

Quant à l'argument de Bloch sur la productivité comparée des esclaves et des serfs, estimant celle de ces derniers probablement supérieure, l'auteur a vite fait d'en « montrer » l'invalidité. Il est en effet exclu, selon lui, que le serf, sous l'aiguillon de besoins nouveaux, ait accru son rendement, car il n'y a au monde pour désirer jouir de plus de biens, que « l'entrepreneur dynamique énergique, tel que le capitalisme nous le donne en spectacle » (p. 154) !

Les analystes marxistes traditionnels ne trouvent pas davantage grâce devant l'auteur. Ch. Parain, en particulier, est longuement décortiqué. P. Dockès ne voit en lui qu'un « menchevik », un mécaniciste dont le tort principal est de ne pas donner sa place à la lutte des classes, de subordonner les forces sociales à l'économisme en posant, comme source du mode de production féodal, l'amélioration des forces productives. Loin de nous l'idée de prendre position dans ce débat qui tient beaucoup du règlement de compte interne, comme le suggérait d'ailleurs la longue digression du premier chapitre sur le « en dernière instance » de Engels, digression qui n'apporte rien au problème des causes de la fin de l'esclavagisme. On aura compris que ce qui compte ici, c'est de montrer que l'apparition du servage ne pouvait être que le fruit de la lutte des classes. Tout autre type d'explication était condamné par avance. Dans une telle optique, on comprend mieux pourquoi ni Bloch ni Duby n'étaient acceptables. Leur tort n'est pas d'avoir mal fait leur travail d'historien mais de suggérer des solutions qui ne cadrent pas avec le modèle théorique de l'auteur. Ici, la théorie prend le pas sur l'analyse patiente des sources. Ce qu'il faut « prouver », c'est que les seigneurs ont été *contraints* à caser leurs esclaves, sous une pression que l'on nous décrit comme sourde et quotidienne. Les preuves contemporaines de ces luttes serviles n'abondent pas ? Qu'à cela ne tienne, on ira querrir Jean Bodin comme témoin privilégié, tout en confessant pudiquement dans une note infra-paginale que Bodin n'est peut-être pas une source très sûre ! Toubert, étudiant le Latium, a cru discerner chez les maîtres une volonté de caser les esclaves ? C'est évidemment que Toubert n'a pas compris ses sources, et surtout qu'il n'a pas su interpréter leurs silences.

Malheureusement, il en est ainsi tout au long de ce livre qui gaspille, par manque de rigueur, un thème capital et passionnant de l'histoire sociale du Moyen-âge. L'auteur a voulu à toute force faire entrer l'histoire dans un modèle hypothétique. Il montre par l'absurde que l'histoire pour être bien faite doit suivre certaines règles et qu'on ne s'improvise pas historien.

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ANDRÉ CORVISIER. — *Armies and Societies in Europe, 1494-1789*. Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1979. Pp. ix, 209.

In the past few years it has become increasingly common to speak of the "new" as opposed to the "old" military history. Although there is some disagreement in the United States over the meaning of the former term, one may concur with Geoffrey Parker that it is concerned above all with martial phenomena viewed in a social context. It is also noteworthy that this recent trend has found a warm welcome among prominent sociologists, political scientists and other disciplinary

specialists, especially as allied with historians in Morris Janowitz' Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society at Chicago. Among such persons there is a consensus that the origins of the contemporary world's military institutions during the early modern era require much closer study. Thus it is clear that Professor Corvisier, the most accomplished French representative of the *métier* in question, has addressed himself to a particularly promising subject. What makes Corvisier's study all the more interesting is that it constitutes a happy melding of the knowledge and techniques of two distinct schools of research, that of traditional French military historiography and that of the *Annales*.

The author has divided his book into three major segments, namely, "The Nation [a better English rendition would be the "People"] and the Army", "The State and the Army", and "Military Society". Within this framework, in keeping with his explicitly stated, comparative objective, he seeks to distribute his attention evenly around Europe — western, central, eastern and southern, not neglecting some mention of Quebec. However, his emphases are naturally conditioned by variations in the quantity and quality of existing reference materials. Consequently, France, which altogether has produced the most "new" military history, occupies a larger share of the volume's pages than other countries. However, this is not to suggest that the treatment accorded other political entities is skimpy or superficial. The account of trends in Prussia deserves special commendation since Corvisier succeeds better than anyone else in delineating for the non-German reader the thoroughly militarized character of its society (for which only colonial French Canada provides a close parallel). Another laudable feature of the volume is the stress laid upon collective attitudes, that is norms, values and behavioural patterns.

To find fault with Corvisier is hardly more than to cavil. It would perhaps have been useful to point to the importance of Irish or Irish-descended officers, the so-called "Wild Geese", investigated by the Sandhurst scholar, Christopher Duffy, in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century armies, especially the Habsburgs'. Some writers, including this reviewer, would prefer to make something of a semantic distinction between "nobility" and "aristocracy". Perhaps the statement (p. 73) that sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century generals could not be courtiers requires some qualification. The case of Tuscany's Piccolomini-Pieri clan comes readily to mind, and other instances could be cited too.

The only serious objection that can be raised about the book is that the English version, if roughly serviceable, leaves much to be desired textually. According to the "Acknowledgments" Professor Claude Sturgill played a major role in preparing the American edition. Consequently, both he and the anonymous Indiana editors must be taken to task for neglecting to correct various kinds of flaws in Abigail T. Siddall's translation. Not only does the latter fail to preserve the graceful prose of the original, but the relatively brief volume contains a number of syntactic or semantic infelicities. In several places, p. 170 for instance, the reviewer even found it necessary to have recourse to the French edition in order to pinpoint Corvisier's actual meaning. Considerably more crucial are outright translation mistakes. The most egregious of these will be found on p. 30 where one is told that somebody called "la Bavière", rather than, properly, the state of Bavaria, established a new militia system. Reference to the "professional war contractor" (p. 42) rather than to Fritz Redlich's now fully accepted concept of the "military enterpriser" is only a little less disconcerting. (Paradoxically, Redlich's study, which incorporates this phrase, is included in the bibliography). Also most inappropriate is the frequent retention of French nomenclature for central and eastern European institutions when a little bit of checking would have supplied the right English equivalents or indeed the native designations: for example, "military

frontier" or *Militärgrenze* instead of *confin militaire*. Such slips only confuse the nonspecialist reader, especially undergraduates. The German titles listed are misspelled as well. In short, these errors provide good evidence of how crucial it is for a press to secure the services of people who have adequate professional experience themselves with the material at hand. The index, for its part, is little more than perfunctory.

Notwithstanding its unnecessary defects (for which Corvisier obviously bears no responsibility), *Armies and Societies in Europe* can be highly recommended to all persons interested in social history and military affairs. It represents a first-rate scholarly achievement.

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A. P. DONAJGRODZKI, ed. — *Social Control in Nineteenth Century Britain*. London: Croom Helm; Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, 1977. Pp. 258.

There were, suggested Gladstone, three ways of riding the tiger of an industrial society with its millions of "hard hands" — force, fraud or goodwill. Historians have sought further understanding of the sources of social order in the period by borrowing the concept of social control from sociology. This has sometimes distorted rather than explicated the specific permutations of Gladstone's three elements, and Donajgrodzki's introduction is in part a defensive exercise which warns against the dangers of reductionism, while rebutting recent charges that the concept is inseparable from the consensualist assumptions of the functionalists who developed the term. The idea has, he argues, a considerable flexibility which makes it transideological, and his even-handed exposition does a useful service in demonstrating the proper utility and potential of the concept of social control for the historian. In particular he stresses that its operation must be studied as a process of interaction between controllers and controlled, both of whom, he proposes, were in a sense trained in their roles.

The contributors examine how a variety of social institutions served the interests of social order, proceeding in a roughly chronological order, which serves a further editorial theme, that of the structural changes in the general mechanisms of social control during the century. As the explosive conditions of the early Victorian period gave way to the calmer political and economic climate of later years, the balance of emphasis shifted from force to goodwill, though several essays point to their continuing tactical complementarity. Thus John Stevenson shows that the hard men of the post-1789 counter-revolution tempered terror with paternalism, and Donajgrodzki's own contribution on the early Victorian bureaucratic élite reveals a pragmatic mix of benevolence and coercion in the social policy of both utilitarians and traditionalists. Judith Fido's piece on the new model paternalists of the Charity Organisation Society argues that behind their aspirations to class fraternity lay a steely reliance on the negative sanctions of the New Poor Law.