THE JOURNALS

European Economic History in American Scholarly Journals (January 1972 - June 1974)

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An examination of two and a half years of European economic history as it appears in American and Canadian journals prompts some disheartening reflections from this historian. In general, the economic history of Europe does not get very much attention in the United States and most of what it receives is erratic and poorly coordinated. Almost thirty-five years of work by the Economic History Association has produced only a small number of people whose articles show that they have reflected seriously upon the use of economic theory, however rudimentary, to increase our comprehension of the historical process or, conversely, have systematically used European historical sources to verify pertinent economic theory and thus strengthen the confidence of the historian in its use.

On the other hand, there is a remarkable variety of work, both topically and methodologically, which this historian sees as pertinent to or part of economic history, broadly conceived. The massive expansion of higher education in the United States and Canada in the 1960's encouraged the development or revival of numerous sub-specialities, including the history of science, technology, education, economic thought, and family structure, and has produced some people concerned with the integration of historical demography, social history, and even political history with economic history. This latter trend, though not well represented in the journals, is a hopeful sign that at long last the influence of Marc Bloch, Fernand Braudel, Ernst Labrousse, and their younger colleagues is penetrating into the United States.

Also conspicuous by its relative absence in the European field is the so-called « New Economic History » which has made such a great impact upon the study of economic history in the U.S. It has been little applied

to Europe, and where it has, the topic has generally been England and its extensions. One suspects the influence of weak language preparation in American universities.

Finally, one is struck by the development of a large number of new journals which are more or less receptive to economic history or, in an incidental way, publish material of interest to economic historians of Europe. Ten of the twenty-three journals scanned for this review were less than ten years old as of 1974. Some of them have a pronounced methodological focus, such as *Family in Historical Perspective, Historical Methods Newsletter*, and *Demography*. Another, the *History of Political Economy*, has ended the prolonged lack of a vehicle for the history of economic thought created when the economics journals shifted to more technical subjects. From another perspective, the new *Canadian Journal of Economics* and *Canadian Journal of History* represent an attempt to develop an autonomous academic tradition in that country. The most successful and interesting of the new journals are the *Journal of Social History* and the *Journal of Inter-disciplinary History*, the latter aimed at encouraging the integration of various social-science approaches to history.

The dozens of items culled out of the journal literature are of widely varying quality and often, from the points of view of their authors, were not conceived of as economic history at all. In hopes of achieving the greatest practical usefulness, the following format has been used to combine comprehensive coverage with a modicum of critical evaluation: all of the substantive articles, some unique journal numbers, and a few review articles of possible interest to European economic historians are listed in a full bibliography, organized into ten more or less logical topical or chronological categories. A number of articles fit two categories and have been repeated where appropriate. Most titles convey a fair impression of article content, but in the cases where the title is ambiguous, a short description has been included.

Those articles which appear to have unusual merit in that they offer effective synthesis, provocative conclusions, or high-quality scholarship are marked with an asterisk (*). This qualitative judgment is a little risky in that no single reviewer can be aware of the current issues in such a wide sweep of topics and periods, and the reader is forewarned that the evaluations are made by an historian (rather than an economist) who is most familiar with the literature on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and who favors integrating economic and social developments for purposes of historical understanding. This summary evaluation makes it possible to devote a few words to a few articles which are especially interesting or exemplify quality work.

Robert Brenner, in « The Social Basis of English Commercial Expansion, 1550-1650 », analyzes the mercantile community of London in the early seventeenth century and demonstrates a good correlation between the "established" overseas trades investing in the East India and Levant Companies,

high social status, London orientation, and royalist positions on the one hand and a similar association between the newer, unchartered colonial traders, smaller English ports, greater risk taking, and parliamentarian politics on the other. In the process, Brenner makes a worthwhile contribution to the study of the backgrounds of the English Civil War.[1]

At the other end of the continent, Deena R. Sadat has provided a majot contribution in her « Rumeli Ayaulari: the Eighteenth Century », by documenting the evolution of a seigneurial regime in the Ottoman Balkans which has remarkaby strong parallels with developments in Hungary, Poland, and Prussia. It includes increased subordination of the rural work force, expansion of commercial agriculture, and retardation of urban social development. The new landlord class developed without any sense of identification with the Ottoman state, with the result that they and the East European powers increasingly thought of the Balkans as a series of identifiable political regions. In the process, the Ottoman state was weakened fiscally as the evolving system of seigneurial power cut the state off from its resources in the Balkan provinces.[2]

Another extremely good article on rural economic life is Paul Hohenberg's piece on « Change in Rural France in the Period of Industrialization, 1830-1914 ». This piece takes the approach that the apparent structural rigidity of French agriculture in this period, coupled with the presence of steady economic growth and a generally good diet suggests the presence of active compensatory forces within the countryside. He outlines a pattern of fiscal behaviour in which, as industry reduced incidental employment in the countryside, the peasantry committed itself to heavy carrying costs on mortgages to get control of land. Thus, in the century after the Revolution, the countryside moved steadly towards a pattern of small holdings in which only one response was available: intensification of small-scale agriculture, mixed cropping, specialization, and gradually increasing output at the cost of growing labour inputs. This produced slow modernization in agriculture and left a rural society which was well fed but offered small possibility for a market for industry. The conclusions are tentative and the value of the article rests primarily in an able effort to bring together recent insights into the process of change during the 19th century.[3]

In a somewhat different field, two articles on technology and education, while not exactly parallel in their topics, explore the limiting effect on economic growth of technical education in England and France at the end of the nineteenth century. C. R. Day deals with « Technical and Professional Education in France: The Rise and Fall of *L'Enseignement Secondaire Special*, 1865-1902 », suggesting that the institutional conservatism of the French

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1 See Bibliography, part VI.
2 See Bibliography, Part VII.
3 See Bibliography, Part IX.

academic world resisted and finally killed the development of technical education designed to increase the pool of systematically trained technicians, shop foremen, and other middle-level supervisors. As a result, the French educational structure remained poorly equipped for teaching applied science and was badly adapted to the task of aiding industrialization at a time when applied science and systematic management were increasingly crucial to industry.[4] Michael Sanderson, in « The University of London and Industrial Progress, 1880-1914 », tackles the problem of scientific education at a somewhat higher level, examining systematic university research and the production of engineers capable of designing new applications. He develops a complex picture of a university whose research was advanced while its training of engineers was deficient. The University of London played a central role in research for industry, especially in fields such as electricity, wireless transmission, chemistry, and aeronautics. At the same time, its curricula for engineers remained deficient in electro-chemistry, basic chemical processes, gas by-products, and maritime engineering. Despite these limitations, it is apparent that the university was in advance of demand and Sanderson offers evidence that industry was in fact slow to absorb the engineers who were produced and conservative about implementing technical changes. In this view, the failure to develop a corps of skilled engineers is not so much due to the rigidities of the academic world but to the conservatism of industry.[5]

The fruits of recent work in European social history and the possibilities of relating that work to economic history are represented by two pieces on the East European labor force. Lawrence Schofer deals with « Patterns of Worker Protest: Upper Silesia, 1865-1914 », demonstrating how, as heavy industry and unionization progressed, labor's concerns evolved from a focus on the terms and conditions of work organization to acceptance of an established institutional context and negotiation over hourly pay and the number of hours worked. Strictly speaking this is much more social than economic history, but the author effectively uses the economic context to elucidate developments and pays due credit to the increased stringency of the labor supply as a factor in enabling the systematization of bargaining.[6] William Hagen, in « The Impact of Economic Modernization on Traditional Nationality Relations in Prussian Poland, 1815-1914 »; tackles a similar problem, but in an even more complex manner. Departing from the rapid changes in the organization of economic life and landholding in the German Empire, Hagen traces the responses of the German, Jewish, and Polish populations of Prussian Poland. As Germany developed industrially, the more educated German and Jewish workers and professionals were drawn

4 *Idem.*
5 *Idem.*
6 *Idem.*

westward. This drew Prussian Poles out of agriculture into the factories and artisan industries, forcing the estate owners, in turn, to import Russian Poles to provide agricultural labor. Despite efforts at German colonization, by World War I only the "public" professions (such as administrative and judicial positions) remained German. The Poles had come to dominate the labor force, artisan industry, and were rapidly taking over the "private" professions such as law and medicine. Thus, as a result of German industrial development, by 1914 almost all sectors of the economy and society of Prussian Poland were dominated by Poles rather than Germans.[7]

The best of the straight-forwardly economic articles (in terms of interest and methodology) is that of Haim Barkai, « The Macro-Economics of Tsarist Russia in the Industrialization Era: Monetary Developments, the Balance of Payments, and the Gold Standard ». Professor Barkai analyzes Tsarist economic policy with respect to the three variables listed in his title and concludes that conservative monetary policy, designed to protect the balance of trade and permit introduction of the Gold Standard, led to unduly tight money, excessively high interest rates, and a dampening deflationary trend. Were it not for occasional disasters which forced monetary expansion through government deficits, the tightness would have been even worse. As it was, money supply expanded at a rate of 2.5 to 3.0% per year when there was at least a 4% growth in monetary demand. The government was unaware of the deflationary bias it was introducing and, says the author, large deficit-financed projects, such as the Trans-Siberian Railroad, were stimulating as much because of the money supply they generated as for the forward and backward linkages they created. In sum, the government opted for a static GNP and forced redistribution of income in favor of infrastructure development, at the cost of increasing volatility in the peasant sector. The counterfactual speculation offered is that a more expansive monetary policy might have eased rural tensions while giving the government more room to speed development — but at the cost of sacrificing the Gold Standard.[8]

Several other pieces possessed a quality comparable to those detailed above, including those of Baron,[9] Hammen,[10] Kirchner,[11] McCloskey,[12] Deane,[13] Mendels,[14] and Mokyr,[15] but in this reviewer's mind the ones detailed above are representative of the issues and approaches of the better work related to European economic history found in recent American journals.

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7 *Idem.*
8 *Idem.*
9 See Bibliography, Part II.
10 See Bibliography, Part IV.
11 See Bibliography, Part VI.
12 See Bibliography, Part VII.
13 See Bibliography, Part VIII.
15 See Bibliography, Part VIII.

JOURNALS SURVEYED IN THIS REVIEW
(with abbreviations)

Agricultural History (AH)
American Economic Review (AER)
American Historical Review (AHR)
Business History Review (BHR)
Canadian Journal of Economics (CJE)
Canadian Journal of History (CJH)
Central European History (CEH)
Demography
Explorations in Economic History (EEH)
Family in Historical Perspective — An International Newsletter (FHP)
French Historical Studies (FHS)
Historical Methods Newsletter (HMN)
History of Political Economy (HOPE)
Journal of Contemporary History (JCH)
Journal of Economic History (JEH)
Journal of Interdisciplinary History (JIH)
Journal of Modern History (JMH)
Journal of Political Economy (JPE)
Journal of Social History (JSH)
Review of Economic Studies (RES)
Science and Society (SAS)
Societas
Technology and Culture (TAC)

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ARTICLES REVIEWED

Topical organization of the Bibliography:

I. Special journal numbers relevant to economic history.
II. Bibliographical and historiographical articles.
III. General approaches and technical applications to European topics.
IV. History of Economic Thought.
V. Education and Economic History.
VI. Medieval and early modern Europe.
VII. The eighteenth century.
VIII. Aspects of the Industrial Revolution.
XI. The nineteenth century.
X. The twentieth century.

N.B.: (1) An asterisk (*) indicated an article of relatively high quality.
(2) Some items appear in more than one category because of the double interest of their content.

I. Special journal numbers relevant to economic history

Bibliography of the Philosophy of Technology, 200 page supplement to TAC, vol. 14, no. 2 (1973).

Farming in the Midwest, 1840-1900, Symposium published as AH, vol. 48, no. 1 (1974). Some articles related to Europe are included.

Historiography of Technology, three articles in TAC, vol. 15 (1974), pp. 1-48. Includes: Robert Multhauf, « Some Observations on the State of the History of Technology », Eugene S. Ferguson, « Toward a Discipline of the History of Technology », Edwin Layton, Jr., « Technology as Knowledge », with comment by Derek de Salla Price.

* *History with a French Accent* », three articles published as JMH, vol. 44, no. 4 (1972). Includes: Fernand Braudel, « Personal Testimony », H. R. Trevor-Roper, « Fernand Braudel, the *Annales*, and the Mediterranean », and J. H. Hexter, « Fernand Braudel and the *Monde Braudellien* ».

* *The Marginal Revolution in Economics* ». Eighteen conference papers published as HOPE, vol. 4, no. 2 (1972), pp. 263-624. Discussions of nature and context of the marginal revolution, with accounts of its spread to England, Italy, Austria, Japan, and America and with assessments of its impact.

Second Anglo-American Conference on New Economic History, Cambridge University, 1972. Published as EEH, vol. 10, no. 4 (1973). Relevant papers included below.

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Editor's Preface, FHP, no. 6 (1974), pp. 1-4. Commentary with contributors and paper titles (37 entries) relative to the Thirteenth International Seminar of the Committee of Family Research of the International Sociological Association.

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Martines, Lauro, *Early Effects of Credit Mechanisms in Italy*, JIH, vol. 4 (1974), pp. 603-609. Review discussion of books by Eliyah Ashtor, William Bowsky, Anthony Molho on medieval finance.

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WALACH, ISSER, *French Economic and Social History*, JIH, vol. 4 (1974), pp. 435-57. Major review article of FERNAND BRAUDEL and ERNEST LABROUSSE, eds., *Histoire économique et sociale de la France*, Tome II: *Des derniers temps de l'âge seigneurial aux préludes de l'âge industriel, 1660-1789.*

III. General approaches and technical applications to European topics

ANDERSON, MICHAEL, *A National Sample from the 1851 Census of Great Britain: A Summary of Aims and Procedure*, HMN, vol. 6 (1973), pp. 49-53. Computerized sampling of census to construct profile of British society.

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COLEMAN, EMILY R., *A Note on Medieval Peasant Demography*, HMN, vol. 5 (1972), pp. 53-58. Quantitative study of 9th century polyptych of St. German des Prés.

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