

English summaries

1789

F. FURET AND R. HALEVI

The French revolution may still present itself to the historian as a whole in many respects, despite its extreme diversity of events, as it contained within it, from the very moment of its onset, something that constituted it as a unheralded mode of action and history: a temporal watershed produced by man's will. At the end of the spring and summer of 1789, the French thoroughly refounded the social contract upon principles of rational will. To focus in on the radicalism of its founders, this article analyses the early elaboration of what, since 1789, has constituted democracy's political universe. In the space of a few months, the radical elements in the revolutionary camp thus broke the chains of time, excluded the Monarch from the revolution, and defined the Ancien Régime as being against them. Now while the former monarchy's successor—the people—was radically different from it, it was nonetheless identical to it in the extent of its sovereignty: here we see one of the deepest links between the men of 1789 and their national past. The political voluntarism of 1789 excluded any possible slippage between the law and its foundation; which is why it instituted no other means of preventing such slippage from occurring but the right to resist oppression; this latter threw back into question the whole of the social contract, though the legitimate conditions of its exercise were never stipulated. The revolutionary maximalism of 1789 thus created a space of infinite one-upmanship: the possibility to appeal to the people concerning a betrayal of principles. Of the two deepest questions the French Revolution bequeaths to history, that of the causes of 1789 and that of the drift from 1789 to 1793, the latter is thus perhaps less enigmatic than the former.

***Crisis of the Ancien Régime, Crisis of Ideologies:
a Year in the Life of Sieyès***

G. BENREKASSA

This study concerns a limited field: Sieyès' publications dating from the end of the summer of 1788, the moment of the commencement of the "Etats généraux" from his Essai sur les privilèges to the third edition of Qu'est-ce que le Tiers Etat? More generally, my aim is to understand, in the ideological realm, a form of what Tocqueville calls the radicalism of moderates. I will show how Sieyès was led, by necessity, to rethink fundamental concepts, rather than simply inheriting them ready made from the Enlightenment philosophers: e.g. "philosopher" versus "administrator", "nation"/

SUMMARIES OF ARTICLES

“contract”, etc. *In redefining the philosopher as a man of both the future and the whole, whose horizon is the nation—reconceptualized on the basis of representation—Sieyès lays down an unheralded image of political man which is both a vision of the future and a circumstantial response to the crisis. The goal of this study is also to try to perfect, alongside the notion of revolution, an approach to the difficult notion of crisis in the history of ideology.*

Violence as seen from Below: Reflections on Political Means during Revolutionary Periods

D. ROCHE

The celebration of the bicentennial of the French Revolution provides an opportunity to consider the central question of violence. Up until recently, historians have explained it either by the necessity of political response or by fear, a mobilizing phenomenon of collective psychology. The purpose of this article is to try to understand the archaic nature of the facts and to read the phenomenon as such. Jacques-Louis Ménétra and Louis Simon, in Paris and in the West, indicate the ways in which violence was subscribed to or refused; their work suggests the possibility of a three-fold explanation whereby terrorism would be the legacy of the Christian spectacle of death whose fascination is related to the “part maudite”, and wherein important factors would be “victimary” (sacrificial) anthropology and the mimetic crisis, and a shift from avowal to disavowal of violence when the latter no longer demonstrates anything.

Two Hundred Years of Reactionary Rhetoric

A. O. HIRSCHMAN

In 1949, the sociologist T. H. Marshall suggested that the concept of citizenship be broken down into three kinds of rights—civil, political and socio-economic—viewed as successively conquered in Western Europe during the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. Using this distinction, the present article sketches out movements of ideas (“three reactions”) which opposed the introduction of these rights, and brings out the three main “reactionary” theses encountered in each of these three epochs, namely that of 1) the perverse effect, where the opposite of the desired effect would come about; 2) futility, where the action undertaken would have no effect on reality; and 3) imperilment, where the recommended reform would counteract a previously introduced reform. The theme of the perverse effect is studied here in its various guises throughout the “three reactions”. In conclusion, it is suggested that the perverse effect is less ubiquitous than its denouncers claim it to be.

How do the Manuscripts of Métier d'historien Present Themselves? A Problem of Historiographic Philology

M. MASTROGREGORI

*In this critical essay, results of an investigation into the published and unpublished manuscripts of Marc Bloch's *Historian's Craft* are provided. The collection and study of direct and indirect testimony concerning this work demonstrate that the unfinished text raises certain problems. Posthumously published in 1949 by L. Febvre, it is not an exact translation of the text written by Bloch. While it is possible to distinguish two different phases of the writing, the text published by Febvre concerns only the latest of the two. The specifically philological problems posed by the *Historian's Craft* are, at the same time, historiographic and philosophical ones.*

***Unevenness in Historical Transmission:
New Objects or New Concepts?***

A. ROUSSELLE

In this article, nouns and locutions that historical language deals with in a realistic way, i.e. as representing real objects, when they in fact turn out to be concepts which have created a field of study, are systematically examined in accordance with their spatial and temporal use. The example analyzed here is that of "Oriental religions in the Roman Empire", a concept developed by F. Cumont in the absence of Oriental documents, but which was introduced by Renan and Duruy at the very moment that French troops were invading Syria and creating an empire in Africa. With this new expression, Cumont was able to resist the former conceptualization of "mystery religions" as well as a problematic informed by the crisis of Catholicism.

***Successorial Practices and Ties with the Land:
Peasant Societies of the Ancient Regime***

B. DEROUET

The apparently disconcerting geography of French successional practices, combined with the inability of traditional interpretations to truly account for them, constitutes an invitation to investigate the relation of these practices to social environments, and to different contexts. Without having recourse to a deterministic approach necessarily linking the nature of these practices with some economic or ecological constraint, a better comprehension of social reproduction in peasant societies necessitates a clarification of factors opposing such constraints: land ties, the nature of patrimonies, and their size and use in each particular regional or social situation.

Rectificatif

L'article d'Angelo MASSAFRA, « Déséquilibres régionaux et réseaux de transport en Italie méridionale du milieu du xviii^e siècle à l'Unité italienne » *Annales ESC*, sept.-oct. 1988, n° 5, pp. 1 045-1 080, a été traduit par Annie Duchesne et Judith Revel.

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