

Book Review: Terrorists, Anarchists and Democrats: The Genevans and the Irish in Time of Revolution by Richard Whatmore

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Whatmore, Richard. *Terrorists, Anarchists and Democrats: The Genevans and the Irish in Time of Revolution*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019. 512 pp. Hardcover, \$39.95.

Terrorists, Anarchists and Democrats is a compelling book that puts multiple historical events and philosophical concepts into perspective. Whatmore tells the fascinating story of two rebellions in history within Ireland and the City of Geneva. The author notes the myriad similarities between the two while weaving through the notions of political spectrums, rebellions, government response and political thought. Whatmore's work is an important book on a topic that is repeated throughout history and is particularly important in national and international security analysis.

Whatmore's take on terrorism is rooted in the historical development of the Irish experience. He traces the issue back into the eighteenth century and then links terrorist concepts to various historical events highlighting where different philosophical thoughts emerged. He writes, "When, on December 14, 1793, the United Irish Society issued an address to the volunteer companies of Ireland, calling upon them to take up arms as citizens, to force the government to undertake parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation, a Rubicon was perceived by the authorities to have been crossed." (p. 7). Whatmore also ties in particularly interesting language highlighting how rebellion concepts in Ireland were similar to that of the French Revolution—issues that show that with one revolution, other ideas begin to spring up in other places throughout the world (p. 6). While discussing the theoretical rhetoric of the time period, Whatmore connects the French Revolution's philosophical threads as he tells the story of those involved in the rebellions.

While Whatmore discusses the notions of rebellion, he also adds to the scholarly literature in a particularly intriguing way. Whatmore notes that while many historians draw comparisons about rebellion and democracy to the French Revolution, he ultimately concludes that these philosophical constructs were actually quite destructive to Europe and did not establish peace and

harmony (p. 379). He continues by claiming that the nineteenth century was particularly destructive and chaotic in Europe (p. 350). Utilizing the discussions about the Irish and Geneva as the backdrop, Whatmore creates another philosophical interpretation of the same events of history but makes an interesting point explaining that the French Revolution was not as successful as other scholars have argued (p. 351). Whatmore's argument is densely constructed and intriguing. He draws the reader by establishing a quest to further understand his perspective.

Terrorists, Anarchists and Democrats is organized in three parts: Part 1, "Rebellion," consists of two chapters: "the power of place" and the "Waterford experiment"; Part 2, "Divided Geneva," includes four chapters: "religion and enlightenment," "extremism," "civil war and revolution" and "exodus"; Part 3, "Disunited Ireland" is made up of four chapters: "Ireland oppression and opportunity," "Shelburne," "New Geneva," and "Barracks and Prison." The final part of the book deals with the failure of New Geneva as a republican community, and its transformation into a prison for republicans" (p. 23).

Terrorists, Anarchists and Republicans would be a tremendous addition to any graduate-level history course focusing on security issues, rebellion and Europe in the nineteenth century. In the same vein, it is an important read for any student or scholar of political thought—particularly where the enlightenment or rebellion ideology is concerned. It is also a good read for someone interested in understanding European politics and thoughts prior to the outbreak of World War I. Ultimately, the book is written for other historians or scholars of political thought. It is a particularly well-written, fascinating read and Whatmore's discussion is an important addition to the scholarly literature.

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