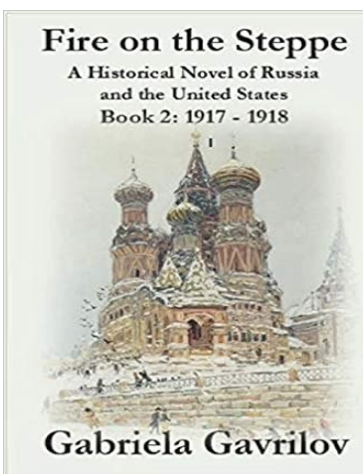
**A History of Energy Flows: From Human Labor to Renewable Power**, (2020) 1st Edition, By Anthony N. Penna presents a global and historical perspective of energy flows during the last millennium. This book details the historical evolution of energy, following the overlapping transitions from one regime to another. In doing so it seeks to provide insight into future energy transitions and the means of utilizing sustainable energy sources to reduce humanity's fossil fuel footprint. The book begins with an examination of the earliest and most basic forms of energy use, namely, that of humans metabolizing food in order to work, with the first transition following the domestication and breeding of horses and other animals. The book also examines energy sources key to development during industrialization and mechanization, such as wood and coal, as well as more recent sources, such as crude oil and nuclear energy. The book assesses energy flows that are at the forefront of sustainability; examining green sources—solar, wind power and hydropower. While it is easy to see energy flows in terms of “revolutions,” transitions have taken centuries to evolve, and transitions are never fully global, as, for example, wood remains the primary fuel source for cooking in much of the developing world. This book not only demonstrates the longevity of energy transitions but discusses the possibility for reducing transition times when technological developments provide inexpensive and safe energy sources that can reduce fossil fuel dependency .

Anthony N. Penna is Professor Emeritus of Environmental History at Northeastern University, USA. He is author of numerous titles, including *The Human Footprint: A Global Environmental History* (2015, 2nd ed), *Natural Disasters in a Global Environment* (2013) and *Nature's Bounty: Historical and Modern Environmental Perspectives* (1999).



Alfred J. Andrea, *The Medieval Record: Sources of Medieval History*, 2nd rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA: Hackett, 2020). This collection of 113 individual and sets of documentary and artifactual primary sources spans the years 100-1493 C. E. Although its focus is Western Europe, it contains a significant number of sources that deal with Byzantium and Islam as well as medieval Europeans' ventures into the greater Afro-Eurasian world, including Franciscan missionaries in China and the conquest of the Canary Islands. A student's guide provides step-by-step instruction on how to analyze documents and artifacts as historical sources, and detailed introductions and notes set each source into full context.

The author/editor has newly translated most of the documentary sources, rendering them into modern English. A glossary and detailed topical index provide additional aids for students and instructors alike.



"A New Look at Russia's Sweeping History and Events that Shaped the Modern World." Historical series *Fire on the Steppe*, Gabriela Gavrilov, Book 1: 1905-1917 and Book 2: 1917-1918 (Kleio Press, 2020) shed new light on the hidden commercial relations between Russia/former Soviet Union and the United States.

A panoramic epic of the 20th Century continues with *Fire on the Steppe: Book 2, 1917 - 1918*. In this second of a series, we are swept into the Russian Revolution, the disbanding of the Constitutional Assembly and the commencement of the American invasion of North and Pacific Russia with spellbinding narrative that captures the tide of global events—all the drama, romance, heroism and tragedy—as it immerses us in the lives of four families; American, French Canadian, Polish and Russian, whose lives are unknowingly, but inextricably tied together and drawn into the center of history's maelstrom. This volume captures little known history of the first unofficial communications between American economic missions to Russia and Russia's new leaders Vladimir Lenin and Leon

Trotsky. Based on U.S. Congressional Testimony, this volume will leave you wondering why you were never taught this fascinating history in school. Available on Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble, hard copy and Ebook.

# Resurrecting the NERWHA Newsletter

Hello NERWHA members! Yes, I've volunteered to resurrect the NERWHA Newsletter. Why? Because we'll get to talk with interesting people involved in a subject we're all in love with: History! When I came across NERWHA recently, I was shocked to find that your newsletter had dropped out of existence in 2015. An engaging newsletter can help bring an organization together, widen its reach and increase its membership. So let's do that—together!

My interest in history was born while (extracurricularly) reading Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago* when it was introduced to the American public in 1975. This literary-historical record of the vast system of labor camps that came into being shortly after the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia in 1917 and that underwent an enormous expansion during the rule of Stalin from 1924 to 1953, stunned my young mind by the depths and scale of brutality in human society.

By 1983-4, I was studying economics at the University of Warsaw as an exchange student while that country was under martial law imposed by communist leader General Wojciech Jaruzelski. When I returned to the U.S. to finish my senior year at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., I began writing articles about the Polish Solidarity movement and attending Congressional Hearings dealing with the Soviet War in Afghanistan. Instead of attending graduation ceremony, I flew to Pakistan and clandestinely crossed into Afghanistan with Afghan Mujahedin fighting Soviet forces in Paktia Province. I spent the summer of 1985 traveling with the National Islamic Front in war-torn Afghanistan. In 1993, I returned to Poland four years after the fall of communism to witness a landslide victory of ex-communist parties in the country's general elections due to popular indignation over social hardships which emerged after the collapse. With each of these experiences, world history became an exciting, personal adventure which initiated a voracious appetite for examination of historical and modern economics and political affairs.

While I never found the financial resources to obtain a PhD, my career choices kept me on an adventurous road; living and traveling around the U.S. and finally relocating to Chile, South America in 2008 where I worked for an international mining company. Living in exotic places and learning about the history and people of those places has infinitely enriched my life. My travels have revealed that history is critical to understanding our modern world. The troubles of today are but shadows cast on us by our past. Without historical knowledge, people are bound to assume that current events are novel and fail to learn from history's failures or triumphs.

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Gabriela Gavrillov being photobombed by Zeke (2020)

When I was introduced to my native-Russian husband in Chile in 2012, we spent that evening discovering (in our only common language—Spanish) that not only had he been part of the Soviet forces in Afghanistan in 1985, he had been inside the garrison the Mujahedin I was with attacked—and he had led the counter attack. Our common history was more profound still: He had been a 17 year old Soviet soldier on his first mission preparing to invade Poland, as student protestors in Warsaw, whom I was with, called for an end to Soviet domination of their country. We had come from the same ethnic roots and shared some family surnames. My grandfather had fled Poland after his brother had been hung for sedition against the Tsar by Imperial Cossack troops. My husband's great grandfather was a member of those very Cossack troops.

So let's work toward an engaging newsletter and widening membership: Each issue could honor someone in New England for some outstanding achievement or unorthodox approach to a historical subject that begs us to re-examine it. We could focus on a particular institution as a 'Get to Know such-and-such institution' for informational content and interest...and drum up new members and larger readership which would follow when their institution is featured in the newsletter.

Let's look at how New England-based teachers, students, universities and people are connected to or participating in World History development / preservation. Each issue could focus on a person to interview and hear their take on how the profession is faring in these times and what they hope for the future. Let's shine a light on young people, individuals or groups who are interested in history and what they're doing, and projects that involve them. We could have special issues on certain historical periods, nations or subjects... The sky's the limit! —Gabriela Gavrillov, Editor