

Marcos with being too European. There are also comments that may offend on ethnic, gender, and class fronts, as when he describes a girl with “the Asian elegance of some Nahua women when they are young,” or when he writes condescendingly of Mexico’s “unreflective class.”

The book also suffers from factual errors and strange interpretations. Shorris’s belief that there were not conflicts in the 1920s and 1930s over politics and economics is nonsense; he is inconsistent on the dates of the Mexican Miracle and incorrect that the overthrow of Francisco Madero started the Mexican Revolution. He also overstates the impact of the U.S. in Mexico—“U.S. money and power had determined the history of Mexico since it took half the country in 1848” (685). This book is a great read that contains much to think about, but it should be approached with caution.

*University of Texas, El Paso*

Samuel Brunk

*Montezuma: Warlord of the Aztecs.* By Peter Trouas. (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2005. Pp. xviii, 114. \$12.95.)

This brief biography of the final Aztec emperor, Motecuhzoma Xocoyotzin, is part of a series called “Military Profiles.” The reviewer began to read the book with the hope that a military historian would be able to illuminate aspects of Aztec warfare and military organization. With the exception of Ross Hassig, Aztec specialists have given far too little attention to this poorly understood topic. Unfortunately, the level of scholarship in this book is so low that one quickly abandons hope of any such insights. We learn little of the tactics, strategies, or techniques of Aztec warfare, and the account of the confrontation between Motecuhzoma and Cortés is flawed by a major error. The longest quotation in the book is not from a primary source but from the romanticized nineteenth-century chronicle of William H. Prescott.

Motecuhzoma (fortunately, the Anglicized “Montezuma” is used only in the title) was a successful general in the wars of expansion of the Aztec or Triple Alliance Empire [1486–1502] and was later elected emperor [1502–1520]. The Triple Alliance was the best-documented Mesoamerican empire, owing to the survival of Aztec dynastic historical traditions after the Spanish conquest. Not surprisingly, these accounts tend to focus strongly on kings and their exploits. Tsouras relies almost exclusively on such official dynastic sources (in English translation), and this limits his perspective on the military dynamics of Aztec imperialism.

If Tsouras had consulted Spanish administrative records (few of which are translated into English), or the scholarly literature on these sources, he would have learned that the Triple Alliance Empire underwent two cycles of expansion. In each cycle, one or two kings extended the reach of the empire through wide-ranging conquests, to be followed by a king who consolidated the gains and established provincial control. As the consolidating king at the end of the second cycle, Motecuhzoma's military exploits were quite modest in comparison with those of his predecessor, Ahuizotl [reigned 1486–1502]. Motecuhzoma, however, was the conquering general for many of Ahuizotl's victories. Tsouras does a good job on several themes, including Motecuhzoma's move toward a more totalitarian form of rule and the conflicting accounts of his death.

When we come to the fateful encounter with Cortés, however, Tsouras's story breaks down. He relies on an old chestnut—that Motecuhzoma believed Cortés to be the god Quetzalcoatl returning to rule Mexico—to explain the king's apparent hesitation to confront the Spaniards. Scholars have debunked this legend, however, showing it to be a postconquest invention by native elites and Spanish priests. Motecuhzoma did indeed try to halt the Spaniards, but was unsuccessful for a variety of reasons not analyzed in this book, including the imbalance in military technology and tactics. He apparently concluded that his armies were powerless to stop Cortés and believed that active military confrontation would have disastrous consequences for the Aztec people. This revisionist account is described in several prominent books and in articles in the leading history journals, all of which are ignored by Tsouras.

*Arizona State University*

Michael E. Smith

*A Strong-Minded Woman: The Life of Mary A. Livermore.* By Wendy Hamand Venet. (Amherst, Mass., and London: University of Massachusetts Press, 200. Pp. xi, 319. \$24.95.)

Mary A. Livermore is one of those prominent nineteenth-century women who faded into obscurity. Wendy Hamand Venet has made a significant contribution by rescuing this forgotten woman in this well-written biography. Observing “when Livermore died in 1905, the *Boston Transcript* called her ‘America’s foremost woman,’” Venet contends “a century after her death, few persons recognize her name or remember her accomplishments” (1). Noting Livermore has not received the attention given her contemporaries—Clara Barton, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucy Stone, and Julia Ward Howe—Venet emphasizes the significance of this often overlooked reformer. Venet effectively