

not always smooth: at the 1883 graduation of the first new rabbis from the Hebrew Union College of Cincinnati, guests were horrified when waiters served crab, shrimp, and frogs' legs. After 1880, the largely German American Jewish community would be overwhelmed by a great wave of Jews from central and eastern Europe. But their ideas about Judaism, including their complicated responses to Zionism, endured.

The Point of It All: A Lifetime of Great Loves and Endeavors

BY CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER.
EDITED BY DANIEL
KRAUTHAMMER. Crown Forum,
2018, 400 pp.

Last summer, the death of Charles Krauthammer, a longtime columnist for *The Washington Post*, silenced one of the most influential voices in the world of U.S. foreign policy. After a diving accident left him partially paralyzed in 1972, Krauthammer went to on graduate from Harvard Medical School, practice psychiatry, and then enter politics, working as a speechwriter for Vice President Walter Mondale. After the end of the Cold War, Krauthammer, already known for his hawkish foreign policy views, embraced and helped define the concept of unipolarity—the idea that the competition between the United States and the Soviet Union had been replaced by a “unipolar moment,” in which the United States, for a limited time, had no serious rivals. Krauthammer went on to bitterly criticize what he saw as President Barack Obama’s retreat from U.S. responsibilities and what he deemed the fundamentally irresponsible approach of Obama’s successor, Donald Trump. In

this book, Krauthammer’s son, Daniel, himself a writer, assembles some of his father’s most important columns. To read (or reread) them is to be reminded of how central the elder Krauthammer was to 30 years of American foreign policy debate.

Western Europe

Andrew Moravcsik

Pandemic 1918: Eyewitness Accounts From the Greatest Medical Holocaust in Modern History

BY CATHARINE ARNOLD. St. Martin’s Press, 2018, 368 pp.

Patients coughed up blood riddled with parasitic bacteria, spraying it across hospital rooms. Dying bodies inflated with the air seeping out of their punctured lungs. Huge numbers of otherwise healthy young people died within hours when their powerful immune systems turned on them. Worldwide, between 50 million and 100 million people perished. Among remote populations that lacked immunity, the mortality rate often exceeded 90 percent. Cities threw the dead in mass graves—unless, as in Philadelphia, too few workers remained to bury them all. Scientists and governments were powerless to stop it. This is no horror-movie vision of Ebola or the Black Death. These are stories from the Spanish flu pandemic a century ago, which claimed five times as many victims as World War I. More scientifically rigorous accounts exist, but Arnold, a popular historian, has assembled the

most terrifying eyewitness testimony. The lessons are obvious. A pandemic today might well spread even more quickly and kill even more people. General multipurpose vaccines—even genetically engineered ones—are often powerless to combat diseases that mutate rapidly. Only a permanent global system that can quickly diagnose and treat people could blunt the spread of such a scourge, yet governments still underfund such programs.

English Nationalism: A Short History
BY JEREMY BLACK. Hurst, 2018,
224 pp.

Does England have a national identity distinct from that of the United Kingdom? Recent political conflict between England and the rest of the union over Brexit, Scottish independence, Irish unity, and other issues has made this a hot-button question. Black argues that English nationalism is genuine: Englishness rests on the shared experiences of Magna Carta, the Reformation, the Thirty Years' War, the British Empire, and World War II. Yet Black struggles to persuade. Memories of internal and external warfare hundreds of years ago neither distinguish England from the rest of the United Kingdom nor reveal much about how media-savvy politicians, a sensationalistic press, and right-wing skinheads are redefining populist nationalism today—something the author all but admits in the last chapter, "Postscript From a Pub." In general, current events stymie Black. In considering Brexit, he dismisses (without evidence) any thought that Euroskeptical voters are ignorant or have been manipulated, or that they are indulging in nationalism.

Yet he fails to provide a plausible alternative explanation for their behavior.

A Bite-Sized History of France: Gastronomic Tales of Revolution, War, and Enlightenment
BY STÉPHANE HÉNAUT AND JENI MITCHELL. New Press, 2019, 352 pp.

This engaging book recounts the history of France through its food. For the French, their cuisine is a prime source of national pride, but as Hénaut and Mitchell's lively vignettes show, few French delicacies are indigenous. The Romans converted uncouth beer-drinking Gauls to wine. The Frank Charlemagne standardized French farms, decreeing that every estate should grow garlic, produce honey, and much else. Returning crusaders brought plums and other exotic fruits. Schismatic popes from Italy established eggplants and Syrah wine. An Italian noblewoman turned French queen, Catherine de Medicis, brought artichokes, spinach, broccoli, sorbet, and the fork. The Turks added coffee; the Austrians the croissant. Brutal slave plantations in imperial domains satisfied sugar cravings. One day, Louis XIV's troops in Spain substituted olive oil for butter, and—voilà!—mayonnaise was born. In the nineteenth century, farmers had to graft American vines onto French grape plants to save them from disease. Today, couscous and pho are ubiquitous in Paris. Aside from a few cases, such as champagne, which was perfected by Dom Pierre Pérignon, a French Benedictine monk, French cuisine is largely the fruit of globalization and appropriation.

The End of the French Intellectual

BY SHLOMO SAND. TRANSLATED BY DAVID FERNBACH. Verso, 2018, 304 pp.

Modern French intellectuals receive tremendous social respect—so much so that they are generally immune from punishment even when they commit common crimes, preach treason or hatred, or speak in riddles. This book argues that in recent decades, although these intellectuals' social status has remained largely intact, the quality of their thought has ebbed. Sand is hardly the first to say this—and certainly not the most persuasive. He is concerned with only one angle of French intellectual life: the conflict between Jews and Muslims. He argues that a century ago, anti-Semitism led many leading French intellectuals to abandon the army captain Alfred Dreyfus after he was falsely convicted of treason. Under the Nazi occupation, many again failed to defend the Jews. Today, Islamophobia is common. Sand argues that the cartoons that provoked the *Charlie Hebdo* shooting in 2015 trucked in tasteless ethnic stereotypes that would have been unacceptable if directed at Jews. He has a point, but he is wrong to level the same charge at such leading French thinkers as Alain Finkielkraut, Michel Houellebecq, and Éric Zemmour. These men may be sensationalistic and perhaps even distasteful, but Sand does little to show that they preach systematic ethnic hatred in the manner of their anti-Dreyfusard and pro-fascist predecessors.

The Islamic State in Britain: Radicalization and Resilience in an Activist Network

BY MICHAEL KENNEY. Cambridge University Press, 2018, 298 pp.

This book contains an ethnographic study of al Muhajiroun, an outlawed radical jihadist group in London. Kenney seeks to explain how, despite intense police surveillance, the group survived, attracted adherents, and recruited fighters to join the war in Syria until the British government banned it in 2010. Ideological sympathy, ties of friendship, charismatic leaders, and youthful inexperience led people to join the group. Once there, they learned how to be activists by watching more experienced members, often imbibing even more dangerous ideologies along the way. Tight subgroups permitted the movement to deflect government pressure by frequently reconfiguring themselves and fostering ambiguity about their purposes. As they aged, some members left for more normal lives, while others turned to different, often more radical groups. These broad conclusions are hardly new, but some readers may be surprised by Kenney's argument that such groups can allow young men to let off steam, thus containing, rather than promoting, violence. As the authorities stamp out these organizations, their disgruntled members may pose an even greater danger.