

contained the seeds “destined to germinate in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries into those institutional arrangements for constitutional restraint upon the abuse of executive power” (176). At the same time, sacral kingship found a new home among the late medieval popes, who, having first criticized lay rulers’ claims to the divine, “went on themselves to assume the role of fully fledged sacral monarchs in their own right” (222). It is this two-pronged shift—the desacralization of the royal courts and the concomitant sacralization of the pope—that Oakley will follow into his next volume.

For all its strengths, the book does have some weaknesses, the first of which is its chronological and geographical sweep. Oakley opens *Empty Bottles* by looking at early civilizations around the globe. Although this comparative impulse allows him to place Western monarchy in a global context, Oakley’s desire to stretch so far afield feels unnecessary. Asides on the Nigerian priest-king or references to the “geologic deposits of Taoist, Confucian, and Buddhist patterns of thought” (19) do not deepen his analysis of the Greek polis and Roman senate; they detract from it.

The second weakness lies in the way Oakley chooses to situate his argument. In his prologue Oakley laments the fact that “we are still reminded that Christianity made ‘purely political thought impossible’” (ix–x). But by “still reminding,” Oakley means scholars writing in 1932, 1937, 1962, 1966, and 1967. Only one person in his footnote (Canning, 1996) could legitimately be said to fall into the “still reminding camp,” and even this is stretching it. Oakley does not need such straw-man attacks to motivate such a probing study.

These quibbles aside, there is much to value in *Empty Bottles*, and I eagerly await the next installment in Oakley’s series.

–Jenny Adams

### END TIMES

John R. Hall: *Apocalypse: From Antiquity to the Empire of Modernity*. (Cambridge and Malden, MA: Polity, 2009. Pp. 285. \$24.95.)

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In a sweeping way throughout *Apocalypse*, the sociologist John R. Hall (University of California at Davis) covers the range of the apocalyptic imaginary from its onset in Zoroastrian Persia and ancient Israel through the incipency of Christianity, the emergence of Islam, medieval Europe, and the early modern centuries to the totalitarian regimes of terror in the twentieth century, and the new manifestations of apocalyptic end times in the Islamic

and Western worlds in the twenty-first century. Hall isn't bothered by the contemporary talk about the secularization of the sacred, the disenchantment of the world, and the withering away of religion. He considers the transcendental longing for the transfiguration of historical reality a visionary constant in the history of all civilizations. In fewer than three hundred pages, his study provides a richly textured and intelligently substantiated discussion of apocalyptic times.

Hall distinguishes this apocalyptic time frame and the anticipation of rapture in being from other modes of temporality. He speaks about the immediacy of the "here-and-now" experiences in primary societies; the socially ritualized "synchronic time" of societies anchored in tradition and remembered memory; the "diachronic time" of routinized time management that enables modern political economies to function in a rationalized way; the "strategic time" component in long-range policy or expansion designs; and the "pre- and post-apocalyptic time" modalities that envision the conditions leading up to rapture and finally illustrate the utopian end realm. The reader occasionally gets the impression that the knowledge interest in the apocalypse and its various historical formations becomes overwhelmed by the author's fascination with the phenomenology of time scenarios throughout history. The two lines of inquiry that compete for attention in this extremely informative book have found two distinctive styles of literary representation, a more analytic one for the time frames and a comparative hermeneutic narrative approach for the apocalyptic imaginary.

The engaging language of the comparative chapters becomes obvious, for example, when Hall sums up the apocalyptic moment at the height of the medieval Islamic expansion, a few centuries before the fury of Europe's crusading Christian backlash:

By the end of the era of Islam's initial expansion in the 850s CE, the basic possibilities of historical and apocalyptic time had become manifest, layered onto the immediate, communal, and transcendent possibilities long established in the primordial here-and-now. A *telos* of historical time could be linked with the destiny of a people, and a dramatic turning point in history could be taken to mark the beginning of a new era. Apocalyptic expectations might posit an immediate moment of divine intervention to rectify the injustices that God's chosen had endured. Those of faith might prepare for the end of time through conversion, or advance the divine cause through war. Or they might retreat from the unfolding debacle in the established order to a post-apocalyptic heaven, on earth or beyond. Finally, if the apocalypse were pushed back far into the indefinite future, the chiliastic expectations of millennial transformation would recede, leaving the bedrock of life in the here-and-now, orchestrated to varying degrees through tradition and ritual, enveloped within wider developments of historical change. (44)

Unlike social scientists and historians who would be satisfied with this "objective" characterization of historical configurations, Hall doesn't

abstain from expressing succinct “subjective” observations when he concludes: “These temporal possibilities are still with us today. They play out within a world that we call ‘modern’ (or, sometimes, ‘postmodern’)” (44).

Hall’s major intellectual motivation for the book is certainly to promote a different reading of modernity. Coupled with a vivid portrayal of the radical and violent features of the revolution in England in the seventeenth century, his account of the French Revolution makes us see that the Reign of Terror was part of “the utopian pursuit of the new sacred civic order.” He writes: “A founding moment of political modernity was apocalyptic in its logic” (119). He traces this apocalyptic logic from the Puritan radicals in England and the Jacobins in France to the bloody revolutions in the twentieth century in Russia, China, and Cambodia and the establishment of regimes of terror in those modern societies. It remains a mystery why he touches on Nazi Germany only in passing and fails to mention Hitler or the Holocaust and its planners and executioners. With the exception of Carl Schmitt, whom Hall quotes, there are no figures in the book with Nazi credentials.

This exclusion of the fascist imaginary from the apocalyptic map may be justified, up to a certain point, when it comes to Italy and the other Mediterranean and fascist regimes in the Balkans. After all, they started out as rather antiliberal and anticommunist authoritarian regimes, which became radicalized when they joined forces with Nazi Germany and began to execute their respective ethnic cleansing projects. But that Nazi Germany itself is not included in Hall’s discussion makes no sense, since much of the original literature on the apocalyptic or religious dimension of the Third Reich—an apocalyptic symbol in itself—emerged in Germany during the reign of the Nazis or, at least, in response to it. The concept of “political religion” was coined in the 1930s and developed by Eric Voegelin in 1938 in the book *Die politischen Religionen*, which was originally published in Vienna and then one year later, after Voegelin’s escape to the United States, in Stockholm. In this book the author deals with the apocalyptic nature of the Nazis and other mass movements, and it has been available in English translation for many years. The ideas of this book were influential in launching the journal *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* in 2000—coincidentally, the same year that the book *The Political Religions* was republished in Voegelin’s *Collected Works*. Hall does not mention Voegelin’s book, the concept of political religion, or the literature on it that has appeared in the interim (see Emilio Gentile, *Politics as Religion* [Princeton University Press, 2001, 2006]).

Despite this inexplicable gap in an otherwise extraordinarily erudite and readable book about the apocalyptic imaginary and its range over three millennia, Hall has succeeded in making us understand “how the apocalyptic has been shaped, contained, rechanneled, and reasserted in relation to modernity, and, conversely, how modernity has been affected by apocalyptic epochs” (200). The currency of his apocalyptic view becomes obvious for even the most antireligious mind when reading this comment on George W. Bush: “it would seem mistaken to focus solely on his individual faith

and his connections with the Christian Right. Bush simply signaled his alliance with the millennial tradition in American religion that has long framed American history" (187).

–Manfred Henningsen

### CHANGING NORMS OF RECOGNITION

Mikulas Fabry: *Recognizing States: International Society and the Establishment of New States Since 1776*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. Pp. 272. \$85.00.)

doi:10.1017/S003467051100101X

Mikulas Fabry's excellent book examines the norms and principles involved in recognizing new states in international politics from the eighteenth century until the present, looking at individual cases in each chapter. Instead of offering a theoretical or narrow discussion of international law, it focuses on the international politics of state recognition, and the author places himself within the English School of international relations (IR) in viewing international politics as an international society. Fabry offers no grand theory to explain why the norms and principles of state recognition change, but he argues in his conclusion that the nineteenth-century principle of "de facto self-determination" has been unwisely superseded since decolonization after 1945 by a "positive" right of self-determination that recognizes states even though some lack the capacity to govern themselves. The book is divided into chapters that look at distinct historical periods and their different norms and principles about state recognition.

In a brief introductory chapter, Fabry dismisses realist theory with respect to this topic; realists incorrectly think force of arms leads to state recognition when there are instead a series of norms, principles, and practices that constitute a society of states that exists independently of a particular state. Since Martin Wight and others in the English School say little about this topic, however, Fabry claims that he addresses an issue that has been largely ignored in IR.

The first historical chapter discusses how the norms and principles of state recognition shifted among the major powers of Europe from one based on dynastic legitimacy in the eighteenth century to de facto self-determination in the nineteenth century. In the eighteenth century, only monarchs based on divine right of rule recognized new states. The rise of liberalism and the American Revolution challenged this principle, but only France and the Netherlands recognized America before the British Crown did so. Like the American Revolution, the French Revolution fought to form new states based on popular sovereignty; however, following Napoleon's defeat, the