
a 1949 economics graduate of Boston University. Tsai became a stock market superstar, but he was an atypical exotic in a city whose conservative modern bankers favor a safe return. It was not always so. Adventure, risk, and profit all ran high in the days of the slavers and the China trade, before Boston's old Yankee blood cooled and turned blue.

**THE HISTORY OF THE
GERMAN RESISTANCE
1933-1945**

by Peter Hoffman
M.I.T., 1977, 847 pp. \$19.95
L of C 76-0824
ISBN 0-262-08088-5

World War II had scarcely ended when the story of German resistance to Hitler began to come to light. Each successive memoir and monograph brought the intricate picture more sharply into focus. But since the resistance was, during its most critical phases, organized in closed compartments, and since those persons most knowledgeable about the whole were executed by Hitler, the task of historical reconstruction has been difficult. Hoffman's absorbing account, first published in German eight years ago, spans the period from the 1938 Sudeten crisis to the final abortive attempt by Colonel Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg on Hitler's life on July 20, 1944. It makes sense of the tangle of evidence that has come down to us. Is it the last word on the techniques of conspiracy and the complex personalities of the men and women who overcame their own hesitations and took up arms against the Führer? Very few key survivors have not been heard from. Unless new diaries or reminiscences come to light, as seems unlikely, this will become the classic work on a heroic failure.

**THE BIRTH OF
SAUDI ARABIA:
Britain and the Rise of
the House of Sa'ud**

by Gary Troeller
London: Frank Cass, 1976
287 pp. £8.50
ISBN 0-7146-3062-4

Until the independence of India in 1947, British policy in the Persian Gulf was tied to London's need to maintain the entire Arabian Sea area as a secure link between England and its most important overseas possession. For many years, reliance upon sea power was accompanied by a hands-off attitude toward tribal rivalries in the Arabian Peninsula. But when, in 1902, 'Abd al 'Aziz Ibn 'Abd al Rhaman Ibn Sa'ud captured Riyadh, the ancestral capital of the House of Sa'ud, from the ruling Ibn

Rashid, the modern Saudi state was born. Thereafter, the desert kingdom became a matter of steadily growing interest to British strategists. In this informative (but, considering its emphasis, mistitled) book, Troeller makes extensive use of unpublished British documents to examine the period from 1910, when King Ibn Sa'ud first met with a British agent, through World War I, when he aligned himself with Britain, to 1926, when his conquest of the Hedjaz (including Mecca) unified the peninsula. All this was pre-petroleum. A "Postscript" takes the story to the Anglo-American discovery of large quantities of oil in Bahrain (1932) and the granting of the first concession to the California Arabian Standard Oil Company (1933).

Contemporary Affairs

**OLD PEOPLE,
NEW LIVES:
Community Creation in a
Retirement Residence**
by Jennie-Keith Ross
Univ. of Chicago, 1977
227 pp. \$13.50
L of C 76-8103
ISBN 0-226-72825-0

Les Floralties, a retirement residence for 150 men and women connected with the construction trades, is a 14-story glass and concrete residence in an old suburb of Paris. The neighborhood embraces low-rent apartments, a modern shopping center, industrial and commercial buildings. "The change of scene for new arrivals," writes Swarthmore anthropologist Jennie-Keith Ross, "is both social and physical, total and abrupt." She knows, having lived there herself for a year to observe how the aging create and maintain a "context for community." The young American's jargon-free report is a heartening contribution to the (frequently depressing) literature on the subject. She describes health and personality problems, daily routines, parties, the significance of seating arrangements in the dining room, political rivalries, and love affairs at Les Floralties. (Six couples met in the residence and are recognized as couples "only in the eyes of other residents." A legal marriage is seen as undesirable—"What would the children think?") Les Floralties *works*. But, says Ross, "'So what?' should be the most frequently asked question in social science." Her case study, she concludes, has two messages: