
REVIEWS OF BOOKS

T.A. BOYLAN - T.F. FOWLEY, *Political Economy and Colonial Ireland*, London, Routledge, 1992, pp. XIV + 208.

The diffusion of the teaching of political economy during the nineteenth century and the establishment of its academic autonomy in relation to courses in moral philosophy or public law have generally been interpreted both as the intellectual classes' answer to the intensification of economic relationships and as one aspect of a vaster process of cultural renewal. Boylan and Foley's book, which is part of wider research on the institutionalisation of economics in European, North American and Japanese universities, shows that such an interpretation can not be applied to Ireland, a country where the teaching of economics was introduced to consolidate the bases of English political hegemony.

Even in the 1830s it was commonly thought in Great Britain that the Irish did not study economics because it was contrary to their nature, believed to be "impulsive, irrational, prone to the precepts of the Catholic church"; therein was to be found the cause of Irish economic backwardness. On the contrary, a knowledge of political economy and an adherence to its "objective and universally valid" laws would have enabled the country not only to reach prosperity but also to overcome the religious, social, political and cultural divisions which characterised Ireland at every level. So the study of economics was deemed a valid instrument to give Ireland stability without changing its socio-political order.

For Boylan and Foley, the apostle of this mission was Richard Whately, the Anglican Archbishop of Dublin from 1831 to 1863 and one-time Professor of Political Economy at Oxford. In 1832 Whately founded the first chair of Political Economy in Ireland at Trinity College, Dublin, and, as a member of the National Education Board, included the teaching of political economy in school syllabuses. Whately was then the founding father and first President of the Dublin Statistical Society, which later became the Statistical and Social

Inquiry Society of Ireland. This was founded in 1847 to promote social sciences and called upon in 1849 to manage the Barrington Fund which had been set up fifteen years previously by a rich Dublin merchant to hold a series of public lectures on economics, aimed especially at the working class and rural population. In addition, Queen's Colleges in Belfast, Cork and Galway and the Queen's University of Ireland were founded between 1845 and 1850, and all attached importance to the teaching of political economy.

Whately's commitment to the diffusion of this discipline was completed with the publication of a manual in 1833, *Easy Lessons on Money Matters for the Use of Young People*, which had a large circulation even outside the Anglo-Saxon area. But when he realised that his readers were mainly middle-class, whereas he had intended to address the widest possible public, Whately got his *Easy Lessons* included in school text books.

Boylan and Foley note that this aspect reveals more clearly the ideological spirit and the deeply contradictory nature of Whately's work. While the teaching of political economy was promoted at every level so that adherence to those principles of behaviour deemed universally valid would lead to the removal of the many divisions in Irish society, those very laws stated by Whately had scant or non-existent scientific basis, since they aimed to preserve the existing social order. For example, not only did Whately condemn the regulation of economic life by state intervention and the trade unions, which he accused of every infamy, but, by recourse to Holy Scripture, he managed to prove that the distribution of wealth was unchangeable and that there had to be paupers.

The first and most violent criticisms of Whately's teaching were aimed at his *laissez-faire* doctrine during the Great Famine of 1846-47. More generally, some exponents of the first generation of Irish social scientists, trained in the institutions which Whately founded, announced that they did not believe in the alleged objectivity of political economy nor in the possibility of applying to Ireland, a rural and socially backward country, those principles which were valid for an industrial economy like the English economy. A lot of ink was spilled to find an economic doctrine closer to Catholic morals and more pertinent to Ireland's real problems, such as for example the structure of land ownership, a problem about which feelings ran high in a country in which agrarian reform had yet to be carried out.

The confrontation between, on one side, Whately and his "orthodox" economists and, on the other, the supporters of an Irish political economy, was sharp but rich in original contributions including some concerning the ensuing debate in the English academic world on the degree of scientism in political economy.

In this period, some interesting figures among Irish economists emerge on both sides, such as M. Longfield, I. Butt and W.N. Hancock. However it would be a waste of time looking for these names in books on the history of economic thought because English cultural hegemony reacted against a de-

bate which would have undermined the very bases of its existence, thus reinforcing the common opinion that in Ireland political economy was an unknown or a thwarted science. This opinion became so consolidated in time as to be accepted uncritically even by a scholar so free from prejudice as J.K. Galbraith, who, in *The Age of Uncertainty* (1977), declared that there was no Irish economist of international standing.

And so it must be acknowledged that Boylan and Foyley have not only written an accurate, well-documented history of the diffusion of political economy in Ireland, but have also belied this prejudice once and for all.

GAETANO SABATINI

Faculty of Transport Economics
and International Trade, Naples

A. CASANOVA, *Paysans et Machines à la fin du XVIIIe siècle. Essai d'ethnologie historique*. Paris, Annales Littéraires de l'Université de Besançon, 1990, pp. 380.

Can the introduction or, viceversa, the non-introduction of a technological innovation act as an indicator of the subsequent progress and social and economic dynamics by which an agricultural area undergoes change over the centuries? Antoine Casanova sets out to answer this question with his careful and detailed research on the transformation of agricultural techniques in Corsica between the last decades of the eighteenth century and the start of the nineteenth century. Yet the book's interest lies not so much in the analysis of the technological changes which occurred on the island in this period, as in the attempt to identify the various elements which explain and justify the existence of obstacles to modernisation. In a historiographical perspective oriented towards an understanding of how things actually happened rather than on their condemnation, the author appears to be examining the deep-seated rationality of the choices made by the Corsican agricultural classes, without, moreover, condemning their backwardness. It is only by analysing the complex mechanism of resistance factors, of their force in opposing innovation, that he succeeds in contextualising the weak incentive to transform the old productive structures or the tendency to give priority only to innovations which the rural communities could more easily adapt to. The study has been conducted not only using archival records but also using ethnological sources such as the testimonies of members of surviving rural communities and the finding of old implements, showing that if the problems to be addressed are defined and clarified beforehand, an ethnological approach can satisfy the demands of an economic historian and produce a fertile and profitable interdisciplinary relationship.

To illustrate the difficulties and contradictions arising from the transformation of production, we should firstly consider the knotty complex of problems connected with territorial characteristics and the quality of soils. The first big differentiation introduced by the author in the chapter on the equipment for working the land is that which distinguishes between mountain, hill and plain and which has a notable influence on labour productivity: to work a *bacinata* of cereal-growing land, ten days were needed in the mountains and five on the plain. On the stony soils and slopes in the districts of Bastia, Calvi and Corte, the replacement of the "guaglione" — a heavy mattock with a sharp blade and a rather long handle — with the spade which was more commonly used in the deep and damp ground of the flat areas, met with big obstacles. Similarly the "ermaccio", a very basic form of plough which could dig earth that was just over six centimetres deep, was preferred in the mountain areas to the heavy ploughs, which were especially common in the Ajaccio area. Its lightness was well suited to the difficulties in transporting implements from the villages to the mountain and hill plots, and, more generally, to the type of settlement characterised by the concentration of peasants dwellings in villages which were often quite far from the places of production. These were not, of course, characteristics peculiar to Corsican agriculture since they were common elements in other Mediterranean areas, as, for example, in South Italy. The nail plough, which consisted of a nail driven through a wooden pole, was the most widely found in the countryside of the south, and was used in the Apennine regions until very recently. Although since the eighteenth century it had been strongly criticised by contemporary experts and agronomists, its continued use and survival throughout the centuries derives from its particular shape, which itself had been often cited as symptomatic of an extremely backward form of agriculture. Light and easy to transport, it worked on especially difficult ground owing to the form of the ploughshare: the "nail" managed to dig into very stony soils which were not very deep, making it possible to plough. If on the one hand its requisites responded to the needs of this particular type of land and farming, on the other hand they acted as a powerful break on the replacement of this ancient plough by a modern iron implement.

The typology of the implements changed according to the social context of the different agricultural groups, and particularly in relation to the availability of capital, animals and the size of holdings. Only the big landowners who had several hundreds of hectares of the best cereal-growing land could employ more efficient and speedier labour techniques such as the improved ploughs. Peasant labourers who did not possess oxen or cows could only use hand implements. Nevertheless, in Sardinia the role played by an authentic class of pure wage-earners seems to be quite modest compared to the smallholder who owned a plot of land and integrated his income with the stipulation of a share-cropping contract, or *mezzadria* (one of the most widespread was the "compagnonnage" especially in the central-southern part of the is-

land in the Sartene and Ajaccio region), with the better-off landowners providing the land, the seeds, the animals and the agricultural implements. Historiography has often emphasised how this type of contract acted as a brake on any form of technical and productive transformation. In particular, Giorgio Giorgetti, in his analysis of the relationships between share-cropping and agricultural progress in Italian rural areas, points out the contract's many contradictory aspects. Generally speaking this type of contract involved a landowner-sharecropper relationship which strongly opposed any innovation. The sharecropper was obliged to provide the main agricultural implements and this slowed down the spread of modern farming tools. As it was, in view of the high prices, only the owner could purchase the implements, but he had no incentive to make such investment since he would have had to hand over part of the benefit to the sharecropper. Moreover, the fact that the contract was short term restrained the sharecropper from making improvements — the costs of which would have been shared equally with the owner — because the sharecropper would have benefited little if at all from the results of his labour were he forced to leave the land.

And so the complex combination of restraining forces which delayed the arrival of new technologies must be sought in the morphological features of the land and in the quality of the plots, in the structure of the holdings and in how the land was managed. Other factors are those connected with the specificity of the agricultural environment and of the organisation of labour which the author deals with mainly in the chapters on water mills and olive presses. Made up of small holders who worked their own land, rural communities had a mixed farming system based on animal grazing and cereals in which tree growing had a limited role. Mixed farming demanded complex professional abilities, suited to carrying out a whole cycle of various jobs which did not fit in well with modern specialised work. The *presse a torsion*, for example, a very simple wooden press with a much more basic form than that used in Ancient Egypt, was very widespread on the island, especially in the Bastia, Calvi and Corté districts, until the beginning of the twentieth century. The oil press was used only for a short period during the peasant family's yearly work cycle, but friends and relations were also involved. However, it must be added that the author leaves unanswered various questions on these topics. Did these communities have an economy based entirely on home consumption, or was part of the product used to satisfy external demand? If the latter were the case, was it a local or a extralocal market? Did Corsica have some role in international markets or was she totally cut off from them? Did the island feel the effects of the great changes which affected part of the European economy in those years? Piero Bevilacqua has shown how in Southern Italy the nature of international demand helped to discourage agricultural modernisation in some sectors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For example olive processing and presses were modernised very late because of the constant demand for oil on the part of the Marseilles soap factories and En-

glish manufacturing. Thus it was the unrefined oil, the poorest quality, that could be produced even with archaic machinery, which had a privileged market in South Italy.

On the whole, the book enlarges and enriches a historiographical tradition which has produced some very prestigious works. These include Marc Bloch's study on the introduction of ploughs on the Central Europea plains, Emilio Sereni's thoughts on the burning of stubble, Giorgio Giorgetti's work on the relationship between innovation and agrarian contracts and Carlo Poni's research on technological change in the Bologna region. In contributing to building up a historical record of the difficulties and the problems encountered by agricultural modernisation in Mediterranean countries, Casanova's book clears the field of facile criticisms about the inertia and ineptitude of the social classes present on the land. It shows how long, slow, difficult and complex the process of adaptation to homogeneous and uniform technological process was in those areas whose agricultural landscapes were characterised — and still are today — by extreme variety and multiformity.

GABRIELLA CORONA

Research Institute for the Southern
Italian Economy, Naples

D. GRIGG, *The Transformation of Agriculture in the West*, Oxford U.K. - Cambridge Mass., Basil Blackwell, 1992, pp. XV - 141.

Already noted in Europe for his methodological studies on the dynamics of change in agriculture, David Grigg now consolidates his reputation with his analysis of the transformations affecting this sector in western countries during the last two centuries. This is certainly an ambitious objective if one considers the breadth of the time span and the vastness of the geographical area under study. Nevertheless the author largely succeeds in achieving such an objective, providing a very complete picture of the main changes affecting agriculture in North America, Western Europe, New Zealand and Australia from the beginning of the nineteenth century. In this way Grigg seeks to fill in the gap left by contemporary historical, economic and sociological literature which in studying the changes that have accompanied the expansion of the wealth of nations and the improvement in the standard of living for the majority of the population, has neglected an analysis of the processes of agricultural modernisation. Yet these play a role of fundamental importance in helping to determine an inversion in tendency which is without precedent in the whole of human history. It is certain, in fact, that the disappearance of famine and hunger, the perennial plague of traditional agricultural societies, depended largely on the growth of the productive capacity of the land and of

labour. According to data provided by the author, the agricultural product rose threefold in Germany in the course of the nineteenth century, ninefold in France between 1700 and 1960, in England in the same proportion between 1800 and 1980, while in the U.S.A. in 1940 it stood seventeen times higher than during the first decades of the nineteenth century.

The problem of constructing a specific timespan for the innovatory process, choosing significant turning points to create a periodisation, is closely tied to the problem of determining the main driving factors behind the transition from a traditional to modern system of agriculture: the industrial revolution, the expansion of markets and state intervention. If in the early phase agriculture made an important contribution to industrialisation, being the main supplier of labour and raw materials, in the second half of the nineteenth century it began to depend on industry for its inputs, especially on the introduction of chemical fertilisers and machinery for working the land and for gathering its fruits. An unprecedented phase of expansion began which slowed down in the interwar period to become a serious economic problem from the 1950s onwards, when the supply of foodstuffs began to exceed their demand. The pace of agricultural modernisation largely followed that of the industrial revolution. Consider English agriculture which already at the end of the eighteenth century saw the introduction of the first steam engines. However it should be added that the national territorial unit did not always reflect the actual geographical divisions within which the transformation was taking place and which in any case cannot emerge from such a broad-based analysis. For example, in Italy there were deep internal discrepancies in the diffusion of innovations and productivity increases. Moreover this was not simply a general diversity between North and South but was much more specific: the Po Valley, for example, where development took place at a pace and in a timespan similar to that of the most advanced English regions greatly contrasted with the north-eastern part of the peninsula and the South. As far as the latter was concerned, moreover, it was necessary to distinguish between the plain (the plain of Caserta and the Tableland) and the mountain areas, and between the areas around the cities (the Neapolitan hinterland) and those further away from the big centres. These circumstances lead us to take account of the regional rather than national nature of agricultural modernisation.

The process of industrialisation was closely linked to the commercialisation of agriculture, which forms the subject of the sixth chapter. The monetarisation of the economy and the expansion of markets, the revolution in transport and the growth of population, the increase in profits and demand for agricultural products, all contributed in a decisive way to modernising the agricultural sector. These phenomena were also characterised by deep internal discrepancies which have been documented by a great store of information. Just to quote one of the many examples, East Europe developed at a slower pace. During the 1960s an average of 13-25 percent of the product was con-

sumed on the farms of this part of the continent, compared to north-western Europe where it oscillated around 2-12 percent and the United States where it stood at 7 percent. The differences not only concerned uniform territorial areas but also the sizes of the enterprises. In Switzerland at the beginning of the century, farms with less than 5 hectares of land consumed 42 percent of their product, while those with more than 30 hectares consumed only 18 percent. Nevertheless the author is keen to point out that the roots of such processes reach back to a much more distant past and that they experienced irreversible development only in the course of the last two centuries. The population grew rapidly between 1100 and 1320, between 1480 and 1640 and between 1750 and 1820. The origins of the use of money reach back to the twelfth century in Italy. As for the expansion of town markets, these numbered 1500 in England in the thirteenth century and 4000 in Germany in the fifteenth century.

State intervention, which forms the main subject of the ninth chapter, became important especially after 1930, when the effects of the economic crisis led to protectionist policies for agricultural products and to support producers. We should, however, add that, besides the information given by the author, state intervention in the interwar period was not only indirect. For example in Italy the Fascist regime carried out a broad programme of agricultural modernisation for both political and economic ends; in this way it was itself the catalyst in diffusing new technologies mostly for cereal growing — machinery, chemical fertilisers, quality seeds — through bodies such as the Peripatetic Professors of Agriculture and Sheep Farming, the Commissions for Grain Propaganda and the Experimental Observatories that operated in the countryside in direct contact with the various agricultural groups.

Within the innovatory process there were important differences regarding the typologies of modernisation. The big differentiation discussed by the author concerns the innovations related to the land factor, which forms the subject of the second and fourth chapter, and those related to the labour factor, which is dealt with mainly in chapters three and five. It was precisely the availability of land and labour and the ratio between the agricultural population and the quantity of land which caused differences in the development processes of the continents under study. High population density in Europe meant that farmers tended to maximise production per hectare, while low density led farmers in North America and Australia to maximise labour productivity. Among innovations intended to make the land more productive were the extension of cultivable areas, the decline in the use of fallow land and the introduction of animal fodder pulses, the abolition of the open field system and the phenomenon of enclosures, the introduction of chemical fertilisers and the improvement of old equipment, the qualitative improvement of agricultural products and product specialisation. Within the various geographical areas there were, moreover, great differences in the pace and ways of modernisation. Mixed farming, for example, as an integrated system of cereal

growing and livestock farming had already spread in eastern England during the late seventeenth century but in France it was still confined to the areas around Paris in the 1840s. And when it became a generalised system in Western Europe in the 1930s onwards, it was still quite unknown in Eastern Europe where cereal growing prevailed.

As far as innovations related to the labour factor are concerned, the big change occurred with the spread of modern agricultural machinery intended to replace human and animal energy in various operations — ploughing, sowing, reaping, threshing, harvesting. If this gave rise to a sharp upturn in labour productivity, it also accelerated the heavy migratory flow from the countryside after the second world war and led to the progressive loss of weight and importance of the agricultural sector within the modern western economies. The real revolution in this sector took place with the advent of the tractor which, unlike earlier machinery, eventually freed itself from external energy sources such as electric and steam power. Adopted very quickly in the United States at the beginning of this century, the tractor became widely used in Europe between 1950 and 1970. Ahead of the European countries was Germany, followed by Great Britain and then Italy, while Denmark and Belgium came last.

This book, then, is a fundamental point of reference for an area of studies which still lacks a consolidated historiographical tradition and which, apart from the work of Slicher Van Bath and Folke Døving, has mainly involved research of a local nature. Yet considering the importance of the themes being discussed and the questions raised about the past, this orientation requires further study and the gathering of new, more broadly-based knowledge. Consider, for example, the scarcely-explored area about the forces constraining modernisation, to which Grigg himself refers at certain points. If the book is structured so as to highlight the driving factors behind transformation, the writer also includes observations about the main obstacles to change. These were undoubtedly the continuance of the feudal system and of the village economies which the author deals with in the seventh chapter. Nevertheless, we should add that besides these aspects there are others, mostly tied to environmental cadres and economico-agrarian systems, which deserve more attention from scholars. This is surely an area rich in possible developments which opens up several issues and raises many questions about the role played by territorial constraints, the quality of soils, the nature of settlement and the structure of ownership, in determining, within the specific contexts, the type of regional path taken to agricultural modernisation, which at the same time became influential in slowing down and even resisting change.

GABRIELLA CORONA
Research Institute for the Southern
Italian Economy, Naples

- P. KRIEDTE, *Eine Stadt am seidenen Faden. Haushalt. Hasuindustrie und Soziale Bewegung in Krefeld in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999, pp. 436 + 3 diagrams.

With this exhaustive monograph on Krefeld, the silk town, Peter Kriedte has without doubt made a fundamental contribution to illustrating and above all to legitimising many of the assumptions about the protoindustrial model. Kriedte has always been, of course, among the theorists of this debated historiographical paradigm, one of the most concrete researchers, averse to formulating excessive abstractions and ready to accept the necessary correctives for the model itself. It is not by chance that, straightaway in the introduction, Kriedte points out that one cannot emphasise the moral development of Krefeld's silk factories and minimise the importance of the town, contrary to what had been claimed in the first version of *Industrialisierung vor der Industrialisierung*. A corrective to what has been one of the mainstays of the theses of F. Mendels and of H. Medick and J. Schlumbohm — co-authors of the aforementioned book — and a corrective which had been called for in the numerous papers and discussions on such propositions, but one which moreover had already been put forward in the introductory paper given by Kriedte himself during the sessions on protoindustry at the Economic History Congress in Budapest (1982). Again the reader is favourably impressed by the empirical research on the much debated transition from decentralised manufacture to the factory system. This crucial issue, legitimately singled out as a fundamental assumption to refute (G. Mori's observations come to mind), has thus been settled by a detailed, documented inquiry which is difficult to fault. Moreover Kriedte is too good a historian to have really intended caging in a hypothetical transition protoindustry and industrialisation processes which of necessity had different meanings.

In any case what emerges from this book is the socio-economic insight into a German town where only in the 1880s was a factory system established, with all that meant in both social and economic terms. However it is equally certain that such a manufacturing process was preceded in earlier decades — a chronological period which is at the basis of this research — and even earlier during the eighteenth century by a widespread diffusion of cottage industry. However in 1840 it was the town of Krefeld which produced the greatest quantity of textiles: 3,124 looms were working in the town in 1840, while the surrounding territory had 2,376 (56.8% as opposed to 43.2%). In 1849, the number of looms had increased to 6,000, as opposed to 2,500 in the rural area, ie. 70.6% against 29.4%. But the *Umland* gained ground with the manufacture of ribbons: 87.5% of the total, as opposed to 12.5% in Krefeld in 1840 and 89.4% as opposed to 10.5% in the town in 1852 (Table 11 on page 72).

First and foremost a study in social history, the book does however show how Krefeld's silk production penetrated the European markets, although

one would have hoped for more detail and a more careful comparative approach.

Nevertheless, the book does provide a very comprehensive picture of the weavers' families (at times one has the impression that it is too comprehensive), that is to say the size of families, marriagable age, birth and death rates, to what extent the trade was handed down among weavers and artisans in general, and the impact of the agricultural cycle and craft activities on their social reproduction. Indeed it is amply illustrated how the price of rye could influence the marriage rate, as indeed did silk production later. In effect, the influence of agriculture and cottage industry on the marriage rate diminished in the second half of the nineteenth century (but the same conclusions can be drawn for other data regarding the families of silk-workers), although not to such an extent that they ceased to have an influence on that important mechanism of social reproduction, the marriage rate, as is shown by the opening of the American market in the 1870s and the great volume of exports which followed.

The *Bevölkerungsliste* (general analytical census) published in 1840, the backbone of this research, together with other sources (the author regrets that the judicial acts have been lost), has enabled light to be thrown on many other aspects. One of these is the social context of Krefeld and its suburbs, which it has been possible to construct in the same way as Lyons, ever increasingly identified with the silk industry. In particular, the process of proletarianisation (the increase in the social strata made up of *Unterschichten*, the German sub-classes) was more keenly felt in the suburbs than in the *Innenstadt*: the reference to the working-class districts of Lyons (Croix-Rousse, Guillotiere et Vase) is obvious. The religious situation as it was in 1840 (Catholics, Evangelicals, Mennonites and Jews) is likewise analysed in detail in 1840, so that its evolution in the second half of the nineteenth century can be followed. This was at the time when, with the manufacturing system firmly established, the formation of what could be defined imperfectly as a class consciousness and the spread of socialist ideas, the role of religious communities was changed. For example, the Mennonites played a smaller role than the Catholics.

The year 1848 was crucial in the growth of collective efforts designed to defend silk weavers and spinners against the power exercised by the Verleger. It was in that year that they tried to set up a *Lohnliste* (a wage table), of which the merchant-entrepreneurs took little notice, however, after the failure of the Revolution. On the contrary, according to the master weavers, in the following years it had become almost customary for the entrepreneurs to pay 10% less than the wages established in the *Lohnliste*. Only in 1870 did they try to rebuild trade-union unity but they did not succeed in reconstructing the social solidarity there had been in 1848. In a certain sense, the *Lohnliste* had taken on the value of a paradigm, representing the crucial moment of a *moralischen Okonomie* which was thence overcome by different production

relations: those of an industrial society which in its turn was being created in those same decades.

SALVATORE CIRIACONO
University of Padua

E. MOREAU, *The Golden Franc: Memoirs of a Governor of the Bank of France: The Stabilization of the Franc (1926-1928)*, trans. by Stephen D. Stoller and Trevor C. Roberts. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991, pp. 574.

When the *Revue des Deux Mondes* published extracts from Emile Moreau's diary in 1937, Moreau's closest advisors during the stabilization of the franc — Charles Rist and Pierre Quesnay — as well as Emile Labeyrie, then governor of the Bank of France, tried to stop publication, and the government considered withdrawing Moreau's honorary governorship of the Bank. Divulging intimate details of central bank governance was conduct unbecoming for a former governor. Moreau's diary for the period from June 1926 to the *de jure* stabilization of the franc in June 1928 was published posthumously in 1954, and has long been recognized as an exceptional source for the politics of stabilization, as well as for its details about central bank relations, state-bank relations, and the exercise of financial power for diplomatic ends. The minutes of the weekly meetings of the *Conseil Général* contain no trace of the stabilization disputes within the Bank, and only formal indications of the test of wills between Moreau and Poincaré: Charles Rist states that the problem of the stabilisation of the franc was never raised in the *Conseil Général*. Moreau's diary provides the inside story of the battles over stabilization; it is a frank and intimate record of his daily contacts, his opinions, his suspicions and his prejudices. It is of interest not only to historians of monetary policy, but to anyone interested in central banking, state-bank relations, French politics, and international financial diplomacy.

Moreau took charge of the bank of France when its prestige was at low ebb. The Bank had offered but weak resistance to government demands for monetization of the growing public debt, had falsified its balance sheets to conceal that the note issue had exceeded its legal limit, and had issued notes to finance its own real-estate developments. Moreau was suspect as a political appointment. He had to win the confidence of the regents of the Bank, and of Raymond Poincaré, who took office as premier and minister of finance one month after Moreau's appointment. Moreau had been a protégé of Maurice Rouvier and appointed governor by Joseph Caillaux — both had been political rivals of Poincaré; he took the place of Georges Robineau, a childhood friend of Poincaré who had cooperated with Poincaré governments

earlier in the 1920s. Moreau stood up to the regents and to Poincaré: when Poincaré threatened to recall Robineau in July 1926 because Moreau refused to discount treasury bills, the governor replied, "Mr. Prime Minister, that is an excellent idea. Recall Mr. Robineau", and started for the door. Poincaré backed down. Moreau held rigidly to his duty as he conceived it: to restore the stability of the franc and the prestige of the Bank through a rigid application of the Bank's statutes, guarding the Bank's independence from both the government and the private interests of the regents.

Although unable to speak English and suspicious of foreigners, Moreau opened the Bank to contacts with foreign central banks and sought an international role for Paris as a financial centre. After *de facto* stabilization of the franc, he tried to use the Bank's sterling balances to challenge Montagu Norman and the Bank of England in their leadership of European monetary reconstruction. His diary provides a remarkably honest and unselfconscious record of the rivalry and tension between the central banks in Paris and London, stating openly his desire to use French financial power for political ends while insisting that he could not involve himself in politics.

Moreau's own views were narrowly orthodox, but he sought and selected from the ideas of talented advisors: Quesnay, his director of economic studies; Rist, deputy governor of the Bank; and Verdier, borrowed from the Crédit Lyonnais to set up the Bank's foreign exchange department. Quesnay claims, "I have the ideas, Rist filters them, and Moreau bangs his fist on the table to bring them off". But the diary shows Moreau to have been adept and resolute in choosing from the advice he was offered; he resisted both Quesnay and Rist on the matter of timing Bank intervention to stabilize the franc. Once he had chosen his course, he held to it. H.A. Siepmann, who as an advisor to Norman had been on the receiving end of Moreau's diplomacy, later described Moreau as "stupid, obstinate, formidable... a magnificent fighter, for narrow and greedy ends. A pragmatist without a conscience, who could do endless harm with zest and conviction, but would be an asset to any side".

Moreau's diary remains the most revealing source available on the stabilization of the franc, the power struggle between the Bank and the Ministry of Finance, and the rivalry between the central banks in Paris and London. Its belated translation into English is welcomed with forewords by Charles Kindleberger and Milton Friedman. Friedman notes that Moreau's diary convinced him that it was politically intolerable to have an "independent" central bank, and that had a translation been available when he and Anna Schwartz wrote *A Monetary History of the United States*, they would have assigned France a greater share of the blame for the international contraction of 1929-33.

The translation by Stephen D. Stoller and Trevor C. Roberts is sound, with rare slips, such as an "unofficial note" (*note officieuse*) issued by the Ministry of Finance on Moreau's appointment becoming an "officious note"

(p. 17). Moreau's prose is translated literally, producing slightly stilted English, but conveying Moreau's obstinacy and conviction. The translators have corrected the most obvious of Moreau's frequent misspellings of the names of those with whom he came in contact (George Harrison, Cecil Lubbock, H. A. Siepmann); others such as Charles Cariguel, G. W. J. Bruins, James Addison Logan, Reginald McKenna and Leon Fraser remain subject to Moreau's phonetic spellings, one of the charms of the original. S. Parker Gilbert, initially rendered by Moreau as "Parker-Gilbert", suffers the indignity of reduction to "Mr. Parker". When Moreau switches to refer to him correctly as Mr. Gilbert, the translators apologetically continue to call him Mr. Parker.

The accompanying preface and notes contain several errors. The Bank was not yet "committed" to a policy of maintaining the franc at 124 francs to the pound in late August 1926, nor had it achieved *de facto* stabilization "by the fall of 1926" (p. xix); Caillaux was Minister of Finance, not Minister of Justice, when he appointed Moreau (p. 540). The index has not been improved from the French original, citing names only. Indications as to subject would be useful for Moreau's relations with Benjamin Strong, Montagu Norman, Charles Rist and Pierre Quesnay: Rist and Quesnay have more than one hundred entries each; for Poincaré, the index refers the reader to pages 1-525.

None of this detracts from the reading of Moreau himself. The tumult of his daily meetings with bankers and treasury officials, politicians and the press, and his laconic record of plans, prejudices and gossip, provide an engrossing inside account of the day-to-day life of a central bank governor restoring order and accountability out of something close to chaos. As an historical document it remains unique, immediate, and captivating.

KENNETH MOURE

University of California, Santa Barbara/Institute for Advanced Study

J. C. RILEY, *Sickness, Recovery and Death: A History and Forecast of Ill Health*, Houndmills, London, Macmillan, 1989, pp. xvi-295, including tables and diagrams.

Historical demography is presently experiencing robust internal growth but difficulty in expanding outwards: if some of its fields of research have proven to be suitable exports — such as the British school of studies on the structure of the European family which is being rapidly absorbed by social history — overall its application to history and economic history is still at an elementary stage and is confined to the mechanical recording of the main statistical data. For the historian who is able to use it intelligently, without get-

ting lost in technicalities and going to the heart of the matter, Riley's book offers an excellent opportunity for coming to grips with the mechanisms that determine demographic macrophenomena.

Riley has carried out a great work of synthesis which sets out to outline the principal coordinates of modern history from the demographic point of view. The theme of sickness — falling ill and being ill — is at the centre of his historical reconstruction, which, starting with the seventeenth century, covers four centuries of the past and — in an attempt at forecasting — one of the future. Integrating the aggregate data with small samples (owing to the scarcity of sources and changes in the concept of illness over time the phenomenon is one of the most refractory for historical enquiry), Riley aims to show the existence of an inverse correlation between mortality and morbidity, dispelling the common assumption that the decline in mortality went hand in hand with a fall in the incidence of illness.

A breakdown of the analysis from the point of view of social groups and a correlation between demographic, economic and social data are certainly still needed; but even Riley's specialist approach provides valuable material for reconstructing the experience and everyday lives of men in the past: "Every life is a story of states of health...". The frequency of illness and health expectancy are not merely statistical material: they form part of emotive matter which is wide open to enquiry.

From prehistoric times, the survival curve has been steadily rising and makes a sharp upturn only from the eighteenth century onwards as a result not of biological changes but of men's ability to adapt to pathogenic agents and to learn from experience. The fall in mortality rates is the great feature of the last two centuries' demographic history, with a slowing-down phase in the period covering the fifty years from the 1820s to the 1870s. A constant however is the dependence of the risk of mortality on factors such as sex, the standard of living and above all age. The same applies to the risk of morbidity, although the behaviour patterns of the two variables, mortality and morbidity, are not parallel.

What is the relation between the revolution in mortality rates and illness? At the root of the fall in mortality was the decline in the incidence of epidemic disease. On the other hand, chronic and degenerative diseases increased. In other words, the risk of falling ill followed very closely the dynamics of mortality, while the incidence of illness in the lives of individuals did not. An analysis of case studies (the incidence of death and sickness among employees in firms which had set up a fund to assist sick workers) shows that between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries the situation is complex. Industrial growth did not lead to an increase in sickness but rather to greater difficulty in forecasting it, while the fluctuations in mortality did not have any direct relation with fluctuations in morbidity in this phase of transition.

The situation in the late nineteenth century shows that the transition to a new demographic regime characterised by low mortality was not character-

rised by a decline in morbidity but rather by its short-term variations. There was an increase in the chances of recovery and in the duration of sickness rather than in the number of illnesses. "The more life expectation gained, the more the aggregate risk of being sick increases", a risk which remained correlated to age. In other words, in a period of rapidly declining mortality the risk of falling ill remained constant for every age group while the risk of being sick increased.

In the twentieth century this apparent paradox, which combines the decline in mortality with the increase in morbidity, has been fully realised: what the author most appropriately calls "the transition from an age of death to an age of sickness" has now materialised. A regime based on both low mortality and low morbidity has yet to be achieved: its advent depends on prevention, a better quality of life and the overcoming of degenerative disease.

Through Riley's book, historical demography — which is still a somewhat neglected discipline and relegated to excessive specialisation — assumes the task of defining the objectives for the future and of reminding us that in this post-historical period many of the promises of modernity have yet to be carried out.

COSTANZA D'ELIA

Research Institute for the Southern Italian Economy, Naples