

The greatest strength of this text is the way that the argument unfolds over the two introductory chapters and three sections. The author took great care to bring organization from a rich body of sources to help disentangle the relationship between modernity and the formation of the middle class during the period after the departure of the Ottoman Empire and the development of the Syrian nation. This text is based on an exhaustive list of print media, particularly newspapers and journals as well as an extensive list of archival sources. *Being Modern in the Middle East* is well grounded within the historiography on Syria and Lebanon (the Levant) and framed within a larger historiography of modernity and its relationship to the middle class in the age of empire during the transition from an Ottoman province to a nation-state.

Being Modern in the Middle East challenged the dominant model of the nation-state and political history as either relevant or organic ways to understand what happened in Greater Syria and the Eastern Mediterranean during the period of transition. It shows that the interwar period forced the diverse middle class to recast themselves into a national identity as they faced both occupation and upheaval of the existing system. This text signposts a shift in the field that understands the Eastern Mediterranean as a zone of intellectual relationships that were somewhat severed by the mandated structure and the nation states that followed. Another contribution of this text is that it seamlessly illustrates the diversity of Aleppo's urban middle-class without falling into the pitfall of depicting Aleppo as a city segregated by religion or ethnicity. The discussion of difference illustrates that conflicts or violence that arose came about because of complicated identities that were not limited to religious or ethnic identity but a result of interwar tension that was complicated by the intersection of class identity.

Being Modern in the Middle East is an important text that rests within a shift in understanding the Middle East in more global and regional terms between World War I and World War II. It eloquently illustrates, through a rich body of primary sources, that the middle class of Aleppo found ways to cope with and mourn the way that they understood their intellectual, social and cultural community. Watenbaugh's important text offers new energy into urban history will positioning itself within existing literature and offering other avenues to explore middle-class Aleppo from 1908 to 1946.

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North America

Deborah A. Rosen. *Border Law: The First Seminole War and American Nationhood*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015. 316 pp. ISBN: 9780674967618. \$45.00.

Border Law: The First Seminole War and American Nationhood is a fascinating look at the impact the first Seminole War had and links the discussion over Andrew Jackson's actions during the war to the growth of American nationalism and the conception of law as only protecting civilized groups and the placing of uncivilized groups outside the bounds of law. Rosen's book is highly informative, well written, and absorbs the reader. At multiple times, Rosen directly introduces and engages with the secondary literature relating to her topic and allows the reader to follow along without constantly looking up cases or legal precedents. Her primary sources draw upon Congressional documents, law treatises, newspapers, and letters

from both sides of the Atlantic. At the same time, this book places the establishment of America within the international system of law as part of the attempt to create American nationalism. Americas conceived of themselves both as a part of the European legal system and a special exception.

Americans placed themselves as members of the European system of law, but claimed an exceptional status under the law, limiting the application of law to class and racial lines. The first Seminole War allowed the United States to establish itself as part of the international community of law while placing itself as outside the said law in its actions. Breaking the book down into seven topical chapters Rosen examines the way the United States discussed and applied the law to justify its actions in and control of Florida. The first chapter begins with the negotiations between Spain and the United States over Florida. Americans charged that Spanish weakness made them incapable of maintaining control of their territory or helping the United States to secure its borders. In the negotiations over Florida Luis de Onis adopted the legal argument that Spain had a historical claim to the territory and the United States needed to stop promoting insurrections in Spanish territory (18). James Monroe argued that the United States had no reason to stop these actions as the sanctuary provided by the Spanish to fugitive slaves and African Americans justified America's attack to secure the border. Arguably, this idea served as the foundation of the Monroe Doctrine that only a nation present in North America could govern effectively and secure territory.

The Florida campaign helped justify American nationhood through military success and the establishment of America's right to extraterritorial actions to defend itself. Prior to this war, Europeans relied upon Emer de Vattel's work *The Law of Nations, or Principles of Natural Law, Applied to the Conduct and Affairs of Nations and Sovereigns* to determine justifications for their wars. Americans emphasized that everything done in Florida was justified by the needs of self-defence and that the United States needed no declaration of war against Spain. The attacks by the Seminoles and their allies the Creeks, British, and blacks were impossible to stop unless American forces could pursue them beyond the boundary line (59). This image of justified self-defence and right to subordinate Natives and African-Americans allowed the United States to assert its position as the dominant power on the continent. America could commit no wrong so long as it served the national interest.

Despite this general statement, Rosen makes it clear that at the time many critics argued against this idea. Reliant on the more traditional European conceptions of war these groups argued against America's right to attack any country without a declaration of war and that Jackson had violated the separation of powers. Despite these and many other appeals, neither Congress nor the populace condemned Jackson's military or judicial decisions made during the war. While over half the book examines justifications and legal criticism, its most fascinating sections are in the later half. Rosen's chapters on Native Americans and African Americans are both intriguing and innovative.

Rosen places the beginning of the switch from universal law to the positivist image that only civilized nations could benefit from the law with the American actions in the first Seminole War. Most scholars place this at the end of the nineteenth century when positivism became widespread. American justification of their actions regarding the Native Americans and Africans would rest upon this alteration in conceptions. The United States use of treaties with the natives to generate territorial concessions and establish a singular tribal authority to deal with is well understood. However, scholars often place the legal establishment of natives as subordinate to the United States forty years later than Rosen with the *Marshall v. Madison* decision.

Rosen examines the 1790 Treaty of New York and points out that the language used in it placed the natives as “under the protection of the United States of America, and of no other sovereign” (104). Indicating that by 1790, the United States had already articulated a racial-cultural line for the application of law.

By placing civilization as something achievable only for whites, jurists eliminated both natives and Africans from the protection of the law. Thus, Americans needed no declaration of war (i.e., they did not need to follow rules of war) and placed all blame for frontier violence on the natives. Additionally, the presence of Africans diluted native claims to civilized behaviour. Fugitive slaves threatened slavery and as such both the government and the planters accepted the pursuit and seizure of these slaves as a standard practice. By casting slaves as pirates Americans justified the pursuit and prosecution of these Africans according to international principles of law. Pirates could be beaten, or killed without any recourse to trial or law, just as outlaws were in medieval Europe. The placing of natives and Africans outside the bounds of the law is something often touched on by historians. However, Rosen makes it clear that Americans based the status of both natives and Africans on a long history of legal precedents and the construction of an American nationalism based on whiteness and a shared opposition to other races. The first Seminole war served multiple purposes as it “forged a stronger, more unified identity at home and a more assertive role in relations with Europeans. During the war and the ensuing debate, the United States demarcated political, diplomatic, legal, and spatial borders in important and enduring ways” (208). This book makes it clear that by 1816 Americans had already articulated the policies that would guide the nation in its expansion westward.

Not only is this book valuable for scholars examining questions of jurisprudence, early American Republicanism, the Adams-Onís Treaty, natives, and African Americans. It also serves as an excellent book for both senior undergrads and graduate students. I have already recommended it to several scholars interested in the covered topics.

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South America

Emily Berquist Soule. *The Bishop's Utopia: Envisioning Improvement in Colonial Peru*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014. 287 pp. ISBN 9780812245912. \$45.00.

In *The Bishop's Utopia*, Emily Berquist Soule analyses Baltasar Jaime Martínez Compañón's tenure as Bishop of Trujillo from 1779-1790. The author draws from personal correspondence, inventories, bureaucratic records and, most prominently, a nine-volume record on the people, history, and the environment in Trujillo commissioned by the Bishop. The author places Martínez Compañón as a reformer steeped in late eighteenth-century Enlightenment ideology. However, Berquist Soule persuasively argues that Martínez Compañón, unlike other reformers, believed the people and environment of the Americas were not innately inferior vis-à-vis Europe. However, because the bishop sought to reform perceived social and economic inefficiencies—such as the inability for natives to climb the social ladder and choose products in an open economic system—Martínez Compañón's utopian vision clashed with colonial realities. Consequently, as the term *utopia* implicitly suggests, the author demonstrates that local circumstance, royal policy, and bureaucratic red tape often mitigated the Bishop's vision.