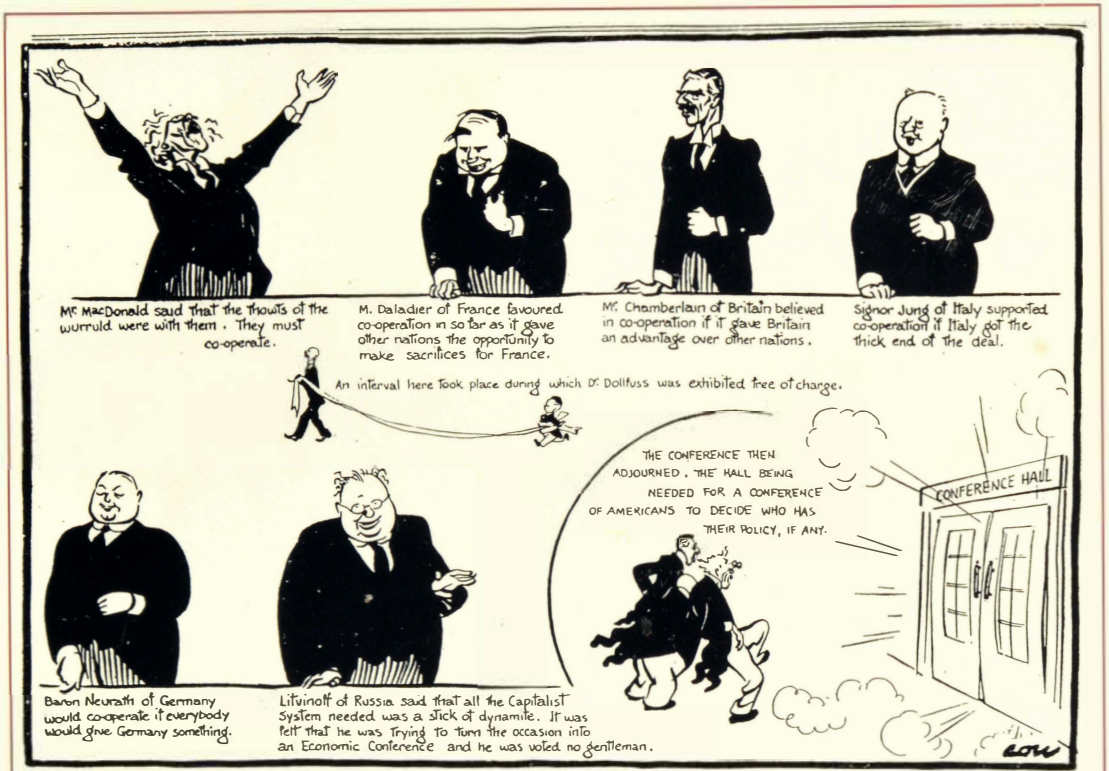
S.A.T.H.

HISTORY TEACHING REVIEW
YEAR BOOK



BRILLIANT SUCCESS OF THE CONFERENCE SO FAR.

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HISTORY TEACHING REVIEW

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EDITOR: ANDREW HUNT

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Cover illustration: *'The Brilliant Success of the Conference So Far', by David Low,* Evening Standard, *June 1933. The cartoon illustrates the failure of international co-operative efforts to tackle the Great Depression.*

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON THE CONTRIBUTORS

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Elspeth King trained as a museum curator, and worked at the People's Palace, Glasgow, and Dunfermline's Abbot House. She is now Director of the Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum. All of her publications are in the field of material culture; the most recent is *An Introduction to Scotland's Liberator – the Life and Legacy of William Wallace 1297-1997* which accompanies the exhibition of that name.

Dr William Kenefick is lecturing in Modern Scottish History at the University of Dundee. He specialises in Scottish social and economic history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Scottish labour history and the history of British ports and dock labour. He is a council member for the Economic and Social History Society of Scotland and a member of the editorial board of the Scottish Labour History Society. His publications include *Ardrossan: the Key to the Clyde* (1993), *The Roots of Red Clydeside 1910-1914?* (co-editor, 1996) and 'Dock Labour and the Neglect of the port Glasgow', *Scottish Labour History Journal,* 31, 1996. He has recently submitted an article, 'The Irish and dock labour at Glasgow', for the *Irish Studies Review,* and a 'Port Report on Glasgow' for the *International Review of Social History.* He is currently working on his book, *Rebellious and Contrary: The Glasgow Dockers 1853 to 1932* (Tuckwell Press) due for publication in 1998.

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Jeremy Leaman is Senior Lecturer in German Studies at Loughborough University. He is the author of *The Political Economy of West Germany 1945-1985* and of numerous chapters and articles on Germany in the twentieth century. He is currently working on a study of the German Federal Bank and on a longer project covering the political economy of Germany in the inter-war years.

Dr Patricia Clavin is Senior Lecturer at the University of Keele. She is author of *The Failure of Economic Diplomacy: Britain, Germany, France and the United States, 1931-36* (Macmillan, 1995) and, with Asa Briggs, *Modern Europe, 1789-1989* (Longman, 1996). She has published various articles on international economic relations in the inter-war period and is currently completing a history of *Europe in the Great Depression, 1929-39* to be published by Macmillan in 1998. She is also, in collaboration with scholars in Munich and Turin, engaged in a comparative study of the public roles of historians in society in the first half of the twentieth century. This project has been funded by the European Union, the Nuffield Foundation and the Humanities Research Board.

Editorial

ANDREW HUNT

I suppose it sounds trite, but I've always thought that the study of History was more about questions than answers; there's often more satisfaction in the search than the finding since what you find is often just the beginning of a new search anyway. In the eyes of a typical S5 pupil however, it is this "never-ending journey" that is probably the key distinguishing feature about History that makes it more difficult than other subjects; it never seems to end up with a right answer and no-one ever gets full marks for an essay! This must be what keeps bringing me back to my article choice for the Year Book; for yet another year it is (largely) topics in the modern option of the Higher syllabus being viewed from a new angle. The exception is the article on Shakespeare's views on the Tudors. I am glad to include a late medieval topic, an area I too often neglect.

"Highers" is the first group of pupils up through the school where the teacher can really expect to get involved in the pleasures of History as debate, where there is no cosy right answer, just views, and pupils have to become comfortable with the idea of uncertainty. You can touch on this uncertainty principle occasionally at Credit S4 but not in every lesson or in too much depth or you risk losing your class. Now, at Higher, debate is the very meat and drink of the subject so, whether the pupils are accustomed to it or not, the methodology of the course is to dish out the class texts then try your hardest to demolish every view contained therein with better arguments from elsewhere which show that the established views were merely products of their time. Of course, this doesn't often work ~~in practice~~ since most of the good text books contain a range of views anyway and then refuse to be an obliging 'aunt sally' by coming to simple 'certain' conclusions which can be triumphantly rejected.

To regular readers of this Year Book, (who bother reading the Editorial) this must look like my Holy Grail, the constant search for revisionist approaches to topics in the Higher syllabus! Somewhere out there, there must be some new slants or insights or attitudes that have emerged that will alter the established credo or encourage research in new directions. Unlike the Holy Grail however (which I assume was never meant to be found), every year I am lucky enough to find what I am looking for; contributors who have a perception or interpretation that, in some small or large way, attacks the prevailing orthodoxy. Critical new thoughts on the place of women, the Scottish angle on suffragettes, Weimar Germany, the gold standard and Scottish labour in this issue of the Year Book, will all be of great value to teachers of senior History classes. I therefore extend my unreserved thanks and appreciation to this year's contributors who took on challenging ideas and worked out how they could be best expressed to be of value to teachers handling them with Higher pupils. Something of the nuance and flavour and style of these articles must find its way into whichever classes these topics are taught. New ideas being fed into the debate are essential if we are not to slip into the routine of just re-cycling our old orthodoxies. Every year we face fresh pupils ready to engage in the debate; I hope this Year Book will always be able to offer us material to freshen up our own act. It is only what the pupils deserve.

William Shakespeare, the Wars of the Roses and Richard III

KEITH DOCKRAY

The Shakespearian Plays

Despite the vast amount that has been written about the Wars of the Roses in general, and Richard III in particular, since the 1950s, most people's knowledge of the later fifteenth century (such as it is) probably still largely derives from William Shakespeare.[1] The great Elizabethan dramatist, in fact, has traditionally been acknowledged as author of no fewer than eight history plays covering the era of Plantagenet rule in England from Richard II to Richard III. Four of them date from the early 1590s and explore personalities, politics and war during the reigns of the third Lancastrian king Henry VI (1422-1461) and the two Yorkists Edward IV (1461-1483) and Richard III (1483-1485): *Henry VI Part* 1 (concerning, very loosely, the first couple of decades of the king's reign and, apart from the famous Temple garden scene where quarrelling magnates pick red and white roses, perhaps not written by Shakespeare at all); *Henry VI Part* 2 (focussing on the sequence of events that culminated in the first battle of St. Albans in 1455, conventionally regarded as the beginning of the Wars of the Roses); *Henry VI Part* 3 (highlighting the bloodfeuds characterising the wars, the role of Henry VI's queen Margaret of Anjou both before and after her husband's deposition in 1461, the overweening ambitions of Warwick the Kingmaker and their consequences, the pleasure-loving Edward IV, and the emergence onto the political stage of his ruthless and entirely self-seeking brother Richard Duke of Gloucester); and, the dramatic climax of the cycle, *Richard III* (charting Richard of Gloucester's bloody progress to the throne, his defeat and death at Bosworth in 1485, and the ending of the wars once Tudor rule was inaugurated by Henry VII). Then, in the later 1590s, Shakespeare added a further four plays, concentrating on the deposition of Richard II in 1399, the turbulent times of Henry IV and the military triumphs of his once wayward son Henry V: *Richard II, Henry IV Parts 1 and 2,* and *Henry V.*

All these plays can, of course, be seen in their own right and they are formidable products of the dramatist's art (particularly *3 Henry VI* and *Richard III*). But they are dramas not histories and Shakespeare was perfectly willing to take liberties with what he found in his sources. Chronology was certainly not sacrosanct, nor was the telescoping of events to facilitate narrative development and heighten dramatic tension in any way out of order: for instance, *3 Henry VI* opens with the parliament of 1460 (as though it immediately followed the Yorkist victory at St. Albans in 1455) and, thereafter, much that happened in the 1460s is ignored in the interests of highlighting Edward IV's wooing of Elizabeth Grey (Woodville), his quarrel with Warwick the Kingmaker, the restoration of Henry VI in 1470 and the ruin of both Warwick (at Barnet) and the Lancastrian cause (at Tewkesbury) in 1471; throughout the play, moreover, Richard of Gloucester is, quite unhistorically, a key figure, an essential prelude to the full treatment of this crook-backed, cruel and ruthless schemer in *Richard III*. The plays are littered with factual errors and, indeed, whole scenes unknown to history: thus, in *1 Henry VI* the memorable sequence where rival Lancastrian and Yorkist leaders distribute red and white roses to their followers is completely fictitious; in *2 Henry VI* William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk is presented as Margaret of Anjou's lover (not true); in *3 Henry VI* Richard of Gloucester participates in the battles of Mortimer's Cross and Towton in 1461 (although, in fact, he was a mere child and not even in England at the time); and, in *Richard III*, Gloucester's wooing of Anne Neville in the presence of the corpse of Henry VI (in whose recent murder, and that of Anne's husband, Prince Edward of Lancaster, he has played a leading role) is entirely the product of Shakespeare's vivid imagination. Even more strikingly, Shakespeare had no qualms at all when it came to enhancing or altering the characters of historical men and women. Did the real Margaret of Anjou, for instance, bear more than passing resemblance to the entirely formidable harridan of *3 Henry VI* and *Richard III*? Did Henry VI actually hang around battlefields wringing his hands at the horrors of civil war? And, most crucially and controversially of all, was Richard III anything like the monster of Tudor tradition?

Clearly, Shakespeare knew his Elizabethan audience and, conscious of the prevailing political and social climate of the day, appreciated well just how to engage its attention and interest (even in these early plays). In the 1590s England was at war with Spain; there was a good deal of economic and social distress; and, as Elizabeth aged and factional strife grew at her court, political life became increasingly turbulent. What better way of warning contemporaries of the dangers now threatening the legendary stability of Tudor England than dramatising the evils of political power struggles and bloody civil wars to be found in the available sources for the Wars of the Roses?

Surely, in the three parts of *Henry VI* and *Richard III,* lies a message that the consequences of rebellion and civil war might be even worse than the perceived failings of Elizabeth I and her ministers. Even a weak and ineffectual ruler such as Henry VI, or a complacent seeker after pleasure like Edward IV, had perhaps deserved

more obedience than they had received, especially if the results of resistance were the sanguinary Wars of the Roses and, horror of horrors, the monstrous Richard III. Moreover, since it had been Elizabeth's grandfather Henry VII who had defeated the forces of tyranny, brought the wars to an end and laid the foundations of the brave new world of the Tudors, surely even a personally cantankerous, politically inept and militarily suspect heir, if such Elizabeth had now become (although, of course, Shakespeare never suggested that she had!), was better than the chaos and confusion of civil strife. Shakespeare, then, clearly wrote for his own times. Yet, in at least three crucial respects, he has also fundamentally influenced how audiences, readers of the plays and, even, historians have approached the Wars of the Roses *since* the sixteenth century: in his presentation of the wars as a series of dynastic struggles; in his emphasis on their bloody nature and the prevalence of bloodfeuds; and, of course, in his compelling portrayals of the leading participants in this traumatic tale of power politics, perfidy and paranoia.

Certainly, there is a coherent theme running through the whole 8-play cycle, a theme that Shakespeare found firmly embedded in his sources, and a theme that would have seemed both very familiar and very relevant to an Elizabethan audience. Like so many Tudor writers and propagandists, the dramatist portrayed the fifteenth century as an era of dynastic struggle, a struggle originating in the tragic circumstances of the first Lancastrian king's seizure of the throne in 1399. The deposition of Richard II by Henry IV, in fact, tended to be regarded in Tudor times as a sacriligious act interrupting the divinely laid down succession of God's anointed, a kind of original sin for which England and her rulers inevitably suffered greatly in the years to come. Thus, in *Richard II*, the bishop of Carlisle predicts (on the occasion of the king's deposition) that:

> The blood of English shall manure the ground,
> And future ages groan for this foul act;
> Peace shall go to sleep with Turks and infidels,
> And in this seat of peace tumultuous wars
> Shall kin with kin and kind with kind confound;
> Disorder, horror, fear, and mutiny,
> Shall here inhabit, and this land be call'd
> The field of Golgotha and dead men's skulls.

On the very eve of Agincourt, in *Henry V,* the king is haunted by the events of 1399:

> Not today, O Lord,
> O, not today, think not upon the fault
> My father made in compassing the crown!
> I Richard's body have interred new,
> And on it have bestow'd more contrite tears
> Than from it issu'd forced drops of blood.

The sin of Henry IV was certainly visited on his hapless grandson Henry VI when Richard of York challenged his right to the throne, and the Wars of the Roses resulted. As the Yorkist leader put it in *2 Henry VI:*

> From Ireland thus comes York to claim his right,
> And pluck the crown from feeble Henry's head:
> Ring, bells, aloud; burn bonfires, clear and bright;
> ... To entertain great England's lawful king
> I am far better born than is the king;
> More like a king, more kingly in my thoughts.

And, addressing Henry VI personally, York declares:

> King did I call thee? no, thou art not king;
> ... Not fit to govern and rule multitudes
> That head of thine doth not become a crown;
> Thy hand is made to grasp a palmer's staff,
> And not to grace an awful princely sceptre,
> ... That gold must round engirt these brows of mine
> Here is a hand to hold a sceptre up,
> And with the same to act, controlling laws.
> Give place: by heaven, thou shalt rule no more
> O'er him whom heaven created for your ruler.

When Richard of York's son Edward IV seized the crown in 1461, he, too, breached a solemn oath and paid the price when his brother not only murdered Edward's sons (the Princes in the Tower) but also usurped the throne for himself. In William Shakespeare's *Richard III,* in fact, the inexorable sequence of events stemming from 1399 reaches its climax, culminating in Richard's defeat and death at Bosworth in 1485 and Henry Tudor's

triumphant taking of the crown. Only with Henry VII's accession and his marriage to Edward IV's daughter Elizabeth of York (uniting, at last, the two warring dynasties) is the sorry saga brought to an end and the way cleared for the glories of Tudor rule. Indeed, at the end of *Richard III*, Henry Tudor Earl of Richmond triumphantly proclaims:

> We will unite the White Rose and the Red.
> Smile heaven upon this fair conjunction,
> That long have frowned upon their enmity...
> O, now, let Richmond and Elizabeth,
> The true succeeders of each royal house,
> By God's fair ordinance conjoin together...
> Enrich the time to come with smooth-faced peace,
> With smiling plenty, and fair prosperous days...
> Now civil wounds are stopped, peace lives again;
> That she may long live here, God say amen'

The Wars of the Roses themselves are portrayed by Shakespeare as a depressing catalogue of battles, executions, murders, treachery and unbridled lust for power, dominated, in particular, by bloodfeuds and their consequences. Thus Margaret of Anjou has Richard of York beheaded and, in revenge, York's sons murder her son Prince Edward of Lancaster and her husband Henry VI; the killers of Edward IV's brother George Duke of Clarence tell him that he deserves God's punishment for breaking a solemn oath and stabbing Prince Edward; and Richard III, similarly, must pay with his life for causing the deaths of his brother, his nephews, his wife and his closest associates. Shakespeare explores this theme most graphically in the great battle scenes in *3 Henry VI*. Following the battle of St. Albans, Henry VI declares:

> Earl of Northumberland, he [York] slew thy father,
> And thine, Lord Clifford; and you both have vow'd revenge
> On him, his sons, his favourites and his friends.

At Wakefield, Clifford, to avenge his father's death, seeks out York's son Rutland and kills him, declaring as he does so:

> Had I thy brethren here, their lives and thine
> Were not revenge sufficient for me;
> No, if I digg'd up thy forefather's graves,
> And hung their rotten coffins up in chains,
> I could not shake mine ire nor ease my heart.
> The sight of any of the house of York
> Is as a fury to torment my soul;
> And till I root out their accursed line
> And leave not one alive, I live in hell.

Then, at Towton, there is the famous scene where a son kills his father and a father his son: "I, who at his hands receiv'd my life", cries the son, "have by my hands of life bereaved him"; "O boy, thy father gave thee life", echoes the father, "and hath bereft thee of thy life too late".

Henry VI, sadly viewing all this, comments bitterly:

> O that my death would stay these rueful deeds' -
> O pity, pity, gentle heaven, pity! -
> The red rose and the white are on his face,
> The fatal colours of our striving houses...

And, in his speech at the end of *Richard III*, Richmond declares:

> England hath long been mad and scarred herself;
> The brother blindly shed the brother's blood,
> The father rashly slaughtered his own son,
> The son, compelled, been butcher to the sire.

Perhaps most striking of all is William Shakespeare's *personalising* of the conflicts he found in his sources, portraying the unfolding of events during the Wars of the Roses as very much governed by the characters and choices of individual men and women. Thus Henry VI, described in life by Anne Neville as 'gentle, mild and virtuous', becomes, in death:

> Poor key-cold figure of a holy king,
> Pale ashes of the house of Lancaster.

Henry VI himself, bemoaning the chaos, confusion and civil war his rule has brought, laments:

O God! methinks it were a happy life
To be no better than a homely swain;
To sit upon a hill as I do now.

And for Clifford, mortally wounded at Towton, blame could indeed be firmly placed on the king's shoulders:

And Henry, hadst thou sway'd as kings should do,
Or as thy father and his father did,
Giving no ground unto the house of York,
They never then had sprung like summer flies!
I and ten thousand in this luckless realm
Had left no mourning widows for our death.

Margaret of Anjou, by contrast, first seeks consolation for her pathetic husband's inadequacies in Suffolk's arms, and, after the birth of her son, becomes a formidable champion of Lancaster, the 'She-wolf of France', forever railing at Henry, particularly once he has acquiesced in Prince Edward of Lancaster's disinheritances:

Ah, wretched man! Would I had died a maid,
And never seen thee, never born thee son,
Seeing thou hast prov'd so unnatural a father!
... Ah, timorous wretch!
Thou hast undone thyself, thy son and me;
And given unto the house of York such heed
As thou shalt reign but by their sufferance.
... I here dissolve myself
Both from thy table, Henry, and thy bed,
Until that act of parliament be repealed,
Whereby my son is disinherited.

And, after both her husband and son have been murdered, Margaret's implacability towards the house of York knows no bounds, especially once Shakespeare has made her the prophetess of vengeance against Richard III. Edward IV, by comparison, is a shadowy, undeveloped figure, pushed into the background by both his greatest subject Warwick the Kingmaker ('proud setter-up and puller-down of kings') and his younger brother Richard of Gloucester: he is the 'lascivious Edward', the king who marries 'more for wanton lust than honour' or the 'strength and safety of our country', who becomes, later in life, so 'sickly, weak and melancholy' that 'his physicians fear [for] him mightily'. Richard III, by contrast, is Shakespeare's first great villain, the magnificent dramatic climax of almost a century of ever-growing denigration: rarely, indeed, was the playwright more faithful to his sources. Not only does the king dominate *Richard III*, moreover, he threatens to take over *3 Henry VI* as well, and, more often than not, he is both an evil ruthless plotter (almost from his first appearance at St. Albans, when the historical Richard was a mere three years old!) and a man who takes a positive delight in his own wickedness. Throughout, Shakespeare makes much of his physical deformity since, in the plays, his monstrous appearance is very much an outward manifestation of the king's warped character: physically, he is the 'crook-back', the 'foul misshapen stigmatic', the 'elvish-marked, abortive rooting hog', the 'bottled spider' and the 'poisonous bunch-backed toad'; while, temperamentally, he is 'the dreadful minister of Hell' who, having 'neither pity, love nor fear', can 'smile and murder while I smile'. No wonder, since Shakespeare's portrait of Richard III (as not only evil but witty with it) is so devastating, Tudor tradition and the popular view of the last Yorkist king have become virtually synonymous.[2]

Shakespeare's Sources

Of Shakespeare's sources for the history plays, perhaps the most important was the *Chronicle of Raphael Holinshed* (available to the playwright in its second edition, published in 1587).[3] Holinshed, however, is not renowned for his originality: even more than most Tudor writers, he happily plagiarised earlier works, most notably the substantial accounts of the Lancastrian and Yorkist kings penned by Edward Hall. Shakespeare may well have consulted Hall's *Chronicle* itself: even if not, much of what he found in Holinshed came, more or less *verbatim*, from Hall. Edward Hall, a lawyer who died in 1547, was very much a man of the Tudor age; he sat in the Reformation Parliament in the 1530s, strongly supporting the political and religious measures of Henry VIII (his patron); and, certainly, he rejoiced in the fact that the dynastic wars of the fifteenth century were brought to an end by Henry VII and his son. The very title of his *Chronicle*, published posthumously in 1548, virtually tells it all: *The Union of the two noble and illustre families of Lancaster and York, being long in continual dissension for the crown of this noble realm... beginning at the time of King Henry the Fourth, the first author of this division.*[4] Described as a 'masterpiece of Tudor propaganda', and soon proving very popular, Hall's *Chronicle*

is, in fact, a work of considerable quality for its time, reflecting the fact that its author both drew on previous histories and preserved information (for instance, on the battle of Wakefield) not to be found anywhere else. From it William Shakespeare took his general framework for the history plays, many scenes and characterisations (for instance, his portrayals of Henry VI, Margaret of Anjou and Richard III can confidently be traced back to Hall), and, most importantly, his vision of the nature of the Wars of the Roses. "What misery, what murder and what execrable plagues this famous region hath suffered by the division and dissension of the renowned houses of Lancaster and York', Hall declared:

> ...my wit cannot comprehend nor my tongue declare, neither yet my pen fully set forth. For what noble man liveth at this day, or what gentleman of any ancient stock or progeny is there whose lineage hath not been infested and plagued with this unnatural division, [until] by the union celebrated between the high and mighty Prince Henry the Seventh and the Lady Elizabeth his most worthy queen [it] was suspended and appalled in the person of their most noble, puissant and mighty heir, King Henry the Eighth, and by him clearly buried and perpetually extinct.

Among the sources clearly consulted by Edward Hall (and, indirectly at least, by Shakespeare) were Polydore Vergil's *English History* and Sir Thomas More's *History of King Richard III*. Polydore Vergil, an Italian scholar and fully-fledged Renaissance historian, embarked on his *English History* during the reign of Henry VII and eventually dedicated the completed work to Henry VIII. Although probably reflecting both Lancastrian and Yorkist traditions on the Wars of the Roses, he is also the first major architect of later Tudor treatment of Richard III. Certainly, Vergil believed the original cause of intestinal conflict was Richard II's deposition, while the wars, as such, began when 'King Henry [VI], who derived his pedigree from the house of Lancaster, and Richard Duke of York, who conveyed himself by his mother's side from Lionel, son to Edward III, contended mutually for the kingdom'. As early as 1450, according to Vergil, York 'aspired to the sovereignty', conceiving an 'outrageous lust of principality' and never ceasing thereafter 'to devise with himself how and by what means he might compass it'. The Tudor stereotype of Henry VI, clearly, owes much to Vergil's suggestion that never had there been 'in this world a more pure, more honest and more holy creature', and his picture of Margaret of Anjou as a woman 'very desirous of renown' and displaying 'all manly qualities' no doubt filtered through to Shakespeare as well. Moreover, there are striking similarities between Vergil's presentation of Richard III, as a man 'deformed of body' who seized the throne 'contrary to the laws of God and man' and 'thought of nothing but tyranny and cruelty', and the much fuller treatment of the last Yorkist in the pages of Sir Thomas More.[5] For the humanist More, writing in the second decade of the sixteenth century, the Wars of the Roses were certainly horrific: in the recent 'inward war among ourselves', he recorded, 'hath been so great effusion of the ancient noble blood of this realm that scarcely the half remaineth [of the nobility]'; indeed, the 'long continued dissension' and the many battles 'so cruel and so deadly fought' have 'cost more English blood than hath twice the winning of France'. Even more horrific, however, was the tyrant who briefly emerged from the wars. Richard III, More declared (here, surely, directly influencing Hall, Holinshed *and* Shakespeare) was:

> ...little of stature, ill-featured of limbs, crookbacked, his left shoulder much higher than his right, hard-favoured of visage... He was malicious, wrathful, envious and, from afore his birth, ever forward. It is for truth reported that the duchess his mother could not be delivered of him uncut, and that he came into the world with the feet forward [and] also not untoothed... He was close and secret, a deep dissembler, lowly of countenance, arrogant of heart, outwardly companionable where he inwardly hated... Friend and foe were to him indifferent; where his advantage grew, he spared no man's death whose life withstood his purpose.[6]

Contemporaries, Near-Contemporaries and Historians

William Shakespeare, and the Tudor tradition he took on board so enthusiastically, must bear prime responsibility for the enduring notion of the Wars of the Roses as dynastic wars, originating in 1399. Yet, in fact, such an interpretation is already to be found in Yorkist propaganda in the later fifteenth century, with the house of Lancaster (in the person of Henry VI) pictured as being rightfully deprived of the throne by the Yorkist king Edward IV in 1461: the civil wars are dramatically portrayed by Yorkist apologists as God's punishment on England for the unnatural usurpation of Henry IV and the sinful murder of Richard II. And, arguably, Edward IV, after 1461, simply built on propaganda already employed by his father Richard of York in the 1450s. Most recent historians have accepted that it was only in October 1460, when Richard of York formally claimed the crown in parliament, that the dynastic issue *actually* came to the fore: however, there is a certain amount of evidence indicating otherwise. As early as March 1450, for instance, York's chamberlain Sir William Oldhall (and others) were alleged to have been plotting 'to depose the king and put the duke of York on the throne'; an anonymous Chancery memorandum of July 1456, alluding to York's claim to the throne via the Mortimer line, recorded that 'from the time that Jack Cade or Mortimer [in 1450] raised a rebellion in Kent, all disturbances are at the will of the duke of York, descended from the Mortimers'; and a near-contemporary chronicler, discussing

the motives of Yorkist partisans in 1459, identified a group who 'said that they had risen chiefly for this reason, that the lord duke of York might sit on the throne of the lord king, over his kingdom'.[7] And, certainly, throughout the 1450s Henry VI's government was notably sensitive on the dynastic issue. Nevertheless, historians have surely been right to highlight other issues at stake in the 1450s, as, indeed, did contemporaries and near-contemporaries. For instance, there are frequent references in anti-government propaganda to the loss of English possessions in France in the early 1450s as a cause of discontent at home, a matter that certainly rankled with Richard of York; the chronic condition of the royal finances attracted considerable attention; the power, wealth and behaviour of those around the king was severely lambasted; and there was a good deal of grumbling about mounting lawlessness, as well as alarming evidence of escalating aristocratic feuds (at least one of which, that between the northern families of Neville and Percy, fed directly into the Wars of the Roses). Moreover, although even the government's critics were long reluctant to highlight Henry VI's manifest shortcomings as king, there can be no doubt that his personal failings are fundamentally important in explaining the onset of civil war.

Shakespeare's portrayal of Henry VI can certainly be traced back to contemporary and near-contemporary sources. The most intimate surviving portrait is provided by John Blacman, a Carthusian monk who served as the king's chaplain for a while and probably put pen to paper towards the end of the Yorkist period: here we have Henry as both 'upright and just', a king 'more given to devout prayer than to handling worldly and temporal things', and a man who enthusiastically embraced the virtues of humility (for instance, by donning 'a rough hair shirt' next to his skin so as to off-set the pomp of crown-wearing). Even a firmly pro-Yorkist chronicler applauded Henry as 'honest and upright' and a 'pious king'; however, he added, he was also 'his mother's stupid offspring', a son 'greatly degenerated from the father' who 'did not cultivate the art of war', and who proved himself 'half-witted in affairs of state'. As for Margaret of Anjou, a letter written in February 1456 described her as 'a great and strong laboured woman' who 'spareth no pain to sue her things' to a conclusion favourable to her power.[8] However, whereas Shakespeare has her master-minding Richard of York's fate at Wakefield, the queen was, in fact, in Scotland at the time! Edward IV's love of pleasure, not least his prodigious sexual appetite, is well chronicled in contemporary sources: indeed, according to the Burgundian commentator Philippe de Commines, 'no man ever took more delight in his pleasures than he did, especially in the ladies, feasts, banquets and hunts'. His marriage to Elizabeth Woodville, too, does seem to have resulted from love (or lust!) rather than any perceived political advantage. The Italian Dominic Mancini, in London during the king's last year, even heard gossip that when 'the king first fell in love with her beauty of person and charm of manner', he found that:

> ...he could not corrupt her virtue by gifts or menaces. The story runs that, when Edward placed a dagger at her throat, she remained unperturbed and determined to die rather than live unchastely with the king. Whereupon Edward coveted her much the more, and he judged the lady worthy to be a royal spouse who could not be overcome in her constancy even by an infatuated king.

And, if the contemporary chronicler John Warkworth is to be believed, Warwick the Kingmaker, for one, was 'greatly displeased' by the marriage. Almost until his sudden and unexpected death in 1483, however, Edward seems to have remained fit and active: indeed, according to the well informed Crowland chronicler, in his later years he 'exercised his office so haughtily' that 'he seemed to be feared by all his subjects'.[9] As far as Richard III is concerned, there *are* contemporary indications that Tudor tradition *might* have got it wrong: for instance, Thomas Langton, Bishop of St. David's wrote, in September 1483, that the new king 'contents the people wherever he goes', remarking that 'I never liked the qualities of any prince as well as his'; the Warwick chaplain John Rous (who was to pen a damning judgement after Richard III's death) noted, during the king's lifetime, that he 'ruled his subjects full commendably'; and, when news of Bosworth reached York in August 1485, it was put on record that Richard had been 'piteously slain and murdered, to the great heaviness of this city'. Significantly, too, no contemporary source makes any reference to Richard III's physical deformity, suggesting, perhaps, that there was nothing particularly unusual about his appearance. He took no part in the battles of St. Albans, Mortimer's Cross or Towton, only emerging onto the political stage at the end of the 1460s: moreover, until Edward IV's death, he was notably loyal to his brother. None of the early murders laid at his door by Tudor commentators – Prince Edward of Lancaster, Henry VI and Clarence – can definitely be blamed on him, and there is no evidence that he was aiming at the throne before 1483. Nevertheless, the two major surviving contemporary narratives both present a picture of the king not all that far from the Richard III of Vergil, More and Hall. Dominic Mancini certainly portrays Richard, in May and June 1483, as a master of dissimulation, motivated by intense ambition and an 'insane lust for power', ruthlessly removing men who stood in his way, and callously depriving his nephew of the throne so that he might take the crown for himself; the anonymous Crowland continuator, similarly, condemned Richard's arbitrary seizure of the throne and the tyrannical northern-dominated regime which, he believed, the king established in southern England: both, moreover, hint strongly at Richard III's responsibility for the murder of the Princes in the Tower. And the Crowland chronicler certainly welcomed Henry VII's 'glorious victory' at Bosworth, portraying the first Tudor king as 'an angel sent from heaven through whom God deigned to visit his people and to free them from the evils which have hitherto afflicted them beyond measure'.[10]

Finally, what of the Tudor picture of the Wars of the Roses as marked by appalling carnage and destruction, massive dislocation of people's lives and, most particularly, bloody vendettas among the aristocracy? Most recent historians have been inclined to be critical, pointing out that the wars were, in fact, much more limited in both scale and impact: most people never became involved in the fighting, there was relatively little looting or material destruction, agriculture and trade were only minimally disrupted, and religious and cultural life continued to flourish almost as if the wars were invisible. True, there is a good deal of emphasis in contemporary political propaganda (whether Lancastrian, Yorkist or Tudor) on devastation and mayhem, but that reflected, in part at least, the tendency of successive usurpers – Edward IV, Richard III and Henry VII – to emphasise the horrors prevailing under their immediate predecessors. The ruling elite, particularly families having royal blood flowing through their veins, bore the brunt of it all, but even they often displayed considerable reluctance to take up arms. Many nobles were either killed in the fighting or faced execution for having backed the wrong side, but few, if any, prominent families became extinct directly as a result of civil strife. Rarely were noble houses split and bloodfeuds, although not unknown, were very much the exception rather than the rule. Indeed, Philippe de Commines concluded that:

> ... out of all the countries which I have personally known, England is the one where public affairs are best conducted and regulated with least violence to the people. [The] realm of England enjoys one favour above all other realms, that neither the countryside nor the people are destroyed nor are buildings burnt or demolished. Misfortune falls on soldiers and on nobles in particular...

Yet it would be a mistake to play down unduly the impact and significance of civil war in the later fifteenth century, particularly between 1459 and 1461 and, again, from 1469 to 1471. England, described as "out of all good governance' in 1459, certainly suffered considerably in 1460/1, especially the northern counties which seem to have degenerated into a condition of near anarchy. Moreover, when Margaret of Anjou's northern army marched south early in 1461, it certainly wreaked havoc (at any rate if we are to believe one horrified contemporary chronicler):

[The northernmen] swept onwards like a whirlwind from the north, and in the impulse of their fury attempted to overrun the whole of England, [and] universally devoted themselves to spoil and rapine, without regard to place or person. [Thus] did they proceed with impunity, spreading in vast multitudes over a space of thirty miles in breadth, and, covering the whole surface of the earth just like so many locusts, made their way almost to the very walls of London."

Then, between 1469 and 1471, at least six separate rebellions occurred in northern England, four major battles were fought, and, in 1471, there was even a short-lived siege of London. Certainly, too, a high percentage of the nobility did become involved in these wars at one time or another; many gentry, however reluctantly, found themselves drawn in as well; and, of course, the English countryside did provide most of the fighting men. Nor can bloodfeuds be completely discounted. The fate of leading Lancastrian magnates at St. Albans in 1455, in particular, may well have sparked a series of vendettas that resurfaced with a vengeance at Wakefield and Towton, as William Shakespeare highlighted so dramatically in *3 Henry VI*. Clearly, his plays cannot be regarded as history: nevertheless, rather more than many recent historians have been prepared to admit, Shakespeare did adapt for the stage not only a powerful Tudor tradition about the Wars of the Roses but an interpretation already firmly embedded in contemporary and near-contemporary sources.

NOTES

1. Apart from the texts of Shakespeare's history plays and surviving Lancastrian, Yorkist and Tudor chronicles/ histories, I have particularly drawn on the following: J. Gillingham, *The Wars of the Roses* (1981); R.A. Griffiths, 'The Sense of Dynasty in the Reign of Henry VI', in *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England*, ed. C.Ross (1979); C.L.Kingsford, 'Fifteenth century History in Shakespeare's Plays', in *Prejudice and Promise in Fifteenth Century England* (1925); A.J. Pollard, *The Wars of the Roses* (1988) and *Richard III and the Princes in the Tower* (1991); C.Ross, *Edward IV* (1974), *The Wars of the Roses* (1976) and *Richard III* (1981); E.M.W.Tillyard, *Shakespeare's History Plays* (1944). Relevant passages from contemporary, near-contemporary and Tudor sources, and further exposition of some of the views expressed in this paper (and alternatives), can be found in K.Dockray, 'The Origins of the Wars of the Roses', in *The Wars of the Roses*, ed. A.J.Pollard (1995); 'The Battle of Wakefield and the Wars of the Roses', in *The Battle of Wakefield* (pamphlet, 1992); 'Edward IV: Playboy or Politician?', in *The Ricardian*, vol. x, no. 131, December 1995; *Richard III: A Reader in History* (1988); *Richard III* (Headstart History pamphlet, 1992); *Richard III: A Source Book* (forthcoming, 1997).

2. W.Shakespeare, *Richard II*, IV, i (bishop of Carlisle's speech on the occasion of Richard II's deposition); *Henry* V, IV, i (Henry V on the eve of Agincourt); *1 Henry VI*, II, iii (Temple garden: distribution of red and white roses); *3 Henry VI*, II, v, vi, *Richard III*, 1, iii (Margaret of Anjou); *2 Henry VI*, V, i (Richard of York's claim to the throne); *2 Henry VI*, V, ii, *3 Henry VI*, 1, i, iii, II, v, vi (bloody wars and blood feuds); *3 Henry VI*, III, iii, V, v, *Richard III*, 1, i (Edward IV); *3 Henry VI*, 1, i, ii, II, i, ii, iii, iv, vi, III, ii, IV, i, iii, v, vii, V, i, iii, v, vi, *Richard III*, 1 – V, virtually all scenes (Richard of Gloucester/Richard III); *Richard III*, V, v (Henry Tudor's speech at Bosworth).

3. *Holinshed's Chronicle, As used in Shakespeare's Plays*, ed. A. and J. Nicoll (1927), contains a comprehensive selection of passages from Holinshed relevant to Shakespeare's plays.

4. E.Halle, *The Union of the Two Noble Families of Lancaster and York* (1550 edn., reprinted 1970).

5. *Three Books of Polydore Vergil's English History*, ed. H.Ellis (1844), especially pp.86, 94, 70, 226, 187, 180.

6. Sir Thomas More, *The History of King Richard III*, ed. R.S.Sylvester (1963), especially pp.7-8.

7. PRO, Ancient Indictments, KB9/II8/30 (quoted in J.R. Lander, *The Wars of the Roses*, 1963, p.63); T. Rymer, *Foedera*, V, ii, p.69 (quoted in B.Wilkinson, *Constitutional History of England in the Fifteenth Century*, 1964, p.128); J.Whetehamstede, *Register*, 1, p.337 (quoted in *ibid.*, p.131).

8. J.Blacman, *Henry VI*, ed. M.R.James (1919), pp.26, 27, 36 (quoted in Lander, *Wars of the Roses*, pp. 29, 41; *Whetehamstede's Register*, 1, p.415 (quoted in B.P.Wolffe, *Henry VI*, 1981, p.19); *Paston Letters*, ed. J.Gairdner, III (1904), p.75.

9. Philippe de Commynes, *Memoirs*, ed. M.Jones (1972), p.413; D.Mancini, *The Usurpation of Richard III*, ed. C.A.J. Armstrong (1984), p.61; *J.Warkworth's Chronicle of the First Thirteen Years of the Reign of Edward IV*, ed. J.O.Halliwell (1839), p.3; *The Crowland Chronicle Continuations 1459-1486*, ed. N.Pronay and J.Cox (1986), p.153.

10. Thomas Langton to the Prior of Christ Church, in *England under the Yorkists*, ed. I.D.Thornley (1920), pp.121-2; John Rous, *The Rous Roll* (1980), cap.63; *York Civic Records*, ed. A.Raine (1939), 1, p.119 ; Mancini, especially pp.61, 93; Crowland, especially pp.159,163, 183,185.

11. Commynes, pp.345,353; *An English Chronicle of the Reigns* of *Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V and Henry VI*, ed. J.S. Davies (1856), pp.79-80 (quoted in *English Historical Documents 1327-1485*, ed. A.R.Myers, 1969, pp.281-2); *Ingulph's Chronicle of the Abbey of Croyland*, ed. H.T. Riley (1854), pp.421-2 (quoted in Lander, *Wars of the Roses*, pp.117-8).

The Scottish Women's Suffrage Movement

ELSPETH KING

There is a widely acknowledged and much discussed difficulty in respect of the teaching of Scottish history within Scottish schools[1]. It follows that the teaching of Scottish women's history must be at an even greater disadvantage within this already disadvantaged area. The purpose of this article is to look at and assess this disadvantage, to indicate where there are useful sources which can be utilized in the teaching of the subject, and to suggest that there could be many benefits, for both students and teachers, in looking at the history of the Scottish women's suffrage movement in particular, even within the constraints of the existing curriculum.

Over the last two decades, there has been remarkable progress both in women's studies and Scottish history. Throughout that period, there has been scarcely a year without a women's history or studies conference taking place in one of the universities or further education colleges, or organised by special interest groups, like the Scottish Colloquium of Medievalists or the Scottish Labour History Society. In 1981, the Mitchell Library took such an opportunity to issue a helpful bibliography[2] on the status of women, and in 1994, the Scottish Libraries Association devoted its Local History Week to women's history.

Also within this period, major new histories of Scotland have been written from the newly established departments of Scottish History in our universities. With the exception of Alastair McIntosh Gray's *History of Scotland*[3] for schools, none of the new histories seem to be willing to acknowledge the women's suffrage movement as being of significance. The subject does of course feature in books on women's history[4], but it was not until 1991 that a university-funded study of the Scottish women's suffrage movement was published in its own right. Leah Leneman's *A Guid Cause – The Women's Suffrage Movement in Scotland* was one of six titles in the very commendable Scottish Women's Studies Series of the late lamented Aberdeen University Press. With its narrow parameters, academic stance and dense prose, it is not the kind of book to inspire enthusiasm, but is useful as a reference book.

When in the period 1968-1975, Midge Mackenzie was researching for the ground-breaking television series and book *Shoulder to Shoulder*, she was moved by how the achievements of the suffragettes had been 'almost successfully erased from the history books':

> 'When I read later accounts of the Suffragette movement, I felt that their authors had denied the movement its spirit and soul. They seemed to take a consciously impersonal stand and in no way to reflect the feelings and commitment of the women involved. After meeting with some of the surviving militants... I resolved to make my own attempt to redress the balance.'[5]

The television series and book stimulated widespread interest, offering strong role models to a generation of young women who wanted to discover and re-claim their history. In 1978 when the fiftieth anniversary of the Representation of the People Act brought a government-sponsored exhibition on women's suffrage to Glasgow, I was able to add a Scottish dimension to it and publish a pamphlet, *The Scottish Women's Suffrage Movement* for the People's Palace (Glasgow Museums and Art Galleries), which is still in print.

Although the militant suffrage movement in Scotland was a daily cause of concern to local and national government in the period 1909-1914, some historians tried to write it off as collective mental hysteria. Glasgow historian Charles Oakley in his *Second City* (1946) summarised it thus:

> Militant feminism created a tense situation, and one of the most astonishing episodes in recent social history was the organisation of quite considerable numbers of women – drawn chiefly from the middle classes – into groups of suffragettes for committing outrages on people and property, to further 'Votes for Women'. Indeed it is rather surprising that no psychological analysis of the behaviour of so many women at that time has been published.[6]

The book is still in print, but the offensive remarks were edited out from the 1975 edition onwards. Nevertheless, the impression that the subject is worth no more than a cursory mention remains, in every newly-issued work which deals with Scottish history from the eighteenth to the twentieth century.

Welsh feminist historian Deirdre Beddoe in her *Discovering Women's History – A Practical Manual*, blames the historians:

> Most historians are male, middle-class, university graduates. They are not concerned primarily with the history of the women who clean their studies or do their wives' harder labour at home. Historians are the products of their own culture and society: most are totally unaware of their culturally determined prejudices and values. They reflect the value system of our society. History, as written and taught for most of the century, has been as class-ridden as our society.....Whether male historians' complicity in this conspiracy

to rob women of their history is witting or not is not the central question here. What matters now is to recognise the historical selection process which operates and to reject it.[7]

While we still lack a succinct, informative, well-illustrated, readable paperback for Scotland, comparable to Rosemary Cullen Owens' *History of the Irish Women's Suffrage Movement*[8] there is nevertheless a wealth of source material which can be used in teaching the subject.

In the years leading up to the Great War, every local newspaper reported on suffrage activity in some depth, and gave coverage to local events or activity which was not reported elsewhere. Often, this information can throw new light on the subject, whilst the student has the satisfaction of studying information on her or his area. For many students, history is made up of a series of events which happened elsewhere, never touching or influencing their home town or village. The reading of local newspapers is a good corrective to this, for there could have been few people in Scotland who did not have an opinion on the woman suffrage question – miner's wives in Lochgelly, golfers in Lossiemouth, councillors in Lerwick – were all drawn into the action.

Only through a thorough investigation of local sources can the full story be known, and there are many discoveries still to be made. When searching for material for an exhibition on William Wallace for example, I discovered the story of Marion Wallace Dunlop, who proudly claimed her descent from Wallace's mother, had the same Christian name as Wallace's wife, named her London house 'Ellerslie' after his birthplace, and conducted her suffrage activity in the spirit of Wallace. She was an artist and illustrator of children's books, and exhibited regularly at the Royal Scottish Academy. She was imprisoned for militant activity several times; in June 1909 her offence was stamping political messages on the walls of St Stephen's Hall in indelible ink.[9]

Marion Wallace Dunlop, 1909, with her ink roller. Photograph produced with the permission of the Museum of London.

All this is unremarkable, except that in June 1909 she invented the tactic of the hunger strike, which has been a powerful weapon in the hands of political prisoners, of every kind and creed, throughout the world since then. It is a tactic which empowers the powerless. Every small child knows that refusing food will cause its parents concern, and the authorities were preoccupied with finding an adequate response. The horrors of forcible feeding and the Cat and Mouse Act, when women were released on the point of starvation and jailed again on recovery, are well enough known. Until now it has not been recognised that the whole shape of the Suffragette campaign in this respect was directed by a Scotswoman who wanted to fight like William Wallace.[10]

The exciting thing about studying aspects of the women's suffrage movement is that there are always new discoveries to be made, even about well known events, and especially if the techniques of the investigator and

the journalist are used. Thus, 75 years after the event, journalist John Sleight of Tyne-Tees Television was able to set straight the record on the 'suicide' of Emily Davison who died under the hooves of the King's horse at the 1913 Derby.[11]

As mentioned, local newspapers are rich sources of information on both national and local events. For example, the report of the *Dunfermline Press* on the great Edinburgh demonstration of 5 October 1907 included the following details:

> The Dunfermline contingent comprised representatives of the Women's Social and Political Union, the National Women's Suffrage Society, the British Women's Temperance Associations, and a group of lady students from the College of Hygiene in their flowing blue gowns, which led one enterprising paper to allude to the wearers as "fair Portias". Among the Dunfermline ladies were Miss Cunningham and Miss Susie Cunningham, Miss Duguid, secretary of the National Suffrage Society; Miss Hodge, Lady Superintendent of the High School; Miss Munro, the energetic Secretary of the Women's Social and Political Union; Mrs Beck, secretary of the Women's Co-operative Guild; Mrs Donaldson, president of the Spiritualist Society; Mrs Parker and many others. Two banners were unfurled at the Dunfermline post – that of the BWTA, an artistic piece of work, blue background and white letters, with a design of laurel leaves in gold – and that of the WSPU, a handsome banner in red with white lettering, the gift of Mr Don, Queen Anne Street. Everywhere were seen the suffragist colours, red and white (red for strength, and white signifying purity), and indeed the colour scheme was an excellent one, and lent quite an effective touch to the whole scene. Each of the suffragettes wore rosettes, flowers or bands round the arm of red and white, as did also very many of the spectators along the route, evidently as an expression of their sympathy.....The Dunfermline Suffragettes came in for a good deal of "ragging" about Mr Andrew Carnegie, whom people of Edinburgh evidently regard as Dunfermline's patron saint from whom all blessings flow.[12]

Thus with some support, the student learns that many of the teachers in the town were suffrage activists, that the suffrage colours were originally red and white, before the famous purple, green and white were adopted in May 1908, and that Carnegie's support of his native town was the object of both admiration and envy. The rich detail in the *Dunfermline Press* was used by Dunfermline Heritage Trust to present the story of Dunfermline-born Anna Munro, Scottish Organiser of the Women's Freedom League, in the Abbot House heritage centre displays, 1995. Using this source alone, it would be possible to write both a national and local history of women's suffrage.

Anna Munro of Townhill, Dunfermline, National Organiser for the Women's Freedom League, in 1908. From a popular suffrage postcard.

Some archives have already extracted source material for the use of the busy teacher. The largest collection is that brought together by Stirling Council Archives Services; their teaching pack on the Suffragettes covers the period 1848-1914 and the geographical area of Stirling, Alloa, Bo'ness and Dollar. The extracts cover meetings, incidents and news items of all kinds, and could be used in a variety of ways. The nine pages covering the Wallace monument 'outrage', when in September 1912 the Wallace Sword case was smashed, includes a news and court case report, describes the street meetings of the time and the public response, and offers a description of the jail conditions where 'horses and cows were better housed than the prisoners in Stirling'. There is enough material to re-enact the drama of the court-room or the street meeting, or to initiate a discussion on journalism and the role of the press. As the news report also depicts the Wallace Monument as a forlorn place, where visitors had to hammer hard on the door, wait long for an answer and pay tuppence entry money, it could also serve as a starting point for a discussion on visitor attractions, their management, and the changing fortunes of heritage tourism over the century!

NEWSPAPER REPORT : 1912. Reference 10/31:1. SD/R.

POLITICS : WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE : STIRLING - SUFFRAGETTE INCIDENT AT WALLACE MONUMENT. ARREST AND TRIAL .

SUFFRAGETTE OUTRAGE AT WALLACE MONUMENT.

ATTACK UPON THE WALLACE SWORD.

The above illustration shows the weapon that Wallace wielded in comparison with an ordinary modern sword.

What appears to have been a Suffragette outrage took place at the National Wallace Monument, near Stirling, on Thursday forenoon. As usual there were a number of visitors of both sexes to the Monument, and nothing unusual happened until about noon, when the attendants heard a crash of breaking glass in one or other of the rooms upstairs. On proceeding to investigate, they discovered that the glass of the case in which the sword of Sir William Wallace, the Scottish patriot, is deposited, had been broken, and that a lady was in the room. A stone was found in the case. The circumstances were suspicious, and the lady was detained, and the Police sent for. Another lady who was understood to be in the company of the lady who was detained, but who was not in the room at the time the glass was broken, but was proceeding upstairs, was also asked to remain till the Police came, and did so. Both were taken to the Stirling County Police Office, where, after inquiries had been made, the lady who was found on the stair, and who has been residing in Bridge of Allan for a time, was allowed to go. The second lady, who gave the name of Johnston, and is about thirty years of age, was charged with malicious mischief, and was afterwards liberated on bail.

The lady who was allowed to go, are departing, shook hands cordially with the other.

The following message was found inside the glass case, hand-printed in small capital letters:—

"YOUR LIBERTIES WERE WON BY THE SWORD.
RELEASE THE WOMEN WHO ARE FIGHTING FOR THEIR LIBERTIES
STOP THE FORCIBLE FEEDING.
A PROTEST FROM DUBLIN."

ACCUSED BEFORE THE SHERIFF.
TAKES OBJECTION TO THE COURT PROCEDURE.

At Stirling Sheriff Court on Friday, Hon. Sheriff-Substitute J. W. Campbell on the bench, Edith Johnston, said to be a Suffragette, who, with a stone on Thursday, is alleged to have smashed the glass case containing the Wallace sword in the National Wallace Monument, appeared on a charge of malicious mischief.

Accused was stylishly dressed, and is a lady of about thirty years of age. She was wearing spectacles, and was dressed in black, and carried a hand-bag and umbrella. The charge having been read over,

The Sheriff Clerk asked if she was guilty or not guilty.

Accused—I beg your pardon.

The question was repeated, whereupon she pleaded not guilty, and remarked that she could not hear very well, and asked them to speak a little louder.

In accordance with the usual custom, the case was continued until Tuesday first for trial, which was intimated to the accused, who was out on £2 bail.

Accused—May I ask why it is put off. It is very inconvenient for me to come back here again. There is no evidence against me.

The Fiscal said it was not usual to proceed the same day with a case when a plea of not guilty had been tendered. He did not know what plea the accused was going to give, but had he actually known she was going to plead not guilty, then it might not have been necessary for him to continue the case.

Accused begged leave to state that the witnesses in the case were all on the spot, and they could easily have been brought to the Court that day. They gave her notice to appear that day, and they could have given the same to the witnesses, without requiring more time to prepare things. She asked if that was quite fair to her.

The Fiscal—It is not the usual practice to proceed with a case just now.

The Sheriff—Delay is quite necessary. I do not think any diversion can be permitted from the course suggested by the Fiscal.

Accused—Would it not have been better if they had told me so yesterday. They must have known the fact then, but perhaps they expected me to abscond. They have really no evidence against me.

The Clerk of Court—You will require to come back here on Tuesday at 11 o'clock, under penalty of £2, being the bail you were allowed out upon.

Accused—Well, I probably won't appear. I have turned up to-day, and I won't appear again.

Accused then left the dock, and departed from the Court, but returned and loudly remarked that they had absolutely no evidence against her.

Accused's address is still unknown to the police.

The accused, Edith Johnston, made no appearance at the Court on Tuesday, and her pledge of £2 was accordingly forfeited.

Central Regional Council Educational Archive Resources

Source: STIRLING OBSERVER. TUESDAY, 3rd SEPTEMBER, 1912. (PAGE 5 : COLS.4-5).

Illustration from Stirling Council Archives Services suffrage pack.

Strathclyde Regional Council (now Glasgow City Council) Archives also produced a teachers' pack with 88 items entitled *Scottish Women and the Vote. Sources for the history of the women's suffrage movement in Scotland.*[13] There is also a number of local historical studies on women's suffrage and women's history[14] available for different places, and there are several good studies on the related subject of the higher education of women.[15]

David Steuart Erskine, Eleventh Earl of Buchan, advocate of women's rights. Reproduced with the permission of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

Some people regard the women's movement in Scotland as being of less importance, because of the apparent lack of feminist theorists like Mary Wollstonecraft. The problem is that the theorists have yet to be recognised. An important figure in this respect is David Steuart Erskine, Eleventh Earl of Buchan (1742-1829), the moving spirit behind the Society of Antiquaries, and a supporter of both the American and French Revolutions. He published two articles *On Female Education*[16] and the desirability of equality for women in 1791, the year before the publication of Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Women.* He was a great friend of Professor John Anderson (1757-1796), sharing his politics and philosophy, and nursing him on his estate in Dryburgh during the last few months of his life. Anderson's will, establishing the Andersonian Technical College (now Strathclyde University) made provision to give 'the ladies of Glasgow.....an opportunity.....and such a stock of General Knowledge.....as will make them the most accomplished ladies in Europe'.[17]

It was in this revolutionary society that Frances Wright (1795-1852) was given her education. Born in Dundee and brought up by James Milne, Professor of Moral Philosophy in Glasgow, she felt that she needed to live in the New World, and her ideas and actions took America by storm. She was the first woman to speak on a public platform, advocating equality for women, social revolution, and the abolition of slavery. She was also the first woman to have a play performed on Broadway. She set up her own co-operative foundation in Nashoba, Tennessee, on Owenite lines, to demonstrate in practical terms how the abolition of slavery would work. [18] She is regarded as a great heroine in the USA, but remains little known in Scotland. Her writings cover almost every aspect of the human condition.

When discussing the status of women with students it is always possible to include Scottish literary sources which are stimulating, informative and guaranteed to generate response and discussion. One of the most amusing evaluations of women's work is contained in the 16th century poem *The Wife of Auchtermuchty* [19] from the Bannatyne manuscript. Glasgow journalist Marion Bernstein's *Dream* [20] poem (1876) where she imagines that when the nineteenth century is over, three quarters of the MPs will be women, and that there will be a system of total equality, resulting in world peace and the abolition of both domestic violence and the House of Lords, can be used to discuss whether feminist political aspirations will ever be realised. Scottish women have always dreamt great dreams, and it should be a life-enhancing experience for their great-grandchildren to hear, share, discuss and learn from them.

NOTES

1 At the Scottish History Conference in Glasgow, March 1997, sponsored by Sunday Times, Scotland, it was surprising to hear that in contrast to the growing interest in Scottish history at graduate and post-graduate level, many teachers and their "customers" considered the subject to be of little value or interest.

2 A Cassells *A Select Bibliography on the Status of Women.* Social Sciences, Mitchell Library (Glasgow) 1981.

3 Alastair McIntosh Gray *Modern Times. History of Scotland Book Five* (Oxford University Press 1989).

4 Rosalind K Marshall *Virgins and Viragos. A History of Women in Scotland from 1080-1980* (London 1983) pp 268-292.

James D Young *Women and Popular Struggles. A History of British Working Class Women, 1560-1984* (Edinburgh 1985) pp113-116; 180-182

Esther Breitenbach and Eleanor Gordon (Editors).

Out of Bounds. Women in Scottish Society 1800-1945 (Edinburgh 1992) pp 121-150.

5 Midge MacKenzie *Shoulder to Shoulder* (Penguin 1975) ix-x.

6 C A Oakley *The Second City* (Glasgow 1946) p 241.

7 Deirdre Beddoe *Discovering Women's History. A practical manual* (Pandora Press 1983) p9.

8 Rosemary Cullen Owens *Smashing Times. A history of the Irish Women's Suffrage Movement 1889-1922* (Dublin 1984).

9 *The Suffrage Annual and Women's Who's Who* (London 1913) *Votes for Women* June 1909.

10 Marion Wallace Dunlop is included in the checklist of artists in Lisa Tickner's *The Spectacle of Women. Imagery of the Suffrage Campaign 1907-14* (London 1987) p244 but her family history, nationality and innovation are not mentioned.

11 John Sleight *One Way Ticket to Epsom. A journalist's enquiry into the heroic story of Emily Wilding Davison* (Morpeth 1988). This short paperback gives a good demonstration of the power of investigative journalism, and raises many discussion points on how news – which becomes history – is presented and interpreted.

12 *Dunfermline Press* 19 October 1907.

13 It is no accident that Central Region and Strathclyde Region were the only two education authorities in Scotland to employ education officers in their archives. Sadly, both posts have been lost in the 1996 local government re-organisation.

14 Eg, Elspeth King *The New Factor. The Hidden History of Glasgow's Women* (Edinburgh 1991)

Leah Leneman *Martyrs in Our Midst. Dundee, Perth and the force-feeding of suffragettes* (Abertay Historical Society Publications no 33, 1993).

Fiona Scharlau *Burn the Witch. The Story of the Forfar Witches* (Forfar Libraries 1996).

15 Lindy Moore *Bajanellas and Semilinas: Aberdeen University and the Education of Women 1860-1920* (Aberdeen 1991)

Johanna Geyer-Kordesch and Rona Ferguson *Blue Stockings Black Gowns White Coats. A brief history of women entering higher education and the medical profession in Scotland in celebration of 100 years of women graduates in the University of Glasgow* (Glasgow 1994)

Tom Begg *The Excellent Women. The origins and history of Queen Margaret College* (Edinburgh 1994).

16 *The Anonymous and Fugitive Essays of the Earl of Buchan collected from various Periodical Works* vol 1 (Edinburgh 1812) pp 26-36. I am indebted to my colleague Michael Donnelly for this information. The articles were originally published in *The Bee.*

17 James Muir *John Anderson and the College he founded* (Glasgow 1950) p25.

18 see Dale Spender *Women of Ideas and what men have done to them* (Pandora, 1982) pp 160-169
Barbara Taylor *Eve and the New Jerusalem. Socialism and Feminism in the nineteenth century* (Virago 1984) pp 65-70

Frances Wright articles can be read in the journal *Isis*, available in the Mitchell Library.

19 Widely anthologised – see for example M M Gray *Scottish Poetry from Barbour to James VI* (1935) pp 244-247.

20 Anthologised with similar works in Tom Leonard *Radical Renfrew – poetry from the French Revolution to the First World War* (Edinburgh 1990) pp 301-2

The Scottish Trade Union Movement c.1850 to 1914

DR WILLIAM KENEFICK

The Structure and Development of Scottish Trade Unionism

The modern phase of British trade unionism began with the process of rebuilding in the improved economic conditions of the 1850s. Developments in England and Wales were to lead to the growth of large national organisations, which were highly bureaucratic, exerted strong central authority, and were founded on a sound financial basis. This development become known as the 'New Model' unionism and the first union of this type was the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE). The structure of trade unionism in Scotland, however, followed a somewhat different pattern to the rest of Britain. Scottish trade unionism was generally small scale, largely localist and federal in structure and power, and control was exercised at branch level rather than through one powerful national organisation.

There were attempts to promote national organisations of miners, printers, or ironmoulders - similar to the English model - but these remained largely federal in structure, and power and financial control was always retained by the local branches. Hamish Fraser suggests that the nearest Scotland had to a 'new model' union was the Associated Carpenters and Joiners' Society, but even they had to abandon their experiment in centralisation and return decision making into the hand of local branches. The powerful ASE had to suspend branches at Greenock and Glasgow in the late 1850's because of the issue of central control, and in the late 1860's Clyde boilermakers left their 'United Society' because of disputes over local autonomy and control. There were renewed efforts in the 1880's to consolidate local societies, but again they tended to follow the more typical Scottish federal pattern rather than that of the 'New Model' unions.

Fraser stresses that this attachment to local autonomy arose naturally from the basic regional structure of Scottish industry. Workers in Clydeside, and in particular Glasgow, were unwilling to accept any decisions issued from outside their immediate area of interest - even more the case where it involved English interference. Parochial considerations were paramount, therefore, and Clydeside workers preferred to look to the aid of other trades unions in their own area rather than rely on a large bureaucratic centralised national organisation. They still needed some type of 'joint-trade' committee to co-ordinate activities locally, however, and in Scotland this role was filled by the trades councils:

> ... The formation of trades councils in Scotland from the end of the 1850s was of vital importance for Scottish trade unionism. Trades councils played a more crucial role in Scotland than they did south of the Tweed, largely because of the structure and relative weakness of the Scottish unions. ...[1]

Federalism may have made sense in the Scottish economic and industrial context, but because of a reluctance to move towards larger centralised national unions, Scottish trade unionism was regarded as relatively weak and somewhat backward.

Is this an altogether fair assessment of the development of trade unionism in Scotland? This short article will attempt to answer this question by considering several factors. First, by looking at the example of the Scottish miners, it will be shown that the problem in forging national organisations in Scotland was not only due to the structure of the Scottish economy, but also because of divisions evident within the ranks of the Scottish labour force itself. Secondly, we shall look more closely at the structure of trade unionism and in particular the role of the trades councils in order to assess the extent of the apparent weakness of Scottish trade unionism at this time. Thirdly, we shall look at the impact of the 'New Unionism' of 1888-90 and the 'Labour Unrest' of 1910 to 1914 and at how these two important events in trade union history are to be explained in the Scottish context, how they influenced the growth and structure of Scottish trade unionism and helped to break down sectional and sectarian barriers, and to what extent, if any, the experience in Scotland was different to the rest of Britain generally? Finally, the article will conclude by considering recent evidence which suggests, among other things, that the notion of intrinsic weakness in the structure of Scottish trade unionism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries may have been over exaggerated.[2]

A Divided Community? - The Example of the Miners in Scotland.

The miners had for some time been organised into small local unions, but attempting to amalgamate them into a broader national movement proved difficult and for good reason. Roy Campbell notes that Alexander McDonald's efforts to build a new general association of miners in Scotland in the mid 1850's foundered on the 'shifting sands of racial and religious jealousies'. The racial and religious dimensions were seen to greater effect

in the 1860's when, at local level, Lodges of Free Colliers appeared. These were mainly social in character, modelled on the Masonic Lodges, and appealed to 'an unusual mixture of nationalist sentiment and opposition to Irish Catholicism'. The Lodges of Free Colliers also attempted to enrol mine owners and managers.[3] Racial and religious differences not only worked to exclude Irish Catholics, but also worked against their unionisation on a local basis. Unionisation was successful around mines in Protestant Larkhall, for example, where there was a relatively stable population who shared the same racial and religious background and shared the traditions and culture of the 'independent collier'. In such locations, Bill Knox argues, local combinations of miners could be more easily sustained against pressure from mine owners. In a more racial and religiously mixed mining community such as Coatbridge, however, unionisation was relatively weak and the employers could exert a greater degree of control.

The existence of sectarian division also helped to increase sectional divisions within the workforce and created even more problems for trade unionists such as McDonald in their efforts to build effective national organisations. Sectionalism was rife in the construction, metal and shipbuilding industries, notes Knox, and the net effect of this was to raise barriers against trade union penetration. As a result, trade union density, throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century, was considerably lower in Scotland than in England and Wales. According to Knox, as a percentage of the employed population, Scottish trade union membership was 'half that of Wales and Humberside, and only a quarter of the north-east coast of England.[4] Where working men did not share the same religion or country of birth, sectarianism and racism, fired-up by a significant degree of sectional mistrust, acted to inhibit greater trade union penetration and the development of national organisations.

From this standpoint, therefore, the problems faced by the miners were those faced by the country as a whole, but they were gradually overcome. By the early 1870's, the campaign for the eight hour day saw miners in Fife, Lanarkshire and the Lothians accept the authority of the Association of Confederated Miners of Scotland. A sharp downturn in economic activity, however, saw the Confederation quickly disintegrate, hastened by inter-district squabbles and wild-cat strikes. Although it was not intended to follow the 'New Model' union structure more prevalent in England, it did show that some form of national organisation was at least a possibility. The first step towards a truly united organisation came with the formation of the Scottish Miners' National Federation in 1886, with James Keir Hardie as secretary. They became the Scottish Miners' Federation in 1894 and they affiliated to the Miners' Federation of Great Britain in the same year. By the end of the nineteenth century the miners were better organised than ever before - both at district and regional level and over much of Scotland as a whole. By 1900 the Scottish Miners' Federation had 50,000 members and in 1913 this had risen to 87,200.[5]

Despite deep rooted racial and sectarian divisions, and regional and district mistrust, it was from within the mining industry that there emerged the gradual recognition that workers could not hope to better wages and conditions across the industry as a whole unless they accepted a greater degree of centralisation. This meant the development of a national strategy for the industry as a whole, centralisation of funds, accompanied with political action intended to further the miners' cause in parliament. The miners were the first to recognise the need for national organisations and the first to overcome considerable divisions within their ranks. This led William Marwick to conclude that the strength and initiative of the trade union movement in Scotland owed much to the examples set by the miners.[6]

The Trades Councils - The Central Organisation in Scottish Trade Unionism.

Unlike the miners, few other workers by the end of the nineteenth century had come to recognise the value of unity at national level, particularly when they were in dispute. Fraser notes that 'strike movements in Scotland tended to be local movements embracing a number of local trades in a given area, rather than a national movement of one particular craft'. Indeed, this approach did not substantially change from the mid 19th century through to the set up of the Clyde Workers' Committee of 1915. It is for this reason that the trades councils were so important. The trades councils co-ordinated local initiatives across different locations and in time created a broader less localised perspective. The trades councils gave a voice to organised labour in Scotland, argues Fraser, and in doing so created a formidable labour movement out of the relatively weak, but fiercely independent, Scottish trade unions.[7]

Glasgow trades council - formed in 1858 - was to become the leading and most influential trades council in Scotland, and its stated aim was to 'examine, devise and execute the best means of improving the working classes, morally, socially, and politically'. The Glasgow council was a model of efficiency and other trades councils simply followed its lead. As if to underline the central importance of the Glasgow council, Alexander McDonald and his Scottish Miners' Association affiliated to the council in 1859, as did the powerful Lanarkshire miners in the 1870s. By the early 1860s, around two-thirds of all the organised trades in the city had affiliated to the council, but some trade unions were unhappy with certain aspects of the trades council's operations. Fraser cites the example of the Association of Carpenters and Joiners of Scotland, who stopped a local branch from affiliating to the Edinburgh trades council because 'the trades councils embody politics as part of their programme and politics were not strictly matters for trades councils.'[8]

The above example clearly shows that many trade unions were seen as economic and not political organisations and from this perspective the attitude expressed here was no different from that of the great leaders of the 'New Model' English unions. Mostly moderate men, they generally disapproved of strikes in any case. But given the legal status of trade unions and the restrictions placed on their activities up until the early 1870's, their attitude is perhaps understandable. Workers and their societies had few legal rights and employers could take workers to court for loss of earnings caused by industrial action. As Campbell notes, workers faced 'imprisonment by summary warrant' for leaving their place of employment without notice. While it was accepted that unions had the right to negotiate with employers, the right to strike and the legality of trade union funds were an entirely different matter.[9] The fear of legal retribution would have been enough to convince many trade unionists against political action at this time, particularly if called for by outside agencies.

The trade councils were to play an important role in co-ordinating the campaigns for greater legal recognition for the trade unions in Scotland. In 1871 the Gladstone government passed the Trade Union Act, which recognised trade unions as legal bodies with the right to strike and to protect their funds by law - rights hitherto denied them. The Criminal Law Amendment Act was also introduced in tandem with the Trade Union Act and this made picketing illegal and rendered strikes impossible to enforce. It was the demand to legalise picketing which politicised many trade unionists and drew them and their unions into the trades councils. Disraeli's government passed the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act in 1875 which made peaceful picketing legal, while the Employer and Workmen Act placed both the employer and worker on an equal legal footing in cases of breach of contract.

The political campaign to overturn the Criminal Law Amendment Act, allied with the need to attract new working class votes (caused by the extension of the franchise in the Reform Acts of 1867 for England and Wales and of 1868 for Scotland) gave the trade union movement more political power and the trade councils became a focus for industrial and political debate. The trades councils supported calls for the shorter working week in the 1850s and gradually came to draw together support for the 8 Hour Bill placed before the TUC in 1889. From the 1870's, Glasgow and Edinburgh councils had Parliamentary Committees to supervise any legislation which would affect labour, they argued for the municipalisation of public utilities and drew attention to the exploitation evident in the sweated industries in the 1880s and 1890s. They encouraged a wider range of discussion on matters affecting labour in the industrial and political spheres, and all trades councils in Scotland were involved in pressure group activities.[10] Between the 1850's and the 1890's the number of trades councils in Scotland increased from two to sixteen (as seen in Table 1 below) and this was accompanied by an 'unprecedented growth' in trade unionism throughout Scotland from the mid 1880's onward.

Table 1. Chronology of Scottish Trades Councils.

1853	Edinburgh
1858	Glasgow
1860	Greenock
1864	Dundee
1868	Aberdeen
1872	Greenock reformed
1873	Kirkcaldy
1885	Dundee reformed
1889	Greenock reformed (3rd time), Motherwell, Port Glasgow and Arbroath
1890	Falkirk and Govan
1891	Paisley
1892	Inverness, Hawick, Dunfermline, Montrose

Source: compiled from W.H. Fraser, 'Trades Councils and the Labour Movement in Nineteenth Century Scotland', in Ian MacDougall (ed) *Essays in Scottish Labour History* (p 6)

The growth in trade unionism was in no small measure due to the impact of the 'New Unionism'. This period in trade union history was commonly held to have marked a distinct break with the past. The 'New Unions' were organisations of unskilled and semi-skilled workers who were more aggressive and militant, and because they were led largely by socialists they were willing to take political and industrial action in order to improve the general conditions of the working classes in Britain. The 'old' unionism, on the other hand, was skilled labour, it was more cautious, moderate, more protectionist than pro-active and led by men who were largely

Liberal in their political outlook. This was most certainly the view held by many contemporaries of the period such as Harry Quelch and Sydney and Beatrice Webb, but it was not a viewpoint that found much support in Scotland and certainly not within the trades councils.[11]

In 1890 Glasgow trades council stated clearly that they saw no difference between 'old' and 'new' and had never distinguished between skilled and unskilled when their support was needed. It was the 'old' style unionists within the trades councils who were playing such a vital role organising new societies of unskilled workers as well as many skilled workers who were more effectively organised at this time. In this area, argues Fraser, the trades councils' approach 'was both distinctive and pioneering' - a role which English trades councils were more reluctant to assume.[12] Scottish trades councils had for some time been at work organising unskilled workers. Edinburgh trades council began to organise a Labourers' Association in the 1860's, Aberdeen organised the Aberdeen Shore Labourers' Unions and the Scottish Farm Workers' Union during the 1880s, while Glasgow successfully helped to organise the National Union of Dock Labourers in 1889. Scottish trades councils were also assisting English based unions to set up branches of gasworkers, seamen, brickworkers, and many others, around Scotland. In terms of aiding and developing trade unionism in Scotland - whether during the 'New Unionist' period, or later at the time of the 'Labour Unrest' of 1910-1914 - the trades councils were of particular importance.[13] As a result of their efforts more trade unions joined the trades councils than ever before - a trend illustrated in Tables 2 and 3 below.

Table 2. Trade Unions Affiliated to Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow Councils 1889-95

	Aberdeen	Edinburgh	Glasgow
1889	30	34	54
1895	40	51	113

Source: compiled from W.H. Fraser, 'Trades Councils and the Labour Movement in Nineteenth Century Scotland', in Ian MacDougall (ed) *Essays in Scottish Labour History* (p 6)

Table 3. Trades Councils in Scotland with Affiliated Membership, 1894 to 1914.

year	trades councils	members
1894	16	84,831
1895	16	87,128
1896	16	96,192
1897	17	102,297
1898	16	107,297
1899	18	99,759
1900	18	113,488
1901	16	120,116
1902	16	119,713
1903	17	112,862
1904	18	120,129

year	trades councils	members
1905	18	121,552
1906	19	124,101
1907	20	133,269
1908	21	134,054
1909	21	135,446
1910	26	142,000
1911	30	155,000
1912	33	187,000
1913	35	230,000
1914	38	223,000
1915	41	233,000

Source: A Clinton, *The Trade Union Rank and File: Trade Councils in Britain 1900-1914*

According to Sydney and Beatrice Webb there were 147,000 trade unionists in Scotland by 1892, but despite the significant increase, Roy Campbell and Bill Knox estimate that trade union membership in Scotland was 20% lower than it was in England at this point.[14] By the mid-1890's trade union membership began to fall off somewhat - due to trade depression, compounded by the effects of the employers' counter-attack - and it was not until the late 1890's that membership levels began to pick up again. There was also a strong upwards trend from 1910 onward as the first real impact of the Labour Unrest was felt. It was not until 1912, however, that Scottish trade union membership actually exceeded the estimates for 1892.

Table 4. Webb's Estimates for 1892 compared to Numbers of Delegates, Trades Unions, Trades Councils and Affiliated Membership to the STUC at selected intervals, 1902 to 1913.

Year	No Delegates	No of Trades Unions	/Councils	Total No Members
1892				*147,000*
1898	114	unknown		100,000
1902	120	49	8	131,513
1906	133	48	6	72,470
1909	117	37	6	66,300
1911	132	43	6	140,705
1912	147	49	7	185,825
1913	150	52	8	261,417
1914	158	54	9	*225,258

*Trades councils' affiliates were not recorded in 1914, this accounts for the shortfall over the previous year.
Source: STUC *Annual Reports* 1902-1914

The Scottish trades councils were largely responsible for the formation of the Scottish Trades Union Congress in 1897, but the trades councils themselves still remained the central organisations for trade unionism in Scotland from 1897 and 1914 - as can be seen by comparing Tables 3 and 4 above. In 1913, for example, total membership of Scottish trades councils was 230,000, while the STUC membership was some way below at 196,217. This underlines the central importance of the trades councils and the central and pivotal role there were to play in Scottish trade union development from the second half of the nineteenth century up until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.

Explaining the 'New Unionism' and the 'Labour Unrest' in Scotland c. 1888 to 1914

During the period of the 'New Unionism' there was an explosion of discontent among a broad group of hitherto poorly organised workers and this was repeated during the 'Labour Unrest' of 1910 to 1914. But what caused the unrest in the first instance and were developments in Scotland any different from the rest of Britain?

Arthur McIvor notes that the orthodox Marxist viewpoint stresses the importance of socio-economic change and the growing homogeneity of a more class conscious trade union movement. Because of increased competition, work intensification, wage reduction and de-skilling, the increased size of companies, the greater use of management, and the erosion of paternalism, industrial relations become depersonalised and this in turn helps to break down company loyalties. Such socio-economic problems are explained to workers in class terms and more workers become open to the new political ideas expressed in socialist or syndicalist terms. As many of the leaders during both the period of the 'New Unionism' and the 'Labour Unrest' were socialist, or syndicalist, it is argued, the role of ideology assumed ever greater importance and therefore had a significant impact on both these events.

McIvor notes an alternative viewpoint, which stresses that increased levels of unionisation come hand-in-hand with improvements in the economic cycle. For example, the major periods of trade union growth occur between 1870-72, 1888-90, 1910-14 (and 1915 to 1920) and these were all periods of high employment. Workers were simply attempting to 'claw-back' wages lost in the intervening period of trade depression and their response was to join trade unions in order to achieve this. The causes of unrest were therefore economic and not ideological. This model of unrest also considers legislative developments - an area which the Marxist model tends to overlook. Changes in the laws governing the actions and activities of the trades unions meant that they were now operating with a significant degree of freedom. As noted above, this liberalisation process began in the 1870's and culminated with the passing of the Trades Dispute Act of 1906. Over this period as a whole the trade unions were getting stronger, were more willing to take industrial action, and this and their improved legal position attracted more members.[15]

But can either of these models adequately explain 'New Unionist' activity in Scotland or explain why the 'Labour Unrest' was more popularly supported north of the border than it was in England? Certain aspects of both seem to be applicable in the Scottish context. Scotland was more dependent on overseas trade than any other region of Britain. The economy was, therefore, more affected by the vagaries of international trade, but

also particularly vulnerable to increased levels of foreign competition. By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, notes Bill Knox, the engineering, shipbuilding, coalmining and construction industries all attempted to introduce semi-automatic machinery and more semi-skilled and unskilled workers, in order to increase production and reduce wage bills in the face of increased foreign competition. He also argues that more workers were being confronted by managerial representatives rather than the employers themselves. Thus there may have been a growing sense of depersonalisation within the working environment at a time when workers faced organised attempts to de-skill, lower wages and increased work loads. This would closely correspond to the Marxist interpretation.[16]

On the other hand, it would also seem clear that with greater trade union freedom increasing numbers of both skilled and unskilled workers were joining trade unions. Workers had less to fear from employers, were more predisposed and often more financially able to join trade unions, and were increasingly willing to take industrial action once they were in trade union membership. From this vantage point the economic explanation of unrest and trade union growth seems the more satisfying.

But what about ideological considerations? The role and influence of socialism does become more pronounced after the 1880's, but it was not a major cause of 'New Unionist' unrest in Scotland. The 'New Unionist' period saw many groups of semi-skilled and unskilled workers organised for the first time, but the process predated the period associated with the rise in influence of socialism and clearly had its roots in earlier developments. It therefore did not mark a radical departure from what went before.[17] There is also the peculiar nature of Scottish socialism to consider. Socialism in Scotland, argues Knox, drew on an eclectic range of sources in order to mount its challenge against capital. Socially, labour leaders in Scotland were teetotal, pacifist, rational, untheoretical and evangelical in religion. Politically, they were radical, republican, anti-landlord and nationalist. Their heroes were more likely to be 'Jesus, Mazzini, and Robert Burns', than Marx and Engels. The trade union and labour movement in Scotland was still largely of the radical lib-labist tradition, and the type of atheism, anti-temperance, and anti-parliamentary rhetoric of the 'English based socialists', argues Knox, only alienated Scottish leaders such as Keir Hardie. Politically, the trade union movement in Scotland was characterised by 'considerable resistance' to socialism and this did not change much before the Labour Unrest of 1910 to 1914.[18]

There is little doubt that British capitalism was shaken by the sheer magnitude of the Labour Unrest before 1914. Evidence from the west of Scotland during this time clearly illustrates that the impact was greater in Scotland than in England. Over the period 1911 to 1913 the annual average strike rate in Britain ran at four times the levels recorded over the previous decade, but in Scotland the level was six times greater. Women played an integral part in the strike activity in Scotland, where female strike propensity was high, and women did not hesitate to fight against exploitation and struggle for better wages and conditions in the workplace, like many of their male counterparts in the lesser skilled trades.[19]

Perhaps the reason for the higher incidence of unrest in Scotland was due to the more draconian attitude of the employers. Knox argues, for example, that in contrast to the weakness of the Scottish union, 'the employers of Scotland were remarkably strong'. Indeed, he suggests that this was a 'major impediment to the formation of a stronger trade-union movement ... ensuring that the majority of workers remained unorganised'.[20] There is little doubt that Clydeside employers initially met the growing crop of disputes and strikes with force, coercion and intransigence. This is evident during the 'new unionism', but particularly so between 1910 and 1914. Importing non-unionist labour, blacklisting strikers, exploiting the full force of the law and threatening lockouts was the staple fare of the period. The propensity among Clydeside employers to introduce blackleg labour during strikes appears to have been particularly high. Recent evidence suggests that Clydeside employers, for example, replaced workers in 2 out of every 5 disputes between 1910 and 1912, which was double the rate of labour replacement in England during the unrest there.[21] That the discontent in Scotland was greater than in other areas of Britain may simply be an example of Scotland 'catching up':

> ... Scotland was in many ways catching up with industrial developments in England ... industrialisation was occurring at a later stage, and was more concentrated within a shorter time span, it produced different response from both the forces of capital and labour. ... from this situation came the emergence of industrial relations strategies based on conflict and coercion rather than the more conciliatory developments taking place in England. ...

Powerful employers' associations - such as those in coal, engineering and shipbuilding - found the unions they faced before 1914 able to match them in organisation and often exceed them in solidarity. The evidence from one study of Clydeside implies that between 1910 and 1914 employers in West Scotland seriously underestimated the power of the labour force, not only of organised labour but the degree of support within many working class communities too.

The early claims of the 'new unionism', states McIvor, 'are now widely accepted as exaggerated' as too are the 'romanticised notions of an extensive socialist and syndicalist presence' at the time of the 'Labour Unrest'.

Labour historians now stress 'longer-term changes' in terms of trade union development, whereby 'old' unions gained more members, moved to the 'left', but still dominated the trade union movement.[22] Accompanying this was the growth in membership among lesser skilled workers. As for the unrest, it was caused by the 'accumulation of grievances' built-up over a long period and when the time was right 'these aggregates of discontent' were translated into strike action.[23]

The Structure of Scottish Trade Unionism, 1892 to 1914 - Weakness or Strength?

It was argued above that the small-scale and independent nature of Scottish unions arose naturally from the basic structure of the Scottish economy. It is for these reasons that Hamish Fraser, like Roy Campbell and Bill Knox, generally support the notion that there was an inherent weakness in the basic structure of Scottish trade unionism. It is clear in Fraser's analysis of the Scottish trades councils that much was achieved in terms of making Scottish trade unionists more politically and socially aware, but also in promoting union penetration among both skilled and unskilled workers. Had the Scottish structure been similar to the more centralised English model then the unskilled may have been largely unsupported in terms of trade union development - an accusation often levelled at the 'old' union in England and Wales by the 'new unionist' leadership.

Given the regionally specific nature of industry in Scotland, and that Scottish trade unionism simply reflected the structure of Scottish capital, could it not be argued that this structure was admirably suited to the particular and peculiar regional industrial environment of Scotland? According to the Webbs, two thirds of all trade unionists in Scotland resided in the Glasgow area.[24] Given this preponderance, the Scottish regional structure arguably made sense. The trades councils were also placed at the very centre of this 'localist and activist-led trade union structure' and, as recently argued, far from being a weakness 'this structure could be interpreted as a strength':

> ... the early and persistent concentration on small-scale and independent trade union development in Scotland was a strength which led to a growing sense of solidarity and the formalisation of independent political strategies. Arguably, the nature and character of Scottish trade unionism should be defined in terms of their actions, leadership and their campaigns, rather than the notion of bureaucratic efficiency. ...

A stronger reliance on a federal system of organisation in Scotland resulted in trade unions becoming collections of small autonomous societies and semi-autonomous branches with decisions being made generally at a local level. Perhaps this is why the Labour Unrest affected proportionally more of the Scottish workforce than British as a whole.[25]

While the attachment to localism remained strong up until 1914 (and beyond) it did draw those 'fiercely independent' Scottish trade unionists, as Fraser described them, into greater contact with other workers. This was seen to a limited effect in the 1880's, but was particularly pronounced during the unrest of 1910-1914. The Glasgow Labour History Workshop have shown local conditions, when linked to this 'localist and activist-led trade union structure', helped to break down the sectional, and sectarian, barriers dividing labour and brought skilled and unskilled into closer union. This process begins at the local level and in Scotland at the very point where industrial conflict was at its height. Perhaps this is why both skilled and unskilled trade unions were making great efforts to maintain and even extend this traditional model of independent trade unionism within the more localised and federal Scottish structure before 1914. This level of approval may offer the final proof that this localist and activist-led trade union structure can be interpreted as a strength and not a weakness.[26]

NOTES

1 Hamish Fraser, 'Trade Councils in the Labour Movement in Nineteenth Century Scotland', in Ian MacDougall (ed) *Essays in Scottish Labour History* (1978), pp 1-2.

2 William Kenefick and Arthur McIvor (eds) *Roots of Red Clydeside 1910-1914?: Labour Unrest and Industrial Relations in West Scotland* (1996), pp 19-21.

3 Roy Campbell, *Scotland Since 1707: The Rise of an Industrial Society* (1992), p 167.

4 Bill Knox, 'The Political and Work Place Culture of The Scottish Working Class, 1832-1914', in W Hamish Fraser and R.J. Morris (eds) *People and Society in Scotland, Volume II, 1830-1914* (1990), pp 149-150.

5 Campbell, *Scotland Since 1707,* pp 236-38.

6 William Marwick, *A Short History of Labour in Scotland* (1967).

7 Fraser, 'Trade Councils in the Labour Movement', pp 2-3.

8 Fraser, 'Trade Councils in the Labour Movement', p 4.

9 Campbell, *Scotland Since 1707,* pp 166.

10 Fraser, 'Trade Councils in the Labour Movement', pp 12-17

11 Harry Quelch, *Trade Unionism, Cooperation and Social Democracy* (1892) and Sydney and Beatrice Webb, *Industrial Democracy* (1913).

12 Fraser, 'Trade Councils in the Labour Movement', p 8, see also Eric Taplin, *The Dockers Union: A Study of the National Union of Dock Labourers* (1986) Taplins refers to the NUDL refusing to join Liverpool trades council because they did little to organise unskilled labour around the docks. The relationship with Glasgow trades council was altogether different, see also Kenefick ('Irish predominance, the workplace experience, and community interaction on Clydeside: The Glasgow Dockers and New Unionism', forthcoming article to be published in *Irish Studies Review).*

13 Fraser, 'Trade Councils in the Labour Movement', p 6-9; Kenneth Buckley, *Trade Unionism in Aberdeen 1887 to 1900* (1955), and William Kenefick, 'A Struggle for control: the importance of the great unrest at Glasgow harbour, 1911 to 1912', in William Kenefick and Arthur McIvor (eds) *Roots of Red Clydeside 1910-1914?: Labour Unrest and Industrial Relations in West Scotland* (1996), offers an insight into the important role played by the Glasgow Trades Council.

14 Campbell, *Scotland Since 1707,* p 237-8, and Knox, 'The Political and Work Place Culture', p 149.

15 Arthur McIvor, 'The rise of the British Labour movement, c1850-1939', in William B. Wurthmann (ed) *Britain, 1850-1979: Politics and Social Change* (Historical Association Committee for Scotland and the Historical Association, 1995), p 37-8.

16 Knox, 'The Political and Work Place Culture', pp 141-42.

17 Fraser, 'Trade Councils in the Labour Movement', p 9.

18 Knox, 'The Political and Work Place Culture', pp 158-60, and pp 160-62, and Fraser, 'Trade Councils in the Labour Movement', p 22.

19 Eleanor Gordon, *Women and the Labour Movement in Scotland 1850 -1914* (1991), p 212, and pp 253-60, and William Knox and Helen Corr, "'Striking Women': Cotton Workers and Industrial Unrest, c.1907-1914', Kenefick and McIvor (eds) *Roots of Red Clydeside.*

20 Knox, 'The Political and Work Place Culture', pp 150-51

21 Kenefick and McIvor, *Roots of Red Clydeside, passim..*

22 McIvor, 'The rise of the British Labour movement', p 41.

23 Glasgow Labour History Workshop, in Robert Duncan and Arthur McIvor (eds) *Militant Workers: Labour and Class Conflict on the Clyde 1900-1950* (1992), p 97.

24 Sydney and Beatrice Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*(1950 edn) pp 425-6

25 Kenefick and McIvor, *Roots of Red Clydeside,* see also Duncan and McIvor, *Militant Workers.*

26 Glasgow Labour History Workshop, 'The Labour Unrest', pp 19-21, and Ricky Devlin, 'Strike patterns and employers' responses: Clydeside in comparative perspective', in Kenefick and McIvor (eds) *Roots of Red Clydeside.*

A 'Fine Harvest'? – Women's Achievements since the Vote was Won

ESTHER BREITENBACH

The extension of women's rights as citizens and their progress towards equality may be regarded as significant aspects of 20th Century British society, though it may be disputed how great this progress has been, and how much further there is still to go to achieve true equality with men, and, indeed, how exactly that 'equality' may be defined. For the average layperson the perception of the stages of this process may be limited to a few key dates or periods of social change – the suffragettes' campaign of militancy immediately prior to the First World War, women's enfranchisement in 1918, the effect of the two world wars on women's role, and the spontaneous birth of the Women's Liberation Movement in the late 1960s, fuelled by economic expansion, the invention of the contraceptive pill, and sexual permissiveness. This produces a picture of sporadic upsurges of interest by women in their rights, followed by long periods of quiescence. The development of women's history in recent years has done much to correct this view and to uncover the extent to which there has been continuity in feminist activity and campaigning from the period of 'First Wave' feminism to the present day. This calls into question some of the explanations that have previously been offered by historians for changes in women's status.

As yet we remain relatively ignorant of the activities of women in the period between 1918 and 1968, and even in this latter period, though there has been an explosion of feminist publishing the actual activities of the women's movement itself are not always adequately recorded. And with the growth of women's history in Britain, various parts of Britain remain poorly served, in particular Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The lack of material on women in certain parts of Britain, and over this period, indeed raises questions about how history has been written and by whom. Many of the writings of the participants of First Wave Feminism were out of circulation long ago, or languishing on the shelves of second hand bookshops, until the process of salvage and recovery was begun by feminist publishing houses such as Virago, and by feminist academics, and while feminist scholarship is opening up issues for debate, it remains to be seen how effectively these ideas will be communicated to 'mainstream' historical texts. What I propose to do here is examine some of the conventional wisdom surrounding change in women's political and social position in 20th Century Britain in the light of recent contributions to the debate.

The Vote

The starting point inevitably must be the vote. The campaign for the enfranchisement of women may be seen as the culmination of British First Wave Feminism. This began in 1867, with the women's suffrage petition presented to Parliament by John Stuart Mill, and the attempt to amend the 1867 reform bill by substituting 'person' for 'man'. [1] Consistent lobbying and campaigning then followed through the creation of women's suffrage societies throughout the country. By 1914 the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies had 53,000 members and over 480 branches.[2] Suffragette militancy was a late development in the campaign. The Pankhursts' Women's Social and Political Union was founded in 1903, and initiated its militant tactics in 1905. As Martin Pugh has written, 'until fairly recently Emmeline Pankhurst and her eldest daughter Christabel epitomised the women's campaign'.[3] However, the knowledge of the broader women's movement gained through recent histories has put the Pankhursts and the WSPU into perspective. Indeed, on some interpretations, including Pugh's, Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst have been characterised as self-seeking headline grabbers, prone to making bizarre policy shifts, and given to high-handed dealings with their membership – shallow, opportunistic, and engaged in 'a ceaseless search for self-promotion'.[4] Of course, militancy was not the exclusive preserve of the Pankhursts, and some of the women who found their authoritarian approach unacceptable founded the Women's Freedom League, also a militant organisation. Militancy undoubtedly kept women's campaign for the vote in the news up until the outbreak of war in 1914, when militant activity ceased. Some historians have argued that militancy was a key factor in gaining women the vote. Elspeth King, for example, strongly disagrees with the view that 'militancy alienated the government and inhibited women's cause'.[5] Sylvia Pankhurst (who, in contrast to her mother and sister, was a left-wing Pacifist, who later became a founder member of the Communist Party of Great Britain) attributes the partial enfranchisement of women in 1918 to women's participation in the war effort, the government's fear of recurring militancy, and the impact of the Russian revolution as a motivation for Parliament to enlist women voters as a means of ensuring stability.[6]

The view that women's enfranchisement in 1918 was a reward for their participation in the war effort has become a popular explanation. As Martin Pugh has commented, ' A simplistic view would see the vote as a reward for loyal wartime service; a more sophisticated version argues for a causal relationship between mass

participation in war and the scope of social change thereafter; a newly participating group like women draws concessions in social and political status for the rulers'.[7] However, he challenges these views, arguing that 'careful study tends to show how little change resulted from the war, not how much'.[8]

There are a number of competing explanations for women's enfranchisement in 1918, though some of these may be regarded as complementary rather than conflicting.[9] Firstly, it has been argued the ground for it had been so thoroughly prepared before 1914; secondly that during the war the opportunity for enfranchisement of women was created by the concern of politicians to give votes to *men*; thirdly that it was due to the campaign and pressure exerted by the women's movement during the war; and fourthly that people had changed their minds, and male prejudices had been overcome by the capacities demonstrated by women during the war.

Martin Pugh's account of changing patterns of voting on suffrage bills by parties in the period between 1911 and 1917[10] offers a persuasive argument of the importance of the further enfranchisement of working class men, in particular those who had fought in the war, and how women's enfranchisement was added on to this. The exclusion of young single women from the franchise in 1918 is significant in this respect, since it was precisely this group who had contributed most to the war effort. The strength of Pugh's arguments lies in the fact that it demonstrates the continuity of traditional male attitudes towards women, and that partial enfranchisement (of older, mostly married, women) could be accommodated with these. This is consistent with continued male resistance to the increase of women's participation in public life, which was then in evidence and indeed has continued to be so throughout the century.

However, this interpretation remains contested by historians who wish to claim women's action had a more important part to play.[11] It is not unreasonable to suppose that governments were concerned at the further threat of militancy. It is also the case that non-militant suffrage organisations continued lobbying throughout the war, albeit in a more muted and cautious manner. A combination of these factors, then, can be seen as having brought about the partial enfranchisement of women in 1918, though it may be hard to assess the weight of each. What is clear is that the enfranchisement of women was not a result of major change in attitudes towards women and women's role.

Women's entry to parliament and legislative change for women in the 1920s

Not only were women partially enfranchised in 1918, but legislation was also rushed through to permit women to stand as Parliamentary candidates. In the 1918 election seventeen women stood for Parliament. The seventeen included Christabel Pankhurst. However, the only woman elected was Countess Markievicz, who, as a Sinn Fein member, did not take up her seat. The first woman to take her place in Parliament was therefore Nancy Astor, who replaced her newly ennobled husband as Conservative MP for Plymouth Sutton. The first Scottish woman MP was likewise a Conservative, the Duchess of Atholl who in 1923 was elected MP for Kinross and West Perthshire. She was also a prominent anti-suffragist.

The increase of women MPs since 1918 has been slow and not always steady, with the position at the beginning of 1997 being 9.7% of the total. It is therefore important to ask what factors might be responsible for women's lack of representation in Parliament. In the first place, suffrage organisations were non-party, though some individual suffragists were party members, especially of the Liberal Party, Labour Party, and other small socialist parties such as the Independent Labour Party and the Social Democratic Federation. For some women party members standing as candidates it posed a dilemma of whether to remain loyal to their feminist credentials or to their Party credentials although most women MPs in this period did not enter politics through the women's movement. The evidence on the whole suggests that Party loyalties had the upper hand, and that the new breed of women MPs did not associate themselves with women's interests in the way that feminists might have expected them to.

Another factor is the existence of barriers to women's participation in political decision-making at all levels, not just the Parliamentary. As Catriona Burness has commented, while parties have been concerned to win women's votes, 'providing electors with women to vote *for* scarcely figured on the agendas of the political parties' in the period immediately following 1918.[12] Male resistance within parties was therefore one factor, another was women's material circumstances, where family commitments made it impossible to take up the role of MP. As Burness notes, in her study of Scottish women MPs between 1918 and 1945, 'The women who became MPs tended to share advantages of family connections with politics and a higher than average level of education. .....Most of the women who became MPs were unmarried, childless and over 40. The barriers faced by would-be women candidates were numerous and included low expectations of women in public life, lack of encouragement, hostility to women moving into the political sphere, difficulty in gaining political experience and in being identified as a potential candidate – over and above the pressures bearing down on women to remain within the domestic sphere and the difficulties of combining the pursuit of political ambitions with other responsibilities'.[13]

It soon emerged that women voters were likely to vote along party lines in much the same way as men, and therefore parties' anxieties about women voters died down. Martin Pugh speculates that a Women's Party formed immediately in 1918 may have made some impact, but the moment of this possibility was quickly over.[14] In any case party politics was increasing its hold in the British political system, and any such success would have been short-lived. Given the detachment from party organisations of many feminists, the growing dominance of party politics in this period created a barrier to feminist influence.[15]

Women were not fully enfranchised till 1928, and this remained a focus for feminist campaigning, particularly by organisations such as the newly formed National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship. In this period other legislation that represented improvements in women's position was enacted . Despite the difficult conditions following the war, in particular the lack of employment for women who had worked during the war, 'the years which followed the passing of the Women's Suffrage brought a big harvest of results'.[16] This included legislation covering such things as registration of midwives; opening of the legal and other professions to women; making women liable for jury service; admission, after some years of battle, to the Civil Service; improvements to married women's property rights; maintenance of illegitimate children; continuing appointment of women police officers, which had first taken place during the war; grounds for divorce being made the same for women as for men; according equal rights to mothers and fathers over their children; creation of widows' pensions, removing them from the Poor Law; acts covering adoption, and legitimation of children on parents' subsequent marriage; according of criminal responsibility to married women; and raising the age of marriage. Finally, despite continuing arguments about young women's 'flightiness' and 'frivolity,[17] Parliament voted in 1928 to enfranchise women of 21 years and over.

While Ray Strachey's view that 'legal equality is not, of course, the whole aim of the movement'[18] was undoubtedly the view shared by feminist activists, it seems equally clear that the campaign for the vote was capable of mobilising large numbers of women and men who did not continue to actively campaign for further changes to improve women's social, economic, and political status. The vote was an issue capable of uniting many, but other campaigns such as that of Josephine Butler against the Contagious Diseases Acts in the 1870s were too explicit in dealing with issues of sexuality and prostitution to be supported by the majority of respectable middle class suffragists. This was despite the fact that Butler's aim was 'social purity', to be achieved through men controlling their sexual impulses.[19]

In the 1920s contraception became a prominent issue following the publication of Marie Stopes *Married Love* and *Wise Parenthood* , but feminist attitudes towards contraception remained ambivalent. Birth control was approved of for the married woman as 'a remarkable palliative for many of her worst anxieties'[20], and there is some recognition of the need for legalised abortion, but the possibility of sexual freedom for women and the undermining of marriage was deplored. Though contraception was also a major issue for women activists in the Labour Party in the 1920s, it was largely seen as a means of alleviating the burdens of frequent childbearing on working class mothers, rather than as an aid to sexual freedom. Despite this the demand for contraceptive services never reached the Labour Party agenda, being rejected by male activists and leaders as a non-political matter, as well as being a potential vote loser, through the alienation of Catholic Labour voters.[21] Women within political parties generally tried in this period to raise their status and put issues on the agenda. This process was met by stubborn resistance from men, and resulted ultimately in a reaffirmation of women's 'helpmeet' position within party organisations.[22]

If feminist campaigners, writing in the 1930s, could list what they saw as the numerous successes of their activities, they also recognised divisions within the women's movement. Eleanor Rathbone commented that 'this fine harvest of legislation affecting women's status and special interests, which marked the first decade since our enfranchisement, gave us old suffragists no reason to feel disillusioned'[23]. Nonetheless she notes that 'during the seven years which succeeded the first decade, progress in women's reforms has been much slower'.[24] Part of the difficulty lay in an economic situation of depression and mass unemployment. It is in this context we must see the enactment in 1932 of the Anomalies Act, (introduced by Margaret Bondfield, the first woman Cabinet Minister) which excluded the majority of married women from receipt of unemployment insurance benefits. Economic conditions frustrated the ambitions of women for equal opportunities and equal pay at work, and indeed significant shifts in this situation did not begin to occur till after the Second World War, with the economic expansion of the 1950s and 1960s.

A difficulty for the women's movement as such was that significant differences began to emerge. Eleanor Rathbone characterised the major division as that between the 'old' and the 'new' feminists. The 'old' are scoffed at as 'me too' feminists, for whom 'the objective of the movement is still conditional and limited by the conception of equality between men and women, interpreted in terms of identity: – identity of political and civil rights; identity of occupational opportunities, conditions and remuneration. Whatever in these respects men have got, women must have; and when they have got it that is equality, and that is the goal of the women's movement'[25]. The new feminists, like herself, however, argued that the world as it was, shaped by men, was a

'poor sort of world', and that women's needs were by no means identical with those of men. This led them to support the retention of protective legislation for women workers, and 'endowment of motherhood' i.e. the payment of an allowance to mothers to alleviate them from the necessity of participating in paid employment. Rathbone's campaign for the endowment of motherhood led eventually to the creation of Family Allowances in 1945, though this was in a form different from that which she had initially envisaged.

If Family Allowances can be regarded as a major gain for women, this also has to be seen in the context of Beveridge's system of national insurance and social security, in which women are explicitly defined as men's dependants. Beveridge was firmly of the view that women's primary role was that of mother, and that she should not work outside the home. The system that Beveridge created both constructed and reinforced women's dependency within marriage, and continues to do so. Changes to the social security system have not tackled this fundamental inequality. [26]

The influence of war on women's position

A persistent and popular explanation of changes in women's status in 20th Century Britain has been that of the impact of the two world wars. The social upheaval created by war has been said to have created opportunities for women and to have furthered the cause of equality – through drawing them into the workforce, in particular in jobs not previously done by women, through the provision of services such as nursery facilities, through women demonstrating their responsibility as citizens, and through changes in sexual mores encouraged by greater instability of relationships during war time. This view has led to the notion that the vote was a 'reward' for women's participation in the war effort, and that the second world war raised women's aspirations and contributed to the development of their modern role. Though this view is frequently stated, some historians have argued that evidence for it is often thin or non-existent.[27] Penny Summerfield comments that there have been two kinds of historiography of the impact of the two world wars on women. 'In one, the wars are understood to have had profound effects on women's lives, but because the focus of the historical work is elsewhere, the changes are assumed and not explored. In the other, the wars are subject to close scrutiny, and different interpretations of the changes are hotly debated'.[28] Martin Pugh has argued that, 'war crystallized conventional assumptions about the proper relations between the sexes'.[29] Maternal and child welfare became more important concerns during the wars and though this brought benefits to women as mothers, it did nothing to challenge ideologies of women's domesticity.

By the time of the First World War most working class women already worked outside the home, though their employment might cease or be interrupted on marriage. The wars did offer a wider range of jobs, and working class women often left domestic service for factory jobs which were more attractive. Most of this work, however, remained 'women's work' and only a small proportion of women worked at jobs normally held by men.[30] It was only for young middle class women that work provided by the war was a novel experience.

In the Second World War it is estimated that twice as many women were mobilised for industry and the services as in First World War. However, more women remained full-time housewives than were employed, and many were reluctant conscripts to war work. War created many difficulties for women, with evacuation of children from major cities, the stress of separation from children and husbands, harsh living conditions and privation. Although there was an increase in nursery provision to accommodate women workers, objections by the Ministry of Health to working mothers meant that not enough was made available. Only about a quarter of women workers' pre-school children were provided for.[31]

Equal pay for women workers was a more significant issue in the Second World War than in the First, though resistance to equal pay continued from government and most unions, though some supported it. This continued to be an issue after the war with equal pay being gained in some professions in the 1950s and 1960s, and finally the Equal Pay Act being enacted in 1970. One real change was the higher percentage of married women who indicated they hoped to continue working, and this trend could be observed following the war. More women survived in the labour force, due to labour shortages. But it can be argued that change depended crucially on vagaries of British economy rather than wartime experience.[32]

Despite the greater participation of married women in employment 'both wars were times when attention was directed to advocating that mothers should devote themselves exclusively to motherhood'.[33] This emphasis arose partly arose in response to loss of life, but in the First World War it was also reinforced by eugenics and moralising campaigns directed towards working class mothers. Though the Maternity and Child Welfare Act of 1918 provided services for mothers, clinics were not allowed to offer a contraceptive service, and maternal mortality remained high throughout the inter-war years. During the Second World War anxiety was expressed over the birth rate and there was a spate of pro-natalist publications. This debate was overtaken by the post war baby boom, though the average size of families did not rise to the recommended minimum of four. The establishment of the National Health Service in 1948 was particularly valuable to working-class mothers, most

of whom had not previously been covered by health insurance.

Though more women participated in the labour market, women were under pressure in both wars to conform to the ideal of the domestic wife and mother. Gender divisions at work remained largely in place. Thus, though war may have had an impact on women's lives in other respects, 'the wars did not cause profound changes, defined in relation to equality or difference, to women as a category.'[34]

The post-war period

The 1950s have often been regarded as a decade in which women focussed their attention on the family and on homemaking, and lost interest in equality and feminism. As Elizabeth Wilson comments, 'so pervasive was this myth that it has become the "facts" for the Women's Liberation Movement too'[35], and she argues for the need for this period to be reassessed. The reality was more complex than the mythology suggests. On the one hand domestic ideology was strongly promulgated, as women's role as housewife was utilised as a means of selling consumer goods being developed for a mass market. There was widespread popular concern about the rise of juvenile delinquency and the contribution of working mothers to this problem, a view which many women accepted. On the other hand, married women's employment continued to increase. The demand for women's labour in the 1940s was buoyant, though as Penny Summerfield has noted, the government campaign in 1947 to attract women who had left work at the end of the war back into the workforce, tends to be forgotten because the focus of attention has been on the 'back to the home' rhetoric of postwar pronatalism.[36] Gains were made in access to equal pay for women in the civil service and in teaching in the 1950s and early 1960s, and the marriage bar in professional employment was abolished. Feminist organisations continued to lobby throughout the period between 1945 and 1968, for example, on issues such as equal treatment and equal rights, and divorce law reform. [37] However, they were small, with an ageing membership, and limited in their capacity to influence change. Some feminists now argued that the party route was the most realistic one to political influence.

The birth of the Women's Liberation Movement in 1968 did not arise directly from existing feminist organisations, but nevertheless owed much to the feminist work that had gone on in preceding decades. The passing of the Abortion Act in 1967, the widespread availability of contraception and more open public debate about sexuality, and the Ford's equal pay strike in 1968, were all key events in the raising of women's consciousness and in the development of the Women's Liberation Movement. Expansion of employment and educational opportunities for women also led to heightened aspirations for women, and to the desire to overcome the barriers that still remained. None of these issues was being raised for the first time, and what progress had been made was the result of the struggles of women of previous generations.

Conclusion

While it is important to acknowledge the influence of demographic and economic change, the emphasis here has been on the political demands and organisation of women. In favourable economic circumstances it is clearly easier for women to realise their demands for access to opportunities in the labour market and for equal pay, for example, but their realisation has depended on political campaigning and lobbying, and not on economic change alone. Generally speaking, every gain that women have made has been long fought for by women themselves, with varying degrees of support from male allies. There has been continuity in feminist campaigning since the 1870s and the birth of the suffrage movement, in the sense that there has always been some type of feminist activity taking place.

Many issues first identified in the 19th Century have continued to be the focus of feminist activity in the 20th. Among such issues may be included the vote, access to education and employment, equal pay, equal rights for married women, child sexual abuse, domestic violence, and contraception. Some of these may have only had very small groups of supporters initially, with increasing public acknowledgement of their political character over time. Many individual feminists also continued to campaign for change throughout their lives, though the names and forms of organisations may have changed as the political context changed. However there have also been divisions between feminists and fluctuating cycles of activity. There have been class divisions between women, differences of opinion over the desirability of joining political parties or remaining in non-party organisations, and conflicts between party loyalties and feminist loyalties.

Feminist aims have sometimes been widely supported by women in general, and at other times they have attracted little interest and support. It has been observed that this cyclical pattern of activity is common to most reformist and radical causes.[38] The most recent cycle of activity, beginning in the late 1960s may have some advantages over previous periods. As Elizabeth Wilson has argued, the contemporary women's movement does not restrict itself to a Parliamentary perspective, in that it does not limit itself to campaigning for legislative change.[39] It can also be argued, of course, that this is a weakness in that Parliament and political parties remain the most significant means of effecting political change. However, in the sense that the women's movement has

redefined the meaning of 'political' and in the sense that it is developing analyses and theories of female subordination, it is building the capacity of women to understand processes of social change and how they might promote this.

Feminist historical scholarship has an important role to play here, and as this develops it becomes more clear to what extent women have been agents of change in their own lives, and to what extent men have resisted this change. Not all women have fought for change, and not all men have resisted it, of course. Nor should divisions between women, and between men be ignored, particularly those of class. But as Cynthia Cockburn has so ably argued, it is in men's collective interest to maintain patriarchy and to resist women's demands for equality.[40] Explanations that have been offered for improvements in women's position have often tended to assume these are the results of macro-economic change, the social upheaval caused by the wars, long term demographic change and so on. Such large scale explanations are open to the criticism of being mechanistic and functionalist, and of denying agency to women. These factors have a part to play, but as total explanations they should be treated with suspicion. In sum, women's achievements in the 20th Century have been many, doggedly fought for and hard won. If Eleanor Rathbone's optimistic claim of a 'fine harvest' of legislative gains by the early 1930s seems to us now somewhat premature, we can perhaps nevertheless agree with Martin Pugh 's assessment , that 'the catalogue of achievements and changes is a formidable one'.[41]

NOTES

1 Martin Pugh, *Women's Suffrage in Britain, 1867-1928*(London, 1980) Pugh, notes, however that the franchise 'was only one element in the disparate movement for emancipation amongst women' p 5.

2 Martin Pugh, *Women's Suffrage in Britain, 1867-1928* (London, 1980), p 22.

3 Martin Pugh, *Women's Suffrage in Britain, 1867-1928* (London, 1980), p 22.

4 Martin Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain 1914-1959* (Basingstoke, 1992), p 47.

5 Elspeth King, 'The Scottish Women's Suffrage Movement' in Esther Breitenbach and Eleanor Gordon (eds), *Out of Bounds: Women in Scottish Society 1800-1945* (Edinburgh, 1992), p 146.

6 Sylvia Pankhurst, *The Suffragette Movement* (London, 1977), (first published 1931), p 607.

7 Martin Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain 1914-1959* (Basingstoke, 1992), p 30.

8 Ibid, p 30

9 See Martin Pugh (1992) for a detailed discussion of these. See also Sandra Holton, *Feminism and Democracy,* (Cambridge, 1987)

10 See Martin Pugh, *Women's Suffrage in Britain, 1867-1928* (London, 1980)

11 See, for example, Elspeth King(1992) and Sandra Holton (1987).

12 Catriona Burness, 'The Long Slow March: Scottish Women MPs, 1918-45' in Esther Breitenbach and Eleanor Gordon (eds), *Out of Bounds: Women in Scottish Society 1800-1945* (Edinburgh, 1992), p 151.

13 Ibid. p 170

14 See Martin Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain 1914-1959* (Basingstoke, 1992)

15 See Eleanor Rathbone, 'Changes in Public Life' in Ray Strachey (ed), *Our Freedom and its Results*(London, 1936)

16 Ray Strachey, *The Cause* (London, 1928), p 375. Reprinted by Virago, London, 1978.

17 Ibid. p 384

18 Ibid p 384

19 See Sheila Jeffreys, 'Women and Sexuality' in June Purvis (ed), *Women's History: Britain 1850-1945* (London, 1995) pp 193-216

20 Ibid. p 228

21 See Pamela M.Graves, *Labour Women: Women in British Working-Class Politics 1918-1939* (Cambridge, 1994)

22 See Pamela M.Graves, *Labour Women. Women in British Working-Class Politics 1918-1939* (Cambridge, 1994), and Catriona Burness, 'The Long Slow March: Scottish Women MPs, 1918-45' in Esther Breitenbach and Eleanor Gordon (eds), *Out of Bounds: Women in Scottish Society 1800-1945* (Edinburgh, 1992)

23 Eleanor Rathbone, 'Changes in Public Life' in Ray Strachey (ed), *Our Freedom and its Results* (London, 1936), p 51.

24 Ibid. p 51

25 Ibid. p 57

26 For feminist critiques of Beveridge see, for example, Elizabeth Wilson, *Women and the Welfare State*, (London, 1977); John Clarke, Allan Cochrane, and Carol Smart, *Ideologies of Welfare - from Dreams to Disillusion*, (London, 1987); Ruth Lister, 'Tracing the Contours of Women's Citizenship' in *Policy and Politics,(1993)* Vol 21, No 1.

27 See, for example, Martin Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain 1914-1959* (Basingstoke, 1992), and Penny Summerfield, 'Women and war in the 20th Century' in June Purvis (ed), *Women's History: Britain 1850-1945* (London, 1995)

28 Penny Summerfield, 'Women and war in the 20th Century' in June Purvis (ed), *Women's History: Britain 1850-1945* (London, 1995), p 307

29 Ibid, p 12

30 Martin Pugh estimates that by the end of the war five-sixths of women were probably doing 'women's work'. Pugh, 1995, p 25.

31 See Penny Summerfield, 'Women and war in the 20th Century' in June Purvis (ed), *Women's History: Britain 1850-1945* (London, 1995)

32 Martin Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain 1914-1959* (Basingstoke, 1992). p 283

33 Penny Summerfield, 'Women and war in the 20th Century' in June Purvis (ed), *Women's History: Britain 1850-1945* (London, 1995), p 310

34 Penny Summerfield, 'Women and war in the 20th Century' in June Purvis (ed), *Women's History: Britain 1850-1945* (London, 1995), p 326

35 Elizabeth Wilson, *Only Halfway to Paradise - Women in Postwar Britain: 1945-1968* (London, 1980), p2

36 Penny Summerfield, 'Women and war in the 20th Century' in June Purvis (ed), *Women's History: Britain 1850-1945* (London, 1995)

37 See, for example, Elizabeth Wilson, *Only Halfway to Paradise - Women in Postwar Britain: 1945-1968* (London, 1980); and John Clarke, Allan Cochrane, and Carol Smart, *Ideologies of Welfare - from Dreams to Disillusion,* (London, 1987)

38 Martin Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain 1914-1959* (Basingstoke, 1992), p 313

39 Elizabeth Wilson, *Only Halfway to Paradise - Women in Postwar Britain: 1945-1968* (London, 1980), p209

40 Cynthia Cockburn, *In the Way of Women* (Basingstoke and London, 1991)

41 Martin Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain 1914-19S9* (Basingstoke, 1992), p 312

Interpreting the Weimar Republic

DR JEREMY LEAMAN

The Weimar Republic, which emerged from the 1918/19 Revolution and the national elections of January 1919, was in essence a new state form which replaced the autocracy of the Second Empire (1870-1918) and which was itself swept aside by yet another autocratic state form fourteen years later in January 1933. Both the installation of parliamentary democracy in 1918 and the jettisoning of that democracy in 1933 represented political choices that carried very large sections of the population with them. Over 85% of the electorate in January 1919 voted for republican parties and, even though the Nazi Party could only manage 43% of the popular vote in 1933, the demand for authoritarian solutions to Germany's crisis was central to the platform of all parties apart from the Social Democrats, a fact underscored by the Enabling Act of March 1933 which conferred dictatorial powers on Hitler's cabinet for four years.

Explaining those two political choices has exercised the minds of many modern historians in Germany and other countries in the very particular context of the mayhem wrought by Germany's second bid for European domination in World War Two. Given the scale of the disaster, it is not surprising that the explanatory accounts of inter-war Germany vary considerably; major controversies have tended to produce emblematic versions of events representing one major school of thought or another: theories of the *"Sonderweg"* (special path) (Wehler), of the "crisis of bourgeois hegemony" (Eley, Blackbourn, Abraham)[1], of the "sick economy" (Borchardt)[2], of Weimar and the "crisis of modernity" (Peukert)[3] and many others. In the heat of debate or indeed in the duller reflexion of second-hand accounts, dished up for students of history, the lines of self-demarcation frequently stiffen into caricatures of valuable original insights. While the perspectivism of controversy makes the construction of rich and exciting syllabuses of modern German history conveniently easy and spawns valuable new lines of inquiry, there is also the danger of the extent and noise of debate drowning out half-way sound, approximative accounts.

Focussing on the successive adoption of contrasting state forms does not constitute an exclusive explanatory analysis but it is a useful heuristic device for approaching some of the major puzzles of German history in the first half of this century. In particular, it demands and explanation for the dramatic discontinuity of forms of political management in Germany – from autocratic federalism through republican democracy to the centralised autocracy of German fascism – within a single generation, and the resilient strands of continuity in German society which survived the political upheavals of 1918 and 1933.

In 1918 the articulation of social interests took on a truly new democratic form. Mass political and cultural organisations flourished and manifested a liberal plurality of styles. However, the fundamental structures of German society remained unaffected by 'revolution': a) the ownership of land, factories, mines, financial institutions, power stations, wholesale and retail outlets, of haulage and shipping companies remained almost entirely in private hands; b) the operational structures of the economy remained highly concentrated, exemplified by the dominance of large firms in key sectors and/or the widespread use of cartels as means to avoid the dynamic uncertainties of the competitive market; c) key personnel in state institutions – in the judiciary, in the police force, in the officer corps and in the civil and diplomatic service – were either the same or continued to be recruited from the old social elites of the Second Empire; d) the main agencies of ideological influence which had upheld authoritarian rule up to 1918 – the churches, the universities, the schools – were not reformed in either their staffing or their programmes to match the new liberal democratic circumstances.[4]

When the Nazis assumed power in 1933, there were likewise few alterations in the categories above – with the notable exception of Jewish Germans in the private economy and in state bodies. The forms of physical and ideological control altered dramatically, exceeding anything the Kaiser's state had offered, but the distribution of income and wealth remained essentially unaffected.

The puzzle of parallel strands of continuous and interrupted development is rendered more fascinating by the fact that particular groups of historians stress discontinuity and others continuity in their explanatory accounts and that contemporary ideological identities in Germany are strongly dependent on one or other set of convictions. For example, it makes a lot of difference if the Third Reich is deemed to belong to an aggressive imperialist tradition, as asserted by Fritz Fischer in the early 1960s[5], or is dismissed as a ghastly aberration from an honourable tradition of progress and modernisation, as maintained by post-war conservative German historians (F. Meinecke, G. Mann, H. Schulze)[6]. While Fischer and his supporters provoked strong political reactions by postulating an unresolved legacy of Germany's authoritarian past, Mann, Schulze and others have sought to minimise national embarassment by highlighting the external causes of Germany's crisis – the counterproductive peace treaty of

Versailles, isolation, international debt, the Great Depression – as determinants of the unrepeatable disaster of Hitler's state.

It is clear, however, that both continuity and discontinuity represent constituent features of Germany's crisis, that both internal and external factors impinged on the development of German democracy and on Germany's peaceful coexistence with its neighbours. It is equally clear that to discount the significance of one out of hand is a risky approach to historical problem-solving. All the more surprising that an eminent American historian of Weimar, Gerald Feldman warns against "overdrawn ideas of continuity between the Second Empire and the Weimar Republic", arguing that "there is no direct line from most of the central problems and issues of imperial Germany to those of 1930-33" [7]. While one must agree with Feldman that the "political culture" of the Weimar Republic played a key role in determining the fate of Germany's first republic, it is impossible to explain that political culture and its fatal influence without reference to its historical roots and the structural context of the Weimar Republic's political and economic pre-history. The metaphor "culture" implies some kind of organic embeddedness which arguably requires deeper roots than 11-14 years of "improvised democracy" (Eschenburg)[8]. Arthur Rosenberg specifically identifies the central significance of the Second Empire in the "evolution of the Weimar Republic"[9].

Explaining the demise of Weimar and the *return* of autocratic rule must therefore include a consideration of structures and events before and after the transition to democracy, must encompass both domestic and international factors. These determinant factors must be drawn from as wide a context as possible, using the insights not just of political history but also of economics, sociology, social psychology, demography and other disciplines. While this article can only examine selective aspects, there are now good collections on the crisis of the Weimar Republic in English.[10]

The circumstances of the 'birth' of the Weimar Republic were arguably the worst conceivable. The adoption of a democratic federal republic was not exclusively the result of an absolutely free choice on the part of the German people, but rather a combination of defeat, an opportunist 'revolution from above' in September and October 1918 and an ambivalent revolution from below between November 1918 and January 1919. As Peukert correctly observed, it thus lacked the unifying mythology which marked the founding of the French and American republics[11]. The final (cynical) act of the military leadership in September 1918 was actively to promote the parliamentarisation of the Reich as a means a) of deflecting the ignominy of failure onto the incoming democratic regime, b) of achieving more favourable peace terms and c) of "saving the best and strongest element of the old Prussia"[12], so that, in General Ludendorff's words, "one could swing back into the saddle and govern by the old methods"[13]. This salvage operation by the political elite of the Kaiserreich was matched by a sudden cooperativeness on the part of industrialists and other employers which culminated in significant concessions to trade unions in the so-called 'Central Labour Community' (ZAG) agreement of November 1918.

The ZAG also reflected the ambivalence of labour interests to social and political change. While thousands of workers, soldiers and sailors had successfully overthrown their respective military and political authorities at local, regional and later Reich level, establishing soviet-style councils, and hastened the abdication of Kaiser and regional monarchs, the leadership of the Majority Social Democrats (MSPD) and the General Federation of German Trade Unions (ADGB) seemed more inclined to continue the national accommodations of the War and to defend marginal advances in working class interests within the framework of (parliamentary) gradualism. The open and celebrated ZAG corresponded to a secret pact between the MSPD Chancellor, Ebert, and the Supreme Army Command under Groener, which was unknown even to Ebert's coalition partners, the USPD.

The choice of the republican state form and its civil rights was defensive, not simply for the traditional elites but also for the labour leadership; "If the Kaiser does not abdicate, then social revolution is unavoidable; I do not want this, however, indeed I hate it like sin" (thus Ebert)[14]. On the other hand, the new republican state form betokened a degree of optimism and positive progress for millions of working class and middle class voters, indeed to the 85.7% of the electorate that voted for republican parties on January 19th 1919, but it was an optimism severely qualified by the miseries of hunger, demobilisation, mass epidemics and civil strife.

The birth of the republic was thus characterised by two fundamental schisms, the one political, the other socio-economic:

a) the political split between moderate and radical workers was only briefly concealed by the revolutionary coalition of SPD and USPD which ended on Christmas Eve 1918 and – apart from very brief interludes (1920, 1923 and 1926) – continued unabated beyond March 1933, surviving even the shared misery of Nazi concentration camps.

b) the socio-economic schism between the old power elites and the new republicans was initially concealed by the common fear of bolshevism, by new corporatist institutions which built on wartime cooperative structures, and by the toleration of the new framework by an industrial and military oligarchy which was temporarily too weak to resist either domestic reformers or the dictates of the victorious Entente. It

was above all concealed by the ingenuous faith of the new, inexperienced republican leaders in the the trustworthiness and reformed character of the old elites, exemplified in the failure to subject key institutions of the state and the economy to structural reforms which would have anchored those institutions (cited above) in a democratic culture.[15]

When the disloyalty of the officer corps became evident – in its failure to defend the new state following the Kapp-Putsch of March 1920, or even to acknowledge the new flag – or when industry reneged on the 8-hour day and took the offensive against the social state, when the judiciary had handed down a series of laughingly one-sided judgements at the expense of republican administrations and progressive forces, it was already too late to rectify matters by tightening up constitutional provisions for the defence of the Republic. In the June elections of 1920, brought forward as a result of the Kapp Putsch, support for republican parties had fallen dramatically, leaving the so-called Weimar Parties (Social Democrats, Catholics and Social Liberals) without a majority in the Reichstag for the remaining 13 years of the Republic. The mass withdrawals of support from the new state form, only 17 months after its inception, was the electoral price for the demonstrable weakness of the republican administrations in both domestic and foreign affairs and thus indirectly for their failure to establish positive foundations for the new form of state.

The initiative had already passed to the forces of the Right which, while unable to organise a full assault on Weimar democracy, was able to exploit the latitude allowed by the new system to reassert its economic and social power. In this context of international impotence and national failure, it is therefore the more remarkable that the "republic without republicans" actually survived as long as it did, while most other countries of central and eastern Europe subsided into dictatorships.

While there is little doubt that the Versailles Treaty contributed to the unpopularity of the Weimar state and to its final failure, it is also clear that its provisions – in terms of foreign, security and reparations policy – constrained domestic German politics and dictated the maintenance of democratic government until the global economic crisis after 1929 and the collapse of the Versailles Consensus.

While republicanism and social democracy failed to provide a unifying mythology for the new state, the Versailles Treaty succeeded in uniting all social forces in Germany in a common negative front against the perceived injustice of territorial losses, reparations and demilitarisation; above all, the mind-set of Weimar politics was dominated by the lasting conviction that the First World War had been defensive and that the war guilt clause was therefore a flagrant injustice; the unshakeable conviction had been effectively prepared by the political culture of the Kaiserreich, crucially nurtured in the immediate run-up to August 1914 and then remained unchallenged until Fritz Fischer's painstaking demonstration of the war guilt of both the German government and the Supreme Army Command in 1961. The myth of the defensive war was the key ideological filter, through which assessments of both German domestic politics and Germany's foreign relations were passed. For an assessment of the failure of the Weimar Republic it is therefore less relevant to show that Germany's reparations burden was sustainable[16], and more significant that government policy and popular opinion were informed by a strong spirit of resistance; even within the context of "fulfilment politics", successive German governments sought to demonstrate the damage that this fulfilment was wreaking, be it through the state-orchestrated farce of hyperinflation[17] or Brüning's "catastrophe politics"[18]. The subtlety of the tactic of subversive fulfilment on the part of the republican state was acknowledged by neither the old elites nor by the mass of the population; rather the Republic was discredited by its original acceptance of the Versailles Treaty, however impossible rejection would have been. The Right added the 'stab-in-the-back' legend (of an undefeated army betrayed by the November 1918 'criminals') to reinforce the contempt of the middle classes for the new state form.

The new state form was at best tolerated by established elites, both because they were initially powerless to reverse democratisation lock, stock and barrel, but also because they were able to gain material advantage from inflation (1919-23) and from the "Golden Twenties" of post-inflationary prosperity (1924-29), largely at the expense of the mass of the population, as well as a partial reversal of the ZAG reforms of 1918. The culture of monopoly or cartel control of market pricing abounded; Germany was widely known as the "land of cartels". The latter were sources of predictability and stability for participating enterprises, but were antipathetic to both competition and arguably to democracy as the guardian of free, fair and open competition. The most notorious case of elite self-serving concerned the claims by the former royal households in 1925 and 1926 for the return of their pre-1919 property and for compensation over losses resulting from the Versailles Treaty and from hyperinflation. The claims were processed by the judiciary which found consistently in favour of the royal households and at the expense of the regional authorities. This provoked the almost unique collaboration of Communists and Social Democrats in the referendum campaign for the expropriation of the royal households in 1926, which received massive support from a population which was denied any claim on inflationary losses by a special Reich law. The referendum failed, because of intimidatory tactics by bourgeois parties and in particular by employers, but – as well as fuelling resentment towards the aristocracy – it increased perceptions of the powerlessness or unfairness of a state form, ostensibly committed to equality of opportunity and civil rights.

The Wall Street Crash coincided with the death of Gustav Stresemann who, as Foreign Minister for the whole of the stabilisation period, had succeeded in both normalising Germany's foreign relations with its western neighbours and with the Soviet Union and maintaining the apparent loyalty of his German People's Party (DVP) and its constituency, big industry, to the democratic state. With his death and the parallel disaster of world financial crisis and recession, the temporary toleration of the Republic by the DVP and most other bourgeois parties and interest groups rapidly evaporated. The ensuing debates within Germany's industrial and agricultural interest groups and their corresponding political camps and economic research institutes took place within a very specific political atmosphere, dominated by a set of common convictions:

a) Germany's obligations under the Dawes Plan and then under the Young Plan needed to be temporarily or preferably permanently set aside;
b) the Weimar constitution needed to be reformed in terms of strengthening executive power and weakening parliament, solving the regional problem of Prussia as a Social Democrat stronghold, and reducing the social obligations of the state;
c) both the Social Democratic Party and the General Federation of Trade Unions should be kept away from the reins of power.

These were the operational assumptions of Hindenburg as President and of the three administrations which he assisted using his emergency decree powers under Article 48 of the Constitution. It is against this background that any discussion about the Weimar state's "room-for-manoevre" must be set. The so-called Borchardt Controversy[19], which centred around the contentions of the Munich economic historian that Weimar's "sick economy" left little latitude for state counter-cyclical action in the Depression, was to some extent a red herring, in that it focused on disputed data of wages, income distribution, productivity, profitability and investment in the second half of the Republic's history and diverted attention away from the arguably more germane issue concerning the political will to solve Germany's economic ills before the objectives of a reparations moratorium, constitutional reform and the roll-back of the Left had been achieved. Borchardt's hypothesis, suggesting an inevitability of economic decline and political powerlessness, sought to exculpate Brüning above all and to place some of the blame for Germany's ills on immoderate wage claims and overgenerous arbitration awards. What was frequently neglected in the debate was the fact that the room-for-manoevre, ostensibly absent between 1930 and 1933, was suddenly discovered after Hitler's accession to power. The monetary straitjacket, imposed by Hjalmar Schacht and continued by his successor as Reichsbank President in 1931, Hans Luther, was miraculously relaxed, with no protest from Schacht or his industrial allies. The austerity fiscal measures demanded by the financial and industrial community under Brüning and by the Reichsbank were abandoned after the destruction of democracy. The ambitious employment-creation scheme of a national motorway network, devised under Brüning (by a Jewish transport expert) but postponed for lack of funds was resurrected as the Führer's grand plan and furnished with generous Reichsbank credits. Hjalmar Schacht, who had railed against the extravagance of Germany's municipalities in the 1920s and made life very difficult for the last democratic coalition under Hermann Müller (SPD), returned as both President of the Reichsbank and Economics Minister, revealing a boundless toleration of Nazi extravagance over rearmament and monumental architectural schemes.

The Borchardt controversy deflects the observer from a consideration of the mind-set of Germany's elites which demanded above all the return of some form of autocracy. Similarly, the heated debates of the 1970s about the degree of financial support for the Nazi party from German industry polarized academic opinion in an unnecessary and dysfunctional fashion.[20] Defenders of German industry, like Ernst Nolte or Henry Ashby Turner, were able correctly to point out that industry supported a wide range of political parties, including the Social Democrats, that the sums channeled to the Nazi party were relatively unimportant and that the bulk of the Party's expenditure was financed by membership subscriptions and public fund-raising. The vulgar marxist view of fascism as the creation and agent of capital was easy to dismiss. However, the exculpation of most industrialists from the charge of open, material support for the Nazis deflects from the shared antipathy for the democratic republican state form on the part of the Nazi Party, big industry, big agriculture, the army, the senior civil service, the judiciary, the academic community, the Hugenberg media empire, the churches and – as the elections in 1930 and 1932 showed – an increasing section of the impoverished middle and working classes.[21]

The Hitler-state was the last in a line of autocratic political experiments, presided over by Hindenburg. The less radical alternatives under Brüning, von Papen and von Schleicher failed because they were unable to attract popular support or infuse their programmes with the mythical power of street politics; this continued to be dominated by Nazis and Communists. All three nevertheless represented attempts to end democratic politics. The Hitler-alternative, resisted at the electoral peak of the Nazi Party in July 1932, was only adopted when von Papen's isolation and von Schleicher's suspiciously leftist programme made more traditional autocratic options unfeasible; above all, it was the November 1932 elections and the beginnings of economic recovery that induced the crucial moves to kill off the Weimar Republic once and for all: the Nazi Party lost some two million votes in these elections, while the Communists continued to make gains, boosted by von Papen's decrees allowing drastic cuts in wage rates. The spectre of both economic recovery and the resurgence of a radical Left eager to

abolish a discredited market economy, forced the abandonment of the elite's intuitive dislike of the brash and brutish Nazis and encouraged a new and adventurous accommodation with mass politics.

The Nazi's "total revolution" (thus Goebbels) was indeed a paradox, in that it was warmly greeted by the leaders of all Germany's established economic and social elites. In contrast to the timid architects of the Weimar Republic, who provided weak foundations and failed to consolidate democratic power after the republican revolution of 1918/19, the revolutionaries of 1933 displayed a marked ruthlessness in both eradicating opposition (in society and within the Nazi movement) and in consolidating its political power and the social power of the elites which welcomed it. While the old elites might have chosen less openly brutal forms of authoritarianism and pursued less provocative domestic and foreign policies, it is clear that the alternative of continuing to tolerate the democratic state form was both hazardous and not in their perceived interests. This reflected "the tendency to view the political system in instrumental rather than normative terms" (thus Feldman)[22] and a contempt for human rights which was only purged after the catastrophe of World War Two. The "rehearsals for fascism"[23], represented by the presidential dictatorships of 1930-33, leave an abiding impression of self-interested elites trying on different state forms for size, as if they were in a gents outfitters, with the main criterion: which one suits best for the maintenance of power and privelege? The overarching continuity of Ludendorff, declaring an intention in 1918 to "swing back into the saddle and govern once more by the old methods", and the nomination of Hitler by Hindenburg (Ludendorff's partner in the military dictatorship of 1916-18) on January 30th 1933 is evident. The formal institutionalisation of the cartel by the Nazis in September 1933 underscored the structural preference within economic elites for centralised, authoritarian (and thus anti-competitive, anti-democratic) forms of economic management. That the loyalty of the elites to the new state form was no temporary, honeymoon phenomenon, has been demonstrated by a number of more recent publications. This represents a central element of the German catastrophe of 1919-45.[24]

NOTES

1 Blackbourn, D. G. & Eley, G. *The Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth Century Germany*, Oxford 1984; Abraham, D., *The Collapse of the Weimar Republic*, Princeton 1981

2 Borchardt's views on Weimar's "sick economy" were first published in German in 1979/80; two of the major articles were reprinted in the translated collection: *Perspectives on Modern German Economic History and Policy*, Cambridge 1991

3 Peukert, D. *The Weimar Republic. The crisis of classical modernity*, London 1993

4 See Elben, W. *Das Problem der Koninuität in der deutschen Revolution*, Düsseldorf 1965; William Carr *The History of Germany 1815-1990*, London 1993.

5 Fritz Fischer, *Griff nach der Weltmacht*, Düsseldorf 1961; there is a valuable collection of essays in English by Fischer published in 1986 under the title: *From Kaiserreich to Third Reich. Elements of Continuity in German History 1871-1945*, London

6 Meinecke, F. *The German Catastrophe*, New York 1963; Mann, G. *The History of Germany since 1879*, London 1974; Schulze, H., *Weimar*, Berlin 1982

7 Gerald D. Feldman, 'Hitler's Assumption of Power and the Political Culture of the Weimar Republic', *German Politics and Society*, Vol.14/1 1996, p.98

8 Theodor Eschenburg, *Die Republik von Weimar. Beiträge zur Geschichte einer improvisierten Demokratie*, Munich 1984

9 *Die Entstehung der Weimarer Republik*, first published in 1928 and which appeared in English in 1931 under the rather misleading title *The Birth of the Weimar Republic*, is in fact a history of the Second Empire from 1870 to 1918; it was followed by Rosenberg's classic account of the history of the Weimar Republic from 1918 to 1930, written in exile in Liverpool and published in 1934.

10 For example, Kershaw, Ian (ed.), *Weimar: Why did German Democracy Fail?*, London 1990 which includes articles by Richard Bessel, Dick Geary, Carl-Ludwig Holtfrerich and Harold James; also von Krudener, Jürgen (ed.) *Economic Crisis and Political Collapse: The Weimar Republic 1924-1933*, Oxford 1993

11 Detlev Peukert, *Die Weimarer Republik*, Frankfurt am Main 1987, 15f

12 Thus General Groener, the successor to Ludendorff in the Supreme Army Command, cited in: Kühnl, *Die Weimarer Republik*, Hamburg 1985 p. 57

13 Erich Ludendorff, cited in: Hans-Ulrich Wehler, *Das Deutsche Kaiserreich 1871-1918*, Göttingen 1973, p. 216

14 Cited in Engelmann, B. *Wir Untertanen*, Munich 1974

15 C.f. Nicholls, A.J. *Weimar and the Rise of Hitler*, London 1968, chapter 3

16 See, for example, Sally Marks 'The Myths of Reparations', *Central European History* 1978/3

17 See Arthur Rosenberg, *The History of the Weimar Republic*, op.cit.

18 J. Leaman, 'The Local State as Agent of Fiscal and Social Policy in the Twentieth Century', in: W.R. Lee & E. Rosenhaft (eds), *State, Social Policy and Social Change in Germany 1880-1994*. Oxford/New York 1997, 269f

19 The Borchardt-Controversy is given lengthy consideration in: Kershaw, I., *Weimar: Why did German Democracy Fail?*, op.cit.; a special issue of *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* (11/1985) was devoted to a discussion of the controversy.

20 C.f. Henry Ashby Turner Jr. *Big Business and the Rise of Hitler*, Oxford 1985; Pool, J & Pool, S. *Who financed Hitler: the secret funding of Hitler's Rise to Power*, New York 1978; Czichon, E. *Wer verhalf Hitler zur Macht?*, Cologne 1976

21 See Hiden, J. *Republican and Fascist Germany*, London 1976

22 Feldman, op.cit. p. 97

23 This is the title of a recent book by Peter Fritzsche, Oxford 1990, which stresses the correspondence of populist, authoritarian views within the whole of the bourgeoisie and the specific section mobilised by the Nazis.

24 C.f. Martin Broszat & Klaus Schwabe (eds), *Die deutschen Eliten und der Weg in den Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Munich 1989; L. Nestler (ed) *Der Weg deutscher Eliten in den Zweiten Weltkrieg*, Berlin 1990

Britain and the Great Depression

DR PATRICIA CLAVIN

The heady mix of domestic, international, political, social and economic history makes the Great Depression a daunting topic for students and teachers alike. In part, it is the scale of an event which precipitates bitter and violent rivalries between the political extremes on the Left and Right of European politics, unprecedented levels of unemployment as well as industrial and agricultural collapse. The depression also had an important impact on international relations. The severity of the world slump pushed Britain, in common with countries around the world, to protect its national interest above all else. By 1932, there was an atmosphere of intense economic competition with trade protectionist measures (including competitive currency devaluation) dividing the world into protected and competing monetary and trading blocs.

The history of government policy in the depression can also be intimidating, if not downright dull, because much of the new scholarship is written by economists, more preoccupied with determining policy lessons for the present than with understanding the past. There is also a new generation of historians skilled in econometrics, but with little eye for making their analyses accessible and interesting to those who believe they cannot become, or have little interest in being, economically literate.[1]

In recent years research into the Great Depression and Britain's response to it, has moved in two important directions. Firstly, and perhaps unsurprisingly given the last eighteen years of British political history, there has been considerable research into the contribution of monetary policy, much of it focused around the history of the gold standard, to the origins and magnitude of the depression. In large part, the history of the depression has become a monetary history. At the same time, however, historians and economists have grown increasingly interested in the relationship between monetary policy – the impact of inflation, hyper-inflation, currency stabilisation, the rules of the gold standard 'game' and the orthodox policy regime necessary to sustain it – and the political, constitutional and social context in which economic policy is made.

A resurgence of the political

Scholars of what has become known as the 'historical political economy' argue that the explanation as to why one economic policy is chosen over another lies in two overlapping areas: the influence of historical precedent (the perception of economic policy success or failure in the past), and the political behaviour of conflicting interest groups or parties to secure particular economic policies.[2] The approach is rather like that of Weimar society portrayed in 'modern history painting' of George Grosz: fat businessmen, blood-soiled soldiers, greedy financiers, bedraggled workers, disgruntled members of the professional classes and monarchist-leaning members of the landed gentry all competing to secure government policies which would re-distribute the nation's wealth in their favour. In liberal democratic Europe of the 1920s, economic policy was determined by, sometimes violent, interest group conflict, a trend which tended to polarise classes and weaken government initiative.

The renewed focus on the political pressures exerted by divergent interest groups has thrown attention back onto the political changes and political expectations generated by the war. As the war forced the nation state to demand new sacrifices of all its citizens in the name of loyalty, government, in return was prompted to extend its obligations to its people and make changes to the political system which such promises implied. The imperatives of the war economy also afforded a new political legitimacy to the working class in general and its political representatives in particular (be they Labour party MPs or trade unions) which shaped future economic policy. In much the same way as one of the chief features of the nineteenth-century had been the absorption of the middle classes into state policy-making, the war and inter-war period was marked by the growing political participation, and the rising expectations, of the working classes.

But it proved easier for the British government to meet the demand for political change by way of extending the franchise, than to tackle the economic and social problems which such promises had implied. Society's expectations of government had changed: increasingly, government was assigned responsibility for maintaining a continuing level of economic activity and political legitimacy was dependent on its ability to manage the domestic economy to the collective advantage of its electorate (or at least its participating majority).[3] In genuinely democratic states like Britain, government also sought to manage conflicting interest group pressures in economic policy while preserving individual, group and national freedoms in an environment of social and legal justice.

In 1920s Britain, there were four main groups with a strong claim on economic strategy: the City of London, industrialists, organised labour and the ministries of government. The City of London wanted the restoration of

liberal internationalism calling for, in particular, the restoration of the gold standard and British investment overseas. Not all these groups were monolithic. The industrialists pressure group was split into two: those who wanted to continue their wartime co-operation with British Labour within the context of strengthened imperial economic co-operation, and those who wanted the reassertion of management priorities and the free trade order which had seemed to work so well in the nineteenth century. In the 1920s the internationalist free trading group dominated, but after 1929 the tide turned in the imperialists favour. Organised labour was also split into two broad groups: moderates who wanted to preserve the party political and social co-operation which had served them well in the war, and those who wanted more radical, strongly labour orientated policies. Again, the former won out over the latter, this time for all of the inter-war period. Finally, the priorities of government as set by Whitehall, despite wartime promises of reform, were dominated by the Treasury's determination to regain its control over British bureaucracy by committing all departments in government to the principles of sound finance and the gold standard.

In the struggle to manage interest-group conflict within the political economy, the British system developed a pronounced 'corporate bias', drawing all the major organised interest groups into the political process. While the benefits of this development are obvious when set against the bitter interest group rivalries which destroyed Weimar and encouraged political support for fascist 'movements' claiming to be above interest group conflict, it also made it much more difficult for the British government to be innovative in its economic policy or to be seen to favour one group over any other.[4]

National versus international

The primacy of national economic solutions over (as opposed to in conjunction with) international economic policy was underlined by the extension of political representation and the growing link between political legitimacy and economic success. The British government grew increasingly sensitive and responsive to political pressures on economic policy. When the tensions between national and international economic obligations defied an apparent solution, as they did after 1929, then national remedies took priority.

The fact that government economic policy had become both more accountable to, and influenced by domestic forces as a consequence, in part, of the political changes born of the war and its end, was not mitigated by the international settlement reached in Paris. In sharp contrast to the political and economic order created in the West after the Second World War, with its focus on international institutions and American determination to secure that its allies adopted economic and monetary policies which were compatible with its own (thereby further facilitating international co-operation), the settlement after the First World War failed to give any real consideration to the economic settlement or how principles of economic interdependence might be protected in times of international recession or during instances of national hardship. Despite the growing inter-dependence of the world economy, there was no attempt to enshrine notions of economic interdependence, for times of disaster as well as for times of growth, into the peace agreements. This failure, coupled with the strengthening of domestic political pressures, left the world economy increasingly vulnerable to 'beggar-thy-neighbour' policies to safeguard national interests when the global economic climate grew less clement. There were no organisations dedicated to promoting international economic and monetary co-operation at the highest level and to act as a brake on the primacy of national and regional concerns.

The peace treaties concluded in Paris also worked to underline division between European powers, like Britain and France, who were allowed to further national interest through regional (imperial) ties and those who were not. Despite the fact that the nineteenth century 'age of imperialism' appeared to have passed, the peace settlement worked to extend the territorial boundaries of the British and French empires, and while the White Dominions secured self-government, the popularity of notions of imperial economic inter-dependence continued to be popular among right-wing political groups in Britain in the 1920s.[5] The retreat into empire became a dominant feature of British economic policy after 1931 with mixed economic results. It also had the unanticipated effect of exacerbating the diplomatic crisis as it worked to legitimate the territorial demands of the 'have not' powers of Germany, Italy and Japan.

Britain and the gold standard

Although there was a widespread desire to move away from the 'international anarchy' of the pre-war period, when economics was mentioned there was always contrasting talk of returning to pre-war 'normalcy'. The 'lessons of History' appeared to demonstrate that the freedom of nineteenth century unregulated business transactions was the economic ideal and in 1919 the rush of governments to remove wartime monetary and trading restrictions to return to 'business as usual' was evident across the globe. The desire of Britain to restore levels of trade and growth enjoyed before the outbreak of the war which were, in part, secured by the operation of the gold standard, coincided with the American desire to put international monetary relations back on a orderly footing, and meant that the reconstitution of the gold standard soon topped the agenda for international

economic co-operation. After 1922-23, moreover, efforts to reinstate the gold standard received an important fillip from the inflation which had gripped many post-war economies, none more so than the spectacular but terrible hyper-inflations of Germany, Austria, Hungary and Poland.

Yet, the character and operation of the inter-war gold exchange standard has come under renewed scrutiny from economists and historians who now argue that it, more than any other single contributory element, both turned the 1928-9 recession into a profound depression and helped to transmit its effects around the globe.[6] Early criticisms of the inter-war gold standard focused largely on the exchange rate at which countries chose to stabilise. More recent critiques, however, place much greater stress on the policy regime necessary to maintain membership of the system, the so-called 'rules' of the gold standard game. These called for confidence in the fixed change rate to be maintained by balanced domestic budgets, bank (interest) rates to sustain convertibility, and a positive balance of trade. This was an inflexible, deflationary (or in modern parlance disinflationary) policy regime which was sensible in a time of plenty, but was to prove disastrous in a time of want.

In the 1920s the British government never attempted to formulate a coherent rationale for its determination to return to gold.[7][8] In large part, the decision to rejoin the gold standard simply reflected a powerful urge to recapture the growth, prosperity and international dominance the British economy had enjoyed in the nineteenth century. It was an ambition reflected in the decision to return sterling to the gold standard at the same parity as it had been traded in 1913: $4.86.

At the time, John Maynard Keynes (one of the few critics of the return to gold) argued that this price overvalued the pound by around 10 per cent, although historians now estimate a 20 to 25 per cent overvaluation.[9] For the six years Britain remained on the gold standard its exports of manufactures and invisibles were uncompetitive – a problem which was exacerbated by the fact that important competitors, notably France, Germany and the United States, were on the gold standard at an undervalued exchange rate. So why did the British government choose to shackle its industry in manacles of gold?

The answer has more to do with politics than economics. The British governmen's failure to formulate clear domestic and international political objectives led them to underestimate the perils of stabilising sterling at an exchange rate which took no account of the changing character of the British economy and its altered role in the world economy as a whole. Like other fixed exchange rate mechanisms, the gold standard was perceived by its supporters as an important means to facilitate trade because prices could be guaranteed. Its operation also helped to remove uncertainty from the world's money markets and to limit inflation – its reputation sealed by the tremendous growth of the international economy during the nineteenth century. Every political party, persuaded by the City and industry during the 1920s, accepted that a strong British economic revival depended upon international trade. As the Bank of England official, Sir Otto Niemeyer put it, 'no one believes that unemployment can be cured by the dole, and palliatives like road digging. Every party – not least Labour – has preached that unemployment can only be dealt with...by measures directed at the economic restoration of trade'.[10] This was the gold standard flaunted as employment policy. Indeed an implicit goal was to restore pre-war levels of employment at, say, 95 per cent of the labour force.[11] Within the Labour Party the logic of the gold standard as employment policy satisfied orthodox financiers like Philip Snowden, while more radical elements were appeased by a shorter working week, major extensions in employment insurance and recognition of working-class political and industrial organisations. All in all this political constellation made for an attitude of 'safety-first' towards economic policy, an approach which continued to prevail in 1930s Britain.

International and imperial considerations were also powerful influences on the British government and its economic advisors. The prospect of improved Anglo-American relations, and the widespread identification of the gold standard with Britain's status as the pre-eminent global power in the nineteenth century, helped popularise the rush for gold in 1925.[12] Being a member of the gold standard club, so the government believed, would afford Britain greater opportunity to influence the economic and diplomatic policies of, for example, Germany and France. Put bluntly, the dominant motivation for Britain's return to gold was political pressure at home and the prospect of revitalising British political power abroad.

The decision to return to gold can be criticised on a number of counts. Successive British governments failed to consider, in any detail, the implications of this monetary policy for the domestic economy and British society.[13] Churchill and his colleagues recognised that the pound was overvalued at $4.86 and that this would have serious consequences for, in Churchill's words, 'the merchant, the manufacturer, the workman and the consumer...(whose interests) do not by any means coincide either with each other or with the financial and currency interests.' The overvaluation of sterling and the high bank (interest) rates required to sustain it, imposed a severe deflationary burden on the British economy and its people. It explained in large measure why the British economy struggled with a persistent unemployment level of over one million. But this vague appreciation was as close as the government came to any systematic investigation of the political and economic implications of sterling's overvaluation on the British economy.

The government had set its society an almost impossible task, as the stabilisation of sterling demanded a reduction in wages and overall production costs of around five to ten per cent. British industrialists and their employees were in an unenviable position, with its all important staple, export-orientated industries particularly hard-hit.

Main British Exports, 1913-1938 (shown as percentage of total)

Industry	*1913*	*1938*
Cotton yarn and piece goods	24.2	10.5
Woollens	6.1	5.0
Linen	1.8	1.5
Hats, haberdashery, apparel, etc.	2.5	1.6
Coal	10.2	8.6
Iron and Steel	10.5	9.1
Non-ferrous metal manufactures	2.3	2.6
Machinery	7.0	12.9
Ships and boats (new)	2.1	1.5
Road vehicles and aircraft	1.0	5.5
Electrical goods	1.0	2.0
Chemicals	4.2	4.7

The above demonstrates the continued importance of staple industries (see coal, iron and steel) to Britain's export economy throughout the inter-war period. Source: adapted from Mitchell and Deane, ***Abstract of British Historical Statistics***, 1962, pp 305-6.

The number of industrial disputes increased as manufacturers struggled to reduce wages, and British goods and invisibles were uncompetitive in overseas markets for the remainder of the decade (the promised rise in American prices to help ameliorate this problem was not forthcoming – American prices did not rise for most of the inter-war period).[14] The deflationary pressures triggered by the return to gold impeded economic confidence and, as the General Strike of 1926 appeared to demonstrate, threatened political stability at home.[15] What was not clear at the time, to critics of the return to gold, but is clear now, is that the economic pressures exerted by the return to gold extended beyond the exchange rate to the policy regime necessary to keep Britain on gold.

Depression and recovery

The Great Depression was heralded publicly by the Wall St. Crash of October 1929. Although the US government's decision to raise rather than lower interest rates remains crucial to understanding the spiral downwards from recession to full-blown depression by 1930, new weight is also given to the deflationary straight-jacket of gold standard orthodoxy in Germany, France and the United States (until 1933), which helped to turn the Great Depression into the greatest economic crisis of the twentieth century. From 1929 until the middle of 1931 in Britain, the logic of gold standard orthodoxy continued to hold sway with the City of London, the Bank of England and the Treasury all working hard to curb the minority Labour government's expenditure plans.[16]

The turning-point came in the summer of 1931 when political events (including new standstill agreements which froze large amounts of British credit inside Germany), the burgeoning budget deficit and the continued depressed condition of the British economy prompted a currency crisis which 'forced' Britain off the gold standard on 20 September.[17] It was not so much a total defeat as a tactical withdrawal. It is now clear that by this time, many in parliament, the Treasury, and to a lesser extent at the Bank of England, had lost faith in the benefits to Britain of gold standard membership and had given up on trying to preserve sterling's gold parity.

After September 1931 the British government were determined to foster domestic economic growth and stability as a priority: sterling was depreciated and bank rates were reduced. The primacy of the international economy in the 1920s now became the primacy of the domestic economy. A 30 per cent depreciation of sterling and cheap money (reduced base rates) did help to bring some measure of economic recovery to Britain at a time when its leading competitors were still suffering the ravages of the depression.[18] When eighteen nations which had close links with the British economy – in the Commonwealth, the Empire and Scandinavia – also chose to abandon gold in 1931, Britain's recovery strategy developed an important regional dimension.

This regional dimension was reinforced when Britain abandoned Free Trade and, succumbing to political pressure from many British industrialists and Dominion partners, adopted trade protectionist measures with the General and Imperial tariffs of 1932. Partly by accident, partly by design, the British government found a regional solution to its problems. Observers overseas were particularly struck by the revolution in British commercial policy. But, as Cain has demonstrated, pressure from the City to rebuild its profits and its power though the Empire, were the biggest influence on government policy.[19] The City of London and the Treasury now sought to make it 'as easy for as many as possible of the unstable currencies to base themselves on sterling so that we may become the leaders of a sterling block [which would] give sterling a new force in the world'.[20]

Britain's determination to effect a regional solution and exploit the newly re-emphasised imperial base of its power also explains why British economic policy remained orthodox and unimaginative during the 1930s. The scholarly emphasis has moved away from arguments about how far Keynesian-style economics had developed and whether British elites could understand them, to a recognition that the dominant political forces in Britain remained committed to orthodox economics for their own ends. The City of London retained its external role, now on a regional, rather than global basis and was strongly supported by the Treasury who carefully managed sterling's floatation so as to assuage surprisingly persistent fears of a German-style inflation crisis (given a boost by the September 1931 financial crisis).[21] Most industrialists, at least until around 1937, were satisfied by protection.

The views of this constellation of interest groups chimed well with the philosophy of the new and charismatic Chancellor of the Exchequer, Neville Chamberlain. Throughout the 1930s, the National Government, like its predecessors in the 1920s, continued to be strongly influenced by the Treasury view that modernisation and recovery depended upon increased efficiency in the private sector and the best aid that the government could give was to keep taxation down and to balance its books.

Constant Employment Budget Surplus, 1929-1940 (per cent of GDP)

1929-30	+0.4	**1935-36**	+2.0
1930-31	+1.1	**19336-37**	+0.8
1931-32	+2.5	**1937-38**	0.0
1932-33	+3.0	**1938-39**	-1.6
1933-34	+4.2	**1939-40**	-12.2
1934-35	+3.2		

The table above demonstrates the government's commitment, even when it came to the employment budget, to balance its books. Source: R. Middleton, 'The Constant Employment Budget Balance and British Budgetary Policy, 1929-39', *Economic History Review*, No. 34 (1981).

If anything, the City had an easier time of asserting its priorities on government policy in the 1930s than the 1920s. Party politics became less important in the framework of National Government, while the Labour party, in particular, became more introverted. Organised Labour was also subdued because there was little downward pressure on workers' income, because wages and employment were indirectly supported by the adoption of general protection, and because the continued downward pressure on prices meant that those in employment found their standard of living rising. Set against the burgeoning levels of crisis in France and the floundering legality of President Roosevelt's New Deal, British pragmatism appeared to have worked.

At the same time, there were clear limitations to Britain's regional strategy. Unsurprisingly, the dreams of so-called imperial visionaries for a self-sufficient empire failed to be realised. More surprising, was the fact that the empire did rather better out of the imperial trade agreements than Britain, a development Britain accepted because of the primacy of financial over industrial concerns.[22] Scholars are no more decided now than they were thirty years ago, on the issue of how far protectionism weakened or strengthened the British economy, because it is so difficult to disentangle the effects of the tariff from other influences like the exchange rate or tariff retaliation by other countries.

However, recent studies into the origins and course of the depression, and the special role of finance, have also placed renewed emphasis on the failure of international co-operation to deal with the depression. There is no longer an exclusive focus on America's failure to act as lender of the last resort, but instead on the failure of all the world's leading economies to undertake a strategy of co-ordinated devaluation (coupled with deflationary measures) sometime after 1931 to reflate the world economy. Indeed, German and French diplomats still looked

to Britain to repeat the pattern of recent history and take the lead on international co-operation. Such a strategy, which was considered and might have been favourably employed at the World Economic Conference in 1933, was promptly rejected in favour of national and imperial interests by the British government.[23] The only attempt to effect international co-operation to combat the Depression failed, not for the lack of viable economic policies, but because none of the leading participants demonstrated the necessary *political* will to co-operate. [See cartoon on the front cover.]

Efforts to co-ordinate rather than compete in monetary policy would also have made life easier for Britain's diplomats, as economic considerations also had a powerful impact on international relations. As a capitalist liberal democracy, Britain remained prey to speculation against its currency and the threat of renewed labour unrest, all pressures which influenced its foreign, as well as its economic, policy. The world's aggressor powers faced few such constraints. The friction in Anglo-American, and to a lesser extent, Anglo-French, monetary relations which had begun during the sterling crisis of 1931 remained a constant source of suspicion between Britain and the United States during the 1930s.[24] American and, to a lesser extent, French pressure on the pound sterling, for example, was an important restraint on the pace and direction of British rearmament.[25]

In the complex, multi-polar world of the 1930s few nation states successfully managed the intricate interaction of economic, social and political prerogatives in the national and international environment with any success. What emerges from the history of Britain's commitment to the gold standard and its central role in defining the policy orientation of the British government is the dominance of political considerations in economic policy. The same political issues also dominated the commitment of France, Italy and Germany to the gold standard far into the 1930s at tremendous political and social cost. The misplaced faith of politicians in the gold standard illustrated, too, the dangers of claiming that a single policy tool was a cure for a whole variety of economic and social ills.

NOTES

1 The best recent account of the Depression as a whole is B. Eichengreen, *Golden Fetters: The Gold Standard and the Great Depression, 1919-1939* (Oxford: 1992) and *idem.* The Origins and Nature of the Great Slump Revisited, *Economic History Review,* 45 (1992), pp.213-39. Compare with C.P. Kindleberger's still magisterial, *The World In Crisis, 1929-1939* (Harmondsworth: 1972). Important recent contributions on British policy including those by Alan Booth and W.R. Garside are summarised and compared with policy initiatives elsewhere in W.R. Garside (ed.), *Capitalism in Crisis. International Responses to the Great Depression* (London: 1993). Amongst the best new surveys of British economic performance in the twentieth century are S. Glynn and A. Booth, *Modern Britain. An Economic and Social History* (London: 1996) and B.W.E. Alford, *Britain in the World Economy Since 1880* (London: 1996). J. Stevenson and C. Cook have recently revised their *Britain in the Depression: Society and Politics,* 1929-1939 (London: 1994).

2 C. Maier, *In Search of Stability. Explorations in Historical Political Economy* (Cambridge, 1987) and S. Strange, *States and Markets. An Introduction to International Political Economy* (London: 1988).

3 C. Maier, The state and economic organisation in the twentieth century, N. Hagihara *et al, Experiencing the Twentieth Century* (Tokyo: 1985), p. 101.

4 A. Booth, The British Reaction to the Economic Crisis in W.R Garside, *International Responses,* pp.33-35.

5 R.W.D. Boyce, *British Capitalism at the Cross-roads, 1919-1932. A Study in Politics, Economics and International Relations* (Cambridge: 1987), chpt.s 4, 8, and 10.

6 Eichengreen, *Golden Fetters, passim* and P. Temin, *Lessons from the Great Depression* (Boston: 1989), chpt.s. 1 and 2.

7 By the 1830s the gold standard had become an article of faith to economists and bankers alike.

8 The City often secured special consideration in the development of policy because invisible earnings play a large role in the balance of payments. D.E. Moggridge, *The Return to Gold, 1925. The Formulation of Economic Policy and its Critics* (Cambridge: 1969), p 85.

9 John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of Mr Churchill* (London, 1925), p. 11; Eichengreen, *Golden Fetters,* pp 204-5.

10 Quoted in Moggridge, *Return,* p 48.

11 Recent research has gone some way to rehabilitating the Treasury view. Roger Middleton, amongst others, now argue that the Treasury was, in certain important respects, right to doubt the contribution that public works could make to Britain's unemployment problem. See R. Middleton, *Towards the Managed Economy. Keynes, the Treasury and the Fiscal Debate of the 1930s* (London: 1985).

12 The Federal Reserve Board was a powerful advocate, see Lester V. Chandler, *Benjamin Strong, Central Banker* (Washington, 1958), pp 291-321.

13 Eichengreen, *Golden Fetters,* p 163.

14 Some wage reduction had already been accomplished in the 1920-1922 slump, but this had only been possible because many wage agreements were related to the cost of living which had also fallen.

15 Moggridge, *Return,* p 88.

16 A. Booth, The British Reaction in W.R. Garside, *International Responses,* p.38, D. Marquand, *Ramsay MacDonald* (London: 1977), pp. 533-54.

17 D. Kunz *The Battle for the Gold Standard* (London: 1987), *passim.*

18 S. Glynn and A. Booth, *Modern Britain,* pp.122-123 and chpt. four.

19 P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism. Crisis and Deconstruction, 1914-1990,* London, 1993, *passim.*

20 I.M. Drummond, *The Floating Pound and the Sterling Area, 1931-39 (Cambridge:* 1981),p.10.

21 For the failure of the City to become involved in the restructuring of British industry, see M. Best and J. Humphries, *The City and Industrial Decline,* in B. Elbaum & W. Lazonick, *The Decline of the British Economy* (Oxford: 1986), pp.223-240.

22 Cain, *British Imperialism,* p.87-90.

23 P. Clavin, *The Failure of Economic Diplomacy. Britain, Germany, France and the United States, 1931-36* (London: 1995), *passim* and B. Eichengreen, 'The Origins and Nature of the Great Slump', pp.213-39.

24 P. Clavin, 'The World Economic Conference 1933: the Failure of British Internationalism', in *The Journal of European Economic History,* vol.20, No.3, 1991, p 524, reprinted in Mark Thomas (ed.), *The Disintegration of the World Economy Between the World Wars,* Vol.2, Cheltenham: 1996).Kunz, *Battle,* p 149- 151.

25 R.A.C. Parker, 'Economics, Rearmament and Foreign Policy: the United Kingdom before 1939 - A Preliminary Study', *Journal of Contemporary History,* Vol. 10, No.4, 1975, p. 643.

A People's Tragedy. The Russian Revolution 1891-1924 **Orlando Figes;**
Jonathan Cape 923pp £25 1996 ISBN 0-224-04162-2

Histories of this huge and complex topic range from slim volumes of sweeping generalisations to multi-volume treatments such as those of E.H. Carr and Richard Pipes. In recent years the older, mainly political, interpretations have been supplemented by economic and social analyses, and historians are increasingly looking at what was happening locally as well as in the revolutionary centres such as Petrograd. Thus Figes' first book, published in 1982, was *Peasant Russia, Civil War* - a study of the Volga provinces between 1917 and 1921. These historiographical trends have been greatly stimulated following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the increasing availability of archive material.

Figes lectures at Cambridge and his latest book is a useful and workmanlike attempt to try to encompass all these facets within one, albeit substantial, volume. As such it will be of particular value to teachers and students doing the topic at CSYS but also provides a well-written and interesting update and refresher for teachers doing it at Higher or Standard Grade. Given its length it is reasonably comprehensive, although the international dimension does not feature particularly strongly. It is well organised into chapter and section headings in four main parts -*Russia under the Old Regime; the Crisis of Authority (1891- 1917); Russia in Revolution (Feb 1917-March 1918)* and *the Civil War & the Making of the Soviet System (1918-24),* with extensive footnotes, bibliography and index.

One of the strengths of the book is the way it tries to move away from the familiar central political figures and events, while by no means leaving them out of account, to look at what was happening to a range of selected secondary figures and the 'masses' – peasants, workers, minority nationalities – in action in various localities at various times. While this can sometimes seem a bit patchy, given the state of research and the constraints of a single volume, it means that there is a fairly constant flow of new and interesting detail (together with a number of unfamiliar and sometimes shocking photographs) within the more familiar framework of key events and major developments. It helps us to realise what a huge canvas is encompassed by the term 'Russian Revolution', counteracting the simplified 'Petrograd 1917' image, and revealing how much is still to be discovered. The narrative is generally easy to follow and demonstrates the links of events and developments fairly well – although, given the method of interspersing personal histories and anecdotes with commentary and analysis, there are times when the wood is lost in the trees.

Figes does not offer any particularly new interpretations and seems to set out deliberately to take a balanced political view which results in him being generally critical of all the main players. Whereas Pipes, for example, tends to exonerate Tsarism and 'blame' the Bolsheviks for what happened, Figes, if anything, does the reverse. Thus Nicholas II's limited and obstinate nature is seen as the key to the failure to achieve even relatively mild reforms such as attempts by his own supporters to replace personal autocracy with legal absolutism and a properly structured government. The way Nicholas divided even those at court into "friends" and "enemies" is reminiscent of the way Britain's closest thing to an autocrat this century, Margaret Thatcher, divided even her own party and cabinet into "them" and "us".

On Stolypin, Figes concedes that if his local government reforms had not been obstructed, the Soviets might not have filled the vacuum in 1917, but generally regards Stolypin, whose hero was Bismarck, as a man of limited bureaucratic vision whose programme of reforms made little headway anyway due the Tsar's antipathy. Figes, therefore, discounts the thesis that revolution would not have occurred if war had not knocked Russia's modernisation off course. In addition the moral bankruptcy of Tsarism is well illustrated by an account of the official sanctioning of anti-semitism in the 1911 trial of the Jewish clerk, Beiliss, for the alleged ritual murder of a schoolboy. Beiliss was eventually acquitted despite the fact that both the Tsar and the Minister of Justice, who knew he was innocent, wanted him convicted.

Figes has very little, if anything, to say in defence of Kerensky and is also critical of the Mensheviks and SRs for their failure to establish a democratic Soviet regime and end the war in the latter part of 1917. The resultant power vacuum played into the hands of Lenin whose ruthless opportunism in the face of the naivety and indecision of others is well brought out as is his unfeeling attitude to suffering on a vast scale. The portrait of Lenin is not an attractive one – his isolation out of fear for his own safety and lack of interest in ordinary people's lives except as grist to his revolutionary mill, his relentless badgering and manipulation of his party colleagues to force through his preferred policies and his contempt for the views of others – are epitomised in Gorky's words – "the working class is for Lenin what ore is for the metal worker".

The selected secondary characters are generally dealt with in a much more sympathetic manner. The first head of the Provisional Government, Prince Lvov, and the war hero, General Brusilov, for example, are shown as capable and conscientious men with a strong sense of patriotism and civic duty. But while their similar sentiments and principles lead the former to become a foreign emissary for the Whites, dieing in exile in Paris in 1924, the latter went on to become a somewhat reluctant adviser to the Reds and died in 1925, receiving a hero's funeral presided over by Red Army leaders and Orthodox priests. The trials and tribulations of the progressive peasant Semenov at the hands of reactionary village elders and his eventual murder are also dealt with very sympathetically.

But Figes' favourite seems to be Gorky – to the extent that the book at times reads like an account of the revolution through his eyes. His reactions to events are frequently quoted – his longing for change mingled with despair at the excesses of the revolution, including those of February 1917 – too often regarded as a bloodless affair but in which thousands died or suffered brutal treatment amidst the breakdown of law and order, and general backwardness which he was later to accuse Lenin and the Bolsheviks of pandering to. But while the latter undoubtedly emerge as the keepers of the Russian asylum or prison, Figes is concerned to show the mass of the people as participants rather than simply victims by showing how indiscriminate terror and the settling of old scores were endemic from the start and how, in some ways, the Bolsheviks simply institutionalised and imposed their control on things that were already happening – "looting the looters", summary "justice" etc. – in much the same way as their slogans on land for the peasants and freedom for the nationalities (neither of which were particularly Marxist policies) were mainly a means of jumping on the bandwagon of existing mass social movements in order to enable themselves to seize and hold on to power – until eventually they were in a position to take both back. Figes brings out well how it was the Whites who largely ensured the survival of the Bolshevik regime by their espousal of landlordism and Great Russian imperialism which drove the peasants and nationalities, many of which had established their own independent local regimes, if not into the Red camp, at least to view the Reds as the lesser of two evils. The whole thrust of the book is, in a sense, to bring out the extent to which the peasants' sense of identity related to immediate locality rather than nationality and how genuinely independent the rural soviets were until they were gradually brought under Bolshevik control.

The extent to which the revolution was fuelled by long-standing popular anti German attitudes is emphasised and the consequent irony, therefore, of Lenin and the Bolsheviks coming to power with German assistance. Within Russia the Bolshevik power base is identified as young upwardly mobile, literate peasants whose experience in the armed forces and personal ambition led them to reject the backwardness of the village and who later formed the core of the Red Army and became Stalin's vanguard in his war against the peasantry – "throughout the world, communist regimes have been built on the fact that it is the ambition of every peasant to become a clerk". Although young industrial workers also played a part as Red Guards in the October coup, Figes reckons that the class conscious industrial workers of Bolshevik mythology generally turned against the Bolsheviks and stayed in the cities, leading the widespread strike movements of the years 1918-21.

Figes' analysis of what the Bolsheviks were up to during the July Days and what Kornilov was up to in September appears to confirm the generally accepted view that neither were organised attempts to seize power but very disorganised reactions to events by the left and right respectively in which the latter made a bungle with far more significant historical consequences than the former. The underestimation of the Bolsheviks by both the left and the right is compared to the underestimation of the Nazis by their opponents in the early 1 930's – but as a sort of mirror image with left and right reversed. The right thought that, having got rid of the Provisional Government, the Bolshevik regime would collapse, leaving the way open for them – in much the same way that the German Communists thought that, having finished off the despised Weimar Republic, the Nazi regime would succumb to a 'proletarian dictatorship'. The Russian left, on the other hand, thought that the Bolshevik regime would either collapse or give way to a coalition, echoing the illusions of the German right about Hitler. Hence the failure in both instances to organise effective opposition in the crucial early stages, leaving them free to consolidate their grip on power.

The chaotic nature of the October coup itself is emphasised, as against the myth of a highly organised and disciplined seizure, largely held together by Lenin's driving will and Trotsky's frantic activity, with some leading Bolsheviks opposing it and some of their socialist rivals supporting it. But while the coup may have been chaotic in execution, Figes himself seems to be falling victim to Bolshevik propaganda when at one point he appears to imply that it started as a spontaneous move to defend the Soviets and the revolution against the right. This may be to misunderstand him as the other evidence cited shows the central role of Lenin in initiating the coup, whatever some of the participants thought.

The success of the Bolsheviks in hanging on to power in the initial stages is explained largely by their ability to impose control at the centre due to the ineffectiveness of their opponents, while allowing local peasant and minority nationality opposition to the Provisional Government its head elsewhere. The central democratic forces were thus knocked out or neutered while the rest of Russia was softened up for the later imposition of the

Bolshevik control which was always Lenin's aim. The masses were preoccupied with local affairs and largely indifferent to the fate of the Constituent Assembly, on the dissolution of which, incidentally, Kolchak congratulated the Bolsheviks. How stupid can you get?

Extremely stupid, to judge from Figes' vivid picture of life with the Whites. Their composition, attitudes and motives are detailed, as are their chaotic, brutal and ultimately self-defeating military campaigns. Some of the scenes are reminiscent of *Apocalypse Now* – lives of luxury amidst the squalor of war. The Reds are depicted as much the same, only less so – hence their victory. In the country of the blind the one-eyed man is king and the Bolsheviks showed themselves to be much more prepared to use revolutionary methods of warfare including political propaganda particularly in relation to the land and nationalities questions on which the Whites' policies, insofar as they existed at all, were gifts to the Reds. Figes also agrees with most other historians that foreign support for the Whites never amounted to very much, apart from a short period of Kolchak's rule in 1919, partly due to the end of the First World War and partly due their ambivalent attitude to the two sides. Stalin's apparent sympathy for the Military Opposition to Trotsky's centralising measures during the Civil War is seen as the starting point of their personal antagonism.

But quite apart from the Whites, the extent of opposition to the Bolsheviks from the mass of the workers and peasants is well detailed in the accounts of strikes, demonstrations and uprisings – fuelled by War Communism, a toxic melange of pragmatism & ideology, and the undermining of the rural soviets by the Bolshevik takeover of their executives and the imposition of the official Committees of the Rural Poor – often dominated by incomers – as well as the impositon of Bolshevik control over the factories. This resistance escalated from the spring of 1918 along with its concomitant terrorist counter-measures with hundreds of strike leaders executed. The climax appears to have come in July 1918 with the half-hearted attempt by the SRs to spark a mass uprising and the outlawing of the SRs and the Mensheviks. The Cheka was increasingly given carte blanche to pursue its "war against society", as Engels called the use of terror, and developed as a state within a state, probably killing more people than died in the battles of the Civil War -although famine accounted for the vast majority. Figes shows that, while some leading Bolsheviks sought to restrain the Cheka, its activities were defended by the "hard men", Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin – an uncomfortable thought for those who try to lay the blame for this sort of thing exclusively on the last named. According to Figes, by 1919 the basic framework of the dictatorship had taken shape – not "Soviet power plus electrification" but "anti-democratic practices plus bureaucratisation". The Bolsheviks had taken over the soviet executives and congresses were largely moribund. Their lack of humanity is brought out clearly in their ruthless attitudes to the mobilisation of labour and destruction of religion with widespread executions for the slightest defiance.

By early 1921 when the Civil War excuses for repression and requisition no longer applied, the bush fires of urban and rural revolt threatened to become a general conflagration which would have consumed the Bolsheviks. To all the political and economic grievances was added considerable resentment at the "feudal" lifestyle of the new Bolshevik elite, despite their leader's asceticism (was the contrast between the Nazi elite and Hitler any different in this respect?). Kronstadt was the most spectacular of a whole series of rebellions which included a significant proportion of the Bolshevik rank and file, leading Lenin to realise that repressive measures, including the use of poison gas against peasants in at least one instance, would not be enough in themselves to save the day for his regime. The result, of course, was the New Economic Policy – economic concessions to avoid political ones.

The invasion of Poland, which Pipes claims was the first step in an intended invasion of western Europe, and which Lenin went ahead with against the advice of both Trotsky and Stalin, Figes sees more as a warning to the western powers. But, on the evidence, it would seem that, flushed with victory over the Whites, Lenin simply thought that the Red Army could continue its victorious onward march and was brought up short against the force of Polish nationalism – hardly surprising in view of the fact that the previous resistance to the Polish invasion of Russia had been seen as a patriotic task on the Russian side as illustrated by Brusilov's decision to support the Reds at that point.

It is perhaps surprising that in this instance Lenin should have underestimated the force of nationalism. Figes brings out both the complexities of the national question within Russia and the subtleties of Lenin's response to it. Apart from stealing a march over their opponents by promising "self-determination" to the subject nations (which many of them were already practising anyway), the Bolsheviks successfully exploited social divisions within the nationalities – playing off local peasant 'nationalism' against that of the intellectuals and the middle class, combining local cultural self-expression with centralised party political control augmented by the recruitment of local elites, including, for example, secularising Moslems opposed to the rule of the mullahs. This formula was continued by Lenin's successors and largely explains why such an unwieldy multi-national state was able to survive for most of the 20th century – especially when one considers the part played by centrifugal nationalism in its eventual break-up.

Meanwhile Figes shows how the NEP was never intended as anything more than a respite in the Bolshevik war on the peasantry. Bolshevik mistrust of the peasantry was exacerbated rather than ameliorated by the fact that many party members were of peasant origin but with nothing but contempt for village life, hence their support for collectivisation. Despite Bolshevik theory, according to Figes, it was not so much the poor against the rich as the young against the old which became the main fissure in the countryside. He also accuses both Lenin and Stalin of exacerbating and exploiting the effects of famine as a weapon against those who stood in the way of their exercise of power and vision of the future.

But, towards the end of the book, in dealing with the issue of whether Stalin marked a break with or a continuation of Lenin's work, Figes, perhaps in a misguided attempt to appear balanced, seems to contradict himself. Having said earlier how it was invariably Stalin upon whom Lenin relied and, more importantly, shown how the framework of the Soviet system as ruled by Stalin was basically in place by 1921, he then suggests that Lenin towards the end saw not just that Stalin should go, but had second thoughts about the whole experiment he had launched and realised that it was coming to grief due to Russia's backwardness – "it was as if he acknowledged that the Mensheviks had been right". There is really no evidence at all for this rather wild hypothesis and goes against everything we know about Lenin's personality, policies and practices. It seems to be based on reading far too much into Lenin's misgivings as the reigns of power slipped from his grasp during his final years of deteriorating health. Given his final illness, it was inevitable that others would step into the power vacuum which he himself had filled so successfully, and, given his driven and dominating personality, it seems that he resented this and struck out in his Testament at all his possible successors, even criticising them for attitudes and practices for which he himself was largely responsible – the attitude of recent Tory leaders to their successors writ large! He wanted to check the growing power of party organs because he no longer controlled them and the differences within the party over Georgia were a question of immediate tactics rather than general approach. Figes finishes off on this with some rather silly speculation on what would have happened if Lenin had survived, observing that he "murdered fewer people" than Stalin, while failing to point out that he only had about 6 years to carry out his killings to Stalin's 30. But this is a bizarre 'killing competition' – especially as Figes himself seems to agree that Stalin's policies were a logical development of the aims and beliefs of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, and how else could they be pursued in the circumstances except by force?

In his Conclusion, Figes attempts some overall explanation of what he sees as the Russian people's tragedy. He sees its roots in the Tsar's blocking of liberal democracy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and popular disillusionment with the Dumas. The result was that the Russian people were viewed and, more importantly, viewed themselves, in the words of Kerensky as little more than "rebellious slaves" rather than as potential citizens. Thus, by 1917 democracy was already foredoomed to failure and the political and social 'melt-down' of 1917-21 inevitable in some form, to be followed by a new despotism. He then, however, appears to contradict this pessimistic scenario by suggesting that it could have been averted if the Soviet leaders had been prepared to set aside Marxist dogma, establish a democratic Soviet regime and end the war in the latter half of 1917. Although Kerensky would have been against it and the right would have rebelled, the Bolsheviks would have been stopped and the civil war minimised. As it is he identifies the Bolsheviks as a very Russian phenomenon – messianic and vengeful, exploiting and legitimising centuries of social resentment. Although Lenin and Stalin were the inheritors of the Tsarist mantle, the Bolsheviks differed from the old Tsarist elite in being "from the people" and without this ability to identify themselves with the people and the revolution they would not have survived.

Finally Figes somewhat philosophically views the Russian Revolution as an "inevitable experiment" intensified by post-war feelings of the need for a new start, which went horribly wrong not because of the malice of its leaders but because the ideals were impossible (and, he might have added, the leaders, rather than face up to this, became increasingly malicious). And, despite his earlier contention that Bolshevism was very Russian, this pattern repeated itself in other communist states. He ends with a plea to learn the lessons of all this by strengthening democracy in the 21st century as a source of individual freedom and social justice -amen to that. But underlying it all is economic well-being and he ends by pointing out that there is no guarantee that the emerging civil societies in the Soviet successor states will take the democratic road. Atavistic communism, resurgent nationalism and anti-westernism continue to feed on the resentment of those who have not shared in the fruits of free enterprise capitalism – all familiar ingredients of the Bolshevik era – "The ghosts of 1917 have not been laid to rest".

Duncan Toms

Years of Change: Europe 1890-1945 **Robert Wolfson and John Laver**
Hodder and Stoughton. 552 pp £13-99 (2nd Ed) 1996 ISBN 0340 63087 6

This is a very thorough text-book on the political and diplomatic history of Europe during the period 1890-1939. (The final chapter, on the Second World War, does not pretend to be more than a brief outline.) It also gives a fair amount of space to economic affairs. The thoroughness is apparent in the fact that each of the successor states is dealt with in its own substantial chapter; there is, for example, a section on the economic history of Hungary from 1919-1939 -an unusual and laudable commitment to detail. Anyone using it for A-level would be certain of having enough facts at their disposal.

The authors, practising teachers, have also adapted this second edition to fit modern examination requirements. There are a series of logical, practical sections on how to write essays and one can see how the advice given to generations of classes has been refined into a progressive scheme. The reader is told, in a series of chapters scattered through the book, how to structure list essays, discussion essays, essays on causes and effects, and significance essays. There is advice on how to bring range, depth and breadth into essays – and it is the sound advice of an experienced professional. There are also various sets of sources, chosen so as to be useful in class discussions or as the basis for exercises. In each set, several documents are printed on one topic, so that there can be detailed comparison and analysis.

And yet, although this book has many strengths, it is not one I would choose for my pupils. In the first place the target readership is not quite right: the chapters are too heavy and formidable for weaker candidates, whilst pupils who do have the necessary ability and commitment should be grappling with the complexities of adult history books (Norman Stone's *"Europe Transformed"*, for example or James Joll's *"Europe since 1870"*). In the second place there is too much text-book simplification of complex processes for a work that has enough depth and weight to claim to be for able candidates. This is evident in the diagrams. Three of them, for example, deal, with subjects of hideous complexity: The Constitutional Organisation of Austria-Hungary, Socialist Parties in France (1880-1910), and The Organisation of the League of Nations. And yet with a few lines and boxes the complexities disappear, as four Socialist Parties become two, and then amalgamate to one. Good stuff for GCSE, but any book that makes the Third Republic easy to understand has to be suspect for Advanced level. A third objection – and this is not merely a personal fad – is the complete omission of cultural matters. In these so-called "Years of Change" Stravinsky, Wittgenstein, the cinema and Dada do not exist. It is possible to argue that hostility to Modernism in the arts was a central part of Nazism; the idea cannot be approached at all through these pages.

I also have reservations about how pupils would respond to the book. From time to time the author resorts to the first person and talks down to his imaginary S5 (lower sixth) readers in a way they will probably find off-putting. For example: "An examination of the events in eastern and central Europe between the wars ... will introduce you to many of the concepts and ideas associated with fascism that you will study later ... We would therefore urge you not to ignore it." This avuncular style is particularly obtrusive in the sections on essay writing. These are very good in many ways, but would not be quite right for my lessons. In the first place the advice given comes better from the teacher as part of the process of marking and discussion of essays as they are written. In the second place the approach is a bit too cut and dried, too mechanistic, with "essay planning sheets" that are reminiscent of painting by numbers. Also, the aspirations of enthusiastic sixteen year-olds to break away from junior schooling are likely to be dampened by the helpful printing in bold type of words found in the glossary. In the first few weeks of a new A-level courses one must stir-up one's pupils with a sense of excitement and anticipation; but Wolfson and Laver write on page 2 of their course "We hope you enjoy it, and even if you don't, that it helps with your exams."

In fairness to Wolfson and Laver, they do not suggest that their book is complete in itself. There are selective bibliographies at the end of each chapter and readers are also urged to read such things as *"Modern History Review"* and book reviews in the Sunday papers. One can also envisage several categories of person for whom this book will be very useful. A mature student, needing say, a B grade for higher education and limited to one evening class a week for a year, could confidently use this book for self-instruction in the basics. An inexperienced teacher – especially, perhaps, one who had come into school teaching from a PhD, and had lost touch with the thought processes of mediocre S5 historians – could do a lot worse than build lessons on the essay-writing sections. I shall find my copy a useful quarry for economic statistics and for ideas for documentary exercises. But it does not convey enough of the joy and excitement and mystery of our subject to be used as the main text-book for those who have just begun to specialise in it.

George Harris

A Sense of History: Scotland. People in the Past P1-3
Longman £69 1996 ISBN 0 582 24986 4

This pack contains fifteen books with subjects ranging from Teddy Bears to Under the Ground. A set of posters is also included, along with a teacher's guide. Each book deals with a different subject but the general layout of each book is the same. All the books were very well illustrated with bright and attractive pictures and ireal photographs' where appropriate. Most books started off with present day pictures which provided an obvious starting point for younger children. On the whole, these initial pictures were also situations/experiences with which the majority of children could easily relate, stimulating discussions readily. Further pictures in the book would encourage a lot of discussion and help children understand that pictures are a valuable form of historical evidence. The amount of written text is kept to a minimum, which makes the books accessible to a wider range of children. As an infant teacher, I would see the books being best used in a small group situation, when working alongside the teacher. The posters however, lend themselves more to working with larger groups. Included in the teacher's guide is a set of *Things to Point out and Discuss* and also a set of *Things to Guess,* when using the posters. I would find this invaluable. The teacher's guide itself is very comprehensive and user-friendly. Very clear guidelines about what to teach when using the individual books are included, all being linked to the Environmental Studies (5-14) document - a real time saver when coming to forward planning! Also included in the teacher's guide is an extremely useful section which suggests a wide range of classroom activities. Some photocopy masters are included with some of the books. These books provide an inviting source of information for younger pupils, and as a teacher of the younger age group, I would certainly see this pack being welcomed in infant departments of primary schools today.

Linda Coutts

A Sense of History: Scotland. People in the Past P4-7
1996 Longman £50 1996 ISBN 0 582 29374 X

"Scottish history should be central to the history education delivered in Scottish schools". (Scottish History in the Curriculum. A paper for discussion and Consultation. Scottish CCC 1997)

Although the work of the CCC Scottish History Review Group has engendered a lively and continuing debate about the rightful place of Scottish history in the school curriculum, the 5-14 guidelines, with their emphasis on studying people, events and societies of significance in the past in a variety of iocal, national, European and world contexts, have been widely accepted by most teachers as a suitable framework for the teaching of History. Good practice within both the upper Primary and S1 - S2 has long placed considerable emphasis on the study of both local and national Scottish history. If there has been a problem, it has been that the resources available for the teaching of 5-14 Scottish history have until recently lagged behind those available south of the Border where the strictures of the National curriculum have undoubtedly led to a remarkably wide choice of high quality materials specifically written to meet the requirements of Key Stages 1- 3. It is therefore very encouraging to see a major publishing house such as Longman, whose *Sense of History* series has been so well received in England, producing a package specifically designed to meet the Scottish history aspects of *People and the Past, P4 -7.*

The complete package consists of 4 topic books, 12 Posters, a Teachers' Guide, including 24 copymasters, blank timelines for classroom display use and a leaflet on strategies for teaching children about time. The four books cover topics which were selected after consultation with teachers and advisors. There is little to cause surprise, although at least one of the topics included here - "The Scottish Wars of Independence" - must currently feature in many S1 courses. Of the other three topics, both 'The Highland Clearances' and 'Emigration from Scotland', are already fairly widely taught in the Upper Primary, while the inclusion of 'Ancient Scotland' could lead to links with work already being done on the Romans as well as providing ample opportunity for activities which are relevant to the key features of People and Place and People in Society as well as Science and Technology.

The topic books have much to recommend them. The presentation throughout is of a uniformly high standard with high quality colour illustrations on every page and a clear, uncluttered layout which encourages reading without including too much text. Specialist terms or words which children of this age might not know appear in a box on the page where they occur for ease of use. In all four books the illustrations have been extremely well chosen. Ancient Scotland contains a large number of photographs of artefacts and of archaeological sites, supplemented by some colourful reconstructions and four relatively straight forward maps. One aspect of this

book that I particularly liked is that almost all of the photographs of artefacts state clearly where the finds were made, with evidence drawn from all over Scotland. In the remaining three topic books, the illustrations include a wide range of historical sources and modern photographs of sites and monuments, as well as archive photographs in the case of The Highland Clearances and Emigration from Scotland.

The 12 posters which form part of the package (three per topic) are of a similar high quality and claim to be laminated though not indestructable! The teachers' guide contains a section entitled 'How to use the posters' but, more usefully, there is a full page of information about each poster including 'things to point out and discuss' and 'further activities' or 'follow - up'. These latter are of variable quality and usefulness but the concept is sound and destined to ensure that these posters become more than mere classroom decorations. I particularly liked the inclusion of David Allan's Highland Wedding and J. Wilson Nicol's Lochaber No More, while the reproduction of a page from the Arbuthnott Missal is a beautiful example of a Scottish manuscript painting.

The teachers' guide, which covers all four topic books, is an essential part of the package. Apart from an introduction to the key features of People in the Past (P4 - P7), there is a checklist of what is required to meet the attainment outcomes specified for People and the Past at levels C and D. It should be noted that this is a 'user friendly' check list which takes the spirit of the attainment outcome statements, rather than adhering to them verbatim. Thus 'select and order a sequence of activities for tackling an enquiry' becomes 'plan what they will do first, second, etc'. This seems to be perfectly acceptable but it is a sad reflection of the ambiguities of the 5 - 14 programme that the ability 'to show secure knowledge and understanding of the relevant key features does not merit a mention, although 'planning', 'collecting evidence', 'recording and presenting', 'interpreting and evaluating' and 'developing informed attitudes' are all featured. This section of the teachers' guide also offers two copymasters, to be used for recording pupil progress, although these seem to add little to what is already available.

The main purpose of the teachers' guide, however, is to provide additional resources for each of the four topic books. Here it seems to lack depth. For each book, at least six copymasters are provided. The format of those relating to Ancient Scotland and to the Wars of Independence is uninspiring. Pupils are asked to draw lines between four questions and their answers (Ancient Scotland), to 'finish the sentences..' (also Ancient Scotland) and to 'cut out the sentences and put them in the right order' (The Wars of Independence). The copymasters for the other two books are not much more inspiring although in both there is a little more scope for pupils to exercise a degree of historical imagination and creativity. In short, the copymasters tend towards the dreary and fall well short of providing the answer to the hard pressed teacher's prayer for suitable 'off the shelf' resources. For each topic book there is also a section headed 'Activities'. Some of the ideas here are excellent: far more fun than the copymasters and involving a whole range of 'historical' experiences. Unfortunately though, many of these activities take the form of 'good ideas' which require considerable 'fleshing out' before pupils could tackle them successfully.

If the teachers' guide falls short of providing an 'off the shelf' set of materials, the answer does not lie in the activities suggested in the topic books themselves. The stated aim of the series is to encourage readers 'to question and express opinions about the clues that have survived from the past and take an active role in their own learning in a detective - type approach'. In practice, this means a large number of 'find the ..' activities relating to the pictorial sources. But, however unfamiliar the idea of a woman milking a cow into a wooden bucket may be to today's primary school children, is it enough to suggest that pupils 'find the woman milking a cow' and 'find the wooden bucket for the milk'? In themselves, the books do not suggest an easy answer to the question 'how are they going to be used in the classroom'? At one point in the teachers' guide it states that '(the book) is written ....as a narrative text and we hope that many children will find it interesting enough to read straight through'. But what of those children who, for whatever reason, do not willingly read for pleasure? A considerable amount of teacher preparation will be required to transform this pack of resources into materials suitable for classroom use.

As ever one or two gremlins have crept into the text. I was amused to note that the first page of the section entitled 'Ancient Scotland' happens to be headed 'Life in Tudor and Stuart Wales'. (After all, those Celtic fringes always were collectively troublesome!) More seriously, on p.20 of the teachers' guide, it is explained that AD stands for Anno Domine (sic) and in 'The Wars of Independence', (p. 20) pupils are invited to look at one of Alan Sorrell's reconstruction drawings of Dirleton Castle and 'find the ditch or moat filled with water round the castle'. This water - filled moat is a startling 'new' feature of Dirleton castle, but also one that is clearly not suggested by the drawing! Given the determination of almost all pupils to surround every castle with a carp-filled moat at least as impressive as that at Bodiam, it is a pity to see this myth perpetuated.

It would be quite unjustified, however, to end on a 'carping' note. Scottish teachers will welcome this package

of 5 - 14 materials. It brings well written, high quality Scottish history materials to the upper Primary classroom and should act as a challenge to other large scale commercial publishers to follow where Longman has ventured. Scottish CCC has already stated that it 'should play a proactive role in encouraging and advising (commercial publishers) on the development of materials which conform with the findings of the (Scottish History) Review Group'. It is to be hoped that those responsible for the Sense of History series will continue to be actively involved in the publication of what are without question significant additions to the resources currently available.

Elizabeth Trueland

Modern Europe 1789-1989. **Asa Briggs and Patricia Clavin**
Longman 502pp £18.99 1996 ISBN 0582 49405 2

This last volume in the Longman's three-volume *History of Europe* covers the years from the fall of the Bastille to the destruction of the Berlin Wall. This is a momentous undertaking and raises several problems for the authors in terms of subdividing the period and deciding how to balance the general and the particular, the need to give both a framework for these centuries and the evidence on which that framework is based. These were problems tackled in D Thomson's *Europe Since Napoleon* in 1962 and it is interesting to see how European history has moved on since then by making comparisons between the two books. Neither are basic school textbooks though both could be useful in schools.

The present authors cover national and international events. They include sections on culture, political ideas and artistic movements. They include Britain as an integral part of Europe and they also give sections on eastern Europe and on Russia. While the overall trends are identified and while a lot of detailed information is given there is a feeling that important evidence or explanations have had to be omitted. Peterloo is mentioned but is not explained. Consequently, background knowledge or further reading is essential for a full understanding of this book. On the other hand there are occasions when intriguing detail is given, e.g., Marat was killed in a medicinal bath for his skin condition. In addition the views of historians are sometimes mentioned but it would have been helpful if more had been made of this approach in order to give an introduction to rival interpretations or to highlight where the authors are giving an original interpretation and/or one based on recent research.

Nonetheless there is no doubt that in many areas, depending on the state of the reader's own knowledge, this book will offer new views, new frameworks and considerable food for thought – no mean achievement in such a well-studied field. A selection of those areas which have most struck the present reviewer follows.

In the chapter, *Revolution and Empire: Experience and Impact 1789-1815,* the authors point out that during the French Revolution historians can no longer talk of 'the people' as a whole if they wish to understand the various revolutions taking place in France or the relationship of events in Paris to events in the provinces. There were considerable social and ideological differences in Paris as seen in the popular clubs of 1789. Historians, therefore, now consider particular people in particular places. It was, for instance, the *sans culottes,* the little people, and not the overall group, the peasants, who drove events in Paris.

The extent to which historical research and writing has moved on since Thomson's history is highlighted when the authors consider the effects of the French Revolution and Napoleon in a section entitled *Social accounting: gains and losses.* Here the effect on the lives of the people is assessed and comparison made with the effects of the industrial revolution in Britain. Basically the effects of both revolutions are viewed as similar: some benefited, the lawyer in France or the manufacturer in Britain, and some lost, the French aristocrat or the British industrial worker.

The treatment of the Congress of Vienna is interesting because it is handled in the same manner as many text-books handle the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. The views of the different participants are considered and the settlement is then assessed. The authors come to the view that while the Vienna settlement had its faults it can be compared favourably with the Treaty of Versailles since the Congress of Vienna ushered in the longest period of peace Europe had ever known.

D Thomson when writing about the period from 1815 - 1848 described the forces of continuity and the forces of change in Europe after 1815. Briggs and Clavin write about the liberal nationalism of Mazzini being at the opposite end of the political spectrum from Metternich's desire for 'safety in the world'. Among these factors threatening safety, such as liberal nationalism, identified here are the emergence of class, the rise of socialism and the demands of the middle class to have a share of the power of the aristocracy. When different kinds of nationalism are discussed, such as those which exploited chauvinist aggression, it would have been helpful if the authors had tried to assess the support for nationalist ideas since it is no longer accepted that mass support for nationalism existed at this time. It was very much, at least in Italy, the preoccupation of a few middle class intellectuals and was to remain so for some time.

While the revolutions of 1848 are given a prominent place, little is said about their causes. They are considered individually and then the lessons which could be learnt from them are specified. Interestingly in 1962 it was not 'the lessons' of 1848 which Thomson looked for. It was the pattern of revolutionary activity. He identified this in terms of time and place, the economic and social pattern and the political pattern the key features of which were the growing importance of nationalism, the failure of liberalism to promote nationalism successfully and the arrival of the age of the masses. The 'lessons' of Briggs and Clavin are in fact very similar. The first lesson which governments learnt was that they should never let their authority be so humbled again. The second lesson is described as the dynamics of social class. It was now apparent that the coming of universal suffrage did not automatically lead to democratic republican government. Consequently, until the working class learned to organise and acquire property it was clear that it was not going to acquire freedom or make other gains. Thirdly it was clear by 1849 that nationalism could lead to conflict and confusion as much as to liberation. There could be just as many problems in a Europe based on the principle of national co-existence as there had been in a Europe based on the balance of power. Finally, henceforth, the role of force was seen to be essential in the pursuit of political aims and in nation-building. Thomson saw these patterns/lessons/ideas being worked out in national and international contexts over the next one hundred years and although Briggs and Clavin do not spell it out, they demonstrate a similar interpretation in what they write.

Bismarck in the authors' view used subtle and devious policies in his nation-building efforts in Germany. He was an expert at using groups and people for his own ends. He always put Prussia first and the authors describe him as 'finding' the way to unification.There seemed in retrospect to be an unfolding logic to Bismarck's policy but the authors are quite clear that unification was neither premeditated nor carried out according to any pre-set plan. Bismarck thought in terms of the present and its fluidity. The Crimean War and the Franco-Austrian War of 1859 were not planned by Bismarck but both weakened Austria and so facilitated Prussia's ascendancy in Germany. In 1860 the Prussian Prince Frederick William told Napoleon III that he did not expect to see Germany unified in his lifetime. Consequently, it seems certain that Bismarck had no master plan for the unification of Germany.

If unification of Germany was not planned then unification was positively spontaneous in Italy where the authors consider that, for Cavour, unification was a by-product of the struggle for independence from Austria. Unification arose from a series of unforeseen events from which Cavour was able to profit. Briggs and Clavin succeed in explaining very clearly some of the more puzzling aspects of Cavour's career. For instance, it is always difficult to know how much of a nationalist Cavour was. Although he despised Mazzini, his Party of Action and its attempted republican revolution in Milan in 1853, he was prepared in 1856 to join the National Society. He did so to ensure they supported monarchy rather than republicanism and because he realised that in future their support could be useful. In 1860 it is difficult to account for Cavour's public support and private criticism of Garibaldi. Cavour, in fact, was strongly opposed to Garibaldi's actions but he felt he was unable to stop him and realised that if he openly opposed him then his ministry would not survive. At this point the authors could have mentioned the imminent parliamentary election in Piedmont and could also have discussed how much nationalist support there was in Piedmont at this time for Garibaldi and for unification. When Garibaldi succeeded in Sicily and Naples, Cavour knew that he had to intervene to counter Garibaldi's growing prestige. Garibaldi's radicalism could have resulted in his espousal of republicanism and there was also the danger of an attack on Rome. The authors explain that Cavour's only solution was to achieve a more spectacular triumph than Garibaldi's. Therefore he cynically arranged an invasion of the Papal States with Napoleon III. Cavour gave the Pope an ultimatum on the grounds that the Pope could not, so he claimed, control revolutionary activity on his lands. In fact, although it is not mentioned here, Cavour himself was now encouraging this revolutionary activity since it suited his purpose. Cavour invaded the Papal States and defeated a papal army led by a French royalist general who hated Napoleon III. Ruthless real politik or cynical backstairs intrigue - all was fair when the end justified the means.

When this history turns to the outbreak of the First World War it is again interesting to see how historical writing has moved on in recent years. There is no talk here of 'causes of war' since such language is associated with distributing blame. Recently, it is pointed out, historians have talked of the origins of war. Thomson, in fact, talked of the sequence of events leading to war. The present authors write of contradictory forces, domestic and international, which preceded the war, forces such as militarism, autocracy, imperialism and moral disintegration as exemplified in mass hysteria and popular imagination. A list not so different in substance from that provided by D Thomson: the Eastern Question, imperialism, alliances and the naval race and the surface of friction, political, social and economic.

The treatment of the war itself is distinctive in that answers are suggested to several intriguing questions. Why was there such great enthusiasm for the war? Because, it is argued, there had been a profound change both in the public spirit of Europe, as Croce first suggested, which was linked to the unification of Italy and Germany and in human consciousness and perception caused by the modern movement in literature, painting and music. Why did men fight in such appalling conditions? The suggestion here is that men were not motivated by ideology

as in the Second World War or the Cold War and yet despite horrendous conditions they did by and large fight on. Why was mutiny largely limited to Russia, to France in 1917 and to a minor British fracas at Etaples? It seems that trench life suppressed what were seen as futile questions. When questions were asked it was not about the war aims or the purpose of fighting but about the quality of food, the cost of tobacco and the regularity of leave. Objections were raised to the poor administration of war and not to war itself. Recently, however, other research ('The Military Historian and the Popular Image of the Western Front 1914-1918', I Beckett, *The Historian*, no 53 (1997), ppll-14 at p 12) has shown that in many areas of the trenches there was a live and let live atmosphere toward the enemy. It has also been shown that the time soldiers spent in active operations, although it was very dangerous, was actually quite small: 100 days out of 1010 for the 56th London Division and 65 days out of 365 in 1916 for an individual private called Charles Carrington. The last question raised is "Why did governments continue the war given the horrific casualties?' Not only did the war aims of the different allies diverge, thus rendering them unable to discuss peace because they could not decide on what terms to seek it, but governments also had the hope that the next attack would be the successful one. It was hard to decide at what point to take no further risks. After the first 10,000 lives had been lost it was easier to sacrifice the next 10,000 so that the first sacrifice had not been in vain.

After the war the reasons for the rise of fascism are discussed in two chapters entitled *A New Order 1919-1929* and *Guns and Butter 1929-1939*. It is perhaps misleading to say that the reasons for the rise of fascism are discussed as such. They are given as issues which lead to sections on fascism in different countries but they are never actually called the reasons for the rise of fascism. The approach here as in other areas would benefit from being a bit more direct. What emerge as the factors leading to fascism seem to be the weakening of the left as a result of the arguments of socialists and communists, the powerful appeal of nationalism, the increasing amount of street violence caused by malcontents, the decline of the liberals and the rise of fragmented interest-group parties. Here also, new ways of thinking are seen. Post-war social and economic problems such as failure in war and unemployment do not figure in the list but the effects of these problems, such as the decline of the liberals in Italy and in Germany, do. This picture, first presented for Italy is subsequently elaborated for other countries in Europe. The role of the depression is also seen as crucial in the rise of fascism.

An interesting distinction is made between the depression and the Wall Street Crash so that it can be stated that 'the European recession did not originate in the USA'. The loss of US investment was important but what also mattered was the collapse of world primary prices, especially wheat in the 1920s. Consequently, the farmers, 67% of Europe's working population, suffered loss of income. Other factors also promoted the depression. Governments introduced protection and clung to the gold standard far too long. Indeed France, Germany, Italy and Hungary never left it. Finally, the politicians failed to promote international as opposed to national recovery initiatives.

The depression created unemployment because of which the centre liberal parties lost support. Big business in Germany blamed economic problems on Weimar. German farmers became divided when the poorer farmers opposed the preferential treatment of the Junkers. Conservatives feared the communists and workers took to the streets demanding jobs. Hitler saw this and played appropriate interest-group politics thus winning over disgruntled peasant farmers, industrialists, the white collar middle class and artisans who felt undervalued with policies such as agricultural protection, rearmament, subordination of labour to the state and public works schemes.

When approaching the Second World War this history does rehearse Hitler's part in causing the war but does not directly apportion blame for its outbreak. Germany is seen as having legitimate grievances in the terms of the Treaty of Versailles and Hitler as only committing Germany to war when her perceived national interests, *Lebensraum* in eastern Europe, could not be met in any other way. The authors explain that Hitler had four inter-connecting aims - to restore Germany's military power, to expand Germany's frontiers, to collect all German peoples in one country and to build a German Empire to provide *Lebensraum* . Historians, therefore, agree that Hitler's aggressive foreign policy was not born of unprincipled opportunism. There were aims behind his policy. He was, however, opportunist in executing these aims. The authors are quite clear that Hitler regarded the economy as the fourth 'arm' for war along with the army, navy and air force. Government investment and public works were geared to producing guns for Hitler's racial aims rather than to promote the welfare of the German people. The authors are also clear that Hitler saw war itself as an instrument of policy.

All this might suggest that the authors regard Hitler as mainly responsible for the outbreak of World War Two. They do ask, however, why Germany, so weak and demilitarised in 1933, could be in a position to threaten global peace by 1938. The answer is that Great Britain and France, because they thought Germany had legitimate grievances, were unwilling and were also unable to resist Hitler until the full magnitude of his aims became clear. Appeasement, therefore, is called into the reckoning but it is not seen as a policy of weakness. Rather it is interpreted as a continuation of the tactics of nineteenth-century diplomacy, a search to find a negotiated settlement. Appeasement, it is argued, probably brought about the national unity in Britain to stand up to Hitler.

The treatment of the Second World War is succinct and to the point and includes very interesting sections on resistance in Europe and on the treatment of collaborators after the war. The history of Europe after the war is divided into two main themes: the Cold War leading to the collapse of communism and the growing co-operation, both economic and political in Western Europe. It is intriguing to see how events can become more significant with the passing of time. When Khrushchev crushed the Hungarian uprising in 1956, Thomson saw this as an affirmation of Cold War policies and attitudes. The present authors, knowing subsequent events, point out that the world was stunned by Khrushchev's actions and communist parties in Europe lost members on a considerable scale.These events can now be seen as part of the process which has led to the end of the Cold War.

The comparisons made with D Thomson's *Europe Since Napoleon* throughout this review show how history has moved on. Briggs and Clavin use language and ideas which reflect recent research and attitudes as in the sections on the effects of the French Revolution, the causes of the First World War and the rise of fascism. Nonetheless the issues and analysis of both books are often very similar. The framework provided for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by Briggs and Clavin may be more up-to-date but it could have been presented more clearly. D Thomson provided a brief introduction to each major section which gave a general outline for the more detailed descriptions to follow. It is a shame that Briggs and Clavin did not follow suit. This book will be interesting reading for pupils as background or as a check on up-to-date ideas on a topic but is does not provide enough information as the basis of study for any of the topics in Higher or CSYS. For teachers, however, it is an ideal way to keep up-to-date on any nineteenth or twentieth century topic with which they are not so familiar.

At the end of a study of two centuries of European history one looks for what reflections the author can offer on these centuries. Thomson writing in 1962 identified forces which united Europe and forces which divided it, especially the Cold War. But he also identified 'supreme characteristics' of European development such as flux and mobility, vitality and resilience. Despite wars and their alliances which fell apart on three occasions between 1789 and 1989, peaceful co-existence continued. Looking to the future, Thomson considered that by hope and endeavour, intelligence and wisdom, Europe's internal contrasts and divisions could lead to cultural diversification and the enrichment of life rather than to war-like jealousies and hatred.

Briggs and Clavin have nothing like this to offer. This is surprising since after reading this book the reader is struck by the turbulent and repetitive nature of European history. Why, one asks, are people so determined to get their own way. It seems that Europeans learnt nothing from their past and that they were an argumentative and opinionated species. Such an impression is perhaps inevitable because History does concentrate on wars, revolutions and disagreements. Disasters may make news but in fact it is the silences of History which count. If there is nothing to report then all is well. The human position is not as bleak as it can be made to appear. There is endeavour, self-sacrifice, toleration, genius, concern for humanity and its health and welfare and contentment in ever-increasing measure.

What Briggs and Clavin have to offer in their final chapter, *The Great Mutation? The End of History? is* disappointing to say the least. They offer an amorphous series of reflections on the impossibility of achieving a long-term perspective in today's surfeit of information, on the effects of technology and on the end of ideology. There seems to be no aim or direction to their observations. In a sense they admit this when they say that 1989 was not a good vantage point from which to survey the past or the future. Despite what this reviewer sees as all the reasons for optimism around us today, they see Europe at present as a place of change, anxiety and uncertainty. Their last chapter clearly reflects this.

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