

article peut être mis en parallèle avec un autre texte malheureusement absent de ce recueil, qui propose une définition de l'idéologie des sociétés à travers l'expérience historique². Quatre autres études complètent le volume enfin, dont deux sont des conférences de portée très générale (« Medieval society », pp. 1-15 et « The History and sociology of the medieval west », pp. 81-88) et les deux autres sont moins directement liées à la problématique de la chevalerie (« Laity and the peace of God », pp. 123-34 et « The Manor and the peasant economy », pp. 186-216).

Bien sûr, un recueil d'articles ne remplace pas une œuvre conçue autour d'un plan global, et la pensée de Georges Duby ne peut être abordée sans avoir constamment recours à ses autres ouvrages. Mais en l'absence d'un travail de synthèse sur la famille aristocratique médiévale, ce choix de textes constitue déjà et demeurera longtemps un jalon indispensable aussi bien de l'histoire de la famille en occident que de l'histoire des représentations et des mentalités dans un milieu social donné, l'aristocratie. Il constitue au meilleur sens du mot un modèle d'« histoire sociale » comme on voudrait qu'elle soit toujours comprise et écrite.

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JOHN HATCHER. — *Plague, Population and the English Economy, 1348-1530*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1977. Pp. 95.

This is one of the more attractive of that new genre of 'aids to history,' the presentation of the *status questionis* of key issues of historical hypothesis and debate. Within a few pages, under the title of 'Introduction to the Controversy,' John Hatcher sketches the foundations of the debate laid by Postan, Saltmarsh, Russell and Kosminsky. There then follow remarks about more recent discussants, among whom are featured A. R. Bridbury and J.M.W. Bean. Hatcher gives more spirited note to his summary by taking part in the issue himself and coming down on the side of the 'Postan thesis'. However, it should be noted that he does this with full awareness of the limitations of data and their possible future potential (pp. 19-20).

The two central chapters of this book deal respectively with the direct and the economic evidence for demographic change. Within the few pages available to that obtuse topic, mediaeval demography, Hatcher inevitably sacrifices certain points for the sake of simplicity. For example, sources for mediaeval demographic study are not quite as impossible as here presented. One of the difficulties with the Postan thesis, as Hatcher is indeed aware, is the fact that it has not stimulated adequate primary research into demographic sources. It is noteworthy that only recently have the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure begun to push analysis of sources back prior to parish registers. The application of more advanced methods, as by T. H. Hollingsworth, has been too dependent upon traditional sources. Nevertheless, this chapter still serves to highlight the main sources and issues hitherto engaging historians.

In his chapter on the 'Economic Evidence of Population Change' John Hatcher comes down even more strongly on the side of the Postan 'prolonged

² Georges DUBY, « Histoire sociale et idéologie des sociétés », dans Jacques LE GOFF et Pierre NORA, *Faire de l'histoire*. T.I: *Nouveaux problèmes*. Paris, Gallimard, 1974, pp. 147-69.

depression' thesis against such opponents as A. R. Bridbury. There is no doubt that the evidence, illustrated here for the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, is broadly in favour of the depression thesis. This being said, one may question whether the depression thesis does not require new terms of reference. The techniques employed heretofore for comparing the standard of living *ca.* 1300 and *ca.* 1400, for example, suggest that we may be comparing apples and oranges. In short, can we make a proper assessment of economic influence upon demography with traditional views of fourteenth-century social structure that fail to account adequately for mobility, occupational specialization and so forth?

There follows a brief chapter entitled 'Why was the Population Decline so Protracted?' The important thesis is proposed that disease, often age-selective, rather than plague, may have been the long-term deterrent to population expansion under suitable conditions. A short chapter on 'Population in Early Tudor England' is really an invitation to historians to get busy on the 1475-1525 no-man's-land of historical research. Hatcher's one brief excursus into national population extrapolation in his conclusion is, in the opinion of this reviewer, unfortunate in a book of this nature.

Specialists will no doubt find much to criticize in this little volume. It is an inadequate treatment of A. R. Bridbury's labour thesis or of the Miskimin-Lloyd-Munro money and trade thesis, to take but two examples. It may better be concluded, however, that these theses require such small 'problem' volumes of their own. For the purposes of this series, that is, aids to undergraduate teaching, this remains a highly successful analysis and can be strongly recommended.

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ÉLISABETH BOURCIER. — *Les journaux privés en Angleterre de 1600 à 1660.* Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne, 1976. Pp. 496.

Diaries were a rarity in Europe before the sixteenth century. The appearance of this new literary genre had much to do with both the Renaissance, with its discovery of the individual, and the Reformation, with its assertion of the autonomy of the individual conscience. Other influences were the rise of literacy, the growing autonomy of the family, and unprecedented social mobility and instability. In consequence, many people turned in upon themselves, seeking refuge in religious and psychological self-examination. There were, of course, other reasons for keeping diaries. A desire to do battle with forgetfulness, and a terror of devouring time, undoubtedly played their part as well. But even more important was the sharp sense of human sinfulness and the unremitting desire for self improvement that obsessed almost all the diarists of the time.

Élisabeth Bourcier's study covers sixty-six early seventeenth-century English diarists. Women's diaries are rare, perhaps because of women's generally lower level of education, perhaps simply because women's diaries had less chance of being preserved. Most diarists lived in the provinces rather than in London, most were married, all were Protestant — whether puritan or Anglican — and, for most, religious questions were at the centre of their pre-occupations.

The diaries of this period are particularly valuable because, unlike those of a later age, their writers did not anticipate that they would be published or even read by others. Accordingly, they