

## Book Reviews and Notices

*Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World, 1783–1939*, by James Belich. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. xii, 573 pp. Maps, tables, notes, index. \$50.00 cloth.

Reviewer Rebekah M. K. Mergenthal is assistant professor of history at Pacific Lutheran University. Her research and writing have focused on the settlement of the lower Missouri River Valley.

James Belich's *Replenishing the Earth* is a fascinating and accessible volume that explores the story of the "Anglophone settler explosion" (21) during the long nineteenth century. To illuminate the scope and importance of this process, Belich compares and contrasts settlements in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. This is a rich and complicated story, and Belich's engaging writing style draws readers in. His prose conveys both his enthusiasm for his research and the stakes of his claims. Belich wants nothing less than to explain how Great Britain and its "newlands" (86) came to dominate the world culturally, economically, and politically during the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. His answers are compelling and offer much for other historians to engage.

Belich draws on and engages a vast array of literature and covers a lot of geographic ground without sacrificing clarity, partly because the book is so well organized. The first section establishes Belich's general themes to explain the development and rise of the Anglophone world. These include the mass transfer of people, information, and goods, as well as the ideology of "settlerism" (153). Subsequent chapters test Belich's explanations in a range of places, moving from London to New York, Chicago to Melbourne, with attention to how the hinterlands of these cities expanded and shifted over time. Belich compares histories of resource extraction and teases out how cultural ties flourished even as political ones were weakened or severed in the Anglo world. The range of topics covered and juxtaposed is one of the strengths of the volume.

This book also provides broader context for those interested in specific parts of the expansion Belich investigates. For those most familiar with the story of American westward expansion, for example, Belich emphasizes the important parallels to its "twin" (79), the British

West. By juxtaposing the expected and less expected, Belich offers his readers fruitful comparisons and an important argument about the broader processes that linked a range of geographic places during this period. In this way, he disputes claims to American exceptionalism. Belich wants to correct a tendency that has led “American westward migration” to be “seldom seen in the context of other great migrations — pan-Anglo, pan-European, or global” (131). In Belich’s view, that isolated view is not only incorrect but also has resulted in a misleading understanding of the American past.

*Replenishing the Earth* is particularly intriguing when it explores patterns of expansion. Belich asserts the importance of “a series of regional booms and busts, followed by an ‘export rescue’ in which shattered settler economies were saved by long-range exports to their oldlands” (86). This process of recovery, according to Belich, reconnected the “oldlands” and the new through long-range exporting that resulted in what he calls “recolonization” (221). Belich previously explored the idea of recolonization for New Zealand but now expands it into a broader geographic context. Recolonization is crucial to Belich’s overall argument about the rise and spread of an Anglo-prone world because it enables him to trace connections that constituted and reconstituted that world, and thus fostered its spread. The positive spin Belich puts on this stage of development does not entirely fit with the views of Patricia Nelson Limerick and other western historians who emphasize the eastern United States’ exploitation of the West and its resources. However, Belich does not shy away from interpretive differences in any of the specific stories he tells.

Those most interested in the history of expansion to the midwestern region of the United States might be disappointed in the relative brevity of Belich’s chapter “The Great Midwest.” However, even if he does not explore as many details as he could, *Replenishing the Earth* provides a rich context that allows a deeper understanding of local developments. For readers specifically focused on the history of Iowa, it is worth noting that Belich categorizes Iowa at times with the Old Northwest and at others with the Midwest, so it shows up in more sections than some of its neighboring states. This vagueness also points to a limitation of Belich’s sweeping approach. Where he excels at extracting patterns, the story of *Replenishing the Earth* needs to be compared with histories that can supplement its bird’s-eye view. The book raises questions about motivation that would best be answered by stories more closely attuned to the on-the-ground details of the places people left and the places they went to in the great migration that Belich recounts.

Moreover, while Belich is clearly aware of the exploitive side of Anglo expansion, those seeking a full consideration of displacement of and resistance by indigenous peoples would need to look elsewhere. Overall, however, *Replenishing the Earth* is a rewarding book that enables readers to re-situate and reconsider stories of settlement and expansion that they might think they already know well.

*Wandering Souls: Protestant Migrations in America, 1630–1865*, by S. Scott Rohrer. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010. x, 312 pp. Illustrations, tables, maps, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$39.95 cloth.

Reviewer Linda K. Pritchard is Department Head, Women's and Gender Studies, and a professor of history at Eastern Michigan University. Her publications include "A Comparative Approach to Western Religious History: Texas as a Case Study, 1845–1890" in the *Western Historical Quarterly* (1988).

Scott Rohrer's thesis in *Wandering Souls* — "[Protestant] religion's role in migration and the settlement process was far more important than has been recognized" (247) — counters what he believes is a distortion of America's internal migration story. For a large variety of Protestant groups, religious migrations differed fundamentally from secular ones. Rather than a setting for disparate individuals to meld into Frederick Jackson Turner's "new American," the frontier, Rohrer argues, provided space for religious peoples to reinspire, reestablish, and reinvent their own religious traditions. The migrations of such groups did not threaten their "Christian Community"; instead, they were generally successful attempts to strengthen ties of shared religious values.

Rohrer selects various well-known and obscure migrations from 1630 to the end of the Civil War to demonstrate the power of religion to shape migration in North America. The book begins with an account of the "first frontier" migration in the form of Thomas Hooker's departure from Massachusetts Bay Colony to the Connecticut Valley in 1636. Rohrer organizes his account of subsequent Protestant migrations into two broad categories. The first includes religiously minded people who moved to find spiritual and economic fulfillment. The "sojourners" he documents in this category include Devereux Jarratt and the Anglicans moving from tidewater to upcountry Virginia in 1752; two groups of Scots-Irish Presbyterians in the mid-eighteenth century, one moving from Boston to Maine and another within Virginia; the Moravian migration into North Carolina from eastern Pennsylvania in 1765; and, finally, Methodists from Virginia into the Ohio Country after the Revolution. Rohrer's second category of Protestant