

Comme le dit Fernand Braudel dans la préface, il faut espérer qu'un jour, une grande biographie intellectuelle de Lucien Febvre, se fondant notamment sur sa correspondance, pourra être publiée.

Hubert WATELET,
Université d'Ottawa.

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ROBERT J. BEZUCHA, ed. — *Modern European Social History*. Lexington, Mass., Toronto and London: Lexington Books, and D. C. Heath and Co., 1972.

Readers of this review should be forewarned that the reviewer is prejudiced. How can one resist the blandishments of an editor who quotes one's definition of social history approvingly and then offers a dozen scholarly examples of how it should be done? To be fair, Dr. Bezucha also quotes a number of other, more eminent social historians, and all on the same tack, that social history is no longer a peripheral activity, mopping up the bits that mainline political, economic, intellectual, diplomatic and military historians have usually left out, but is now a central pursuit in its own right, concerned with the history of society, with "understanding the life of men in the past, in its setting of society and institutions." The only questions that arise then are: are the essays genuine examples of social history thus conceived? are they well done? and do they deserve so comprehensive a title as *Modern European Social History*? The answers, briefly, are: yes, yes, and well, perhaps.

The twelve essays are all scholarly pieces of original work by younger social historians, mostly, I would guess, condensed from doctoral theses. The editor has grouped them under five well-established themes of social history, elites, the working classes, peasants, personal (meaning sexual) behavior and social protest. All are steeped in the sources, much of them intensely local and close to the grass roots of social behavior, several display of mastery of quantitative techniques which is one of the hallmarks of the new generation, and nearly all show a sophisticated understanding of the subtleties of social structure which goes far beyond many earlier, cruder efforts at analysing social action in terms of stratification.

Amongst the first group of elite studies, James J. Sheehan investigates the changing character and relationships between the governing elites of nineteenth-century Germany, and tries to explain how and why the social values and even the personnel of the single unified elite of the pre-industrial landed aristocracy with its domination of the army and bureaucracy survived to set the tone and objectives of the most advanced industrial nation in Europe. He finds the answer in the flexibility of the Junkers, their capacity for adaptation to the needs of a modern, more efficient State, their recognition and involvement in the new economic system via direct exploitation of agriculture, their defeat of the rising liberal *Bürgertum* in 1848 and the subsequent conversion of the latter to conservative, aristocratic ideals by economic interest in State-encouraged business enterprise, admiration of military and diplomatic success, recruitment of their sons into the army and bureaucracy and fear of the threat to property and the social order from the organized working class. Aristocratic and bureaucratic ideals were preserved by the fusion of the new and old elites, but at a deferred cost in social tension and breakdown released by the First World War. As an interpretation, none of this is completely new — see, for example, J. R. Gillis's article in *Past and Present*, December 1968 — but it is very convincingly argued.

T. William Heyck offers a useful statistical analysis of the social origins and background of British Radical M.P.s between 1874 and 1895. He shows how their typically middle-class stand against the privilege and political pre-eminence of the older landed elite had limited appeal for the working-class clientèle which they needed for support, and could not prevent the latter breaking away and forming their own Labour Party, thus precipitating the demise of Radicalism in its middle-class form. I do not quite agree with him that the typical Radical was a big business man frustrated by lack of social reward. My own work on the land reformers suggests that most Radical business men were comparatively small owner-managers, and the big corporate business men, bankers, brewers and railway directors, were the first to desert to the Tories, while his own figures confirm mine, that most Radical M.P.s were increasingly professional men with no direct stake in either capital or labour. But it is still an illuminating essay.

Judson Mather examines the rise and fall of an extreme right-wing Catholic elite, the Assumptionists in France, 1870-1900, and their militant campaign against secularism, which deservedly foundered in the anti-semitism of their aberrant and abhorrent role in the Dreyfus affair.

The section on the working classes consists of two studies of working-class violence, the Lyon rising of the *canuts* (domestic silk workers) in 1831 and 1834 and the Fatti di Maggio rebellion of factory and other proletarians in Milan in 1898. The first, by the editor of the volume, convincingly demonstrates the "pre-industrial" origins of the working-class movement in the struggle of artisans to preserve the protective paternalism of pre-industrial society, betrayal of which by the State provoked a violent, if hopelessly doomed, response. The second, by Louise A. Tilly, is a quantitative analysis of those arrested or injured in the Milan rebellion which shows that they were not a random selection of "trouble-makers" but organized proletarians with genuine grievances and a tradition of street protest.

The two peasant studies are both of Spain, Glen A. Waggoner's of an outbreak of primitive rural violence in Andalusia in 1881-83 blamed on a mysterious "Black Hand" gang, and Edward Malefakis's on the peasants' role in the Civil War of the 1930s, and how the details of property distribution and social structure affected their attitudes to the contending armies. The threat of land reform, paradoxically, is the reason why some peasants supported Franco and others deserted the Republican Government.

Under Personal Behavior and Social Change, Edward Shorter repeats his well-known theory of an explosion of sexual activity, as shown by illegitimacy and premarital conceptions, in Europe from the early eighteenth to the late nineteenth century, and its relationship to the modernization of society via the disproportionate increase in landless wage-earners without property ties to control their marriages and procreation. What he does not explain is why the illegitimacy figures in England, the prototype industrial country, were so much lower than in pre-industrial Germany. His skeletal statistics are clothed in palpitating flesh by Robert Neuman's study of actual sexual experience from German workingclass autobiographies which, albeit for a more recent period, show the manifold opportunities for sexual gratification or consolation amongst footloose wage-earners, rural as well as urban — shades of Guenther Grass's *The Tin Drum* — the only difference being the greater likelihood that the rural swain would be forced to make an honest woman of his pregnant girl friend.

Under Forms of Social Protest Anthony Esler explores the politics of inter-generational revolt through the young French revolutionaries of 1830, and con-

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.

Harold PERKIN,
University of Lancaster.

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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.