
dangerously unsuited. The whole Mediterranean fleet might have been lost to enemy airpower (just as the battle squadron sent to Malaya was lost a few months later) in the bombardment of Tripoli, but for freak weather conditions. Readers may be taken aback by this reconstruction of the widely accepted legend of the "former naval person," who, for his work at the Admiralty prior to World War I, has largely been given credit for Britain's preparedness to fight in that war. Ollard does pay proper tribute to Churchill's real achievements as a naval administrator, especially in improving the survival chances of ordinary seamen, even as he points out his terrifying capriciousness as an armchair admiral.

If there is to be a significant new assessment of Churchill, it will likely concern his contentious record as a peacetime minister. Peter Clarke argues that, in the 1920s, Churchill made a better chancellor of the exchequer and had a surer understanding of economics than his predecessors Lloyd George, Stanley Baldwin, and Neville Chamberlain. And Paul Addison shows how, despite his Tory and aristocratic background, Churchill became "one of the founders of the welfare state." Yet considering the array of historical talents assembled here, their collective verdict is modest enough. Churchill emerges overall as the same familiar figure, though with more nuances. The picture might have been more telling were there not one conspicuous absence among the distinguished contributors—Martin Gilbert, the author of the eight-volume biography of Churchill. To have "a major new assessment" of Churchill without Gilbert's contribution is, as one wit put it, rather like having a discussion of *Hamlet* without mention of Shakespeare.

W. E. B. DU BOIS: *Biography of a Race. Vol. I: 1868–1919.* By David Levering Lewis. Holt. 700 pp. \$35

As a 25-year-old graduate student in Berlin, W. E. B. Du Bois confided to his diary his plans "to make a name in [social] science, to make a name in literature and thus to raise my race." That simple declaration foretold both the promise of academic achievement and the secular messianism that characterize Du Bois's entire

career. Lewis, the Martin Luther King, Jr., professor of history at Rutgers University, here describes the first half of a long and eventful life in which Du Bois fulfilled his youthful promise.

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois was born to free-born parents in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, in 1868. A child prodigy—he contributed to black newspapers while still in his teens—he attended Nashville's Fisk University when he was only 16. He subsequently studied with Harvard University philosophers William James and George Santayana and became Harvard's first black Ph.D. Simply by pursuing an academic career, Du Bois defied the conventional wisdom of the time about black progress. Its foremost advocate, Booker T. Washington, believed blacks should forswear the pipe dreams of book learning or even of civic equality and instead strive for economic independence. Du Bois was not one to suffer this "racial humility." Already in 1891, he had written complaining to former U.S. president Rutherford B. Hayes, who had offered promising African-American students scholarship money but then had gone back on his word: "I find men willing to help me use my hands before I have got my brains in working order . . . but I never found a man willing to help me get a Harvard Ph.D."

Booker T. Washington was initially well disposed toward Du Bois. In 1900 he encouraged the younger man, then an Atlanta University professor, to come to Tuskegee Institute. The two large egos, however, soon clashed. Du Bois turned down Washington's offer, and Washington's powerful Tuskegee machine dashed Du Bois's prospective appointment as superintendent of Washington, D.C.'s black schools. As southern blacks increasingly suffered disenfranchisement, lynchings, the effects of Jim Crow laws, and race riots, Du Bois grew impatient and at last furious with Washington's accommodationist stance. In the summer of 1905, he convened a meeting on the Canadian side of Niagara Falls to launch the "first collective attempt by African Americans to demand full citizenship rights in the 20th century." That organization would become the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People five years later. By then the Wizard of Tuskegee was eclipsed, and it was clear that the 20th cen-

tury would belong to Du Bois. When he died a half century later at age 95, it was the day before Martin Luther King, Jr., marched on Washington—an event which, in effect, culminated the long march Du Bois had started in the darkest days of post-Reconstruction America.

Du Bois was prolific as a young scholar. He wrote 16 research monographs between 1897 and 1914, including *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), the first case study of an African-American community. Four years later he published his classic *Souls of Black Folk*, with its rending words: "One ever feels his twoness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder." Du Bois gained more renown, though, for the *Crisis*, the magazine he founded in 1910 and edited with a strong hand for decades. Du Bois was an agnostic among a people whose bedrock institution was the church. But in the *Crisis*, he found his own bully pulpit, and, as its circulation topped 100,000, Du Bois became one of the more influential African-American secular preachers of this century.

Lewis's graceful, compelling narrative takes Du Bois up to the year 1919. The second half of Du Bois's life—in which he lost faith in integration, flirted with communism, and surrendered his American nationality to become a citizen of Ghana—promises to make, if anything, an even more stirring, tumultuous volume.

NATIONALISM: Five Roads to Modernity.
By Liah Greenfeld. Harvard. 581 pp. \$49.95

Nationalism is a big subject that has been illuminated by small books: Elie Kedourie's pungent *Nationalism* (1960), for instance, and Benedict Anderson's luminous *Imagined Communities* (1983). *Five Roads to Modernity* is an equally important study but one that comes in the large economy size, encompassing five centuries of nationalism in five countries. Curiously, during the last century most observers believed that nationalism's days were numbered, to be replaced by an era of liberal states operating on universal principles (according to John Stuart Mill) or on the precepts of international socialism (courtesy

of Karl Marx). Here Greenfeld, a Harvard University sociologist, locates the historical detail that Marx and Mill overlooked in order to show why "it is nationality which has made our world, politically, what it is."

"God's firstborn" among nationalists were the English. The new English aristocracy of the 16th century, often commoners by birth, inherited a world view that did not allow for upward mobility; so they justified their aristocratic claims by identifying the English as a chosen people. (If, instead of invoking this embryonic nationalism, they had forged genealogies for themselves, history might be different today.)

The success of the English national idea proved irresistible when, two centuries later, French aristocrats were searching for a way to oppose royal power. Copying the English, they evoked a national authority greater than the crown's, even while they developed what Greenfeld calls *ressentiment*, a hostile envy, of the English themselves. The French thus established a precedent (which has been followed in every case but America's), according to which a dissatisfied or displaced group adapts a successful foreign example of nationalism but rejects the foreigners who inspire it. In France, Greenfeld writes, instead of the people delegating authority to the nation's representatives, as they did in England, "it was the nation from which authority emanated and it empowered individuals." Eighteenth-century France already possessed those characteristics that today make nationalism appear so dreadful: xenophobia, the subjugation of the individual to the group, and a subsequent recourse to violence or a reign of terror to solve its problems.

Five centuries of nationalism have supplied Greenfeld so many facts and facets to explore that they may obscure how iconoclastic her underlying thesis is. Historians and sociologists have usually assumed that modernity precedes nationalism, that the alienation and materialism of modern life necessitate a nationalistic state to hold together the forces let loose. Greenfeld, however, reverses that chronological order. Not only in England and France but in Germany, Russia, and the United States, she argues, the development of nationalism—the changing from a religion- or estates-based interpretation