

there may be a primary imperative to assist fellow citizens, such a concern does not cancel out thoughtful consideration of the historical, social, political, and economic context in which that nation has emerged. Indeed, the patriot must of necessity be actively engaged in securing justice and equality both inside and outside a particular nation's boundaries (p. 155).

The author then turns to multicultural concerns, noting that even a culturally diverse society must have a "we" at its core. National identity is never static, but rests upon robust discussion extending to all of its members. That community must recognize and respect difference and engage with it in open conversation, which means that not all cultural distinctions can be maintained or, in some cases, even tolerated (p. 53). Political communities, he argues, must necessarily be attuned to cultural factors that influence how people imagine themselves, and theories that try to transcend identities altogether will miss some of the most constitutive aspects of the polity. This culturally aware patriotism can challenge unjust hierarchies and move toward a national culture continually reconstituted by all its members engaged in dialogue with one another. Only if liberal polities understand the interpretive dimension of culture can they hope to build bonds among diverse people and groups (p. 90).

Civic virtue is critical for building such culturally conscious patriotism. This is not a civic virtue hammered into citizens by an overweening state but civic virtue as a participatory practice, in which citizens exchange views on everything from social institutions and policy decisions to symbolic political matters (pp. 108–9, 113). The requirement that citizens engage in public deliberation and act in good faith to provide reasoned justifications for their positions rescues this form of patriotism from more exclusive forms of the same (p. 134). Through such open discussions, a true love of country can emerge, according to the author: a love that sees all of a nation's warts and imperfections but is generous enough to ignore some of those minor imperfections and move toward overcoming others (p. 140).

The last section of the book outlines the author's prescriptive concerns, discussing the social institutions and practices necessary to promote liberal nationalism. His arguments in the last two chapters touch on very sensitive subjects: immigration and education. With respect to the latter, he provides a graceful defense of common schooling, outlining a model of education "directed at the conscious social reproduction of citizens who share a national culture and tradition" (p. 176). He offers compelling arguments in support of his assertions that children should be educated primarily in public schools because only within such institutions will they truly experience difference and learn to understand diversity

within a broad cultural narrative. As he notes, "[a] national education must encourage civic behaviour that is motivated not only by a citizen's desire to exercise mutual respect for fellow citizens, but also their desire to do their part to secure a collective identity and the flourishing of a tradition" (p. 182).

This eminently reasonable emphasis on public schooling is likely to meet strong resistance, however, despite Soutphommasane's solid arguments that such a civic education does not violate individual or parental autonomy. In the United States, for example, parents have jealously guarded constitutional rights to educate their children as they see fit. While a compelling case is made throughout the book that living in a liberal democracy *requires* children to learn tolerance and respect for diversity, putting such a system into practice and suggesting that private education should be limited is likely to jangle nerves. As the author notes, the civic education he espouses need not be overwhelming—teaching children to be good citizens does not mean compelling them to be "active busybodies"—but many parents will see any imposition of a national cultural education as heavy-handed, especially one focused on "an open sense of historical self-understanding" (p. 185).

Likewise, there is much more to be elaborated in the final chapter on immigration. Here, the author recognizes that nations may be selective in deciding whom to admit; they should not be required to allow immigrants in such numbers that they would overwhelm the current population, nor bring in groups who would not be willing to engage in public discussions and negotiations of cultural difference. Nations, he argues, may legitimately limit intake to "culturally compatible" groups, but he notes that as a reality, that threshold would have to be high to show that any particular groups would be incompatible (p. 201). Like the arguments about education, there is more embedded in this argument than the author perhaps acknowledges. Determining the groups that are culturally compatible has the power to spawn deep disagreement, and deserves greater attention than given here.

*The Virtuous Citizen* is an important addition to the literature on multiculturalism, liberalism, and patriotism. It is to be hoped that its prescriptions will generate discussions among both scholars and policymakers; its framing of these issues is long overdue. It is appropriate for scholars, upper-level undergraduates, and graduate students.

**Liberty and Property: A Social History of Western Political Thought from Renaissance to Enlightenment.**

By Ellen Meiksins Wood. London: Verso, 2012. 336p. \$26.95.  
doi:10.1017/S1537592714002837

— Michael J. Thompson, *William Paterson University*

Ellen Meiksins Wood's provocative book offers a distinct challenge to the dominant academic narratives of the

emergence of modernity. In place of an emphasis on discourse, speech acts, or other hermeneutic devices that confine themselves to intertextual data, she argues for a “social-contextual” approach, which encompasses the social processes that are shaped by property relations and which occur outside of the formal political sphere, and how it “is constituted by social processes, relations, conflicts and struggles outside the political space” (p. 28). Her contention is that the essence of Western political thought’s development lies in the social context of property relations. What defines the feudal order is a conception of property tied to fragmented, localized political authorities, what Wood calls, borrowing a term from Perry Anderson, the “parcellization of sovereignty.” The rise of modernity is tied to the disintegration of this form of social-political power and the emergence of a centralized state that overcomes the various factions, orders, and privileges that went with it.

Machiavelli’s political theory is seen as defined by the social context of the Italian city-state and its personalized form of authority. What are generally seen as “modern” in Machiavelli’s political theory—his realism, his move toward a scientific approach to politics, a separation of ethics from politics, and so on—“have more to do with his grounding in the political realities of his city-state, with its military civic culture and the immediate dangers it confronted, than with any modern conception of the state or some affinity to scientific methods” (p. 53). Machiavelli is, in fact, entrenched in the parcellized sovereignty of sixteenth-century Florence, not an advocate of individual rights or a centralized, rationalized state.

Nor can the seed of modernity be found in the Reformation. Although Luther’s doctrine provided the rationale for resistance, this did not apply to private citizens, only to temporal authorities against one another and the Pope, who sought to violate the division between the sacred and secular. More essential to the doctrine of Lutheranism for Wood is its rationale for obedience to secular authority, not for rebellion. What is needed for a modern conception of politics is the articulation of individual rights, and not simply the rights of orders and jurisdictions against one another. In Spain, although ideas about individual rights and popular sovereignty are developed by neo-Thomists, they did so not for the purposes of setting the stage for a rebellion against secular authority but in order to support royal power against the intrusions of the papacy. With its spreading empire, royal authority needed legal and ethical arguments to be able to legitimate its dominion over its subjects and its new colonial holdings against external powers.

The context of the Dutch Republic affords a development toward modernity, but not in the sense that many modern scholars have claimed. The social context of the commercial republic in Holland was one ruled by an oligarchic elite that sought to defend commercial interests against the imperial designs of other powers. But the con-

cept of individual rights makes its first genuine appearance, in Wood’s view, in Grotius’s attempt to defend the rights of private corporations to engage in military ventures to protect and open new world markets against other national powers. As a result, “the conceptual consequence was to place rights residing in the private person, the sovereign individual, on par with the sovereign rights of the state” (p. 130). Wood then reads Spinoza as defending an oligarchic republic that wedded wealth with public office as a means to achieve political stability. But she quotes from the tenth chapter of his *Political Treatise* (PT) to maintain this view, which is still considering aristocracy and not democracy. For Wood, “his definition of democracy itself . . . does not rule out exclusion of the plebs (to say nothing of women . . .)” (p. 144). But this seems unfair; although he explicitly excludes women (and slaves), Spinoza does not have a property requirement for any citizens “to demand for themselves the right to vote in the supreme council and to fill public offices” (PT, XI. 1). Wood misses a more problematic, Hobbesian position in the final chapter of the *Theological-Political Treatise* (TPT), where individuals are to possess freedom of thought, but not of political action: “[T]he individual justly cedes the right of free action, though not of free reason and judgment. . . . [N]o one can act against the authorities without danger to the state” (TPT, XX). Spinoza may be a liberal in thought, but not a radical in politics or in action.

In France, aristocrats were not absorbed into the state, but separate from and in competition with the monarchy. Since both accumulated their wealth and power through rents and taxes appropriated from an exploited peasantry, the problem that plagued French political thought was defined by these parameters. Bodin’s theory of absolutism is an attempt to solve this problem by vesting sovereignty in monarchy while preserving the corporate, feudal bodies of a fragmented, competing aristocracy, just as Montesquieu’s republicanism “approved of a strong central power and would even advocate a kind of unified national system of law,” while still identifying “liberty with the preservation of autonomous powers invested in the nobility” (p. 185). It is only in Rousseau that change occurs. Since the structure of French thought was to look for a single place to invest sovereignty in order to overcome social fragmentation, his *general will* grounds sovereignty not in elites but in the people. Rousseau’s rejection of intermediate political bodies is not a move toward totalitarian democracy; it shows a “concern for transforming the state into a truly ‘public’ thing which derives its public or general character from the people” (p. 201).

In England, nobility and monarchy did not compete over fragmented jurisdictional sovereignties but were both incorporated into the state. Nobles derived profit through direct exploitation of landed commoners; Englishmen therefore confronted the exploitation of landlords who

were unified with the monarchy, not detached from it. As Wood sums up the difference between French and English social contexts: “Englishmen asserted their individual rights; Frenchmen defended their corporate and regional privileges” (p. 151). This means a more radical environment for individual rights, something that occurs during the course of the English Civil War’s Putney Debates. The Levellers are pivotal, for they wed the ideas of private rights with political action, for “[t]hey argued that every man in England, even the poorest, had a right not to be governed except by his own consent, and that right was attached to the person, and not to property” (p. 236). This movement, however, is not only doomed to failure; its arguments get appropriated for opposite political interests in the theories of Hobbes and Locke. Hobbes utilizes the conceptual language of the radicals—of individual rights inhering naturally in individuals—but in order to defend a theory of absolutism. In Locke, the idea of natural rights becomes tied not to the person but to property and, more specifically, to the improvement of property, the one thing that can allow the exclusion of the natural rights that inhere in the individual.

Wood’s emphasis on property relations as a constraining and enabling factor in the explanation of political ideas is powerful, and shows the truly *political* underpinnings of political ideas, something that too much of current intellectual history has bled out of our interpretation of the history of political thought. Her narrative forces us to call into question the assumptions and conclusions of the dominant paradigms of political and intellectual history, only to reveal a much more complex, much more tortured movement toward modernity. It is not the Enlightenment ideas of rights and progress that have won out as defining modernity, but the “formation of an ‘economic’ sphere distinct from the political domain” (p. 316). Now, capitalism becomes the social context within which we conceive not only rights and politics but also the history of political thought itself. What in their own period were attempts to constrain popular authority and political action, to legitimate propertied interests over common interests, become, for Wood, mistaken today as forerunners of truly democratic ideas. And lest we think that Enlightenment ideas are so fundamental to political “radicalism,” Wood asks us to consider the extent to which “the advance for productivity for profit seems to overtake the improvement of humanity as the main criterion of progress” (p. 311).

**Modern Islamic Thought in a Radical Age: Religious Authority and Internal Criticism.** By Muhammad Qasim

Zaman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. 363p. \$30.99. doi:10.1017/S1537592714002849

— Andrew F. March, *Yale University*

Western publics have long had a keen, if not always well-informed, interest in the politics of Islamic religious

reform. Whatever it was that was thought to have Gone Wrong—the economic, scientific, and technological backwardness of Muslim societies, their belated democratization and political modernization, or excessive fondness for violence and misogyny—it has often been argued that some kind of reform of Islam itself is a necessary prerequisite for Muslims finally getting with the program. Lots of people have gotten in on the game, from the U.S. State Department to glossy newsweeklies to self-styled latter-day Orwells like Paul Berman.

There is nothing wrong with an interest in Islamic religious reform, of course, and there is no a priori reason to think that religious authority and dominant religious values have absolutely nothing to do with political development. The problem is that Westerners just do not tend to be very good at asking the right questions about Islamic religious discourses, particularly when discussing them in public. We tend to think in terms of historical analogies to Western experiences (often poorly remembered; so “Who is the Muslim Luther?” or “When is the Muslim Reformation happening?”). We also tend to see a variety of distinct issues as bundled together, for example, that a Muslim thinker’s views on the status of the Qur’an and flexibility of Islamic law go hand in hand with political views that we would regard as “moderate.” We are thus often not sure where to draw the boundaries between good guys and bad guys but are sure that there are such boundaries. Indeed, the very concept of “reform” is problematic. We, in our inevitable Whiggery, assume that “reform” means to move ineluctably from a more traditionalist or fundamentalist position to a more liberal one. However, in Islam, the concept of reform (*islah*) is just as commonly associated with “correction” and “purification,” which involves restoring an original purity, rather than evolving toward something new.

For these reasons, Muhammad Qasim Zaman’s *Modern Islamic Thought in a Radical Age* could not be more welcome. The book presents a set of important debates on core Islamic religious concepts, some of which have almost become part of the English language: *ijma’* (consensus), *ijithad* (independent religious reasoning), and *maslaha* (public welfare, common good). It also covers a number of key subjects of public debate in the modern Islamic world: religious education, gender equity, social justice, and the rules of *jihad*. But the book is not just a survey of opinions and doctrines on these topics. Rather, it uses them to study the politics of internal criticism and the quest for religious authority in the modern, postcolonial, transnational Islamic public sphere.

Zaman’s views ought to be of great interest even to scholars not particularly interested in the weeds of modern Islamic religious debates, for the practice of “internal criticism” (or “connected criticism”) is more complicated than the notion of “criticism internal to the Muslim community,” thus excluding only