

Lee Ward. *The Politics of Liberty in England and Revolutionary America*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004. x + 459 pp. \$90.00. Review by GEOFFREY M. VAUGHAN, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE COUNTY.

This is first and foremost a book of intellectual history. All the actors in this drama are writers, and despite some attention to their biographies, this book recounts how their ideas played-off one another and eventually changed the course of history. Certainly this is an unfashionable approach in some quarters of the academy. I happen to be as convinced of this approach, if not in all particulars, as I am compelled by the argument of this book, if not in all particulars. Anyone interested in the political ideas of the seventeenth century and their impact on subsequent British and American intellectual and political history would do well to read it.

This book seeks to resolve two paradoxes. The first paradox arises from what the author claims to be the intellectual origins of the Whig politics of liberty in the absolutist arguments of Hugo Grotius and Thomas Hobbes (12). The second paradox lies in a much more political and historical problem: "British and American Whigs interpreted the same events and institutions in Anglo-American political history in substantially different terms" (17). Sir Robert Filmer is the pivot around which the first paradox revolves while Pufendorf is the pivot for the second. These two orbits overlap and, between them, encompass roughly two-hundred years of history with the Catholic natural lawyers, Francisco Suarez and Roberto Bellarmine, at one end and the American revolutionaries, Thomas Jefferson and Tom Paine, at the other.

The book is divided into three parts, although these parts do not correspond directly to the resolution of the two paradoxes. In Part I the author argues that Filmer rejected Catholic natural law and Calvinist resistance theories because they were a threat to the stability of monarchies. The author also explains that Filmer criticized both Grotius and Hobbes for their secular defense of absolutism and for the hostage they gave to fortune by basing even absolutism on consent. There is nothing new in this section to students of the seventeenth century, but it is well argued and, if not entirely necessary for the subsequent section, sets the stage for what will come.

Part II is the heart of the book, and in this section we discover the resolution to both paradoxes. According to the author, Whig theory devel-

oped during the Exclusion Crisis as a response to the republished work of Filmer, *Patriarcha*. Just as Filmer had feared, the Whigs used the hostage Grotius and Hobbes had given them to develop arguments against absolutism. Thus the first paradox is solved: in responding to Filmer the Whigs borrowed the premises of his erstwhile fellow absolutists to develop a consent theory that could lead to republican conclusions. But this leads us to the second paradox, for there were competing Whig theories.

In explaining how they developed their theories, Wård argues that James Tyrrell relied heavily on Pufendorf, the result being a moderate Whiggism. Algernon Sidney was influenced deeply by Spinoza, while John Locke, it seems, was *sui generis*; but both were far more radical than Tyrrell. This leads to his distinction between moderate Whig and radical Whig. In subsequent political history the British political classes accepted Tyrrell's version of Whiggism while Sidney and Locke were exported to the American colonies. Thus the second paradox is resolved: the radical Whigs in the colonies and the moderate Whigs in Britain had become two great nations divided by a common philosophy.

Perhaps as a coda, Lee explains in Part III that the arguments of Sidney were dominant in the early stages of the American Revolution but were overtaken by Lockean arguments at a later stage. Locke's version of radical Whiggism was then enshrined in the New York and Massachusetts state constitutions and became the nation's dominant philosophy as expressed in the Constitution of the United States.

As even a brief summary reveals, this is an ambitious book. But that brief summary does not reveal just how ambitious the book really is. Not only are there extensive analyses of all the Whig authors mentioned above but the author also offers sections on Suarez and Bellarmine, Beza and Hotman, George Buchanan, Henry Parker, John Tranchard and Thomas Gordon (as Cato), and part of a chapter devoted to Hume, Montesquieu, and Blackstone. Only then does he turn to the Americans James Otis, John Dickinson, and individual chapters on Jefferson and Paine. Is all of this necessary to make his argument? In a way. Is all of it necessary for those most likely to read this book? Perhaps not.

The author does a very good job of explaining the political and rhetorical reasons that his authors had for choosing which books to criticize and which to approve. For instance, an intricate weave of arguments developed when

Filmer tried to outdo Grotius and Hobbes as an absolutist responding to earlier Catholic and Calvinist theories of resistance. The Whigs then leapfrogged Filmer to appropriate ideas from Grotius and Hobbes while simultaneously trying to avoid their forms of absolutism and any suspicion of recusancy that might attend defenders of resistance that was first developed by Catholic natural lawyers. In this effort, Tyrrell appropriated ideas from Pufendorf, Sidney from Spinoza, while the *sui generis* Locke developed Whiggism in his own direction, and all of this led to three branches of Whig theory that were adopted in different ways on two sides of the Atlantic. Sorting out the pattern of this process is the real achievement of this book and well worth the attention of students of the seventeenth century, students of intellectual history, and students of the American Revolution. This is a success.

Yet there is one persistent imbalance that runs through the book and may even affect the argument. Although the author is attentive to the political and rhetorical motives for choosing certain opponents and allies, he is not as attentive to the caprice or opportunism of some of these decisions nor does he consider the effect on their arguments and the status they should be accorded. Unfortunately, the one place where he does consider such subtle motives will prove to be, I am sure, the most contentious part of the book. In Chapter 8, "Natural Rights in Locke's Two Treatises," the author makes the following claim: "[I]t becomes clear that Locke's most important aim of the *First Treatise* is not to refute Filmer, but rather to deliver a powerful, if often implicit, criticism of extant variations of the doctrine of natural liberty. The radicalism of the *First Treatise* presupposes Locke's assessment of the inadequacy of his predecessors in the natural liberty tradition" (214). So Locke's bold attack on Filmer was a screen for his exceedingly cautious criticism of Suarez and Bellarmine? While I am not prepared to dismiss the argument, for the author does make some very good points, he has not proven to my satisfaction that Locke had more to fear from criticizing Jesuit theologians in his anonymous tract than from the mouthpiece of royalists. His patron's experience in the Tower and Sidney's at the gallows are good evidence of where the real danger did lie. But I fear this one section will attract undue criticism and deflect praise from a praiseworthy book.

Every library should have a copy of this book and every serious student of the period should have it on his or her shelf. There are gems of insight and

brilliant summaries of arguments. The reader who would most profit from it, however, is one who is approaching the period for the first time, but not as an undergraduate. This makes its best audience difficult to discern, but anyone would profit from the read.

Caroline Castiglione. *Patrons and Adversaries: Nobles and Villagers in Italian Politics, 1640-1760*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. ix + 254 pp. + maps and illustrations. \$19.95 Paper. Review by R. BURR LITCHFIELD, BROWN UNIVERSITY.

Studies of eighteenth-century France have shed light on the nature of peasant communities and their increasing litigiousness, which erupted in the *Cahiers de doléances* of 1788 and in the Great Fear, the peasant uprising in the first month of the French Revolution. There has been less study of village politics in Italy, especially for readers of English. Thus Caroline Castiglione's well researched, well written, and insightful study is welcome. The relationship between feudal landholders and peasant communities was a very important one. Who could forget the scenes in 1860 at the Prince of Lampedusa's Sicilian estate of Donnafugata in Luchino Visconti's film, *The Leopard*? Castiglione focuses on estates of the Barberini family in the countryside north-east of Rome. This is not a demographic or agricultural history. Instead it treats the family history of the Barberini, village politics, and the Papal government. The Barberini bought feudal jurisdiction over several villages in the last year of the pontificate of Matteo Barberini, Pope Urban VIII (1623-44). The Barberini came from an un-remarkable Florentine family, and at the end of his pontificate, Urban VIII attempted to secure the family's permanence in the upper ranks of Roman society by obtaining a landed endowment. He tried unsuccessfully to wrest the fiefs of Castro along the papal border with Tuscany from the Farnese family (*nipoti* of Pope Paul III) in 1641, which produced the brief War of Castro between the Papacy, Tuscany, and Venice in 1642-44. Frustrated, his nephew, Taddeo, bought, at huge expense, a collection of villages earlier assembled by the old Roman feudal Orsini family.

This was not one estate. The family had earlier bought the nearby Principality of Palestrina. In the new property, Monte Libretti carried the title of a duchy, Nerola of a principality, and Montorio of a marquisate. In the 1740s