

passive meditation, nor was it something appropriate only during the final years of one's life. Rather, moksha is attained by a total and principled engagement with one's life and social circumstances at all times. Parel's depiction of Gandhi's emphasis on physical work, on engaging with one's calling to the best of one's ability, and on the full immersion in the ethical and political life of one's own society and time draws a picture of the man that is much closer to the dynamic person he was than the emaciated and pietistic image he sometimes is saddled with today.

Through a close reading of the immense corpus of Gandhi's *Collected Works* (numbering a hundred volumes), Parel shows how Gandhi sourced his derivation of purushartha in the *Bhagavad Gita* for its balance between earthly duties and the allure of transcendence. It enables Parel to convincingly argue that Gandhi's unparalleled efficacy as a political actor came from the constant eye he trained on matters of artha and to show that he was no pacifist arguing for unilateral disarmament but quite cognizant of the need for a state capable of national defense; that he was sensitive to the need for a self-reliant and resilient economy that could fulfill the earthly needs of the population; and, most importantly, that Gandhi's nonviolence came from a robust sense of ethics, truth, and strength of self rather than anything resembling the resentment of the weak. This picture of an earthy yet ethical, canny yet spiritual, Gandhi is one that would be readily recognized by his South African, British colonial, and Indian political adversaries who found themselves, too often and too late, outflanked by the Mahatma.

The main weakness in Parel's work is his rather tone-deaf attitude to the situation of religious minorities (like the Muslims) and the lower castes in India. Parel's understanding of the Muslim drive for a separate homeland in South Asia simply does not take into account the immensely insightful works that emerged with and after the publication of Ayesha Jalal's *The Sole Spokesman* (1985), which do not allow one to idly attribute the creation of Pakistan to some form of uncompromising Islamic religious nationalism. Parel's arguments would be enhanced by engaging with that scholarship, some of which underlies the chapter in the Rudolphs' book on "The Road Not Taken" referred to earlier. To see Jinnah or the Indian Muslims as having an innate proclivity for secession because of religious injunction or scriptural ideas of jihad, as Parel does, is to completely miss the complex ways in which the new ideas—of majorities and minorities, elections and vote-banks, federalism and provincial autonomy, secularism and faith, and colonial machinations during the World War II—all interacted to produce a situation in which partition became a tragic outcome favored by none but in the end accepted by all (including Gandhi). Similarly, Parel's B. R. Ambedkar is little more than a straw man, seemingly incapable of understanding the capaciousness of Gandhi's revisioning

of Hinduism and the caste system. There was so much more to that encounter between Gandhi and Ambedkar, whose legacies are incredibly complex and still being worked out even as we speak, as a burgeoning literature now shows.

Notwithstanding such limitations, *Gandhi's Philosophy and the Quest for Harmony*, alongside the Rudolphs' book, represents a new and invigorating way to interpret Gandhi—and to appreciate the ever-changing but continued salience of his thought for our times. As we are held hostage yet again by a superpower bent on remaking the world in light of its own fantasies of omnipotence and terror, Gandhi's thought remains as germane as ever.

J. S. Mill's Political Thought: A Bicentennial Reassessment. Edited by Nadia Urbinati and Alex Zakaras.

New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 400p.

\$85.00 cloth, \$27.99 paper.

DOI: 10.1017/S1537592707072349

— Richard Boyd, *Georgetown University*

John Stuart Mill is as famous for his celebrated contradictions as for the originality of his thinking. What else should we expect from a disciple of the likes of Bentham and Coleridge, Saint-Simon and Tocqueville, Wilhelm Von Humboldt and Auguste Comte? Much of the two centuries since Mill's birth has been spent trying to figure out how all of these diverse influences can be made to fit together into one tidy package, and this may explain why there are almost as many renditions of J. S. Mill as there are Mill interpreters. Simultaneously heralded as the poster child of libertarianism and of social control, defender of women's rights and whipping boy of contemporary feminists, aristocratic critic of democratic culture and defender of Athenian-style participatory democracy, a liberal reformer who condoned empire—the list of Mill's paradoxes goes on and on. What makes this volume such a breath of fresh air is the way these essays build upon, without duplicating, traditional interpretations. Original, illuminating, and suggestive of altogether new directions in Mill scholarship, this collection should carry us well into the third full century of engagement with his life and political thought.

The volume's 14 chapters fall into three broad areas: "Liberty and Its Limits," "Democracy and the Individual," and "Beyond National Borders." Contributors take pains to show how Mill's life and writings inform the theory and practice of contemporary liberal democracy. Focusing on Mill's staunch opposition to the Contagious Diseases Acts of the 1860s, Jeremy Waldron advances an important claim about the distributional requirements of liberty. Mill's opposition to these acts is perplexing given his utilitarian stance that liberty can be traded off against other social goods like public health, safety, or national

security. Waldron not only renders Mill's opposition consistent but also suggests parallels to the Patriot Act or other laws imposing disproportionate burdens on the liberties of some groups. Maria Morales's stand-out chapter advances the striking thesis that Mill's liberal feminism is not, properly speaking, "liberal" at all—as defenders and critics alike have assumed—but a more radical theory attentive to "dominance" in the private sphere of the family. The upshot is that problems of spousal abuse and violence toward women cannot be remedied just by securing formal legal equality in the public sphere. Surveying Mill's career as a member of Parliament, Dennis F. Thompson extrapolates rules for weighing moral principles against the compromises necessary for achieving tangible results. This essay reveals the method (and political savvy) behind Mill's apparent madness and explains why some of his political actions appear less principled than his purely philosophical writings might suggest.

Turning from the domestic to the international, Stephen Holmes and Michael Walzer each plumb Mill's thoughts on foreign intervention. Holmes cogently retells Mill's story of the emergence of "self-rule" out of "no-rule" with an eye on the transitional stage of "undemocratic rule" (pp. 322–25). These lessons about the birthing pains of democracy shed some light on regime change in Iraq. Walzer reminds us of the criteria for humanitarian intervention set out in Mill's celebrated essay on "Non-Intervention." In Karuna Mantena's sophisticated post-colonial reading, Mill's thoughts on empire represent both the "apotheosis and denouement of the project of liberal imperialism" (p. 301). Given the unsustainability of Mill's liberal categories, a harder-edged imperialism emerged in the late nineteenth century that shifted responsibility for the failures of civilization onto subject peoples themselves. Georgios Varouxakis explores the role of nationality in Mill's writings, convincingly demonstrating that while the cosmopolitan Mill loathed vulgar nationalism, he was not unaware of the need for patriotic affection among citizens.

Many chapters revolve around the question of Mill's lukewarm commitment to participatory democracy. Exemplary of this tension is Jonathan Riley's nuanced account of how Mill's neo-Athenian representative democracy balances the value of political competence against the goods of popular participation. Bruce Baum teases out the distributional and developmental aspects of Mill's political economy. Nadia Urbinati offers a fascinating genealogy of the concept of "despotism," which tries to reconcile Mill's endorsement of the "good despotism" of empire with his opposition to the "bad despotisms" of the patriarchal family, custom, and bureaucratic "pedantocracy." Frederick Rosen acknowledges that although Mill "never adopted the viewpoint of the democrat," his "method of reform," a dialectical view of social change drawn from his studies of Bentham and Coleridge, contains nothing that would have

prevented him from doing so (pp. 143–44). Alex Zakaras distinguishes Mill's Tocquevillean antipathy to "conformist democracy" from his preferred alternative of "discursive democracy" (pp. 202–7), where individuality anchors democratic politics. Like Wendy Donner's illuminating chapter on education and moral development, Zakaras thinks that everyone, and not just a few eccentric geniuses, can partake of moral development (pp. 220, 255, 258, 262). This requires proper socialization. But are not the schools, families, and workplaces mentioned as potential sites of moral development by Donner also responsible for augmenting the natural advantages and talents of some while leaving others even further behind? Maybe this is why, as Alan Ryan notes, Mill says much less than one would like about the role of civic associations in fostering the "boldness and imagination that would sustain their members against a conformist wider society," effectively shifting responsibility "on the shoulders of individuals" (p. 161).

These are all terrific essays. That said, I am left with a nagging sense that many of these glosses and carefully worked out distinctions end up whitewashing Mill's elitism. In the true Millian spirit, Mill's antidemocratic assumptions are worth taking seriously, not only because of their ubiquity but also, and maybe more importantly, because they serve as object lessons for the direction in which liberalism should *not* go in the centuries ahead. After all, how far have we really progressed from the spirit of Mill's age? Western "civilization" still gets constructed in opposition to fanatical backwardness and barbarism, a process in which Mill himself had a hand. As tyrannical as ever, and arguably no less hostile to diversity or minority views, democratic public opinion proves equally susceptible to elite manipulation and the vagaries of mass culture. The average voter is woefully ignorant of politics, history, and international affairs. Moral authority is either nonexistent or stultifying, depending on which pundit one asks. Given this state of affairs, can we not learn just as much by attending to the illiberal, anti-democratic, and exclusionary legacies of Mill's political thought, rather than celebrating how he strove—in defiance of his age and class prejudices—to approximate the kind of cosmopolitan participatory democrat we might wish him, and ourselves, to be?

Living Speech: Resisting the Empire of Force.

By James Boyd White. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.

256p. \$29.95.

DOI: 10.1017/S1537592707072350

— Eloise A. Buker, *Saint Louis University*

James Boyd White's recent work is as impressive as his earlier work in terms of the clarity of argument, the originality of thought, and the commitment to social analysis that incorporates language analysis, legal theory, and ethics. While drawing from current theories of language, White