
Late medievalists rather than early modernists must take the credit for gradually remedying the relative dearth of research into the social and economic history of early sixteenth-century England. Recent studies (by Larry Poos and Marjorie McIntosh amongst others) have emphasized the problems caused by the conventional periodization of English history before and after 1500 into ‘medieval’ and ‘early modern’; and shamed sixteenth-century historians for their failure to engage with the evidence of social and economic change surviving in manorial court rolls, one of the staple sources of medieval history.

From this perspective, Jane Whittle’s exhaustively researched and clearly conceptualized analysis of the course and experience of economic change in rural Norfolk is particularly welcome. The development of agrarian capitalism is self-conscious in its determination to employ (among other sources) both manorial court rolls and county quarter sessions records; and, concomitantly, in its attempt to force medievalists and early modernists into dialogue. But Whittle has more challenging ambitions than to play academic hostess at a particularly difficult historiographical dinner party. In a lucid theoretical introduction she traces the debate over the transition from feudalism to capitalism first to the Scottish Enlightenment pioneers of the history of social and economic development; thence to the founding fathers of sociology; and ultimately to the two seminal essays published by Robert Brenner in 1976 and 1982. Along the way, she offers rigorous critiques of the definitions of ‘peasant society’ adopted by Alan Macfarlane (‘unusually restrictive’) and Mick Reed (‘over-encompassing’) for the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries respectively. Her most searching criticisms, however, are reserved for ‘the Brenner thesis’ itself, which is pulled apart here not only for its weaknesses as a historical account (p. 24) but also for its theoretical failure to explain the ‘particular balance of class forces’ which in Brenner’s view determined the outcome of class struggle (p. 25). Whittle therefore sets out both to investigate the interconnections between market relations and demographic change on the one hand and property relations and class interests on the other; and to enquire after those factors that obstructed ‘the transition’ as well as those that promoted it. The substantive chapters that follow are based on an intensive study of the north-east Norfolk village of Marsham, and of the manor of Hevingham Bishops in which it stood (comparing it where appropriate with eight neighbouring manors), in the period between the end of serfdom and the appearance of widespread landlessness. In turn, they deal with the manorial system and its legacy; with the land market and inheritance strategies; with the nature and scale of social differentiation; and with the experience of rural service and labour. The emphasis throughout is on the relative circumscription of market dependency. Cumulatively, they offer the most rigorous, sustained, and persuasive analysis currently available of the underlying causes of economic and social change in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century England.
Two chapters in particular will be especially influential. The discussion of the peasant land market demonstrates not only that landlords were slow to adjust levels of rents and fines in response to mid-sixteenth-century price inflation; but also that at least as much land was acquired by each generation through purchase as through inheritance. Even those who inherited land often had to pay for the privilege. Far from being largely alien to peasant society and interests, as Brenner had suggested, the land market was therefore integral to peasant landholding. Even where lordly interference was minimal and rents and fines were low, moreover, ‘engrossment and social polarisation were rife’ (p. 399).

Equally striking is the discovery of the enforcement of the ‘fairly oppressive and all-encompassing system’ of labour regulation in mid-sixteenth-century Norfolk both before and after the introduction of the statute of artificers. Although it has conventionally been assumed that the great medieval statutes of labour regulation were regarded as redundant even in the early fifteenth century, Whittle suggests that they had quite possibly operated continuously since the mid-fourteenth century. Indeed, by linking the clauses of the 1563 act to those of the 1351 statute of labourers she offers a remarkable long-term perspective on the history of labour regulation, from which it appears that the near-total wage (and welfare) dependency of the landless poor emerged only after about 1750. The existence and enforcement of these labour laws, it is argued, are themselves signs of ‘the imperfect development of the market’ (p. 314).

The implications of all this are far-reaching, especially for those early modernists who have followed Peter Bowden in associating the half-century after 1580 with the significant redistribution of income in favour of the landed class. Whittle shows convincingly that James Boleyn and Edward Clere were almost alone among Norfolk landowners in attempting to improve their estate incomes at Hevingham Bishops (in 1543) and Blickling (in 1562) respectively. The active estate management policies of the period after 1580 thus emerge as a surprisingly belated response by landlords whose tenants had been profiting at their expense during two generations of price inflation.

Although it may seem churlish to call for greater archival enterprise in a book already distinguished by its mastery of a wide range of documentary sources, the records of the central courts (an arena in which she was likely to find at least some further evidence of aggressive landlordism) are conspicuous by their absence from Whittle’s discussions and bibliography. This is all the more surprising in that she argues that the right of recourse to the royal courts in disputes with their lords was itself one of the considerable successes achieved by tenants by the 1580s. This fascinating volume will none the less be required reading for medievalists and early modernists alike: rigorous in its methodology, subtle in its analysis, its map of a mixed peasant economy which was simultaneously prosperous yet unstable is an indispensable guide to all scholars and students traversing the rugged terrain of the transition debate.
1998 marked the two hundredth anniversary of a small but significant event in modern European history. On 15 February 1798 Italian Swiss Jacobins attempted a coup d'état in Lugano in order to join the Italian-Swiss valleys of the Ticino to the French Cisalpine Republic. To their dismay, the crowd that gathered in the Piazza Grande shouted them down. That evening two conservative lawyers from Ponte Tresa, Annibale Pellegrini and Angelo Stoppani, led a group of armed men to the bailiff, who represented the German-Swiss canton of Unterwalden. The bailiff appointed by Unterwalden was the notoriously oppressive, corrupt, and incompetent authority who administered the Luganese as a subject territory in the name of the thirteen cantons of the Old Swiss Confederation. Pellegrini and Stoppani announced: ‘We demand our sacred rights; we desire Swiss liberty; finally after centuries of subjection, we are mature enough to govern ourselves.’ When the startled bailiff, who had every reason to expect the worst, promised to carry that message back to the Confederation, celebrations began. The crowd planted a Tree of Liberty, adorned it with a William Tell cap, and shouted that they were ‘Svizzeri e liberi’ – free and Swiss.

Canton Ticino and the City of Lugano commemorated these events by an exhibition in 1998 and commissioned a set of historical essays to accompany the show. The scholarly work in this volume shows why ‘small but significant’ is the right designation for the counter-coup of 1798. In effect, the Italian-speaking Swiss opted to reject progress, enlightenment, rationality, uniformity of weights and measures, and the blessings of liberty for what Georg Kreis in the introductory essay calls a ‘feudal, medieval system strongly centered on immutable personal relations’ (p. 18). It took Napoleon to impose the modern world on the area by his intervention in 1803, which created an independent Republic and Canton of Ticino. The Ticinesi were not alone in rejecting French progress in the 1790s and 1800s; the Sanfedisti in Naples, brigands in Calabria, the guerrilleros in Spain and Andreas Hofer in the Tyrol took arms against what we instinctively see as the main timeline of modern European history: modernization.

As Andrea Ghiringelli writes in his splendid essay in this collection, the residents of the Italian-speaking Swiss valleys clung to the ‘speranza da vivere nell’ antico disordine’ (the hope of living in their ancient disorder) (p. 30). On 18 February 1798, the congress of the communities of the former bailiwick of Lugano failed to agree on a new order. The rural parishes of Agno and Capriasca rejected the Lugano version of liberty and opted for the status quo. Riva San Vitale voted to join the Cisalpine Republic. The Mendrisiotto could not agree on anything. Val Maggia continued to pay tribute to the old lords. The Leventina opted for annexation to Uri, and Locarno and Bellinzona declared themselves independent (p. 29).

The antico disordine benefited the old ruling elites who jealously guarded equally ancient privileges, which Giovanni Buzzi illustrates by an account of the incredible variety of tenancy and overlapping authorities in the region (p. 181). The old order turned out to be very resilient. For example, as Stefania Bianchi explains, it took
seventy-one years, 1798 to 1869, for Canton Ticino to introduce the metric system (p. 203). Italian Jacobins and enlightened observers were appalled then, as their descendants are today, by the apparent shortsightedness of Swiss behaviour. Several wonderful chapters in the book trace the collapse of Jacobin illusions drawn from Rousseau about simple, upright, virtuous mountaineers formed by nature to be free and rational.

Particularism is often used to describe stubborn local resistance to change and the word has a dismissive overtone, as if general categories must by definition be superior to particular ones and uniformity preferable to diversity. Certainly the French and Italian Jacobins thought so in 1798. They strove for one indivisible, uniform bureaucratic paradise.

The Ticinesi rejected that vision in 1798 and again in March 2001 when in a referendum they voted overwhelmingly (85 per cent No) against a proposal to begin immediate negotiations to join the European Union. The reasons then and now can be found in the book reviewed here, a fascinating piece of apparently peripheral historical scholarship celebrating an event of which few readers of the Historical Journal will have heard. The persistence of the Old Europe in the midst of the New remains one of the most important and least regarded aspects of modern European history. The collapse of the Soviet Union in a sense marks the final episode in the long history of the French Revolution and the reign of universal ideas. As the bright lights of enlightened universalism went out across the European sub-continent, the antico disordine of ethnic identity and local rights re-emerged from the shadows. Two centuries of enforced modernization had not entirely eradicated the Old Europe. This fine volume, marked by excellent scholarship presented in an easy, user-friendly format and style, has something to tell us about the persistence of localisms in the midst of apparently victorious enthusiasms for general schemes for human betterment.

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This landmark study addresses admirably the needs of English-speaking readers for whom primarily it is written, but it also has value for all who are interested in the deeds of the last great Turk on the world stage. Its outstanding characteristic is its balanced sympathy for its subject. This astute empathy in itself is no small accomplishment, for Kemal Atatürk (1881–1938) is no easy subject for a biographer. The book, however, is not only a biography but also a political history of modern Turkey.

The volume, divided into five parts and twenty-nine chapters, is organized both chronologically and thematically. Part One provides relevant details about the family and educational background and early formative years of Atatürk. Part Two investigates the place of the Tripolitanian, Balkan, and the First World Wars in the career of the Turkish leader and examines their impact on him. Part Three deals with the battles occurring during the Turkish War of Independence, relates the developments leading to the signing of the Lausanne Peace Treaty and points out the special significance of this legal instrument in relation to the future of Turkey. Part Four treats
the proclamation of the republic and the subsequent launching of the Westernizing reforms. Attention is also concentrated on the maintenance of law and order in the country. Part Five discusses the economic and foreign policies of the Turkish leadership. Finally, there is a conclusion summarizing aspects of the personality and work of Atatürk.

The analysis of the main topics is well documented. Mango has explored in depth the voluminous official speeches, statements, circulars, and telegrams of Atatürk. References to contemporary books and articles complement the use of government publications. This reflective portrait is thus based largely on published Turkish sources, which until now have never been adequately checked, compared, and collated. Mango is also fully conversant with the large secondary literature on Atatürk and the views of recent admirers and detractors. He is well acquainted with the Turkish biographers’ works on Atatürk and compares thoughtfully his own interpretations with theirs. Yet the approach is not entirely satisfactory. Unfortunately, presidential archives and the General Staff Military History and Strategic Studies Directorate’s archives in Ankara have not been used; nor were the proceedings of the Turkish Grand National Assembly and the papers of the Republican People’s Party and pertinent foreign archival materials. Curiously enough, the writer also appears not to have made use of the important biographies of Atatürk in the French and German languages (with the exception of Alexandre Jevakhoff’s *Kemal Atatürk: les chemins de l’occident* (Paris, 1986)).

This investigation suggests creative ways of analysing existing information to provide insights which enable the reader to comprehend better the life and times of one of the great figures of the twentieth century. Here is by far the most thorough study of Atatürk in the English language and an absorbing biography in its own right. Mango examines ably the broad range of Atatürk’s activities and accomplishments as a soldier, a diplomat, a politician, and a statesman. Although the resulting evaluations are not particularly novel, their tone is judicious and considered. The author highlights the extraordinary feats in Atatürk’s career. He stresses that few could have predicted the extent of the Turkish army’s victory over the Greeks in 1922 and the ensuing diplomatic triumph at Lausanne the following year. In addition to the figure of Atatürk, Mango paints lively and spirited sketches of Turkish statesmen and military commanders of the period: İsmet İnönü, Fevzi Çakmak, Rauf Orbay, Kazım Karabekir, Ali Fuat Cebesoy and Refet Bele. Although long (666 pages), the narrative is always lucid. The book is written in a fine and straightforward style, with touches of humour and no sentimentality.

Mango’s book will become an essential source for future studies of Atatürk. While some of his assessments may not be unanimously accepted, they will no doubt become a central feature of scholarly debate. Mango has written a penetrating book and has done so with erudition and zest, even if the possible explanations for Atatürk’s success in the field of foreign policy, such as the signing of the Montreux Straits Convention which enabled the re-establishment of the Turkish sovereignty over the Straits and the return of the region of Hatay to Turkey, might be probed further. The question why Atatürk acted as he did, in a principled or pragmatic manner, requires closer attention. There is also no attempt to examine the special links between domestic and foreign policy. However, the author, whose admiration for Atatürk is obvious, has given the life and achievements of this remarkable statesman a new and convincing human dimension. To Mango’s credit, he did not follow the general trend of depicting Atatürk in mythic proportions. There are numerous works on Atatürk in Turkish, English, and
other languages, but none to my knowledge approaches him with such a steady eye and a gift for interpretation. The author has produced a sophisticated assessment which is sympathetic but not sycophantic, critical on occasion but not iconoclastic. The book makes demands on the reader, but it repays the effort in full measure. It is authoritative and indispensable, but it is not the last word on the subject; much remains to be said and written about the creator of modern Turkey.

Stefan Collini’s history has deep contemporary resonances. English pasts is infused with the conviction that historians must engage with a wider public, and that history should play a central role in the formation of what passes for public culture. Collini’s expansive reviewing is conceived in precisely that spirit of engagement. Nevertheless uncollected reviews remain ephemeral: interventions and occasional pieces which can do no more than hint at a grander vision. In English pasts Collini collects a series of essays around the broad themes of history and literature, England and ‘Englishness’, and an essentially Arnoldian view of ‘culture’. Lest the sceptical reader scorn mere recycling, throughout there remains a freshness and richness of historical reference which delights and engages. With one exception, Collini has reworked the original essays and highlighted central ideas. It would be wrong to say that the resulting volume betrays its origins, but it does transcend them, at least to the extent of now being cast in the form of elaborate variations on recurrent themes.

Part 1, ‘Histories’, ranges widely but returns throughout to the nature and writing of national histories. Collini locates both history and the creative acts of historians within the public processes which shape a nation’s self-image. His foil here is David

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1 Donald Winch and John Burrow wish to pay tribute to … Stefan Collini … the team’s captain and leading scorer’. Stefan Collini, Donald Winch, and John Burrow, That noble science of politics: a study in nineteenth century intellectual history (Cambridge, 1983), p. ix.

Cannadine, or more precisely Cannadine’s sense that G. M. Trevelyan constitutes a model for the public role of professional history.  

It is just not true, as Cannadine seems to imply at certain points, that the choice has to be between having either ‘a vision of the national past’ (and note the singular) which is ‘highly usable and very relevant to contemporary Britain’, or accounts which ‘are rarely more than one thing after another’. To see it thus would be to oversimplify the variety, complexity, and interest of the many ways in which historians’ accounts of periods, episodes, and characteristics of English history have some purchase on our collective self-understandings in the present. (p. 16)

Rightly Collini concludes that writing national history by the late twentieth century was immeasurably more difficult than it had been in the earlier part of the century, and that Cannadine’s clarion call to historians to intervene in national life in grand narrative mode rather misunderstands the ways in which public culture and political identities are now made. Collini’s conclusion, that national histories will be more essayistic, more frankly selective, more visual, and more self-reflexive is as welcome as it is well-judged.

Collini is similarly acute in deconstructing the ways in which the Conservative tradition from Burke onwards intrudes a myth of England’s historical development into narratives of Britain’s constitutional development. Since the end of the seventeenth century, Collini argues, British history has been characterized by ‘much greater apparent continuity and agreement’ than that of France. It has been shaped by a sense of tradition which is both lived and pervasive. Nevertheless this sense of tradition, of evolution, operates as a profoundly legitimizing myth, reverencing tradition in an attempt to ‘confer the legitimacy of continuity on what is in practice always changing’ (p. 55). There is, in short, a ‘large element of myth in the idea of a supple tradition being wisely adapted so as constantly to renew a fundamental national consensus’ (p. 56).

As a critique both of Conservative and Whig presentations of England’s history and English identities, this takes us a long way. My problem here is not with what is explicit in Collini’s critique, but rather what is implicit: its hinting at an alternative, cooler, almost demythologized national history. What Collini’s cool repositioning of English history perhaps does not fully capture are the ways in which writing history is active in contesting that national history. Not only are all national histories selective and even impressionistic, they are now almost necessarily fragmentary, driven and shaped by particular ways of knowing, and contested precisely because they reflect and reinforce the profound cultural uncertainties of a multinational, multicultural, and post-imperial state.

A central theme of Part 2, ‘Minds’ is the decentring both of the intellectual and intellectual authority in modern Britain. Strikingly, Collini’s explanation of this ebbing of intellectual authority is grounded not in the social and political developments of the twentieth century but rather in the intellectual textures of the nineteenth. The dominant public languages of nineteenth-century Britain, and indeed of what passed for socialism in early twentieth-century Britain, rested not on ideological systems but on moral energy. Not for nothing did Coleridge write *lay sermons* and Carlyle exhort the nation. The intellectual was a preacher, and the world of ideas of a domain of moral certainties and ethical aspirations. Collini traces the contours and the limitations of these kinds of discourse in subtle, but hostile, readings of Tawney and Raymond Williams. In Tawney Collini finds ‘a simple, massive assertion that the teaching of

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morality points towards the politics of socialism’ (p. 194). The same may be said of an almost endless cast of voices of the left: try substituting Tawney with the Webbs, the Coles, Orwell, Raymond Williams, E. P. Thompson, many of the Fabians, or much of the First New Left. In sketching the high tide of the British Left’s moralizing energy, Collini also detects its long withdrawing roar.

In profound and enduring ways, the tone of British public discourse was shaped in and by the ‘Condition of England Debate’ in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Collini recognizes the long shadow cast by Britain’s early attempts to understand the meanings and moral tendencies of manufacturing capitalism. In Part 2 of English pasts Collini seeks to map the profound shift in sensibility and what might best be described as the ideological instincts of the reading public. ‘Few of those likely to read Tawney today can easily share his unargued conviction about the nature and force of something called “morality”’ (p. 194). There is a bleakness in this assessment, not because there was something necessarily compelling about earlier moral evocations, not because they actually promoted social improvement or political involvement, but because they represented an attempt to engage rather than a cry of despair. Between 1840 and 1940 Britain attempted to resolve ‘the Condition of England Question’ by massive moralizing and modest welfare. After the Second World War the prescription was reversed. By the end of the twentieth century the resurgence of neo-classical political economy displaced both moral energy and welfarist optimism. Richard Hoggart might spend much of his time shopping and somehow persuade himself that shopping represents an analysable social drama, but no amount of imagining social classes in supermarket queues can obscure the normative power of the new political economy which now constitutes the staple of British political discourse. Those wanting to understand the nature of recent ideological transformations in Britain should reflect on Collini’s careful reconstruction of the historical locations of Tawney, Berlin, Williams, and Hoggart.

In Part 3 the idiom changes. We move from ‘Histories’ and ‘Minds’ to ‘Arguments’. The style is more overtly polemical, and Collini is now seeking to influence cultural attitudes on the grandest stage. Suddenly the partisan reader is alarmed. This is our man, history’s man. He may be a leading scorer in our league, but at this level defences are better, the tackling much fiercer, and man-to-man marking the norm. We need though have had no fears: Collini can play at this level too. There is the same pace of argument, the same stylish footwork, the same skilful use of the elbows. This reader roared approval when he dispatched John Carey’s crude The intellectuals and the masses as ersatz intellectual populism. ‘He [Carey] drinks Middlebrau, and doesn’t reach the parts everyone else can’t reach’ (p. 291). In Collini’s five essays grouped under ‘Arguments’ there is a sureness of touch and tone which entices the reader and almost demands approval. Moreover, and perhaps more importantly, Collini has done his work. Too often polemics against the times are polemics from an uninformed sentimentality or an uncritical nostalgia. Collini’s mode is oppositional but securely grounded. He dislikes attempts to measure research, he rejects rhetorical conceits which marginalize academic critics in ivory towers, and he is coruscating on le trahison des intellectuels. But he has read his sources. He is immersed in the briefing documents emanating from the state and its agencies, he does not confuse the UGC with the UFC, and he has statistics as well as intuitions. He confesses at times to writing more in anger

\footnote{Collini’s review of Hoggart’s Township with figures is a delightful essay in critical generosity (pp. 219–230).}
than sorrow, but the anger is that of an academic and a sense of sorrow persists because the underlying reflexes are those of scholarship rather than mere opinion.

Precisely because so much here is well judged, and much of what is less well judged is politically necessary, I feel the need to enter my note of protest. There are moments when he becomes beguiled by his own cultivated scholarly ambition, where his sense of academic worth becomes too fastidious, where the lines between what is and what is not real research become too dogmatically drawn. So when Collini tells us that ‘research’ in Humanities is about reflecting on what has long been ‘known’, when it is narrowed to ‘cultivating understanding’, I want to protest (pp. 233–51). I want to protest from the low ground of academic pragmatism by reasserting the old argument that there is a link between research and teaching in higher education, and affirming if the price of this is a burgeoning of journals and even the publication of books I have neither the time nor the desire to read, there is still a greater good. The alternative to this kind of academic Fordism, paradoxically, is the proletarianization of the university teacher. Without our research, we are still more vulnerable to direction and regimentation by our political masters whose desire to control what is learnt and the ways in which it is learnt might even make Saint Just blanch. As a bulwark against that, I will accept yet another piece on the Liberal revival in some county or other, and even another real-wage series for bricklayers in Bootle.

I also want to protest from higher ground. ‘Cultivating understanding’ is a noble aim, but is often done by the few standing on the shoulders of the many. Collini himself, both as a historian and as a cultural critic, practises this whilst seeming to distance himself from it. The grand vistas which now pass as historical understanding have been created and cultivated by the humble labours of the many. Those who labour in the vineyard are all worthy of their hire, even if some are more worthy of intellectual esteem. And this, in fact, is precisely why English pasts succeeds. Its form is improvisatory, its subjects are other people’s books, but its thematic unity is the product of a creative and refined critical intelligence. There is a revealing sense of the ambiguities of the past and the complexities of historical values. Above all there is an ability to read other historians’ work, and to perceive wider meanings whilst locating it within a grander intellectual vision. From these heights those struggling in the foothills of mere research are perhaps too easily overlooked, and their emphasis on the routine disciplines of research too easily marginalized. Cultivating understanding often has its roots in the prosaic and the almost mundanely technical. It was, after all, Dr Barry Cooper’s apparently mechanistic analysis of Beethoven’s notebooks and compositional techniques which gave us a glimpse of Beethoven’s Tenth Symphony. Suddenly the most desiccated and rigorous scholarship takes flight, and research becomes the basis for cultural creativity. History, as a collective and creative project, is much the same. From the fragments of our notebooks, from the dissonance of overdriven, overprotective ‘research’, we create our pasts and thus interpret our presents. Of course none of us is Beethoven, few of us are Mendelssohn, and most of us are not even Molter, but the ‘project’, the ‘enterprise’, the ‘art’ remains the richest and most rigorous tool we have for understanding the worlds that people create.