

cludes that “neither class nor nationality, perhaps not even race, has a more powerful effect on the growing human animal than the forces that mold a generation” — a view which many academics who survived the campus unrest of the 1960s will confirm. Michael F. Marrus ponders the divergent ways, mostly silence or reaffirmation of patriotism, in which French Jews reacted to the Dreyfus affair. Finally, Amy Hackett studies the third largest, and most neglected, feminist movement before the First World War. She shows why German women did not pursue the same objectives, notably the vote, as their American and British counterparts, and how cultural differences between societies may determine even the forms of protest of apparently similar international minorities.

A substantial, nutritious and palatable bill of fare, then — but does it deserve its title? Only in the sense that all the courses on the menu come under the general heading of modern European social history. But there is nothing on Scandinavia, the Low Countries, Eastern Europe, and some of the themes, like the peasantry to Spain, are geographically confined. Though we should be thankful for what we have received, we are still a long way from that comprehensive modern European social history for which at least one appetite was whetted.

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HENRY A. LANDSBERGER, ed. — *Rural Protest: Peasant Movements and Social Change*. London: Macmillan, 1974.

Although peasant society is one of the most universal and indestructible forms of social organization, the study of peasant society together with the social protest that it has generated in so many different times and places is a relatively new area of scholarship. In this field, Henry A. Landsberger is clearly a pioneer. His introductory essay in *Latin American Peasant Movements* is now a classic. With the help of several distinguished historians and social scientists, Professor Landsberger has extended his brilliantly suggestive analysis to a variety of peasant revolts and movements ranging from Medieval Europe and England through eighteenth-century Russia and late nineteenth-century Spain to the developing countries in the Third World during the last thirty years.

Professor Landsberger's essays are the kind that exercise the imagination and provide a variety of working models that historians and social scientists can employ in investigating diverse species of rural social protest. He also has warnings to impart to investigators: although Mao, Guevara and Debray have all argued that peasants have considerable potential for making revolutions independently of urban classes, Landsberger is careful to point out that a peasant-based revolution is not necessarily a peasant-led revolution, and that even under twentieth-century conditions the goals of peasant movements of protest are limited, specific, and indeed even reactionary. Most peasant revolts are a reaction to a decline of status and reflect a desire to return to a communal life experienced in the recent past or enshrined in the mythology of a golden age. But there remain some movements that clearly seek an improvement in status (such as the Spanish Cantonalist Revolt of 1873 or the peasant movement in twentieth-century Poland). Peasant movements will nearly always prefer reformist approaches to revolutionary solutions, but they can become radicalized if they hold together long enough and if their initial conservative, short-range objectives are not achieved.

However, it must be said that there are areas of investigation where the questions asked concerning rural protest could have been more sharply defined.

The writers in this volume leave one with a rather hazy idea concerning the specific forms of violence employed: was it typically directed against property or persons? These questions are dealt with more satisfactorily by George Rudé in his various writings on the crowd in history. Professor Landsberger might also have profited from using Rudé's more subtle distinctions concerning ideology and goals among the revolutionary crowd. Although Professor Landsberger, a sociologist, has read widely in the social sciences as well as in various fields of history, he apparently is unaware of the very important work on violence and popular movements of social protest that has appeared recently in the pages of *Past and Present*. Nor does he deal with the role of rumour and religious and secular prophecies in furnishing peasant and artisan rebels with generalized feelings that could local riots and risings to coalesce into larger regional rebellions. Here Keith Thomas's *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, Geoffrey Elton's *Policy and Police* and Georges Lefebvre's *The Great Fear* are very pertinent but nowhere are they noticed. Keith Thomas's book in particular should be of as much general interest to sociologists and anthropologists as it is to historians.

In his analytical summary of writings dealing with the English Peasant's Revolt of 1381, Professor Landsberger insists upon the importance of villeinage as a cause of that rebellion and he states that conspiracies and risings continued until villeinage disappeared. The fact is that they continued until well into the nineteenth century in England — more than three hundred years after villein status ceased to be an important issue. Professor Roland Mousnier, in his *Peasant Uprisings in Seventeenth-Century France, Russia, and China*, has argued that oppressive legal or social structures such as villeinage or "feudalism" are not necessary in order to explain peasant risings. Mousnier maintains that a conjuncture of disasters — bad weather, harvest failures and food shortages — is in itself a sufficient cause of rural social protest. This distinction between structures and conjunctures — familiar to the readers of *Past and Present* and *Annales* — is a useful one that Professor Landsberger might well have employed.

While no single book on so broad a topic is likely to please every critic, yet it must be said that Professor Landsberger's new collection of essays should serve the student of peasant protest well indeed.

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YVES DURAND. — *Les républiques au temps des monarchies*. Paris, P.U.F., 1973.

Dans un petit livre paru fin '73 dans la Collection Sup, Yves Durand présente une étude fort suggestive sur un sujet peu souvent traité, la comparaison entre les monarchies et les républiques sous l'Ancien Régime.

Les historiens ont en effet tellement insisté sur l'absolutisme monarchique qu'on en est venu tout naturellement à considérer les républiques comme quantités négligeables; celles-ci étaient d'ailleurs de dimensions modestes et elles avaient mauvaise presse auprès des pouvoirs forts; ainsi de Venise vue par Rome et de Genève ou des Pays-Bas vus par la France et par l'Espagne.

Pour éclairer son sujet l'A. met en œuvre sa profonde connaissance de la Société d'Ancien Régime et sa vaste érudition. Il s'attache particulièrement à recueillir sur tous les points qui l'intéressent les témoignages des contemporains.