

# NEHA



The Newsletter of the New England Historical Association

Volume XI, No. 2

FALL 1984

## Calendar

OCTOBER 27, 1984

FALL MEETING AT FRAMINGHAM STATE COLLEGE, MASSACHUSETTS

DECEMBER 1, 1984

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING AT LESLEY COLLEGE IN CAMBRIDGE

APRIL 26-27, 1985

SPRING MEETING AT BOWDOIN COLLEGE IN BRUNSWICK, MAINE

OCTOBER 26, 1985

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY MEETING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT IN STORRS

DAVID EMORY SWEET (1933-1984):

FRIEND AND SPONSOR OF NEHA  
Dr. David E. Sweet, 51, President of Rhode Island College since 1977 suffered a diabetic seizure and cardiac arrest and died on September 16. David Sweet was born in Holyoke, Massachusetts. He obtained a doctorate in political science at Duke University [1967]. Professor Sweet was a member of NEHA and loved history, particularly biography. In 1980 he agreed to establish an executive office for NEHA at Rhode Island College and to provide the association with an executive secretary, office and computer services. He was a benefactor of our association and made a noteworthy contribution to it.

### COMPUTERS MEET SCRIBES AT FALL MEETING IN FRAMINGHAM

Framingham State College will be host for the October 27 meeting of the association. Information and registration forms were mailed to the membership and subscribers to the Newsletter. The local arrangements were made by Joseph Harrington. Ridgway F. Shinn, Jr. constructed the program consisting of two plenary and three specialized sessions. Program details are published on page three. For more information call the Executive Office at 401-456-9714.

### MAINE HISTORIANS HOST TWO-DAY CONFERENCE IN APRIL

The two-day meeting scheduled for Brunswick reaches out to our yonder constituencies and northern hospitality. Program plans are well in hand for a larger number of papers and sessions, plus more opportunities for socializing. Information and details will be mailed out in February, along with travel directions and motel listings. Plan now to attend.

### NATALIE Z. DAVIS TO RECEIVE MEDIA AWARD AT SPRING BOWDOIN MEETING

The Executive Committee voted to bestow the 1985 NEHA Media Award on Princeton Professor Natalie Davis for her work as consultant on the celebrated film THE RETURN OF MARTIN GUERRE. There will be a special showing of the film at a plenary session on Friday evening, followed by the presentation of the citation to Natalie. There will also be a discussion of the film and the role of the historian consultant.



## from the Editor

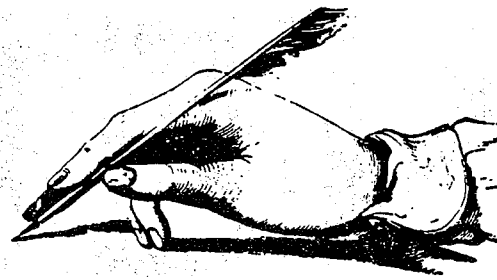
EDITORIAL CORRECTION: The title of Natalie Davis' Harvard lecture reported in NEHA NEWS [Vol XI, No. 1: April, 1984] was incorrect and misleading. The correct title should read THE Sacred and Conjugal Sexuality in Sixteenth Century Lyon. Omission of "the" seriously altered the meaning, giving the impression that the talk was about sacred sexuality. What a difference a byte makes.

The Editor invites members and readers to contribute items for the newsletter: reports, critiques or commentaries for the NEW ENGLAND LECTURES column; review essays; notices of awards, grants or prizes; short articles on teaching or curriculum innovations.

The election of officers for 1985-1986 will be held at the Fall Meeting. The slate prepared by the Nominating Committee and brief biographies of candidates appears in this issue. Ballots will be distributed at Framingham.

110 persons registered at the AAS meeting in Worcester and 98 attended the luncheon. John Hench issued a standing invitation to return. Members also asked for a reprise.

The Executive Committee voted to establish a Life Membership category for NEHA. The sum was set at \$150 during the 20th Anniversary period [until Fall 1985]. Thereafter the sum will be set at \$200.



## CALL FOR PAPERS

Program proposals for the Spring 1985 meeting at Bowdoin and the Fall 1985 meeting at Storrs are invited. Papers and/or complete sessions in the following areas are especially desired: ancient and classical period, theory and method, non-western topics and themes, Canadian history, 19th and recent US history. Papers and sessions on retrospective themes and new directions in the profession are sought for the 20th Anniversary meeting at Storrs. Contact Ridgway F. Shinn, Rhode Island College, Providence, RI 02908 by December 1.

The report of the Book Awards committee chaired by Alan Reinerman has been sent to President Formisano for adoption by the Executive Committee.

WANTED: a host institution for the Spring Meeting in 1986. Suggested locations: Kennedy Library, U Mass, Boston College, Deerfield.

The Executive Secretary contacted the AHA Headquarters in Washington about participation in the Regional Teaching Conference Program. The response was favorable, but the deadline for current consideration caught us unprepared. Any ideas for topics, themes, participants and locations should be submitted to one of the association officers.

Contributions to the 20th Anniversary Fund in amounts ranging from \$2 to \$25 continue to come in. All donations are tax deductible. Send yours in anytime.

## FALL MEETING

NEW ENGLAND HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION  
OCTOBER 27, 1984  
FRAMINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

8:00 - 9:00 REGISTRATION [College Center]

9:00 AM PLENARY SESSION I

CURRENT PROBLEMS AND NEW PROSPECTS FOR COMPUTER USE BY HISTORIANS  
"DOING AND TEACHING HISTORY WITH COMPUTERS"

"INTRODUCING QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS"

Robert Schwartz, Mount Holyoke College

"TEACHING WITH THE 19th CENTURY CENSUS"

R. Burr Litchfield, Brown University

"COMPUTER-ASSISTED INSTRUCTION IN THE WESTERN CIVILIZATION SURVEY"

David S. Thomas and Jeffrey Newton, Rhode Island College

Chair: R. Burr Litchfield

Comment: The Audience

10:45 COFFEE INTERMISSION

11:00 AM CONCURRENT SESSIONS

### 1. ASPECTS OF EARLY AMERICAN RELIGIOUS CULTURE

"EXPRESSIONS OF POPULAR RELIGIOUS SENSIBILITY: RELATIONS OF CONVERSION FROM 18th CENTURY WESTBOROUGH"

Ross W. Beales, Jr., College of the Holy Cross

"JONATHAN EDWARDS' MOST POPULAR WORK: The Life of David Brainerd AND 19th CENTURY EVANGELICAL CULTURE"

Joseph A. Conforti, Rhode Island College

Chair: Richard D. Brown, University of Connecticut

Comment: Irene Quenzler Brown (Human Development and Family Relations) University of Connecticut

### 2. NEW USES OF OLD RECORDS: ARCHIVES IN NEW ENGLAND

"MODERN RECORDS IN THE ARCHIVES OF THE COMMONWEALTH FOR SOCIAL HISTORY"

Albert Whitaker, Archivist of the Commonwealth

Other panelists TBA

Chair: Mary Morgan, Boston College

### 3. BLACKS LOOK AT THE STATE OF ISRAEL

"ISRAEL, JEWS, AND BLACK AMERICANS"

Robert Weisbord, University of Rhode Island

Chair: TBA

Comment: Morris Lounds (Political Science), University of Massachusetts, Boston

12:30 SHERRY HOUR

1:00 LUNCHEON AND BUSINESS MEETING

2:15 PLENARY SESSION II

### MYSTERY AS HISTORY: SAINTS, SINNERS AND SLEUTHS

PERSPECTIVES ON The Name Of The Rose

"AS MYSTERY GENRE"

C. Annette Ducey, Rhode Island College (English)

"AS HISTORY"

Dean Ware, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

"AS LANGUAGE AND LITERARY CRITICISM"

Michel-Andre Bossy, Brown University (Comparative Literature)

Chair: Ridgway F. Shinn, Jr., Rhode Island College

Comment: The Audience

# PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

SPRING 1984

## FASCISM IN ITALY: "REVOLUTION" OR "REVELATION"?

Emiliana P. Noether  
University of Connecticut, Storrs

The debate over whether Fascism represented a revolutionary "parenthesis" in the historical development of modern Italy, or whether it was a "revelation" of intrinsic weakness in the Italian character and past history began even before Fascism came to power. Those who interpreted Fascism as a parenthesis viewed it as a revolt against the established order, a violent response to a crisis brought about by the war, a "revolution" by certain groups, impatient with what they considered to be the ineptitude and inefficiency of the democratic process. Those who viewed it as a revelation claimed it reflected certain inherent flaws in the Italian character, and was the inevitable sequel to all past Italian history.

These conflicting interpretations were first advanced by Benedetto Croce and Giustino Fortunato, two of Italy's leading pre-1914 intellectuals. After initially describing Fascism as an expression of youthful exuberance which age and experience would temper, Croce became the leader of the internal intellectual opposition to Fascism and a defender of liberal Italy, for him a period of progress and achievements, against its critics.[1] Thus, in Croce's view Fascism could only be a "parenthesis," a temporary deviation from the path of liberalism and democracy. By contrast, as early as 1921, before Fascism came to power, Giustino Fortunato, one of liberal Italy's most respected leaders, had identified what he considered to be a basic weakness in the Italian state. Created through the efforts of "a small minority of intellectuals....it was not...possible that in only fifty years it...could unify thirty-five million men who lacked civic discipline because they lacked moral discipline, into a state other than the present...sick body." [2] Five years later, after the Fascist dictatorship had been established, Fortunato saw in Fascism a revelation of the true Italian character.[3] Both interpretations have inspired historians for the past sixty years.

Taking a Crocean view of pre-1914 Italy are two studies by an American and an Italian historian, respectively. A. William Salomone's Italy in the Giolittian Era. Italian Democracy in the Making, 1900-1914 first published in 1945, evaluated, in the light of historical evidence, the achievements of the last peaceful decade in pre-Fascist Italy and found that much progress had been made. In the 1970s, the Italian scholar Alberto Aquarone reviewed what liberal Italy had actually achieved from 1861 to 1914 and concluded that much had been done, in comparison to conditions at the time of unification. To try to judge Italy, he concluded, by the standards of countries whose existence as independent unified states with viable economies much antedated that of Italy would result only in invidious comparisons.[4]

Fortunato's "revelation" interpretation has enjoyed the greater popularity. In a sense, it exculpates the Italian people from wilfully embracing Fascism. At the same time, however, it condemns them to everlasting political damnation. They cannot escape their past destiny, which set the pattern for what happened from 1922 to 1943, and presumably will continue to prevent the emergence of a viable democracy in their country. Such a deterministic view of history dooms Italy and its people, like Dante's sinners, to political perdition, with little hope for salvation and a place in the liberal democratic heaven. Among those who have embraced this pessimistic view were the anti-Fascist Giuseppe Borgese and the English historian Denis Mack Smith.

In 1937 Borgese released Goliath, the March of Fascism, one of the most comprehensive indictments of pre-Fascist Italy. Published almost on the eve of the Second World War, Borgese's work enjoyed much popularity and influenced subsequent American views of the place of Fascism in Italian history. After the war, Mack Smith, following in the footsteps of Fortunato, has interpreted Italian history as the preface to Fascism, and finds all pre-Fascist leaders, including Cavour, the liberal nineteenth century statesman, guilty of proto-Fascist political behavior.[5] In the immediate post-1945 years many Italian historians indulged in an examination of conscience and identified a presumed moral and political Italian malaise as the leitmotiv of their country's history.[6]

How are we to reconcile these two opposing views of Italian history and identify the complex forces that spawned Fascism? We may find it profitable to begin by analyzing the implications and the historical validity of each interpretation. Let us start with the "revelation" explanation. It is persuasive, lends itself to apparently sound documentation, and has been accepted and elaborated upon by historians whose probity can hardly be questioned. The same indictment was levelled at Germany and the Germans to explain the rise and affirmation of Nazism.[7] Yet, such a deterministic historical position presents problems, when we remember that fascism and nazism were not phenomena limited to Italy and Germany and note the various fascisms that sprouted everywhere, like toadstools after a heavy rain, during the 1920s and especially in the 1930s. To be sure, only in Italy and Germany did fascist regimes come to power. Obviously, other factors need to be considered.[8] Or does the history of each country where fascism appears reveal an innate weakness, a predetermined impossibility ever to evolve a viable democracy?

My own research on pre-World War I Italy persuades me that no predetermined pattern dominated the political, social and intellectual life of that period which pointed inexorably to Fascism. In fact, by 1900 the first generation born under the flag of a united Italy had come of age and for them the mystique of the Risorgimento belonged in history books. The political leadership of Giovanni Giolitti, the first prime minister not to have fought against the Austrians, introduced a new style into Italian politics. Italians began to come to terms with the reality of their place in the modern world. Concern for the solution of the immediate socio-economic problems which were condemning thousands of others to continuing poverty and ignorance replaced the grandiose claims of Mazzini and Gioberti.

After surviving the crises of the 1890s, when the very fabric of nationhood seemed to be disintegrating, as social unrest among rural and urban workers frightened the government into imposing martial law, defeat in Africa led to four years of political crises, and an unpopular king was assassinated, Italy entered the first decade of the new century with hope. Catholics and Socialists, who, in 1898, had been tried side-by-side in the same courtroom as subversives and enemies of the state, slowly began to be integrated into the life of the nation. Labor unrest and strikes were dealt with legally without recourse to martial law. The economy expanded and wages rose. Education reached more people. While not obliterated, the deep rifts between Italians began to be bridged.

Not all were in harmony, however. Bored intellectuals became critics of this essentially bourgeois ethos and dissented, often violently.[9] Three groups

may be identified among these dissenters: the Dannunzians, the futurists and the nationalists. Gabriele d'Annunzio, poet, dramatist and novelist, preached a Faustian view of life and modelled himself on the Nietzschean superman. His contempt for bourgeois values made him the hero of rebellious middle class adolescents for whom a Dannunzian phase was part of the rites of passage to responsible adulthood. In 1909 Filippo Tommaso Marinetti released his Futurist Manifesto from Paris. Iconoclastic and irreverent, the futurists attacked tradition in the name of modernity. "Burn the museums," "drain the canals of Venice," "kill the moonlight" became their bywords, machines and movement their inspiration, and dynamism their guiding principle. Gino Severini, one of Futurism's best known painters, wrote "we choose to concentrate...on things in motion....because heavy powerful motor cars rushing through the streets...airplanes flying above....satisfy our sense of a lyric and dramatic universe, better than do two pears and an apple." [10] In 1910, Enrico Corradini, the journalist and jingoistic nationalist, founded the Nationalist Party. The Corradini nationalists were vociferous, numbered many intellectuals among their ranks, and took credit for having egged a reluctant Giolitti into the imperialist venture against Turkey in 1911. These movements appealed to middle-class youths bored with the gospel of hard work and sobriety represented by Giolitti, but remained peripheral to the general trend of political life.

The Great War was the catalyst that altered the existing balance and unleashed irrational forces. Everywhere, the war appealed to the discontented and the restless. It swept people along in an orgy of nationalism, and forced regimentation upon society. In Italy, the war spawned additional problems. On its eve, the country had been shaken by riots, the so-called "red week," which reawakened fears of socialism assuaged since the end of the 1890s. Violent interventionist propaganda by a minority — led by d'Annunzio and fanned by the nationalists and the futurists — preceded Italy's entry into the war in May 1915. The final dramatic days in Parliament culminating in the declaration of war against Austria-Hungary represented a victory for this minority whose determination and organization frustrated the will of the neutralist majority. Unlike the other warring powers, Italy did not enter the war a united country. A nation divided within itself thus faced the war's tremendous strains on its economy and social fabric. Moreover, the bitter conflict over intervention eclipsed many of the country's previous leaders. Giolitti, Croce and other pre-war figures who had supported continued neutrality retreated into silence.

The end of the war brought no relief. Existing problems were aggravated by a frustrated nationalism when the peace settlement failed to reward Italy territorially in the way the supporters of the war expected. Disgruntled army elements turned to d'Annunzio, who had acted out his heroic fantasies during the war by volunteering and serving in all three branches of Italy's armed forces. In defiance of the Allies and the Italian government, d'Annunzio and his followers occupied the Adriatic port city of Fiume, which had become the symbol of Italian nationalist frustrations. For over a year the government seemed unable to force them out of Fiume. At home the Bolshevik revolution in Russia both frightened and inspired different sectors of Italian society. Dazzled by its distant mirage, workers occupied the factories and rioted in the streets. Driven by an unsatisfied land hunger, peasants took over the land. Convinced that neither presented a real threat — since neither enjoyed widespread support among the Italian people — and anxious to avoid armed confrontations and bloodshed, the government let the agitation run its course.

But this action served only to reinforce the public perception of weak government. The post-war economic crisis faced by every country also afflicted Italy. Unemployment among veterans persisted. Again, as in the 1890s, the fabric of Italian society seemed to be disintegrating. Unable or incapable of restoring stability and order, the government's prestige plummeted. Unlike 1900, no new century promised hope in 1922 and no new liberal leadership offered guidance. The political crisis brought on by entry into the war and the war itself had destroyed the fragile consensus of the early 1900s. It was at this point that the Fascists began to make their presence felt. While the old leadership may have planned to coopt Mussolini and his followers, the Fascists thought of themselves as a revolutionary force and their government takeover as a revolution. The official party history, written to commemorate its rise to power, was entitled the Fascist revolution. While Fascism appealed to the past to cloak itself with the mantle of respectability by enshrining Machiavelli, Mazzini and others in the pantheon of Fascist precursors, the dictatorship and the straitjacket of uniforms and ritual imposed on the Italian people had few antecedents in Italian history. The ease with which Italy threw off Fascism in 1943 demonstrates its lack of any real roots in Italian traditions, be they recessive or dominant.

Despite the very persuasive interpretations of Italian history that the revelationists have advanced and despite the problems that republican Italy faces today, I find the view of Fascism as a revolution effected in Italy at a crucial point in its existence more historically valid. The causes of and rationale for fascism emerge more properly from immediate twentieth century problems than from historical or intellectual antecedents. To change the scenario, a practice generally forbidden to the serious historian, without the war Italy might have slowly continued to evolve into a stable political community, despite d'Annunzio, Marinetti and Corradini. To counterbalance the Faustian d'Annunzio there was the Olympian Croce. In equilibrium to the nationalists were the socialists. Mussolini would have continued his editorship of the Socialist newspaper AVANTI and remained a Marxist. But historical fantasy is an idle exercise. Historical reality gives us the war and Fascism, linking the two, so that the second is inconceivable without the first. Revelation, thus seems to lose its validity. But revolution may also be simplistic. Cause and effect do not always proceed in lockstep.

Before closing, it may be useful to mention one other very prevalent interpretation of fascism, among the many that have been advanced in the last half century. This too appeared shortly after Fascism had come to power in Italy. It is, of course, the Marxist view that sees Fascism as the tool of a capitalist class fearful of the rising power of the proletariat. [11] It appeals even to non-Marxists because it offers a facile explanation of Fascism even to those whose knowledge of Italian history is minimal; moreover, it lends itself to generalizations applicable to other periods and countries. It became the official Communist interpretation at the Fourth Party Congress of the Third International in 1923. In 1935, however, in his lectures at the Leninist School in Moscow, Palmiro Togliatti, one of the founders of the Italian Communist Party and a trusted Stalinist, presented a more subtle view which deserves to be better known since it is analytical rather than doctrinaire. After considering a variety of factors present in post-war Italy, Togliatti saw Fascism as a pragmatic movement which took advantage of the crisis of the moment and gathered support as it evolved from various sectors of Italian society. [12]

There is no doubt that capitalists did support Fascism, but only after it had shown itself to be a viable force capable of containing Marxism. Initially, many of them reacted suspiciously to the more radical aspects of the Fascist program. Those who supported Fascism before 1922 anticipated that it would not "remain the revolutionary movement it claimed to be." [13] It should also be pointed out that once in power, Fascism subjected capitalism to political control. It rewarded it with profits and protection, but restricted its entrepreneurial freedom to expand and produce how and what it wished. Many recent studies on Fascism look at the relationship between Fascism and capitalism as one of balance rather than domination -- a marriage of convenience founded on pragmatic considerations in which Fascism held the upper hand. When Italian industrialists objected to certain Fascist directives in March 1925, Mussolini authorized a massive strike against the steel industry. The strike demonstrated that the Fascists could cripple industry and brought the recalcitrant industrial leadership to a more conciliatory position. Again, industrial objections were ignored when Mussolini stabilized the Italian currency with the famous quota "90" setting the exchange rate at 92.46 lire to the pound sterling. Businessmen feared that such a high exchange rate would adversely affect Italian exports, but political considerations prevailed. A third instance of Fascist revolutionary attitudes towards capital came in 1932 when Ugo Spirito, one of the younger Fascist theoreticians, advocated the abolition of private property and its vesting in Fascist corporations which would be fully responsible for production. This suggestion, however, was publicly rejected by the party. But in January 1933 the government rescued the private sector by establishing the Institute for Industrial Reconstruction (IRI). This provided financial assistance to ailing industry and introduced a high degree of government control. In 1937 IRI became a permanent government agency with far-flung holdings in steel, heavy machinery, shipping, electrical and other sectors of Italian industry.

To conclude, brief reference should be made to other interpretations: Fascism as a phase in the modernization process, the political expression of industrialization in underdeveloped countries; fascism as escape from freedom and other socio-economic, psychological, and political explanations. But the more sophisticated the explanation, the more complex fascism becomes, and the terms "revelation" and "revolution" take on new meanings: not revelation of hidden weaknesses in past history, but revelation of basic conflicts in modern mass society; not revolution in the traditional form with barricades and tumbrils, but revolution in basic tenets and values. [14] Thus, we find ourselves returning to the early terminology, but using it in different ways to explain Fascism.

#### NOTES

[1] Storia d'Italia dal 1861 al 1915 (Bari, 1929). For Croce's role in the anti-Fascist intellectual opposition see E.P. Noether, "Intellectuals under Fascism," JMH 43:4 (December 1971): 630-48. [2] G. Fortunato, Dopo la guerra sovvertitrice (Bari, 1921), 15ff and 36ff. [3] G. Fortunato, "Nel regime fascista," now in Pagine e ricordi parlamentari (Rome, 1947), II. [4] A. Aquarone, "A Closing Commentary: Problems of Democracy and the Quest for Identity," in E.R. Tannenbaum and E.P. Noether, eds., Modern Italy: A Topical History since 1861 (NY, 1974), 337-54. [5] See especially his Cavour and Garibaldi (Cambridge, 1954) and Italy: A Modern History (2nd rev.ed., Ann Arbor, 1969). [6] G. Colamarino, Il fantasma liberale (Milan, 1946) and Fabio Cusin, Antistoria d'Italia (Turin, 1948). [7] Examples of such interpretations

of the roots and causes of Nazism are W. McGovern's From Luther to Hitler. The History of Fascist-Nazi Political Philosophy (NY, 1939) and Peter Viereck's Metapolitics: From Romantics to Hitler (NY, 1941). [8] See the collection of interpretative essays in Fascism, A Reader's Guide. Analyses, Interpretations, Bibliography, ed. by W. Laqueur (Berkeley, 1976), especially Juan J. Linz, "Some Notes Toward a Comparative Study of Fascism in Sociological Historical Perspective," pp. 3-121 and Francis L. Carsten, "Interpretations of Fascism," pp. 415-34. Also important is the bibliographical analysis by Renzo De Felice, Le interpretazioni del fascismo (Bari, 1972). [9] On Italian intellectuals as critics and dissenters see E.P. Noether, "Italian Intellectuals" in Tannenbaum and Noether, pp. 274-291. [10] Quoted in Joshua C. Taylor, Futurism (NY, 1961), p. 11. [11] J.M. Cammett, "Communist Theories of Fascism (1920-1935)," Science and Society, No. 2, 1967. [12] Palmiro Togliatti, Lectures on Fascism (NY, 1976). [13] Roland Sarti, Fascism and the Industrial Leadership in Italy (Berkeley, 1971), p. 2. [14] Published too late for consideration in this paper is MacGregor Knox's "Conquest, Foreign and Domestic, in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany," JMH 56:1 (March 1984), 1-57.

## AT THE SESSIONS

APRIL 14, 1984 AAS WORCESTER

### THE WEST AFRICAN CONFERENCE OF BERLIN, 1884: A CENTENNIAL PERSPECTIVE

Professor George A. Shepperson (University of Edinburgh) discussed the reasons for, the outcomes of, and research that needs yet to be done on "the first international conference to concern itself with Africa" which met, off and on, from the fall of 1884 to the adoption of a final document in February 1885 in Berlin. Fifteen countries participated, including the United States. Shepperson pointed to the necessity of a substantial historical study of the Conference and called upon American historians to examine the role of the United States. He pointed out the possibility that, in some ways, the Berlin Conference may have been a model for subsequent approaches to Pan African issues. In addition, he argued that the Conference deserves careful consideration for the ways in which it responded to humanitarian movements seeking the abolition of slavery. Shepperson called attention to instances where on-the-record debates were related to off-the-record lobbying interests and the part the conference played in the series of attempts that were made to resolve international issues through verbal conflict and discussion rather than military engagement. He concluded with some thoughtful perceptions about American and African relations, contrasting views that W.E.B. DuBois held when he was a graduate student in Berlin seven years after this conference with the views expressed in his last years.



Armand Patrucco (Rhode Island College) commented on the significance of the conference from the perspective of Italian colonial interests. H. McKim Steele (Trinity College) claimed that the Berlin West African Conference provided important international legal precedents for the mandate and trusteeship systems, but maintained that the conference seems to have had little significance for the formation of the Pan African movement. The latter appears to have drawn greater inspiration from Pan-Americanism. While it is difficult to point to specific provisions of the Berlin Act that had later diplomatic consequences, the conference was one of a series of gatherings that helped internationalize (in European terms) the "African Question." The greatest consequences were perhaps indirect: 1) in the impetus given to the use of Charter companies; and 2) in the explicit denial of any "international personality" to existing African polities.

#### CIVIL WAR AND UNITED STATES INTERVENTION IN EL SALVADOR

Thomas P. Anderson (East Connecticut State University) began by distinguishing between two aspects of the civil war: the internal roots of the conflict and the United States perception of the conflict as part of the Cold War. Anderson contended that the civil war is a struggle for control of the increasingly scarce resources of the country, particularly land, between two rival groups: one which identifies its interests with the landholding class and the military, the other which sees an opportunity for the redistribution of wealth through revolution. The civil war could not have endured so long if both sides did not have considerable support. It is equally in error to assume that the rebel forces have little support and to assume that most Salvadoreans secretly back the rebels. The civil war developed

out of a linkage in the late seventies between mass organizations of peasants and workers and the previously tiny guerrilla bands. By March 1980, they had sufficient backing to begin the full scale civil war. But not all sectors turned to the rebels. The essentially conservative middle class and certain sections of the peasantry backed the government. Because the rebel forces are Marxist, the United States erroneously assumes that the rebellion is not indigenous in origin, but rather part of a Soviet conspiracy. Flawed perceptions of the situation by the U.S. have contributed to the continuation of this bloody struggle.

#### TOCQUEVILLE'S BOURGEOIS REVOLUTION

Marvin Cox (University of Connecticut) considered the place of Alexis de Tocqueville in the historiography of the French Revolution and the pertinence of his major works to the historiographical crisis which has resulted from the recent revision of the Marxist interpretation of the Revolution. His initial focus was on the interpretation of Tocqueville set forth by Francis Furet in his Penser la Revolution Francaise [1978]. Cox argued that Furet is wrong to place Tocqueville altogether outside the mainstream of the historiography of the Revolution and maintained that what emerges from a careful reading of Tocqueville's writings on the subject is a mid-nineteenth century variation on the "orthodox" theme of the bourgeois revolution. Cox contended, consequently, that Tocqueville stands in much closer proximity to Marxist historians than Furet imagines. The burden of Cox' argument, however, was that Tocqueville's version of the bourgeois revolution is crucially different from the Marxists and that he offers a means for moving beyond the historiographical impasse created by the fall from favor of the Marxist version of the orthodoxy.

Cox contrasted the two interpretations of the bourgeoisie in Lefebvre and Tocqueville. He emphasized the central place of financiers and entrepreneurs in Lefebvre's analysis of the post-revolutionary ruling class, and pointed out that these groups hold no comparable position in Tocqueville's bourgeoisie. He concluded that Tocqueville's bourgeoisie is thus non-capitalist and that Tocqueville perceived the bourgeoisie as a kind of social trinity consisting of three related, overlapping, but nonetheless distinct components [the smallscale businessmen and modest rentiers; the historic Third Estate; propertied and education functionaries]. This last group, Cox argued, enjoys primacy within Tocqueville's bourgeoisie and is thus analagous to the capitalists in the Marxian version of this class.

Cox also dealt with differences in the methods which Lefebvre and Tocqueville use to demonstrate the distinctive modernity of the bourgeoisie. Cox concluded with a discussion of the differences between Lefebvre's and Tocqueville's interpretation of the place of the French Revolution in history. Lefebvre and other Marxist historians emphasize the climactic character of the Revolution, a violent culmination of the centuries-long transition from feudalism to capitalism. Cox observed that Tocqueville's interpretation marks a sharper break with the past than does Lefebvre, but that this fact is not readily apparent in the present climate of opinion. For Tocqueville, the advent of democratic social conditions rather than the emergence of industry is the major phenomenon in modern history.

The overthrow of feudalism created social conditions which, though prefigured under the Old Regime, have no real counterpart in the previous history of France. Tocqueville's Revolution thus assumes the dimension of a major watershed.

Paul Lucas (Clark University) delivered a lively and spirited comment on Cox's paper. Lucas and Cox were in sharp disagreement on a number of issues. Lucas raised the question whether Lefebvre was truly a Marxist historian. Lucas was also hopeful that further research might resolve the historiographical crisis created by the revisionist offensive against the Marxist interpretation. Cox reiterated Furet's belief that historians can transcend the Marxist conceptual framework and succeed in seeing the Revolution in other than Marxist terms. Cox's paper and Lucas' commentary generated a serious examination of assumptions, definitions and methodology in past and present historiography.



# Association report

## ELECTION NOTICE

The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of candidates for the election to be held at the Association's Fall Meeting at Framingham State College on October 27, 1984.

President: Ridgway F. Shinn, Jr., Rhode Island College  
Vice President: Catherine M. Prelinger, Franklin Papers, Yale  
Treasurer: Robert J. Imholt, Albertus Magnus College

Executive Committee [two positions, two year terms]:

Charles E. Clark, University of New Hampshire  
Barbara L. Solow, Boston University  
Bruce Stave, University of Connecticut  
Douglas Sweet, US Equal Employment Opportunities Commission

Nominating Committee [two positions, three year terms]:

Ralph B. Casey, Taconic High School, Pittsfield  
Alice A. Guimond, Holyoke Community College  
John Hench, American Antiquarian Society  
William Metcalfe, University of Vermont

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Publications in scholarly journals on early American social history, church history and history of American education. Current research: New England Baptists and the Great Awakening.

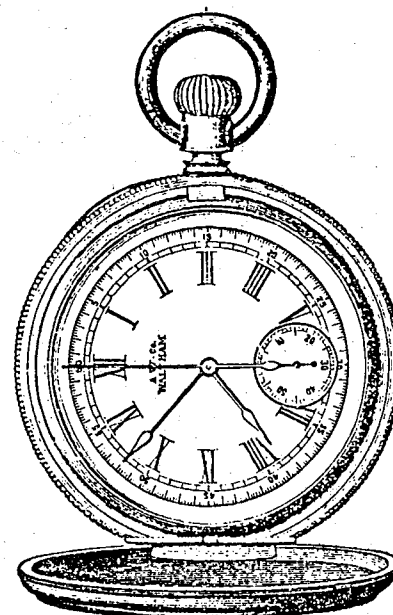
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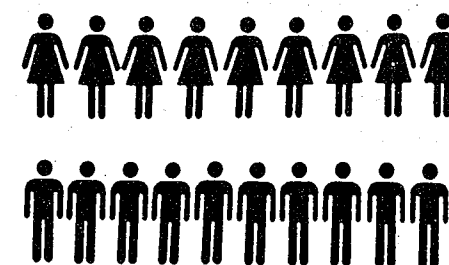
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Have You Renewed Your Membership ?



News & Notes

NEHA mourns the passing of two distinguished New England scholars. Sydney E. Ahlstrom, professor of American History and Religious History at Yale died on July 3 in New Haven. Carl J. Friedrich, professor of government at Harvard died in September in Lexington.

The 1984-85 GUIDE TO DEPARTMENTS OF HISTORY is available from the AHA publications office (\$16). Check to see whether your department is included. This is a useful handbook to have and to be listed in.

The NCC for the Promotion of History reports that the Senate and the House passed bills to restore independence to the National Archives by separating it from the GSO. A confrence committee is working to resolve the differences between the two bills and send the legislation on to the President.

The Rhode Island Publication Society has prepared a new catalog of in-print books relating to R.I. historical development. 67 titles are available from the Society. A free catalog can be obtained from Patrick T. Conley, Chairman, Rhode Island Publications Society [Old State House, 150 Benefit Street, Providence, R.I. 02903].

The New England Renaissance Conference will be held at Wheaton in Norton, Massachusetts Nov. 2 - 3. Paul O. Kristeller will be one of the featured speakers. Interested? Contact Jane Ruby at Wheaton.

Congratulations to Fulbright recipient William H. Pease (University of Maine, Orono). Bill is a member of the Executive Committee and is working on local arrangements for the Bowdoin meeting.

A SCHOLARS' GUIDE TO WASHINGTON, D.C., for Northwest European Studies is available from the Smithsonian Institution Press [955 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 2100, Wash.D.C. 20560]. The 452 page book describes collections and information on 11 countries. \$29.95 or \$15 (paper) + \$1.50 for shipping.

Applications for Research Fellowship Grants and Awards [five categories] from the American Antiquarian Society are available from the Research and Publications division. The deadline for completed applications is January 31, 1985.

Archivists, historians and administrators are concerned that the growing use of computer technology may damage the government's administrative and historical record system, particularly the collecting and storing of documents, speeches and preliminary drafts. "Unless we get some firm rules in place pretty quickly, a lot of information is going to go down the P.C. rat hole," said William Price, director of the State Department Foreign Affairs Management Center. Efforts are underway to require government agencies to keep paper drafts of important documents.

Guggenheim Fellowships have been awarded to the following New England scholars: Alan Brinkley, Patrice L. Higgonet, Ernst Badian and Charles S. Maier of Harvard and Nancy F. Cott of Yale.

The September issue of AHA PERSPECTIVES [Vol.22, No.6] has publicized the Vietnam Documentary Media Award given to WGBH by NEHA last Spring in Worcester.

The International Psychohistorical Association is holding a mid-year conference on December 7-8 at the Brooklyn Center of Long Island University. Focus will be on the interdisciplinary process.

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AN INVITATION FOR YOU TO JOIN

The New England Historical Association is a comprehensive organization of and for all historians. Its membership is drawn from professional, academic and free-lance historians in all areas and periods of history. It is not restricted to American or New England studies. Membership is open to all persons or organizations interested in the study, teaching or writing of history. Members receive two issues of the Newsletter and notifications of the Spring and Fall meetings. Annual dues for regular members is \$5.00 and \$3.00 for retirees or students. Life Membership for individuals and institutions during the Twentieth Anniversary period [through 1985] is \$150. All dues and contributions to NEHA are tax deductible.

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Contributions and suggestions  
are welcome and invited. The  
deadline for the Spring Issue  
is January 11; deadline for  
the Fall issue is June 15.

Manuscripts should be typed  
and doublespaced.