toward memory and the past. Chrostowska distinguishes a properly utopian affect from a tendency toward left-wing melancholia that she observes in contemporary left critique, which immobilizes utopia even as it unconsciously seeks to resurrect its political energies. Identifying this affective theoretical strain in theorists including T. J. Clark, Enzo Traverso, and Daniel Bensaïd, she counters left-wing melancholia with an entreaty for nostalgia. This utopian nostalgia is not the sentimental and conservative nostalgia that holds memory hostage to past illusions, but rather a nostalgia that liberates memory for the expression of utopian hopes, allowing for the forms of attachment that "can provide criticism with material, values, and aspirations relativizing our own and idealized ones" (p. 35). Connected with this liberatory nostalgia, chapter 1 contends that the connection of critique and utopia requires an orientation toward myth, not the familiar myth of the social contract, which gives an account of social order, so much as a *speculative myth*, which in the words of Northrop Frye (1965), is "designed to contain or provide a vision for one's social ideas, not to be a theory connecting social facts together" (quoted at p. 323).

Chapter 2 is devoted to the question of desire and its place in utopian thinking, and more specifically how to educate desire to propel us toward emancipation. In the words of Miguel Abensour (1999), "to desire, to desire better, to desire more, and above all to desire otherwise"(quoted at pp. 145–46). This is a far cry from tempering, disciplining, moralizing, or restricting desire to reach a particular vision of the common good as we see in the classical utopia of Thomas More, which would have us inhibit our passions. Indeed, Chrostowska rewrites the genealogy of utopia in this respect, displacing the threadbare version of utopia's history that would begin with More's *Utopia* with the "desire-driven body utopia" of Cockaigne, a medieval European myth that tells the story of a leisurely, abundant, sensuous society (p. 56). Surrealism and Situationism were key movements in the education of desire toward its expression and plenitude, rather than its discipline or taming. The psychogeographical experiments of the Situationist International sought to reorganize urban space and time through the mobilization of play, love, sexuality, and relationality, the refinement of pleasure into noncommodified forms. Chrostowska seeks to shift the emphasis of utopian thinking toward the bodily utopias of thinkers such as Charles Fourier and Raoul Vaneigem, and away from its more disembodied forms, which make their most dangerous appearance in the "applied utopias" of existing socialism, sacrificing the creative power of bodily desire to a machinic productivist vision of society (p. 68). Crucial to this emphasis on somatic desire is a rethinking of the hierarchy of desire and need, and indeed a questioning of their analytical distinctness. Drawing on Theodor Adorno's dialectic of need and desire, Chrostowska argues that "[o]pposing need to desire perpetuates the assumption that, to fulfill a need, anything is better than nothing, lowering the standard by sanctioning mediocrity, and justifying an indiscriminate, rather than personalized, approach to need satisfaction as sufficient, good enough for most, who cannot afford better. The same opposition also maintains survival as 'bare life,' incapable of imagination or cultivated desires" (p. 69). Utopian desire expands our understanding of what our needs are beyond the parameters of the given.

This expansion of somatic desire ultimately leads Chrostowska to the finale of the book, a powerful exploration of the politics of survival in an age of planetary crisis and its relationship to nonstatist, utopian thought and practice. Here she explores radical experiments with the politics of survival from neo-Zapatism, communalist Rojava, eco-Zadism, and the direct democratic dimensions of the Yellow Vest movement. Perhaps most provocatively, she discusses movements that engage in *necroresistance*, citing the work of Banu Bargu, including forms of practice such as self-starvation and immolation that target "survival as the sovereign means of biopolitical domination" (p. 91). Far from endorsing necroresistance in a naive way, Chrostowska offers these examples as a courageous engagement with the possibilities for resisting the capture of political imagination by the biopolitics of survival. In so doing, she shows that facing the existential threats to the planet that we see all around us demands a utopian reimagining of how human survival can point beyond the very conditions of survival from which it originates. Chrostowska's work is a powerful and masterful exploration of the necessity of utopia for critical theory in the present. Beautifully written and passionately argued, the book is an essential read for those of us struggling, both emotionally and intellectually, to find sustenance in the political desert of the present.

Adam Smith Reconsidered: History, Liberty, and the Foundations of Modern Politics. By Paul Sagar. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2022. 229p. $35.00 cloth.
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Paul Sagar's richly rewarding, always intelligent new book identifies itself as a "reconsideration" and that aptly captures what distinctively characterizes his enterprise. His "aim" is polemical (p. 10); he sets out to "challenge" much received Smithian scholarship (p. 4). Accordingly his text abounds with characterizations of "misreadings," "misinterpretations," and "misunderstandings" (all employed in his opening pages [pp. 6–9] and repeated with synonyms such as "mistakes" throughout) and his engagement with contemporary scholars results in extensive footnoting. More substantively Sagar's agenda is reactive in that the topics with which he engages are those where he thinks others are wrong. It is, of course, not simply reactive because he has selected issues that he judges

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need reconsideration. This gives the book its focus. We can identify three lines of [mis]intepretation he has chosen to reconsider.

The first is a ground-clearing critique of what Sagar calls the "standard model" (p. 14). This has three components—that Smith is a conjectural historian, that he adopts a four-stage approach to history, and that "commercial society" is only correctly understood as a "technical usage" (p. 13). While he somewhat overeggs the first of these, a common feature of the first two components is a commitment to reading Smith as writing "real history" (pp. 19, 29ff). This is well argued and instructive, especially in Sagar's recognition of the importance of war and its contingencies within Smith's account.

The third component in this ground-clearing exercise is, I think, more problematic. For example, Sagar's discussion of technical usage derives solely from the opening paragraph in *Wealth of Nations* (*WN* I.4) (he quotes it three times [pp. 12, 107, 214]) but it is able to bear a different weight of reading; especially if the word "thoroughly" and the references to "everyman" and "far greater part" with respect to exchanging goods and services are heeded. Sagar imposes on Smith a strictness of terminology that is out of step with the way Smith writes. He is not a precise writer (something implicitly acknowledged by Sagar when he lists a variety of Smithian usages of "commercial" [p. 49]). Also problematic is Sagar's wish to ascribe "commercial society" not merely to advanced societies but also to the Greek-Roman states and China. But Smith is clear that what enables "every man" to live by exchanging is that it occurs in a "well-governed society" (*WN* I, i.10), but neither Greece/Rome nor China fall under that description on Smith's account. As Sagar recognizes, the former are societies dependent on slavery so a section of the population does not live by exchanging (as they should in the technical usage). And regarding China (on which Sagar says much that is genuinely insightful) the fact that Smith sees no rule of law operant there (cf. *WN* I.xi.15) is a point that Sagar rightly emphasizes as central to Smith's own account, but that here Sagar underplays. The message Sagar draws from his analysis is that it matters what "kind of commercial society" is discussed (p. 50), particularly the distinctiveness of post-feudal Europe (p. 52 cf. pp. 104, 199).

This message is then a subtext within the other two lines of interpretation that Sagar's argument reconsiders. In Chapter 2 he outlines and defends an interpretation of Smith as a "theorist of liberty as nondomination" (p. 60). He is explicit that this not the version espoused by Skinner and Pettit because he wants to insist that Smith is in no way a "republican" because he "severs the link between law, political participation and nondomination." Here the crucial term is "law" because Sagar argues that Smith takes a "common law" approach to liberty and security. These are jointly the "cumulative" and "unintended consequences" of "complex legal and political processes" (p. 101). All this I find persuasive and certainly constitutes the best case yet for not reading Smith as an heir to classical or civic republicanism. If I have a quibble with Sagar's interpretation here it is that in making his case for "free cities" as the original site of freedom in our present sense of the word (following the argument in WN III. iii), Sagar doesn't pursue Smith's point that the burghers for their own ends used their political power to further their economic interests. It is precisely that encroachment that signals corruption and that is a prominent theme in the third line of interpretation that Sagar seeks to reconsider.

It is here that Sagar is at his most fervently critical. The gravamen of his assault is the argumentative premise, adopted by many commentators, that societies that rely heavily on markets are presumptively normatively problematic (pp. 4, 181) and interpretations that regard Rousseau as a decisive benchmark against which to evaluate Smith's analysis either implicitly or explicitly. In what is the strongest part of the book Sagar sets about thoroughly discrediting this argument. For Sagar, Smith did "not take Rousseau particularly seriously as an intellectual opponent" (p. 114), rather, as Sagar again correctly observes, Smith attaches far more weight to Hume's impact (p. 150).

In an exercise of highly commendable meticulous textual analysis, focussing on the issues of deception and vanity he traces the roots of Smith's argument back to his critique of Hume's account of utility. He employs as a term of art the phrase "quirk of rationality" (pp. 140,172,184, etc.) by which he means the overvaluation of the means of utility rather than the utility itself (p. 178) and this quirk, not vanity, is the "motor of most economic consumption" (p. 177). While not entirely original, Sagar is here developing, more systematically and programmatically than is to be found elsewhere in the literature, Smith's own claim that he is the first to notice what he calls the "principle" of the preference for aptness over utility (*Theory of Moral Sentiments* IV.i.4.6). This quirk would seem to exhibit what Sagar refers to in passing as the "human condition" (pp. 163 cf 4,186).

This attribution of universal (cf. p. 157), "underlying psychological processes" (p. 181) to Smith implicitly informs Sagar's account of corruption. Aside from emphasizing that Smith's preoccupation is with political rather than moral corruption, his account of the "conspiracy of merchants" (the title of Chapter 5) treads largely familiar territory. Indeed, given that he openly identifies his book as a revision of the "foundations and implications of Smith's political thought" (p. 212), and attributes to Smith the possession of a "political project" (p. 217, cf. p. 211), then this surprisingly is not as prominent as might have been expected. Despite

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throwing out remarks like Smith having "enduring lessons for us today" (p. 211, cf. p. 219), what I think is more telling is Sagar's recognition of Smith's (implicitly universalist) observation that "the violence and injustice of mankind is an ancient evil" that "can scarce admit of a remedy" (*WN* IV.iii.c.9 [quoted at p. 193]); this, I hazard, lies at the heart of Smith's deeply historically inflected, nonideological [cf. p. 210], "politics."

Given that Sagar admits of one aspect of his discussion that it is "purposefully constrained" (p. 185), some will judge his book too narrow. However, he has deliberately set out not to provide an overview but to give a selective account of where, in his assessment, many commentators have gone wrong in their specific analyses. Within this self-chosen limited remit, he has executed his intent successfully. It will be a measure of that success the extent to which his "challenges" are taken up and responded to subsequently by others. Whatever their response it cannot be on the grounds that Sagar has failed to take Smith seriously. All students of Smith's political, historical, and moral thought should read Sagar's book, and in that spirit I heartily commend this volume to fellow Smithian scholars.

Reformation, Resistance, and Reason of State (1517–1625). By Sarah Mortimer. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021. 320p. $45.00 cloth.
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This is the first volume to appear in the Oxford History of Political Thought series edited by Mark Bevir. Sarah Mortimer has written a deeply historicist survey of her period, situating a prodigious number of political thinkers, both canonical and obscure, in terms of the manifold debates that touched on politics, broadly conceived, on the threshold of modernity. In so doing, she gets the series off to a very strong start.

The book covers the period from 1517, when Martin Luther nailed his *Ninety-Five Theses* onto the door of Wittenberg cathedral and thereby momentously split the Western Church, to 1625, when Hugo Grotius published his *The Laws of War and Peace.* The chapters are organized thematically. Mortimer begins by elucidating the tensions between rival imperial and civic discourses of politics in view of, on the one hand, the growing power of Spain, France, and the Ottoman dynasty from early in the sixteenth century, and, on the other, the Renaissance recovery, especially in Italy, of the normative force of the classical theories of *polis* and *res publica.* The following chapters are centred on religion and politics: first, the Protestant challenge to settled Catholic theories of Church and state and, second, the unsettling of Catholic political thought in light of the debates about Spanish claims to the newly "discovered" Americas. Evolving concepts of authority, sovereignty, and the limits of political obligation are the foci of the next set of chapters. The final substantive theme to be handled is the nascent political theory of interstate relations and of the laws of war.

Despite the thematic treatment of its subject, however, Mortimer's survey sustains an argument. This is that although political thought in this period always drew on "ideas current in legal, theological, and classical writing," these become the ingredients that made for a relatively autonomous discourse of politics by 1625 (p. 7). If there is a narrative arc in the book, it seems to me to go like this: By the beginning of the sixteenth century, the humanist movement had produced new translations of and commentaries on Aristotle's *Politics* that recommended the view that "the ultimate aim of human life" was "happiness or flourishing in accordance with nature," and that politics was a natural activity oriented both toward the common good as well as to what was right, which meant "giving to each person within the city the role best suited to their nature" (p. 25). A new literature, pioneered by the likes of Desiderius Erasmus, advised princes about how to govern justly and for the common good. But some of these same ambitious princes sought to apply pressure to the Pope, assembling learned men to formulate in Church councils broadly Aristotelian arguments that "political power was grounded in nature and natural law rather than in any direct grant from God" and that also "helped to explain why political power was diffused among a number of independent communities rather than united in the [Holy Roman] Empire" (p. 43). Leading Protestant thinkers later rejected the distinction between "natural laws aimed at a temporal end and divine laws aimed at a supernatural end" (p. 69), maintaining instead that magistracy existed for the conservation of order and peace in a postlapsarian world, and further that "the prince was the guardian of the two tables of natural and divine law, and [that] his authority stemmed from his office rather than the community's consent" (p. 77). Thus was the stage set for Bodin's definition of sovereignty as "the most high, absolute and perpetuall power" over the commonwealth (p. 180) and of Grotius's detaching of justice "from questions of merit, desert or virtue, as well as from questions of Christian morality" (p. 264).

Mortimer succeeds, I think, in subtly adding layers to this general narrative. One of these, for instance, concerns the character of political power in increasingly complex and compound political units. Erasmus "begged the most important question," namely "how to balance the differing and even conflicting interests" of the new territories acquired by Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, in Castile and Aragon from 1516 (p. 26). Hence the revival across Europe of a discourse of political flourishing as best guaranteed by "mixed government" (pp. 136–54), against

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