

English summaries

The Murder of the Lord in Feudal Society: Memory, Rites, Function

R. JACOB

A series of chronicles from northern France recount a dozen cases of rebellious, peasant or bourgeois, subjects murdering their lord. All these accounts present the event as a divine act, usually as God's judgement of a "tyrant." They reveal that rites existed for such killings, rites that, reenacted in the various murder cases, turned assassination into a sort of sacrifice, which must be compared with regicide in ancient Germania and Scandinavia. This ritual murder can be seen as a form of social regulation corresponding to the state of the lordship in the 11th and 12th centuries when the lord's power was not yet limited by the development of the judicial function and common law.

The Body and Perceptions of Authority: Leprosy of Baldwin IV

M. G. PEGG

In the encyclical Cor nostrum (1174), pope Alexander III suggests that the leprous body of the Jerusalemite king Baldwin IV was linked to the inability of Outremer to defend itself against Islam. Yet, paradoxically, this way of thinking about the body of Baldwin IV was completely alien to the Kingdom of Jerusalem itself. Was the pope merely picture-making about the leper-king's body and not reflecting upon practical issues? Not at all. This article, then, is an examination into the changes of the centres of power, the shifting pattern of claims accepted and denied (through the accusation of leprosy), that made the body a locus of authority and a metaphor of society in the late twelfth-century Latin West but not in the Crusader East.

Saying the Unsayable. Remarks on the Category of Nefandum from the 12th to the 15th Century

J. CHIFFOLEAU

Within the framework of inquisitorial procedure—known to have never become generalized and yet to have marked the whole of the procedural system—the accused often ended up saying the unsayable, the nefandum. In what did this strange meta-judicial category consist? What role did it play in the history of avowal and of power? I attempt to answer these two questions in bringing to light, first of all, the links between the nefandum (that which is against nature), heresy and lese majesty, and in sketching out, secondly, a phenomenology of the inquisitio. I suggest, lastly, that the desire to make people say the unsayable—the will to reach the truth—has something in common with the inauguration of absolutist power.

The Barricades in Paris on May 12th, 1558

D. RICHEL

Why have the Parisian barricades so significantly branded collective memory? In order to understand why, one must write a detailed history of them. The Day of the Barricades (May 12th, 1588) constituted a founding moment. Where did the idea of barricades come from? How was it concretized? What were its geography and urban systems? What were its immediate results? The answers to these questions allow us to shed light on the modalities of this phenomenon's inscription in Parisian political activity.

***The Barricades of the Parisian "Fronde" (August 26-28, 1648):
A Sociological Reading***

R. DESCIMON

Our differences in approach were agreed upon already at that time. The barricades built by the Fronde demonstrate the persistence of institutionalized communitarian structures (chains, the bourgeois militia, and so on) within the Parisian populace when confronted with the fiscal offensive mounted by the Regency of Anne d'Autriche. Councillor Broussel symbolized these contestatory potentialities as much because of his own life story as because of the stances he adopted in Parliament. The conjunctural confrontation between bourgeois privilege and the monarchy in search of absolutism high-lighted an antagonism between two coherent systems of political representation. But its aftermath and the lesson to be learned from the barricades crisis can be found in the rapid vanishing of any political stakes whatsoever.

Traces of Potosi's SilverE. LE ROY LADURIE *et alii*

Anyway, a new method of neutron activation analysis developed by the Centre Ernest Babelon (CRA, CNRS, Orléans) allows to follow via the trace-element Indium, characteristic of Andean silver, the arrival of Potosi silver ore in European coinages. Some 200 coins struck by the Spanish and French mints of the "Atlantic group" have been analysed. The results contribute to date this arrival in Europe in the 1570's, and to estimate the relative volume of Potosi silver in French coinage. In its peak years of the 1590', it made up to some 70% of the metal struck by French coastal mints.

At the Origins of the History of Prices

O. DUMOULIN

Studying the International Scientific Committee on Price History affords us with an opportunity to understand the process of innovation in historical research. The aim of this article is to relate determinations inside and outside of the intellectual field. After a first generation of researchers such as Natalys de Wailly, the committee's work favors the acculturation of quantitative methods by the corps of historians. Created in 1929 through W. Beveridge's initiative, the committee is financed by the Rockefeller Foundation. Differences in training, in commissioning of projects, and the historical conjuncture all influence its work. Methodological conflicts within the committee have traced out the investigatory field of economic history for the past twenty years.