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Review of *Zebulon Pike, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* Edited by Matthew L. Harris and Jay H. Buckley.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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. Photographs, notes, maps, appendices, bibliography, index. \$29.95.

During the 200th anniversary commemoration of the Louisiana Purchase, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark and their achievements in exploration and cartography of the northern reaches of the territory were much celebrated with books, articles, and conferences as well as coins, medals, and postage stamps. Zebulon Montgomery Pike's similar investigation and mapping of the southern parts of the region were marked appreciably less. Why? Were his accomplishments any less than those of Lewis and Clark? Was it that he got "lost" and was captured by the Spanish, who had earlier failed to intercept Lewis and Clark? Or was it because he was sent to spy against the Spanish for the United States or associated with former Vice President Aaron Burr and Louisiana Governor General James Wilkinson, who hoped to carve out a country of their own in the American Southwest? After his death as a general during the War of 1812, Pike was equally esteemed with Lewis and Clark throughout the nineteenth century, but in the twentieth he drifted into more relative obscurity. And the reasons are yet unclear.

This comparatively small book brings together eight prominent scholars of the American West, drawing upon the most current research in a laudable and mighty attempt to bring Pike out from under the shadow of Lewis and Clark. Matthew L. Harris's introduction ably sets the tone and almost obsessively discusses the controversies surrounding Pike. In the first four and the sixth essays, Jay H. Buckley (first and fourth), James P. Ronda, John Logan Allen, and Leo E. Oliva, respectively, discuss the major import of Pike's exploration and mapping of the southern Great

Plains and the Southwest within the context of Jeffersonian manifest destiny. Quite simply, Pike was the first American to reconnoiter deep into these southern territories and to postulate their potential in his published journals and cartography, therewith also helping to define the border between the United States and New Spain. Jared Orsi then deals somewhat uniquely with the environmental effect of Pike's searches, and William E. Foley considers Wilkinson, his relationship to Pike, and the controversy surrounding it. An answer emerges to the question of whether Pike was an explorer or a spy: probably both, but only for his country, the new United States.

This fascinating and vital volume goes a long way toward helping restore Pike and his feats in the Great Plains and the Southwest to their rightful place in American history. It also should stimulate other scholars to continued research on Pike and his ventures.

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