
NEW TITLES

History

RICHARD III
by Charles Ross
Univ. of Calif., 1982
265 pp. \$24.50



Badge of Richard Duke of Gloucester.
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Shakespeare labeled him "That foul defacer of God's handiwork." Seen thus by Tudor "propagandists," Richard III (1452–85) was a spiritual and physical cripple, driven by evil until justice, in the guise of Henry Tudor, brought him down at Bosworth Field. Richard's more recent defenders have been no less impassioned. Steering a middle course, Ross, professor of medieval history at the University of Bristol, measures Richard by the standards and political climate of the 15th century, a particularly ruthless period. As a child, Richard saw his father and brother (the future Edward IV) plunge the country into civil war to overthrow the Lancastrian monarch, Henry VI. Edward used any means available—disinheritance, betrayal—and when Edward died at an early age, leaving two young sons, Richard proved his mastery of the family lessons. Though he had no preconceived plan to usurp the throne, according to Ross, the divisions within the court provided an irresistible opportunity. There is still uncertainty as to whether Richard ordered the execution of his nephews; the important matter is that most Englishmen believed he had. Richard's overdependence on powerful northern landowners and his alienation of vital southern support figured largely in his downfall. But in Ross's view, Richard was neither the most nor the least immoral of men; merely a man of his times, when times were "sadly out of joint."

**INTEGRATION OF
THE ARMED FORCES,
1940–1965**
by Morris J. MacGregor, Jr.
Government Printing Office,
1981, 647 pp. \$17

A handful of pragmatists who set to work shortly after World War II made the armed services the institutional vanguard of racial integration in the United States. Motivated less by high ideals than by concern for military efficiency, men such as General Idwal Edwards, chief of Air Force personnel, and

John McCloy, Assistant Secretary of War, argued, against upholders of "military tradition," that segregation both during and after the war had left white units undermanned and black units burdened with more troops than they could absorb. The Air Force took the first progressive step, integrating months before Truman's executive order of July 1948 called for equal opportunity in all services. But not until the Korean War, when blacks proved themselves in combat beside whites, was integration completed in the Army and Marine Corps. During the 1960s, reformers in Kennedy's Defense Department joined with civil rights leaders to make the military an instrument of broad social uplift. Requiring the services to boycott civilian businesses that practiced segregation, the reformers were oddly negligent when it came to promotion practices that clearly favored whites within the services themselves. MacGregor, a historian at the Army's Center of Military History, believes that more high-level attention to internal reform might have prevented the build-up of racial tensions that so troubled the services in the late '60s and early '70s.

**ECONOMY AND SOCIETY
IN ANCIENT GREECE**

by M. I. Finley
Viking, 1982
326 pp. \$22.50

Democracy, tyranny, slavery, and empire are terms frequently misused in describing ancient Greece. What did they mean to the inhabitants of Athens, Sparta, and the other city-states? In this collection of essays written over the past 30 years, Finley, a Cambridge classicist, reveals an enormous diversity within Greek institutions and some surprises: Sparta's military victories ultimately destroyed its model military state by bringing "non-equals" into the army, providing opportunities for ambitious individuals, and puncturing xenophobia. Freedom reached its apogee in those city-states where chattel slavery flourished (in fact, slavery and democracy may have originated in Greece at the same place, Chios, at roughly the same time, the sixth century B.C.). Yet within various states there were often radically different notions of bondage. In Sparta, for example, "helots" belonged to the state, whereas, in