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HISTORY TODAY RECOMMENDED BOOK OF 2016

John R. Gillingham, *The European Union: An Obituary*

(Verso, London, 2016), pp. 288

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Brief Review by: Penelope J. Corfield

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True, this study is a gritty neo-liberal polemic. Yet it's based upon in-depth historical research. The author, American historian John R. Gillingham, details the ideological and *real politik* origins of countless Euro-meetings and Euro-compromises. The story includes political optimism, institutional creativity, competing interests, and much canny horse-trading. Today, however, the European Union faces manifold problems, some (like the Euro) of its own making. For Gillingham, the Euro-project has over-reached itself and is doomed. Yet its history is one of great adaptability. Can it now reform its constitution, to reboot the European Union's democratic accountability? Gillingham charts the complex historical roots of today's difficulties, which closely concern Britain – whether outside, inside, or half-in-half-out. Important, if sober, reading.