

## Zebulon Pike, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West

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concluding chapter, titled "The Impact of the Expedition on Science, Culture, and Indian Diplomacy, 1806–1820," is especially important for succinctly summarizing the legacy of the Lewis and Clark expedition immediately after its return.

The text is supported by a huge number of footnotes (1,989) and a bibliography that together reference virtually every published study relating in some way to the Lewis and Clark expedition. For the careful reader, the book serves as a guide to the immense literature on Lewis and Clark, a body of scholarship that increased greatly preceding and during the recent Lewis and Clark bicentennial celebration.

Illustrations—seven maps, 54 black-and-white figures (many of them of contemporary documents), and 11 color illustrations—are relatively sparse. The color illustrations are mostly late nineteenth-century and twentieth-century artwork depicting scenes of the expedition at various points in its travel, although one is Saint-Mémin's remarkable 1807 painting of Lewis wearing Indian clothing and headgear presented to him by Shoshone Chief Cameahwait, Sacagawea's brother.

Because of its length, the book is an arduous, but absorbing, read. Devoted buffs of the Lewis and Clark expedition will enjoy and learn from it immensely, and scholars of many persuasions will have much to mine from these volumes. The book will long stand as an important source for serious Lewis and Clark enthusiasts and researchers.

*Zebulon Pike, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West*, edited by Matthew L. Harris and Jay H. Buckley. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012. x, 242 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendixes, notes, index, bibliography. \$29.95 hardcover.

Reviewer Vernon L. Volpe is professor of history and department chair at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. He is writing a biography of John Frémont.

Zebulon Pike neither climbed the grand peak bearing his name nor successfully completed the objectives of his western missions to the Mississippi's headwaters and the gates of Spain's internal domain in Mexico. As the editors of this collection of essays note, the bicentennial anniversary of Pike's 1806 expedition passed with little notice, the memory of Pike's travels certainly still dim in the shadow of Lewis and Clark's epic journey. Still, the editors and contributors to this worthy volume successfully cast light on Pike's life work and the actual achievements of his explorations. Perhaps not resolving forever the questions of Pike's "spying" and flawed navigation, these studies do clarify and cement Pike's accomplishments more than ever before.

Neither a “lost pathfinder” nor an unwitting “spy” duped by his benefactor—the known rogue General James Wilkinson (Spain’s “Agent 13”)—Pike emerges from these pages a more substantial military explorer. Editor Jay Buckley contributes an essay detailing Pike’s personal and military life. Understandably, Buckley believes that Pike has been dismissed as an explorer rather than appreciated for his real scientific accomplishments and for helping to solidify America’s northern and southwestern borders, as well as leading the way to Santa Fe. (Another Buckley essay assesses Pike’s explorations alongside those of Hunter and Dunbar, Freeman and Custis, as well as Lewis and Clark.) In the end, Pike died a hero’s death, falling victim to exploding debris while leading an 1813 attack on a British fort at York (Toronto), Canada.

Somewhat more critical are essays by noted scholars John Logan Allen and James P. Ronda. Allen reconstructs Pike’s scientific understanding of the southwestern region, due perhaps to Alexander von Humboldt’s famous map of the Spanish lands. Speculating that Pike was more confused and frustrated than “lost,” Allen suggests that this led to Pike’s erroneous perpetuation of the mythical common source region of the western rivers and his depiction of the plains as “sandy deserts.” While showing the importance of Pike’s efforts at mapmaking, Allen still concludes that among Pike’s problems was a “disastrous grasp of geography,” thus contributing to his “failure.” Ronda also critically assesses Pike’s rather heavy-handed efforts to extend American sovereignty to the far north (in his Minnesota expedition) and across the Southwest to Santa Fe. In so confronting British traders, native peoples, and Spanish authorities, Pike served less as a naïve promoter of Jefferson’s “empire of liberty” than as a willing accomplice in General Wilkinson’s dubious machinations. Ronda proposes that Pike gladly embraced this sort of “spying” mission to the Southwest.

Jared Orsi’s essay proposes a different form of imperial reach: the ecological domain of the market. Both insightful and somewhat far-fetched (for example, connecting Shays’s Rebellion with Mississippi River access), the essay also shows Pike to be a willing participant in extending America’s commercial power over the energy stored in the lands and rivers of the West. Debatable is whether the American flag flying over a Pawnee village in Nebraska should be taken to represent the power of the growing market, but Orsi certainly presents the “achievements” of Pike’s mission in quite different terms.

Perhaps more intriguing is Leo Oliva’s essay on the unusual friendship that developed between Pike and the Spanish officer who would detain the American interloper, Lieutenant Facundo Melgares. Pike had followed the Spaniard’s route from the Pawnee villages to

the mountains and then garnered valuable information from Melgares during his captivity in Mexico. Ironically, this relationship provided the American explorer much useful information, leading to the Santa Fe Trail, though it might be too much to link it to provoking the Mexican War and the loss of much territory to the United States. Still, it was Melgares who welcomed American traders to Santa Fe when it opened to trade from Missouri.

Readers of this volume may find most interesting William Foley's careful essay detailing the many and varied intrigues of General James Wilkinson. Fortunately for Pike, the explorer and his exploits play only a very small supporting role in this drama, but Foley's essay provides essential insight into the motives and operations of the man who sent Pike up the Mississippi and to the southwestern frontier. The essay (and Wilkinson's eventual demise) provides a fitting final chapter to the volume. While mostly debunking the myth of Pike's alleged spying mission, these original essays provide much material for contemplating the meaning of his extensive exploits.

*Life, Death, and Archaeology at Fort Blue Mounds: A Settlers' Fortification of the Black Hawk War*, by Robert A. Birmingham. Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2012. 152 pp. Illustrations, maps, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index. \$14.95 paper.

Reviewer William Whittaker is a project archaeologist at the Office of the State Archaeologist at the University of Iowa. He is the editor of *Frontier Forts of Iowa: Indians, Traders, and Soldiers, 1682-1862* (2009).

When Black Hawk's band of Sauk left Iowa in 1832 to reclaim their traditional homeland east of the Mississippi, settlers panicked and built dozens of small stockaded forts in Illinois and Wisconsin. The apprehension of the occupants of a small fort at Blue Mounds, Wisconsin, was well founded. Attacks by Sauk and other Indians allied with Black Hawk killed three occupants. Fort Blue Mounds briefly became the main bivouac and supply point of the volunteer militia attempting to stop the uprising. The fort's historical importance in a campaign that essentially ended Indian claims to land east of the Mississippi is underappreciated. The uprising ended in disgrace for the United States after hundreds of Indian women, children, and men were massacred along the Mississippi River attempting to return to Iowa, a dishonorable act that taints all historical events and places associated with the Black Hawk uprising.

After the uprising ended, settlers and miners used the fort buildings through the 1850s. In 1921 the state of Wisconsin acquired the quarter-