BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by James C. Bradford

Thomas Paine: Apostle of Freedom. By Jack Fruchtman, Jr. (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1994. Pp. xii, 557. $30.00.)

Political scientist Jack Fruchtman, Jr., has written a marvelous new comprehensive biography of Thomas Paine. In his masterful *Thomas Paine and the Religion of Nature* (1993) he interpreted Paine as a "secular preacher." Likewise, *Thomas Paine: Apostle of Freedom* connects Paine's life to "the essentially religious character" of Paine's work (2). Fruchtman hesitates to compare Paine with Locke and Rousseau, because Paine always began thinking with a journalistic outrage at the particular injustices he happened to see, and then articulated first principles in a prophetic language familiar to his readers. Fruchtman also recognizes that it is problematic to reduce Paine's ideas to any of the conventional categories of radical thought in the period. Fruchtman's Paine is an original: a secular "apostle," a journalistic "crusader," and a "prophet" doing a Deistic God's work on earth, serving "the cause of humanity."

Fruchtman explains that Paine's significance and originality are rooted in the "accidental" and "wandering" nature of his life. Like the Apostle Paul, the Apostle Paine seems to be transformed on the road. In the course of his journeys Paine encountered injustices in many different contexts and made friendships and alliances in various countries and social classes. Paine's ideas mirrored his wanderings. In revolutionary America, he synthesized Lockeanism and Protestant imagery. In revolutionary France he became influenced by Rousseau's ideas of virtue and the nation. During the Reign of Terror, he explored the implications of Deism/Pantheism, and in his final American years he became darkly bitter as he endured hate and disrespect. Fruchtman's approach allows him to see the contingency of these stages as an interpretive tool rather than as a problem. For example, Fruchtman often discusses Paine's intellectual relationship to his celebrated friends (*e.g.*, Franklin, Jefferson, Lafayette, Booneville) and celebrated enemies (*e.g.*, Gouverneur Morris, Burke, Robespierre). Although these towering figures are presented as supporting members of Fruchtman's cast, they reveal concretely how Paine's accidental as-

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sociations and situations drove his writings. It is this uprootedness and wandering in thought and in life that allowed Paine to unleash the democratic potential hidden in liberalism.

Fruchtman aims at a wide audience. His book is a triumph in combining history and political theory. Students of political theory will be impressed by his discussions of how Paine pioneered now-embattled liberal notions of patriotism, internationalism and the welfare state. Scholars of revolutionary America and France will find his analysis of Paine's role in eighteenth-century politics fascinating. Unlike other recent Paine biographers (Alfred Owen Aldridge, Gregory Claeys, Eric Foner, John Keane, and Mark Philp), Fruchtman penetrates Paine's rage and passion throughout his entire life and writings. *Thomas Paine: Apostle of Freedom* is an excellent introduction to Paine's thought and sets a new standard for comprehensive Paine biographies.

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Let the Advice be Good: A Defense of Madison's Democratic Nationalism. By William B. Allen. (Lanham: University Press of America, 1994. Pp. vi, 66. $37.50; paper, $18.50.)

William B. Allen's extended essay on the political philosophy behind James Madison's view of the United States Constitution demonstrates the pitfalls of examining the theory behind an individual's behavior without attending to the historical context of events. Allen seeks to explore, primarily through Madison's contributions to the *Federalist Papers*, Madison's attempts to fashion a cohesive American nation from the diverse interests present in the late 1780s. Allen recognizes the occasional inconsistency in Madison's arguments, particularly between the writing of the *Federalist* essays and Madison's attempts to form a congressional and then national party, but where the author falls short is in his failure to concede the importance of the changes that took place as the country underwent the transition from the Articles of Confederation to the Constitution.

Where Allen succeeds is in his recognition that, while Madison occasionally changed course in his arguments, he remained consistent in the reasons behind his arguments. Madison sought to found a new "American regime" based on the goal of democratic nationalism. Where his inconsistency has always been evident are in the methods he advocated to achieve that goal, first in the *Federalist Papers*, then later