study of the history of American slavery, has pointed out that the turn in slave historiography to slave culture and resistance has, in the hands of some scholars, swung the pendulum from massive oppression and victimization to rich cultural expression and rebellious spirit so far as to almost elide the efficacy of slave-owner power. Similarly, C. L. R. James, who provides at least some of the inspiration for Linebaugh and Rediker’s work, once admonished Herbert Aptheker for seeing conspiracy and rebellion every time two slaves spoke together. I mention this danger only to point out that Linebaugh and Rediker on the whole sidestep it, but nevertheless in tone at times seem overly captivated by the notion of a widespread, concerted resistance to the powers that be. They acknowledge that the ruling classes succeeded in suppressing hydrarchy, but argue that, like the legend, the many-headed hydra lives on.

_The Many-Headed Hydra_ tells a fascinating and intricate hidden history of the revolutionary Atlantic at the dawn of capitalist globalization. It should be recognized as an indispensable contribution to the transnational turn in American Studies and will hopefully lead to many more studies that reconceptualize early American history as part of Atlantic history.

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This is a family history covering three generations, written by the professional historian in the Reitan clan of the Upper Midwest and dedicated to his siblings. The author's academic training, albeit in the field of eighteenth-century British history, leads the reader to expect qualities not usually found in the genre of family histories that became a commonplace of American middle-class culture in the wake of the ethnic revival of the 1970s. Reitan himself must have believed this to be the case, given the title he chose and his decision to send the book to be reviewed by an academic journal. A careful perusal of this highly readable narrative does not disappoint the reader hoping for something different than the usual family history.

On the one hand, _Crossing the Bridge_ lacks features typical of the form, such as a multitude of family photographs and the increasingly professional genealogical charts that trace multiple generations – which hold more than familial and antiquarian interest perhaps only to social historians who can identify the representative amidst the minutiae. On the other hand, although it is not a scholarly monograph exploring the experience of the generation of Norwegian-Americans who reached maturity by 1946 as the title suggests, this slim volume provides some of the satisfactions one hopes for from the professional historian. Reitan enhances the book’s value by emphasizing the more generally relevant elements in his family’s experience. For example, he understands his story as a narrative of assimilation – of ‘crossing the bridge’ to mainstream American culture – and with a light touch analyzes the factors promoting or impeding individuals' and generations' movement away from their immigrant or ethnic past. As he deftly characterizes the defining traits of
individual relatives who affected his growing up, he identifies his sense of their ethnic qualities and places them against the background of a 'large Norwegian-American community in a strongly Scandinavian state [Minnesota], where their moral and religious values were widely shared' (10).

For Reitan, assimilation represents the family's progress over three generations from a 'parochial and conservative' Norwegian immigrant society - and later, a similarly narrow ethnic community - to complete access to the 'opportunities of post-war America' (3, 32). The first generation, his Norwegian-born paternal grandparents, were pillars of small-town life in Grove City, Minnesota - founders of its Norwegian Lutheran church, the proprietors of the general store, and part owners of the grain elevator. Yet they chose to speak and write English in public and at home when their native tongue was still used in church and on street corners in the town. Pioneers and benefactors of the great American expansion, they also suffered the reverses common to the country's 'boom-bust capitalism' but nonetheless made a complete commitment to the United States that was 'more than legal status' by taking out citizenship (9-11). Reitan’s maternal grandparents were Danish immigrant farmers, but he always knew he was a Reitan, not a Jensen, and although his mother was the culture-bearer in the family, only when writing this book did he consider that the heritage transmitted to him was anything but entirely Norwegian in origin. The second generation took further steps along the way chosen by their elders. His father and uncles chose careers in business, all but one in small towns. Both of his two aunts married and kept house in small towns, but one first took teacher training at the Lutheran Normal School, one of the 'network of institutions the immigrants established to provide a comfortable transition for the next generation.' The other followed a potentially more Americanizing path, when she divorced and lived an 'emancipated' life in Minneapolis-St. Paul (15, 18). The entire second generation reserved 'ethnic trappings' for special occasions, and stock phrases or a 'comical jumble' of Norwegian and English was all that remained of their linguistic heritage. Nonetheless, Reitan claims that theirs was a Norwegian-American environment, whose greatest strength and staying power came from the conservative social and moral precepts disseminated by the Lutheran church and enforced by the community. These limits provided an 'unthreatening context within which ... Americanization could take place' (21-22).

Still, a lack of higher education and the dearth of economic opportunities during the Depression meant that his father 'did not make much progress' into mainstream America (101). Economic set-backs twice forced the family to move outside the haven of Norwegian America, but Grove City, Minnesota, the point of ethnic origin, remained the one place his parents felt at home. Everywhere they lived, exposure to American mass media from newspapers and magazines to radio and film made their children's third-generation tastes and heroes distinctly American. The strength of Norwegian Lutheranism and its 'scholarly tradition' nonetheless inspired Earl and his siblings to choose Concordia College, the closest school supported by their synod, when they left home (84, 103, 131). Their generation was the first to cross completely into American society, but mixing with men of many backgrounds during the Second World War and going further away from home for graduate school after the war comprised the first decisive steps outside the ethnic sub-culture.

The author's understanding of his ethnic past conforms to the conventional wisdom
among historians nearly fifty years ago: The inevitable end of immigration is Americanization, and the ethnic community is a kind of decompression chamber which partially relieves the pain of the generational transition from one culture to another. But Reitan also fulfills the title's promise of dealing with the impact of 'depression and war' by tracing how the Great Depression and World War II affected the processes of assimilation for individuals and, to a degree, the ethnic community as a whole. Perhaps most valuably for the social historian, he remembers clearly and tellingly catalogues the typical elements in the lower-middle-class small towns and bungalows of his childhood, concisely contrasting with the insider's first-hand knowledge what in them was Norwegian-American and what was mainstream American. We are treated to descriptions of the physical layout of streets, neighborhoods, and houses in several Midwestern small towns, along with a remarkable quick study of how these arrangements affected the quality of life for inhabitants. As Odd Lovoll, the dean of Norwegian-American historians, has recently noted, the study of the ethnic group's small-town centers has been neglected. Reitan's book provides valuable material for studies in this area. The general and specialized reader will also enjoy the author's unpretentious, lively writing style, which serves well as a vehicle for family humor and irony as well as for conveying strong but restrained family feeling.

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Peter S. Onuf opens his book by stating that 'Thomas Jefferson cherished an imperial vision for the new American nation.' To understand this position it is important to note that the word 'empire' did not carry the pejorative connotation which it does today. Jefferson did not envision an empire like the British, but rather an empire of endless republics. He viewed his creation optimistically, as being destined to serve mankind. The author poses the question as to whether Jefferson was aware of what his empire would become, and was its destiny manifest? Defining the terms of empire and nation as far as Jefferson used them are two of the major themes to be addressed. Onuf admits to being 'deeply conflicted' in his consideration of Jefferson, making note (as most authors do) of his best-known inconsistencies – his ownership of slaves and his liaisons with Sally Hemmings – which occurred despite his own warnings against miscegenation in *Notes on the State of Virginia*. But it is important to define Jefferson, because in doing so we define the United States, the two being almost impossible to distinguish from each other.

The American Revolution was the central event for Jefferson, and he measured everything against it. Whenever a crisis arose, it was always to the first principles of the revolution that he returned. In his Americanism, we see further paradox in this man of paradox. He is at once European and American. He is European in his Enlightenment sensibilities and even his patriotism is directed towards a European audience, his *Notes on the State of Virginia* being addressed to European elite. Jefferson is not the isolationist some would