

the process of community development. Instead, it reinforces the conclusions reached in those earlier studies. Hickey's work reminds readers that Chase County settlements faced problems similar to those of numerous other communities across the West. For example, Thurman had to attract a railroad to ensure economic growth and development. Like other communities, Thurman was also confronted by massive population turnovers, and it was therefore left to families of long residence to bring stability to the community. Hickey notes the importance of the church and school to the community, and the instrumental role played by women in maintaining these institutions. Finally, he reiterates that if a community is to survive, it must adapt to external changes.

This work would have been far more effective had Hickey struck a balance between primary sources and secondary works to support his conclusions. His attempt to integrate existing scholarship on communities into this study is commendable, but his excessive reliance on those works to provide a "history in microcosm" (19) has the effect of suggesting that there is little if anything unique or significant about Thurman, Kansas. This impression is softened, however, by his discussion of the importance of the Flint Hills area to the cattle industry. Despite these limitations, *Ghost Settlement on the Prairie* is a good local study that will be of interest to students of Kansas and Great Plains history.

Colony and Empire: The Capitalist Transformation of the American West, by William G. Robbins. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1994. xvi, 255 pp. Notes, index. \$29.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY DAVID A. WALKER, UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

The American West is undergoing dramatic, perhaps revolutionary change. This is true not only for the contemporary setting but also among historians studying the region's past. Many small communities and previously isolated rural areas are attracting new, often affluent residents who turn ranch land into housing developments. In addition, scholars are aggressively debating the significance of the western experience between the Turnerian perspective of orderly progress and triumphalism and the "legacy of conquest" interpreted by advocates of the new western history.

William G. Robbins has written a stimulating, thought-provoking analysis of the American West during the past 150 years. He argues that attention to the movement and dynamics of capitalism reveals more about the region than studies focusing on the clash of cultures, economic development, or the West's status as pacesetter for the rest of the country. The dynamic role of capitalism is the essential ingre-

dient for understanding power, influence, and change throughout the region. Previously, historians focused on westward expansion driven by the spirit of Manifest Destiny and on the region as haven, opportunity, or refuge. Robbins, however, does not believe these perspectives offer a comprehensive analytical thesis to explain market and class relations or the influence and changing nature of capitalism that propelled the modern West into a global economic system.

Although people from all social classes acquired and developed western resources, especially land, Robbins demonstrates that those with surplus investment capital dominated all economic activities. No single factor was more important than capital invested in railroads and other internal improvements that created an infrastructure that facilitated subsequent economic expansion. By the late nineteenth century, the West was integrally linked with national, even global, industrial enterprises. Robbins believes that mining had a greater influence on western history than any other industry, and that wageworkers were as important as subsistence farmers, cattlemen, or sourdough placer miners in the region's development.

The author draws some interesting comparisons with the western borderland regions of Mexico and Canada. The element of violent conquest, issues of race and class, and tensions surrounding immigrant laborers dominated southwest borderlands relations. Although issues of race and class are much less apparent along the northern border, the Canadian process of settlement and economic development was more cautious. Neither the government nor settlers relied on a policy of genocide to clear indigenous people from the land. In another comparative essay, Robbins demonstrates that by the turn of the twentieth century, the West was more thoroughly integrated into national and international capitalism than the South. A tragic sense of the past, pervasive and entrenched poverty, a restricted labor market, and a need to seek national atonement through a romantic defense of its culture all inhibited the South from experiencing a thoroughgoing capitalist transformation similar to that occurring in the West.

Robbins examines the development of urban/hinterland relations in the West in terms of the expanding power and influence of metropolitan centers feeding off dependent rural areas. The Turnerian focus portrays a resource-rich hinterland with sparse settlement, isolated from markets. Despite this persistent theme centering on symbols and images of backcountry life, the urban West has been at the center of capital accumulation and commercial expansion often with an international outreach. Capital linkages to eastern and European investors influenced urban development in the West and directed the course of hinterland resource exploitation.

In a tightly written epilogue, the author maintains that to understand changes in the West, one needs to study the dynamics of capitalism throughout the region. This includes the perpetually changing character of its political and economic culture, the inherent instability of its resource sector, and the conflict over time between city and hinterland. The contemporary West is a region in transition, with rising and declining sectors, but also with a global component to its economy and business partnerships. For Robbins, California epitomizes the emerging post-Cold War West with its dramatic demographic movements and constantly restructuring local economies.

This book will encourage continuing analysis of the West at the turn of the twenty-first century and the impact of regional history on those conditions. Although the author focuses his argument on the mountain, desert, and coastal West, most readers of this journal will benefit from Robbins's depth of analysis, stimulating interpretation, and clear straightforward narrative style.

The Making of Western Labor Radicalism: Denver's Organized Workers, 1878-1905, by David Brundage. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994. xii, 207 pp. Notes, index. \$26.95 cloth.

REVIEWED BY ROBERT JOHNSTON, YALE UNIVERSITY

David Brundage has produced a solid monograph about the political radicalism of Denver's unions over a significant stretch of history. It is a workmanlike book, although the content between the covers does not by any means match the ambition of the title.

Brundage's major contribution is to demonstrate the continuity between the "old" producer-oriented Knights of Labor, the craft-oriented American Federation of Labor, and the very new Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, or Wobblies). Traditionally, historians have told us that the radical Wobblies suddenly burst on the scene because of the violence and super-heated exploitation characteristic only of the western mining frontier. Instead, Brundage argues that labor activists' quarter-century-long efforts at political reform linked business unionists and revolutionary syndicalists in a culture of protest that grew organically out of working-class Denver.

Brundage's book proceeds by way of relatively autonomous chapters on different topics. Brundage discusses the economy of late nineteenth-century Denver; the legacy of Irish nationalism on the Knights of Labor; the Knights' fight against the saloon; the development of syndicalist ideology within the mainstream labor movement; the effect of the 1890s depression and the Populist revolt on ideas about industrial unionism; and the milieu around the turn of the

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