

The Good Book Guide

POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES. AN INTRODUCTION by Andrew Heywood. Palgrave, third edition 2003. xviii + 382 pp. Index. £17.50 pbk

From the time Man lived in more than family groups there has been a political dimension in History and long before Modern History political ideas and ideology have influenced life. While many AS and A2 units can be undertaken without an appreciation of underlying ideas, a more secure and complete awareness of ideology, by teachers and students, will enable greater understanding of a period studied.

Andrew Heywood's introduction to political ideologies includes about 30 pages each on liberalism, conservatism, anarchism, socialism, nationalism and fascism as well as chapters on newer ideologies; feminism, ecologism and religious fundamentalism. Each chapter covers origins and development, a description of the main parts of the ideology and variations from the core ideas. Dispersed throughout the book are descriptive inserts on related concepts, paternalism, patriotism and pluralism are examples, and perspectives on other concepts such as authority, freedom, nation and equality. The volume also incorporates information on some 40 writers and their ideas and, most interesting of all, brief bullet points of tensions within or between ideologies.

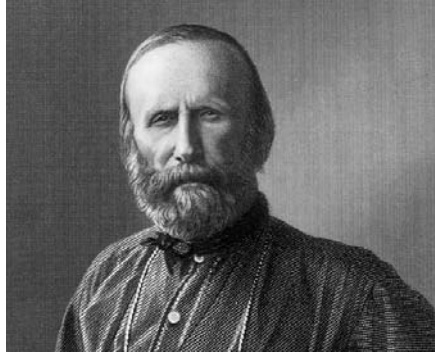
The author's style is noteworthy for clarity and the absence of jargon. Teachers, and students, who wish to increase their understanding of the ideas that underlie and influence society and politics and thereby the events of History, will be well served by this volume. It will be a valuable addition to a department library.

Tom Wells

ITALIAN UNIFICATION 1820-71 by Martin Collier. Heinemann - Advanced History series, 2003. iv + 156 pp. Index. £9.99 pbk

Martin Collier's book provides an accessible, stimulating, and well-illustrated introduction to Italian unification and is ideal for use by sixth-form students. It is comprehensive in its chronological treatment, carrying the story through until 1914. Each chapter is focused around a particular question: 'Why was the Risorgimento important?' 'What happened in the Revolutions of 1848?' and so forth, and the discussion is well sign-posted by use of sub-headings. Key-terms are explained throughout and - especially useful - potted biographies are provided for many of the lesser-known figures in the story.

If there is any criticism to be made



Garibaldi, the maverick Italian nationalist

it is that the book seeks, if anything, to be too helpful to students. The first half is targeted at AS students and provides a basic narrative and analysis of the key events, while the second half retraces the same ground through central debates such as: 'What was the role and importance of foreign powers?' Given that the book is only 150 pages, this division is a little ambitious and doesn't really serve a clear purpose: successful AS and A2 students will need to read both sections.

Yet this is primarily an organisational quibble. In terms of content, presentation, and historiographical awareness, this book can be strongly recommended to teachers and students alike.

Ian St John

THE VICTORIANS SINCE 1901 edited by M. Taylor and M. Wolff. Manchester University Press, 2004. xv + 295 pp. Index. £14.95 pbk

Having read the book, you then appreciate, as never before, that Queen Victoria died in 1901 but the Victorian Age did not die with her.

This clever collection of essays, entertaining as well as instructive, describes how the twentieth century has read and responded to the nineteenth century of the Great Queen; and it explores the wide range and growing reach of Victorian studies. It is an important contribution to our understanding, and not only of the Victorian decades. In ferreting through the legacy of history-writing and commentary the authors, 16 of them, present a changing historiography through 100 years of, firstly, reaction (Bloomsbury superiority), rehabilitation (the 1950s and 60s) and then 1990s enthusiasm (in film and TV especially). Hence, the text tells us as much about the assumptions and prejudices of these decades as it does about the century under review: their own values and responses in architecture, politics, travel and tourism, literature, art, history and popular culture are explored. This is a

magnificent read, full of surprises and strongly informative - a treat for the open mind, provided by a series of interdisciplinary case studies. Through them we encounter complex and conflicting interpretations of the past and for that reason any student of history should read it.

Richard Miller

ROOSEVELT'S PEACETIME ADMINISTRATIONS, 1933-1941. A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF THE NEW DEAL YEARS edited by G.H. Bennett. Manchester University Press - Documents in Modern History Series, 2004. vii + 264 pp. Index £15.99 pbk.

This is a lively and comprehensive collection of sources on Franklin Roosevelt's peacetime administrations. There is a brief but penetrating introduction which summarises Roosevelt's career and draws attention to its many paradoxes: 'Born of privilege, he had the common touch. Saviour of his class, he was accused of being its greatest traitor ...' This is followed by a useful summary of recent writing both on the New Deal and Roosevelt himself.

The rest of the book is built on the main aspects of the New Deal: New Deal rhetoric, New Deal domestic policy, New Deal people, New Deal foreign policy and New Deal critics. The choice of material is illuminating and imaginative. As well as obvious sources such as Inaugural Addresses and the famous 'fireside chats' there are transcripts of radio interviews, newspaper columns and excerpts from Roosevelt's private correspondence. The section on New Deal people gives a valuable insight into the way Roosevelt operated and the debts he owed to his advisers. Many of the documents bring home the real impact of agencies such as the Works Progress Administration on the lives of the unemployed. There is a useful chronological table, a guide to further reading and an index.

The book will be most useful to students who are already reasonably familiar with American history of this time. Knowledge of the background to the Roosevelt administrations such as the Wall Street Crash is assumed. The topic by topic treatment, while useful in most ways, means that students will need to be familiar with the political context in which the New Deal evolved. With that proviso, this book can be strongly recommended. The sources bring out all the complexities and contradictions of the New Deal while giving credit to its constructive achievements and to its architect.

William Simpson