

Chambers accepted classical liberalism as the deliverer of “business” from a dated orthodoxy (*Ghosts*, 221). As a “man of the Right,” he endorsed, with reservations, “capitalism in its American version” (115). In the late fifties he argued for certain concessions to the New-Dealized temper of the time. Reinsch, who notes this shift from the “Manichean” absolutes of *Witness* (106), seems in his own voice less conciliatory, attacking “progressive taxation, centralized solutions to economic growth,” and Social Security, product of “a political vision ... obviously not [in] the Founders’ Constitution” (46, 138).

A final note might bear the title “A Stream of Solecisms.” Reinsch has attempted to place Chambers in the line of modern conservative thought that includes Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, and Russell Kirk, but in a style that consistently turns a reviewer’s response into that of a composition instructor. Even a secular humanist will conclude that the Conservative Mind deserves a more lucid advocate than Reinsch—and a more temperate representative than Chambers.

–James Walton

CULTURAL SECESSION

Michael T. Bernath: *Confederate Minds: The Struggle for Intellectual Independence in the Civil War South*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010. Pp. xi, 412. \$39.95.)

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In *Confederate Minds*, Michael T. Bernath recounts the activities of Confederate “cultural nationalists” who worked to create an independent Southern literary and educational tradition during the years of the Civil War. According to Bernath, this group of Southern editors, writers, and educators self-consciously promoted the Confederate nation-building effort by severing venues for Southern intellectual expression from Northern influence and producing work that had a uniquely Southern point of view. Southern cultural nationalists saw their effort as central not only in legitimizing secession and promoting the effort to establish a Confederate nation but also in defining what the nation would be for the future.

Using sources that have recently become more accessible to scholars as a result of digitization and microfilm, Bernath bases his study on the newspapers, journals, books, and educational materials that Southerners produced throughout the Civil War years. The content of these materials, however, is not the central concern of the book. Bernath is more interested in exploring

the motivations of the editors and writers who produced such material and in examining the success or failure of those materials to thrive during the chaotic years of the war than he is in examining the themes and ideas of the literature itself. His work is thus more a history of the production of cultural materials during the Civil War than a true work of intellectual history. That said, *Confederate Minds* is a valuable overview of the Southern publishing industry and educational system during the Civil War. It reveals much about the mindset of cultural leaders in the Confederate South, their struggles to create a literary tradition from scratch, and the impact of war itself on the efforts to promote cultural independence.

Bernath's book moves chronologically through the war years, tracing the evolution of the production of Confederate cultural materials throughout the conflict. In Part 1, he discusses the Southern struggle to break away from Northern cultural domination after secession. Throughout the Antebellum Era Southerners had complained about the use of Northern teachers and textbooks in the classroom and the widespread consumption of Northern print materials among the general public, but after secession this critique sharpened. To achieve true independence, cultural leaders argued, the South would have to break free from Northern intellectual dominance. According to Bernath, the war provided not only the impetus but also the opportunity to achieve this break. Demands for a Southern literature escalated when Northern print materials were cut off by the blockade during the war. In addition, Southerners became more committed to supporting Southern over Northern literature as part of the war effort.

After discussing the initiation of the Confederate cultural nationalist effort, Bernath moves in Part 2 of the book to a discussion of how this effort was organized during the first years of war. In his evaluation, Bernath makes a distinction between two types of nationalist literature promoted by Southern cultural leaders: a pragmatic "Literature of Knowledge" and a more romantic "Literature of Power." These two types of literature evolved in stages. First a Southern "Literature of Knowledge" had to be developed in order to provide vehicles for the dissemination of ideas from Southern sources and develop a demand for such materials among a Southern readership. Once this took place, a higher "Literature of Power," in which Southern writers could work to define the nature of the Confederate nation, could come into existence. Bernath argues that Confederate cultural leaders were surprisingly successful in their creation of an independent "Literature of Knowledge." Despite the wartime shortages of material resources and manpower, a number of newspapers and journals were produced during the war years in the South. In addition, during these years educators in the South were increasingly able to break away from the use of Northern textbooks and teachers in the classrooms.

Nevertheless, Bernath argues that while cultural nationalists made strides toward developing a "Literature of Knowledge" during the war years, Confederate nationalist literature failed to mature into a "Literature of

Power." Part 3 of his work examines the "high-water mark" of the development of Confederate cultural nationalist literature, and it analyzes the reasons that it failed to develop into a fully realized vehicle for the promotion of Southern romantic nationalism. Essentially, the war caught up to cultural leaders. Although the creation of a "Literature of Knowledge" had encouraged a Southern demand for a nationalist literature, the pressures of war made it increasingly difficult to produce material of high quality to fill this demand. The last years of war were marked by increased hardship, shortages, and a depletion of manpower in the South, and the production of a lasting, high-quality Confederate nationalist literature could not take shape under these conditions.

The last section of the book discusses the end of the war and its aftermath. Bernath eschews the argument that Confederate nationalism survived beyond the war, asserting a clear delineation between Confederate literature and the regional literature that emerges in the South following the war. In the immediate aftermath of the war, Southern writing did progress, but it was not forward-looking, a characteristic that Bernath sees as central to the goals of the literature of the war years. The "Lost Cause" school of thought that emerged in the South in the postwar years focused first on reconciliation and then on glorifying the Old South. Although a strong regional identity remained in the years after the war, the effort to promote a romantic vision of an independent Southern nation died with the end of the Civil War.

As mentioned, Bernath focuses more heavily on the development of Confederate cultural vehicles throughout the war years than on the content of the literature itself. Some of his chapters devolve into a list of the various publications that were produced, and at times the reader can become frustrated by the lack of attention given to content. Bernath is at his best when he does engage with the themes that are present in the literature itself. For example, one of the more interesting conclusions of Bernath's work is that in creating a new literary tradition, Confederates played down certain themes that had dominated antebellum Southern works, such as the defense of slavery and arguments about states' rights. Because secession had taken place, he says, Southerners no longer needed to emphasize these issues. In fact, Bernath argues that writers were able to be more critical of the institution of slavery and promote various reforms more freely because Southerners no longer felt the need to defend themselves against attacks from the North. Bernath also asserts that as these old issues became less pressing, cultural nationalists sought new topics. These new topics, however, are never fully explored. Perhaps this lack of significant attention to the content of the literature during the war years is due to the failure of Confederate writers to produce a coherent "Literature of Power." According to Bernath, the literature during the war tended to focus on the war effort itself, and new themes never fully emerged before the collapse of the Confederacy.

Despite this frustration, Bernath's work is a valuable look at the Confederate experience of war from a unique point of view. *Confederate*

Minds reminds us of the enormity of the task that Confederates had before them during the Civil War. Not only did they have to conduct a military effort and create a new political entity; they also had to create a new cultural identity in order to coalesce as a true nation. Bernath's work shows us how the failure of these first two tasks helped to lead to the failure of the third.

–Angela F. Murphy

FLEEING LEVIATHAN

James C. Scott: *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009. Pp. xviii, 464. \$35.00.)

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For students of society across the *longue durée* who are eager for a readable and challenging approach to understanding the ways in which the social organization of lowland states and that of upland communities have interacted across history, James Scott's latest book, *The Art of Not Being Governed*, is a veritable feast, alike for specialists of Southeast Asia and for nonspecialists. Borrowing Willem van Schendel's concept of Zomia, or the area of mountainous Asia that spans seven nation states, Scott argues that groups living in these highlands are not any sort of survivals of primitive "pre-state" peoples, but rather are groups that have escaped the taxes, corvée, conscription, and other ties that would otherwise bind them to state-building projects in the valleys. If Scott's influential works were an LP record, *The Art of Not Being Governed* would be the flip side to *Seeing Like a State*. This is a major argument that goes against Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*: it is not the nature of society to become subordinate to a state-building project, but rather there are many instances in which groups will flee these very projects in favor of adopting other modes of social organization. As Scott puts it, "virtually everything about these people's livelihoods ... can be read as strategic positionings designed to keep the state at arm's length" (x).

Scott does, however, make the caveat that this is no longer the case, since emergent technologies of transportation, communication, and surveillance preclude the possibility of groups escaping the state. For the peoples of Zomia, escaping the state is hardly a political endeavor alone; this project also entails technologies and modes of production that lend themselves to political organization, including illiteracy as well as certain foodcrops that need not be harvested en masse. As Scott argues, the concept of Zomia is an attempt to push the limits of "area" studies in that it is the result neither of national boundaries nor of strategic conceptions; in this sense, the