

become "the center of American policy-making," according to Grumbach, a shift that runs counter to traditional notions of federalism and Supreme Court justice Louis Brandeis's theory that states are "laboratories of democracy" that "can emulate each other's successful policy experiments and reject the failed ones." Grumbach employs large data sets and statistical methodology to show how Democratic and Republican activists, frustrated with congressional gridlock, have increased their attention on state politics since the early 2000s, and he makes a convincing case that many state leaders are more concerned about emulating their fellow partisans in other states than effective governance. Though Grumbach notes that states have a history of resisting federal oversight, he argues that recent developments, such as the "lame-duck coups" waged by Republican legislatures in North Carolina and Wisconsin against their Democratic governors, pose a critical threat to democracy. Though the academic prose can be challenging, Grumbach's claims are persuasive and timely. This is a pinpoint diagnosis of a troubling political trend. (July)

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Napoleon: The Decline and Fall of an Empire 1811–1821

Michael Broers. Pegasus, \$39.95 (768p) ISBN 978-1-63936-177-9

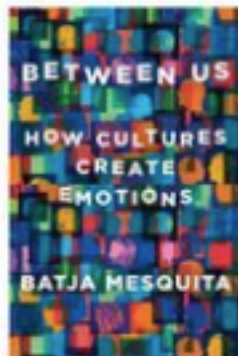
Oxford University historian Broers (*Napoleon*) delivers a granular history of Napoleon's final decade. In 1811, the French ruler welcomed his first legitimate male heir, solidifying his hopes for establishing a European dynasty. From that high point, Broers meticulously tracks Napoleon's decline as military missteps, an attempted coup, and deteriorating relationships with powerful allies, including his own father-in-law, Austrian emperor Francis I, sapped his power and influence and led to military defeat, abdication, and exile. Broers's deep knowledge of the era is evident in his fine-grained recreations of such events as the breach birth of Napoleon II (a terrifying ordeal for the boy's mother, Empress Marie-Louise), the burning of Moscow after Napoleon's troops entered the city in 1812, and the Battle of Waterloo, but he makes little accommodation to readers

not well versed in these events. Key players are referred to solely by last name, with few biographical or contextual details, and the narrative is dense with obscure military leaders, troop movements, and political intrigues. Still, those with the background and wherewithal to navigate Broers's staccato prose will find a nuanced and insightful portrait of a once mighty ruler in decline. This impressive scholarly history is best suited for experts. Illus. (July)

★ Between Us: How Cultures Create Emotions

Batja Mesquita. Norton, \$28.95 (304p) ISBN 978-1-324-00244-4

"Many of the answers about emotions are not to be found in our insides, but importantly, in our social contexts," contends Mesquita, a psychology professor at the University of Leuven, Belgium, in her dazzling debut. Arguing that "we primarily have emotions in order to adjust to changes in our relationship with the (social) world," the author uses social psychology and eye-opening case studies to examine the cultural, political, and economic factors that influence what people feel. Mesquita lays out two ways of thinking about emotions: MINE



("Mental, Inside the person, and Essentialist") and OURS ("Outside the person, Relational, and Situated"). She suggests that Western cultures tend to take the MINE approach while OURS predominates everywhere else, and she cites a study that found Japanese Olympic athletes emphasized the relational aspect of emotions more than their American counterparts in interviews. Exploring how parents instruct children in emotional norms, Mesquita describes how Minangkabau people in West Sumatra shame kids when they break a norm and how Bara people in Madagascar teach the young to fear displeasing ancestral spirits so that the children comply with authority. The bounty of case studies captivates and

makes a strong argument that social conditions have the power to dictate how one expresses and experiences emotions. The result is a bracing and bold appraisal of how feelings develop. (July)

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Cuba: A Brief History

Sergio Guerra Vilaboy and Oscar Loyola Vega, trans. from the Spanish by Mary Todd. Seven Stories, \$15.95 trade paper (128p) ISBN 978-1-64421-209-7

In this thin and workmanlike account, University of Havana historians Vilaboy and Vega sketch Cuba's development from the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1492 to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Briskly recounting the archipelago's transition from a Spanish sugar plantation colony to an independent socialist state, the authors forego complexity and color in favor of dry economic data and bland euphemisms about the Mariel boatlift, the Elián González affair, and other controversies. Though Vilaboy and Vega provide accurate and persuasive details related to U.S. and Soviet meddling in Cuban affairs, their overwhelmingly positive depiction of Fidel Castro and his political legacy begs skepticism, as does their assertion that "the vast majority of the Cuban people cherish the gains of their revolution and continue to seek a prosperous and sustainable form of socialism." Economic struggles are consistently blamed on foreign interventions and disappointing sugarcane harvests, rather than government policies; "dogmatism and intolerance" are glossed over; and there is a noticeable lack of attention paid to racial issues within Cuban society. As a basic primer on Cuban history that takes a decidedly anti-imperialist and pro-socialist stance, however, this delivers. Readers seeking the perspective of those who remain committed to the Cuban revolution may want to have a look. (July)

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ What Goes Unsaid: A Memoir of Fathers Who Never Were

Emiliano Monge, trans. from the Spanish by Frank Wynne. Scribner, \$26 (368p) ISBN 978-1-950354-91-7

Mexican novelist Monge (*The Arid Sky*) eschews the traditional parameters of memoir in this exquisite meditation on the men in his family. "The story,"