

# NEHA News

The Newsletter of the New England Historical Association

September 1, 1981

Vol. VIII, No. 2

## MEETING DATES

October 24, 1981, Albertus Magnus College  
New Haven, CT

II. Hitler, Expressionist Counter-  
Revolutionary

If you are not a member of the association you will not receive notification of these meetings unless you write the Secretary, Prof. Kenneth Lewalski, History Department, Rhode Island College, Providence, RI 02908

Theodore H. Van Laue, Clark University

Comment: Jeffrey Herf, Harvard University; Dietrich Ruschemeyer, Brown University; Robert Waite, Williams College

## PROGRAM FOR THE FALL MEETING

### Morning Sessions

I. How to Stop a Revolution: Massachusetts after the War for American Independence

1. The Revolutionary Process in American and Comparative Perspective

Robert Gilmore, University of New Hampshire

2. How the Shaysites Organized Themselves: The Cultural Constraints in Revolutionary Action

Stephen E. Patterson, University of New Brunswick

3. Maine: The Unfinished Revolution

James Leamon, Bates College

Chair and Comment: Richard D. Brown, University of Connecticut

III. Ante-Bellum New England Temperance Reform

1. From the Fast Day Sermon to the Temperance Address: The Psychic Origins of a Social Movement

Joel Bernard, Colby College

2. Washingtonian Temperance

Robert L. Hampel, Franklin and Marshall College

Comment: Paul Johnson, Yale University

### Luncheon Address

The Study of American History in China

Chi Wang, Head, Chinese and Korean Section, Asian Division, Library of Congress

### Afternoon Sessions

IV. Organizing the History Profession at the State Level

1. The National Coordinating Committee for Promotion of History as a Clearing House for the Work of State Committees

Page Putnam Miller, NCC

2. The Connecticut Coordinating Committee and the Establishment of the Historian Consultant Program, the Institute on Connecticut History, and the Center for Independent Historians

Bruce Fraser, Connecticut Humanities Council

3. The New Hampshire Coordinating Committee: A New Committee Plans Ahead

Robert M. Mennel, University of New Hampshire

V. New England Towns and Cities in the Nineteenth Century

1. The Clarity of Focus: James Hillhouse and the Urban Form--New Haven, Connecticut, 1783-1832

William L. Philie, Southern Connecticut State College

2. Response to Industrial Transformation in Two New England Communities: Dexter, Maine, and Amesbury, Massachusetts, 1850-1890

Robert J. Mitchell, Maine Council on Economic Education

3. The Boston Subway: A Late Nineteenth Century Attack on the Emerging Mass Transit Problem

Burton G. Brown, University of Rhode Island

Chair: William H. Pease, University of Maine at Orono; Comment: Paul H. Tedesco, Northeastern University

Burlington, Vermont, September 24-25, 1981. The 16th National Colloquium of the Association will be held immediately following the Workshop, September 25-27, 1981. If you wish more information about the meetings or would like to receive programs for the 1981 Workshop and Colloquium, please write to: Ronald E. Marcello, Executive Secretary, Oral History Association, Box 13734, North Texas State University, Denton, TX 76203.

Northeastern University--Boston has available for research interviews with shoe workers, fishermen, immigrants, and merchant seamen, as well as memoirs on such topics as transportation, World War I and area communities. All materials are housed at the university. R. Wayne Anderson directs the work.

The National Endowment for the Humanities has awarded a grant for an oral history project entitled "Connecticut Workers and a Half Century of Technological Change, 1930-1980." Bruce Stave and Robert Asher, both of the University of Connecticut, will interview approximately 150 workers concerning technological developments in the state's industry, commerce, and transportation.

Plymouth State College will hold its Third Medieval Forum on April 16-17, 1982. Papers by specialists will be welcome, but preference will be given to discussions of topics of general interest to teachers of medieval subjects. Proposals should be submitted by December 1, 1981. For further information contact Prof. Manuel Marquez-Sterling, Director, Medieval Studies Council, Plymouth State College, USNH, Plymouth, New Hampshire 03264.

The Society of Architectural Historians will hold its annual meeting in New Haven, Connecticut, April 21-25, 1982. For further information write Paulette Olson, Executive Secretary, Society of Architectural Historians, 1700 Walnut Street, Suite 716, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The 12th National Workshop of the Oral History Association will be held in

The Department of History and Political Science of Iona College will co-sponsor with the American Historical Association a regional conference on "The Teaching of History. Persons interested in presenting a paper should submit a proposal by October 1, 1981. The conference will be held March 26-27, 1982. Direct correspondence to Ernst A. Menze, Department of History & Political Science, Iona College, New Rochelle, NY 10801.

The Salem Conference will be held October 16-17, 1981, at Salem State College, the Peabody Museum, and the Essex Institute. The conference theme is "Massachusetts and the Sea: Cultural and Historical Perspectives." Interested persons should contact Joseph Flibbert, English Department, Salem State College, Salem, MA 01970.

The Conference on the History of Massachusetts will be held at Westfield State College, March 27, 1982. Persons wishing to participate are invited to send copies of proposed papers by December 1, 1981, to John W. Ifkovic, Department of History, Box 182, Westfield State College, Westfield, MA 01086.

The Vice-President, John Voll, urges that all members who are interested in presenting papers at the spring, 1982, meeting of the association should communicate with him at the Department of History, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824

NEHA News is a newsletter of the New England Historical Association. It appears twice a year, in April and September. The deadline for the April issue is January 1; the deadline for the September issue is June 15. The editor for this issue was Robert J. Imholt, Albertus Magnus College, New Haven, CT 06511. The new editor of the newsletter is Prof. Kenneth Lewalski, Department of History, Rhode Island College, Providence, RI 02908. Contributions and suggestions are welcome.

MAILING LIST UPDATE: Is the mailing address on materials sent to you from NEHA inaccurate or out-of-date? If so, kindly send in a corrected version to:

Kenneth F. Lewalski  
Executive Secretary  
New England Historical Association  
Rhode Island College  
Providence, R.I. 02908

Bookkeeping changes involve extra expense for the Association. Please submit only necessary changes.

ROUTES TO ALBERTUS MAGNUS COLLEGE

Interstate 95 to Interstate 91; Exit 3 Trumbull Street; straight ahead on Trumbull to Prospect Street; right onto Prospect; proceed about 1½ miles on Prospect to Goodrich Street; left onto Goodrich. Entrance to the campus is approximately 100 yards away on the left.

-or-

Wilbur Cross Parkway (State Route 15); Exit 61 Whitney Avenue (Route 10A); left onto Whitney Avenue towards New Haven; proceed about 4 miles on Whitney to Ogden Street; right onto Ogden; straight on Ogden to Prospect Street; right onto Prospect to Goodrich Street; left onto Goodrich. Entrance to the campus is approximately 100 yards away on the left.

NEHA Conference will be using the Campus Center and Aquinas Hall (buildings 12 & 14).

A diagram map will be sent out with the registration and reservation material.

NEW MEMBERS WANTED:

The New England Historical Association is an organization of and for all historians in New England. You can help build a stronger NEHA by informing your friends and colleagues about the organization and encouraging them to become members. Bring them along to the Fall meeting.

The officers of the New England Historical Association for the 1981-1982 academic year are as follows:

President: Darrett Rutman, University of New Hampshire

Vice-President: John Voll, University of New Hampshire

Executive Secretary: Kenneth Lewalski, Rhode Island College

Secretary: Jonathan Liebowitz, University of Lowell

Treasurer: Joshua Stein, Roger Williams College

Executive Committee:

- Armand Patrucco, Rhode Island College
- Catherine Prelinger, Benjamin Franklin Papers
- Roger Howell, Jr., Bowdoin College
- Charles A. Watson, Roger Williams College
- Neil Stout, University of Vermont
- Fred Cazel, University of Connecticut

Nominating Committee:

- Alice McGinty, Bentley College
- James Patterson, Brown University
- Helen Mulvey, Connecticut College
- Deborah Clifford, Middlebury, Vermont
- Barbara Solow, Boston University
- Douglas Sweet, Massachusetts Commission for the Blind

SESSION SUMMARY: TEACHING THE HISTORY OF CRIME AND THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM  
SPRING, 1981

In "From the Police Gazette to the Godfather; Media-Made Crime," Professor Frank Walsh of the University of Lowell presented a series of slides documenting the continuing public interest in crime from the emergence of the penny press in the 1830s to the present. Similarly, each generation has denounced the influence of the media on the incidence of crime from the attacks on the Dime Novel to the current concern over television violence. In his survey of the presentation of crime in the various media, Professor Walsh demonstrated the growing impact of the media on the public's perception of crime. Among the items included in Professor Walsh's discussion were drawings from the Police Gazette, photographs of nineteenth century criminals, and films ranging from the Musketeers of Pig Alley (1912), the first gangster film, through Little Caesar and Public Enemy in the 1930s, the Kefauver Commission Hearings, and The Godfather I and II.

In "Crime and Punishment in America," Professor Donald Jacobs of Northeastern University called attention to the growing interest in the history of crime and the criminal justice system. He discussed a variety of efforts in academic circles to create programs and to improve teaching materials dealing with criminal justice such

as Carnegie-Mellon University's text on the subject for secondary level students. Professor Jacobs discussed his experience at Northeastern as chairperson of a Criminal Justice Steering Committee under a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. This committee developed an array of interdisciplinary and specialized courses including "The Punishment of Women: The Image of Bad Women and Its Impact;" "The Image of 'Bad Children' in Children's Literature;" and a course with which he is directly involved, "Total Institutions and Their Impact on the Human Personality." The main focus of his course is the concept of the total institution as seen in the prison, the mental institution, the slave plantation, and the Nazi concentration camp.

Professor Joseph Lipchitz of the University of Lowell discussed the problems involved in developing a new course on the history of comparative police systems in his paper "The Police in English History or There's Never a Cop When You Want One." Noting Gilbert and Sullivan's warning that "when constabulary's duty to be done, the policeman's lot is not a happy one," Professor Lipchitz pointed out that the lot of any historian wishing to put together a course on the police in history is not much better. He discussed a number of books on the history of the English police that have appeared in recent years, but noted that too often the works are only available in England. Professor Lipchitz demonstrated how a course on the history of the police can also offer valuable insights into other areas of American or European History.

The three panelists made available bibliographies and copies of their syllabus. Professor Joyce Antler of Brandeis University chaired the session and led the discussion from the audience.

Francis R. Walsh  
University of Lowell

SESSION SUMMARY: UNITED STATES RELATIONS WITH AFRICA  
SPRING, 1981

In "U.S. - African Relations: Patterns of the Past," Eugene Schleh of the University of Southern Maine presented a bibliographic essay designed to introduce listeners to some five dozen major works on the general topic. He suggested that beyond a few valuable surveys, coverage clustered on select subjects reflecting U.S. activities and interest. Among these were the North African states from the Barbary Wars to the present and the increased interest in Southern Africa in the last two decades. Schleh pointed out that dealings by individual Americans with Africa have been more nearly continual than governmental relations and offered selections on the Slave Trade, general commerce, Liberian settlement, exploration, missions, and special relations between Black Americans and Africa.

William Raiford of the Congressional Research Services of the Library of Congress, in his paper "Background Note on U.S. Economic Interests in Africa" examined three aspects of U.S. - African economic relationships: 1) investments, aid, and trade, 2) issues arising from these relationships, and 3) U.S. policies adopted to promote the economic relationship. He stressed the relatively low levels and uneven distribution of investment and aid and demonstrated Africa's current importance as a supplier of minerals, especially petroleum. Particular attention was given to the rapidly rising U.S. balance of payments deficit with Africa and to the important case of South Africa and its relationship to dealings with the rest of the continent. These lead to a need for serious concern and caution in order to avoid real harm to the U.S. economy.

President William R. Cotter of Colby College drew upon his long involvement in U.S. - African relations to offer fine summaries and comments on both papers and then led a lively discussion with the audience.

Eugene Schleh  
University of Southern Maine

SESSION SUMMARY: PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS IN THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION  
SPRING, 1981

Each of the three papers presented in this session advanced a revisionist view of aspects of parliamentary history during the period of the English Revolution 1640-1660.

In "Oliver St. John and the Middle Group in the Long Parliament: A Reappraisal" William Palmer of the University of Maine, Orono, examined the applicability of the concept of the middle group, originally advanced by J. H. Hexter, to the period after the death of John Pym. Noting that Valerie Pearl has argued that the group lingered on through 1644 under the leadership of Oliver St. John, Palmer contended that a close analysis of St. John's activities suggests a quite contrary picture. That St. John succeeded Pym in 1643 as unofficial leader of the parliamentary cause seems certain enough, but, in doing so, he departed markedly from his predecessor. Eschewing moderation, he chose to cooperate most frequently with the war party and repeatedly endeavored to undermine the authority of the Earl of Essex, the moderate and consensus choice for military commander. In this way, a major upheaval seems to have transformed the Commons in 1643 and 1644. Adversary politics began in earnest, and, while the party led by St. John did not sweep all before it, the middle way of Pym was seriously disturbed, if not discarded.

John F. Battick of the University of Maine, Orono, in his paper "Luke Robinson M.P.: A Closer Look at a Moderate Commonwealthsman in the Puritan Revolution" argued that the view of Robinson advanced by Christopher Hill is misleading and simplistic. In Hill's account Robinson is taken to typify the meanness of the propertied classes towards working people during the Interregnum. That Robinson was cranky, peevish, pompous, and at times petty is undeniable, but he was at core a libertarian, commonwealthsman, and parliamentarian. An active member of the second rank of parliamentary politicians, he sought to introduce a moderate tone into the proceedings of the House. Far from sharing in the Puritan vendetta against the Quaker James Nayler, he tried to diminish the violence visited upon him. Probity, toleration, a precise sense of justice tempered with mercy, a rampant concern for the carrying out of the public business rather than private advantage, and a refreshing lack of egotism were his chief characteristics. They were also, ironically, his weaknesses. Had he been able to overcome any one of them, he might have been admitted to the circle of power under the Protectorate. But this was not to be, for he was too much the commonwealthsman, too jealous of Cromwell's pragmatic seizure of power, and not adept enough at switching sides at the right moment.

In "Cromwell and His Parliaments: The Trevor-Roper Thesis Revisited" Roger Howell of Bowdoin College examined the argument advanced by the former Regius Professor that Cromwell's failure to work with his parliaments was the result of his lack of understanding of the techniques of parliamentary management. Howell suggested that the Trevor-Roper thesis implies an almost mythical view of the Elizabethan parliaments

with which those of Cromwell were contrasted and that it seriously misreads both Cromwell's intentions and his problems. The basic problem was not one of management in the conventional sense applied by Trevor-Roper to the handling of Elizabethan parliaments. There were essential differences in context between the Elizabethan and Cromwellian parliaments that make straight comparison misleading, and the nature of expectations about the parliamentary occasion had changed considerably from the Elizabethan period. In addition, the crucial role played by the army means that the shortcomings of the executive cannot be explained solely by reference to a failure to organize and control parliament. Cromwell was not a good parliamentary manager, but the central difficulty with the Trevor-Roper thesis is that parliamentary management by itself was not the answer to the political problem of the 1650s.

In a wide-ranging and witty commentary Sidney Burrell of Boston University stated his feeling that all three arguments were convincing, although he suggested some details which needed clarification and pointed to several themes which he felt had been neglected in the discussion.

Roger Howell, Jr.  
Bowdoin College

SESSION SUMMARY: HANDS ON HISTORY FOR THE UNDERGRADUATE: JOHN F. KENNEDY AND EASTERN  
SPRING, 1981 EUROPE

What was scheduled to be a "hands on" demonstration of research techniques used at the Kennedy Library and a presentation of papers written by three Framingham State College undergraduates evolved into a frank discussion about the study habits of college students, their rapport with their instructors, and their motivation in undertaking a seemingly monumental and tedious task in order to fulfill a seminar requirement. Framingham students John Livemore, Daniel Domozick, and Kathryn DeSisto fielded the questions from the audience and made the presentations.

After the students had outlined their research experiences and had discussed such topics as methods used, time involved, and problems incurred, the audience asked questions about the students willingness to comply with the seminar's stringent requirements as set forth by Dr. Joseph Harrington of Framingham State College. In general, the students' response to this inquiry was that, first of all, they were required to take a seminar in European History to satisfy their major's requirements. Also, the students believed that all the work they put into writing these papers on the Kennedy Administration's policy toward various Eastern European countries was, in itself, a valuable learning experience. Finally, the students found working with Dr. Harrington on this project a challenge and a privilege.

Although the balance of the discussion centered on these topics, the remainder of the panel's time was spent outlining the contents of the research papers. (Mr. Livemore's paper was entitled "Kennedy and Hungary;" Mr. Domozick's paper concerned Kennedy and Poland; and Mrs. DeSisto's paper dealt with the Kennedy Administration's policy towards Yugoslavia.) After Commentator Paul D. Quinlan of Rhode Island Junior College gave his remarks, Dr. Darrett Rutman asked the panelists if they felt justified in making a value judgment about the effectiveness of the Kennedy Administration's Eastern European policy, if it is the role of the historian to "judge" historical events. All three students concurred with the idea that they were justified in

assessing the accomplishments of the Kennedy Administration in the area, because of the extensive research they had done on this topic. The students also expressed the belief that it is the historian who is qualified and possibly even responsible for making such assessments.

Kathryn DeSisto  
Framingham State College

SESSION SUMMARY: TOWARD A BETTER HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING OF CHILDBIRTH IN AMERICA  
SPRING, 1981

In his paper, "The Quest for 'Painless' Childbirth in America," Professor Eugene Declerq of Merrimack College examined the various techniques used over time to render childbirth painless. Particular attention was paid to the period since 1847 and the first use of chloroform on a parturient woman. Techniques that were studied included the use of rituals and amulets, hypnosis, exercise and diet, the water cure, blood-letting, twilight sleep, various barbiturates and anesthetics, natural childbirth, and the "baby bubble." It was found that many current techniques have roots dating back into the nineteenth century. Also, the development of new techniques was often subsumed within larger social, religious, or economic movements and was the subject of substantial racial, social, class, and sexual bias.

Professor Judy Barrett Litoff of Bryant College in her paper, "Researching the History of American Midwives," focused on aspects of the history of American midwives in the twentieth century that have yet to be fully explored. She singled out four areas of special concern: (1) the attitudes of female physicians toward midwives; (2) the relationship of the individual bureaus of child hygiene toward the midwife; (3) the utilization of oral histories; and (4) a full-scale historical study of nurse-midwifery.

The discussion which followed demonstrated that the history of childbirth in America is a topic which is yet to be incorporated into standard historical knowledge.

Judy Barrett Litoff  
Bryant College

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: THE MIDDLE AGES: A PROBLEM IN PERIODIZATION  
SPRING, 1981

The Middle Ages have meant different things to every age. To the men of the time theirs was the "modern" age. They were aware of the difference between themselves and earlier men, but they tended to revere their predecessors and ancestors. They spoke of being dwarfs standing on the shoulders of giants, though they were conscious that thus they could see farther than the men they admired. They were especially conscious of the difference Christianity had made: as Christians they would be judged at the last day and either saved for eternal bliss or damned to eternal pain, while the pagans, no matter how great, could not be admitted to the company of the saved. Dante could make Virgil his guide through the Inferno and Purgatorio, but not through Paradiso; there his beloved Beatrice, a modern Christian, became his guide. Wherever Christianity has remained strong, this distinction between pre-Christian antiquity and Christian

modernity has continued to put the middle ages in the modern era. Thus in England when the Regius Professorships of History were established at Oxford, they were Chairs of Ancient and of Modern History, the latter often held by men who studied and taught what we call medieval history.

The idea of the middle ages was a Renaissance idea, the other side of the coin, so to speak, from the idea of the Renaissance itself. When some fourteenth century French lawyers began to think of themselves as reviving Roman law and government and when Petrarch undertook to write an epic on the model of the Aeneid, their love of the ancient Roman past led them to denigrate their nearer predecessors. In fifteenth century Florence the idea of these ages, revered antiquity, renescent modernity, and a depraved middle age, became explicit. It was an uncharitable view of the recent past and a proud boastful view of themselves that these "humanists" expressed. But it has proved a very long-lived one.

It was, however, a view about which there has been much disagreement. Petrarch had admired Republican Rome and his middle ages would have been the whole Christian era up to his own time. The fifteenth century was more tolerant of ancient despotism as they also came under the rule of despots, and so we find Flavio Biondo in his Decades ending antiquity in 410 with the Gothic sack of Rome and beginning modernity with his own birth date of 1410; it seems obvious that he chose a millennium backwards from his own time. The "Gothic" age was an Italian synonym for the middle ages and the art of the period was regarded as particularly graceless in its lack of antique proportions and classical decoration.

Italy was the cultural leader of Europe in the fifteenth century and her ideas spread across the Alps, though the northern nations did not so readily renounce their heritage as the Italians. When Shakespeare, for example, wrote historical plays, they were drawn from the English past that today we know as medieval. But the Reformation added another factor of difference, especially in the north, between the Protestant present and the Catholic past. When Protestant historians condemned the papacy and all its works, present and past, the "middle ages" could hardly escape that condemnation. So in a German textbook of the seventeenth century that was often reprinted, the idea of the middle ages was firmly presented and there precisely dated at 476 to 1453. The millennial conception is still apparent, if not so exactly as Biondo's but the dates are more political - the deposition of the last Western Roman emperor to the fall of Constantinople to the Turks - and the middle ages are thus summed up as a period of political failure as well as doctrinal degradation.

The Age of the Enlightenment was still less sympathetic to an age of faith and so was born the appellation, the dark ages, for an unenlightened period, a time held to be ignorant, uncreative and oppressive. Voltaire thundered against medieval feudalism because it was oppressive, although what he meant was seigniorialism. Even Montesquieu, far better informed, mistakenly made feudalism the cause of the collapse of strong central government rather than its result. Gibbon blamed the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire on Christianity and Barbarians. And Hallam, as late as the early nineteenth century, viewed the state of culture in the middle ages as dark and dreary.

But the Enlightenment produced its own reaction in the Romantic movement. Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill began the Gothic revival that covered England with neo-medieval churches and neo-medieval ritual in the nineteenth century. Nothing could be more romantic than knights errant and damsels fair, and so Walter Scott and

Alexandre Dumas pere set their novels in the period. The new religion of nationalism also found its roots in the middle ages as the early literature of the vernacular languages was discovered, edited, and studied and as the roots of national politics were traced back into the middle ages. A great deal of solid scholarship was published and "medievalist" became a term of pride in university circles.

The last hundred years, however, have seen the tripartite periodization of history into ancient, medieval, and modern attacked, especially as the civilizations of other peoples besides Western Europeans have come to be studied and found to have periodizations of their own. Is it meaningful to talk, as we sometimes do, about medieval India or China or Nigeria? Even in Western history, the Renaissance scheme has come under attack. Haskins and others have called the unique character of the Renaissance into question by identifying a series of "renaissances" during the middle ages. Renaissance historians like Wallace Ferguson have extended their concerns backwards in time to about 1300, identifying urbanism and commercialism as the principal characteristics of the new era. Economic historians like Cipolla, on the other hand, looking at the Industrial Revolution as a great break in man's way of life, have proposed that the middle ages should be extended down to the eighteenth century. Indeed, at the present, one can find historians who begin the middle ages all the way from the second to the tenth centuries and historians who end the middle ages from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Clearly not all is well with the humanist scheme of ancient, medieval, and modern history. And the problem of periodization reflects deeper problems of interpretation and even values.

There are at least three ways these problems might be solved: 1) to adopt the view of Arnold Toynbee and see in the middle ages the genesis of western civilization; 2) to retain the traditional separate medieval period but differentiate it as a civilization of its own, essentially different from that of either ancient or modern civilization; and 3) to seek new understandings.

The first idea, that of Toynbee, has had wide currency but has fallen into some disrepute among historians during the last couple of decades. It is basically the Christian view of Western civilization and it has the merit of emphasizing the unity of that civilization as it is based in Christian values and Christian experience. In this scheme the unifying theme for the whole of the past two millennia is the expansion of Christianity: in antiquity its conquest of the Roman Empire; then in the middle ages its conversion of the barbarians, first in the Empire and then beyond its borders - the Irish, the Germans, the Slavs and Magyars, the Scandinavians, and last of all the Balts; and in modern times the colonial missionary movement which spread European Christendom around the globe. From this point of view the middle ages is just a chapter in a big volume, and the continuity of the past is stressed. But what of the discontinuities that so many historians have found? What of political and economic and artistic and literary history? Do they show similar continuities? I think not.

The second view, that the middle ages had a civilization different from either ancient or modern, is a view held by such distinguished medievalists as Joseph Strayer and Norman Cantor. These scholars believe medieval civilization should be studied as we study ancient Greece and Rome or Confucian China, a source of comparative studies with our own modern civilization. This idea has the merit of setting the comparisons largely in terms of values, contrasting medieval Christianity with ancient and modern humanism. But this traditional view does not take account of the evidence for continuity between ancient and medieval or medieval and modern times such as the economic historians have observed.

Is it possible to come to some new understandings about the middle ages, understandings which both take account of continuities and the discontinuities? I believe it is. For some time now historians of the period have found it necessary to subdivide the millennium into two or three shorter periods. As well as the traditional breaks in the fifth and fifteenth centuries, a break about 900 and another about 1300 are widely recognized.\*

Indeed, in some respects it may be said that there was more difference between the ninth and the thirteenth centuries than between the fifth and the ninth or the thirteenth and the seventeenth. Is it not possible that we should join the Early Middle Ages to Ancient history and the Central Middle Ages to Modern history and simply ignore the time-honored crises of the fifth and fifteenth centuries?

Gibbon points the way in the first case. For him the Early Middle Ages saw the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Until 476 there was a western Roman Emperor, though less and less independent of his barbarian generals. After 476 the barbarian kings in the West were theoretically subject to the Emperor at Constantinople, and Justinian in the sixth century actually reconquered Africa, Italy, and a bit of Spain. Until 732 the popes as patriarchs of Rome regularly sought confirmation from the Eastern Emperors. Then in dissatisfaction with the faith of the Greeks, the popes found protectors in the Frankish kings and in 800 acclaimed Charlemagne Emperor in the West. The ninth century saw the rapid disintegration of that Empire and with it the last attempt at a unitary state in the West. The empire created in the tenth century never hoped to rule any territory outside the boundaries of its own three kingdoms of Germany, north Italy, and Burgundy.

Along with political disintegration went the decay of trade and industry. But on the brighter side there was a reorganization of agriculture on a largely self-sustaining basis and with it a decline in slavery. The first classical renaissance came in the Carolingian period with the development of minuscule and the copying of almost every classical Latin work that has survived to modern times. English and Germanic literature can be traced back to this period with the epics of Beowulf and Hildebrand, but there was no Romance literature as yet because the languages were not yet sufficiently differentiated from Latin. Much of the Latin literature was written in a very debased language but other works especially in the Carolingian age maintained a good standard of Latinity. Latin poetry was still written in classical meters. The general picture is that of the Roman Empire and its Latin culture in a moribund state but also at times capable of spasms of activity, while the Christians and barbarians were learning and gradually taking over leadership culturally as well as militarily in western Europe. To some historians the civilization of the Carolingian Empire is the first of medieval times, to others it is the last of ancient times. If it is the former, it was ephemeral. Was 476 the end of the Western Roman Empire or was it 899, when the last adult Carolingian Emperor died? Certainly the whole first millennium of our era

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\*The period before the tenth century is known as the High Middle Ages in Italy and France, as the Early Middle Age in Germany and the United States, as the Dark Ages in England. From the tenth through the thirteenth century is the High Middle Ages in Germany and the United States and the Central Middle Ages in England. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are often described as the Later Middle Ages in England and the United States.

can be represented as a gradual decline and disappearance of classical civilization before the onslaught of Christians and barbarians.

The period from the tenth through the thirteenth century, on the other hand, was very different. It was a period of expansion and creativity. At the beginning of the period the Vikings from the North, the Moslems from the South, and the Magyars from the East, were raiding western Europe with such success as to threaten the continued existence of Latin civilization. By the end of the tenth century the invaders had been driven out and the Latins were on the march. Their political and military expansion would soon lead to the conquest of the Mediterranean and a beach-head in the Levant which was only lost in 1291. The Spanish Reconquista had restored two-thirds of the Iberian peninsula to Christendom before the end of the period, and the German Drang nach Osten added other lands to the East. Internally personal lordship gave way to feudalism which effectively territorialized lordship and restored some degree of order, if not unity, to the political life of western Europe. The Latin church, moreover, was reorganized into a powerful papal monarchy.

But it was not all political and military expansion. There was real cultural creativity. Christian values were widely preached by this powerful church and their acceptance can be measured by the great numbers of converts to the religious life. The code of chivalry was developed to embrace Germanic warrior values, Christian religious values, and courtly love - a marvelous, not to say miraculous feat, which has had continuing influence through the centuries. This same period saw the flowering of Romanesque and Gothic art and literature, whose monuments still enrich the culture of Europe and all her children in other parts of the globe. There were "renaissances" almost continuously from the tenth century onwards as ancient culture was recovered and incorporated into the learning and thought of Western Europe. The cathedral schools and universities provided Europe with a unique educational system, which has proven remarkably effective and long-lasting, easy to modernize for every generation's special educational needs.

Economically and socially Europe also expanded during the high Middle Ages. Population increased by a factor of three or four if the English example is typical. Lands under cultivation expanded to include virtually all those able to be cleared and drained, given the technology of the era. The technology improved: the stirrup, the horse collar, the iron-tipped plowshare together made the use of horses on a large scale possible, and horses increased the speed of cultivation as well as changed the nature of warfare. Water and wind mills were built everywhere to substitute other forms of energy for man and animals. The cam made possible the conversion of linear into rotary motion. Jean Gimpel speaks of an Industrial Revolution of the Middle Ages, and if the developments were far less sweeping than those of the eighteenth century, they represented similar ideas of saving human labor and mastering nature, ideas which were not characteristic of antiquity. The lot of the peasant was generally better than in the Roman Empire, where he was typically a slave in a plantation system; in the high Middle Ages the peasants were typically settled on the soil in which they had rights and from which they could not be moved. The flourishing urban settlements engaged in trade and industry on a wider and wider scale. Their burghers became richer and richer and even their lowliest citizens were free men. In sum, whether the thirteenth was or was not the greatest of centuries, it was a vital, productive, creative one, the culmination of four hundred years of western creativity.

The later middle ages, the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are dominated by the four horsemen of the Apocalypse. This was the period of the Avignonese Captivity of the Papacy followed by the Great Schism, of the Hundred Years War and the nigh endless wars of the Italian condottieri, of the Black Death and St. Vitus' Dance, of revolts by peasants and artisans throughout Europe, of shrinking population and deserted villages. On the other hand there was greater freedom for the peasants and a rising standard of living for the lower classes in both country and town when labor was in short supply. There was greater accumulation of capital and growing capitalism in agriculture, trade, and finance. Humanism characterized art and letters, especially in Italy and Flanders. The stage was set for the modern era.

Was the rebirth of classical letters in the period a real break with the past four hundred years which was characterized by so many such rebirths? The universities remained the pinnacle of the educational system though they attracted more laymen and added Greek to the curriculum. The scientific revolution of the seventeenth century seems far more significant: Bacon railed against the Aristotelianism that still dominated the learning of his day. Again, was the humanism of the arts and letters so new or had it not grown up gradually from John of Salisbury and Giotto onwards? Classical ornament and motifs were adopted but classical proportion was used only rarely. The domes borrowed from the Greeks were Byzantine rather than classical. Politically, the fall of Constantinople in 1453 probably had no more significance than the fall of Bordeaux in the same year to the French, ending the Hundred Years War. But neither made any very great difference to the political life of Europe. The discoveries of the East and West Indies were far more significant, though their impact came later. Most of all we must face the economic and social evidence for continuity till the eighteenth century Industrial Revolution.

In sum neither the "crisis of the fourteenth century" nor the "Renaissance" represented a qualitative break in the history of Europe of the sort that the tenth century did. It was then that the basic direction of European civilization as we have known it to this century, was taken: its expansionism, its political system based on contractual feudalism, its increasingly free population, its labor-saving technology, its urban centers of trade and industry, its cathedral schools that would develop into universities, its unique amalgamation of Mediterranean and Northern artistic traditions, its Christian humanism. Should we, then, not recognize this break in history more suitably than by burying it in the middle of the "middle ages"? To do so will necessitate a reorientation of our views of both ancient and modern history. But both periods are very different now from what the Renaissance humanists thought them. Archaeology has revolutionized ancient history so that the Roman is only the last of a long series of ancient Empires. And modern history, i.e., recent history, hardly extends before 1789, for many not before 1914, and the term "early modern" history has had to be invented for the fifteenth through the eighteenth centuries. Is it too much to hope that that period might be extended back to the tenth century while the ancient historians take on the decline and fall of the Roman Empire?

Fred A. Cazal, Jr.  
University of Connecticut

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES, APRIL 10, 1981

President Cazal convened the meeting at 8 p.m. Present were F. Cazal, S. Wyntjes, K. Lewalski, A. Patrucco, A. McGinty, R. Shinn, D. Rutman, J. Voll, C. Prelinger, R. Howell, C. Watson, N. Stout, and J. Liebowitz.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved. The Treasurer's report was distributed and discussed. A discussion followed regarding the Association's paying for lunch for participants at its conferences. Voll recommended having all participants pay for their own lunch so costs could be kept low for members. Stout suggested leaving the matter to the program chair. Rutman proposed a motion that the stated policy is that everyone should pay for lunch, subject to exceptions made by the program chair and treasurer. The motion passed.

Voll asked whether the NEHA could afford a luncheon speaker whose fare would have to be paid. The committee agreed to Voll's proposal.

The Executive Secretary was the next matter to be discussed. Some members thought that the description of duties should be part of the bylaws, rather than the Association's Constitution as published in the Spring 1981 issue of NEHA News. Rutman moved that the Association proceed on the basis of the document published. This motion passed.

Cazal reported that the Executive Committee would be proposing Rhode Island College as Host Institution for NEHA and that RIC proposed Kenneth Lewalski as Executive Secretary. Cazal would report these recommendations to the membership for their vote. In response to a question from McGinty, Shinn declared that the Executive Secretary should take office immediately. He suggested writing a letter to RIC reporting the results of the Association's votes. Cazal has already corresponded with the President and Dean at RIC. They approved the relationship with NEHA and nominated Lewalski for Executive Secretary. McGinty proposed a vote of thanks to the Executive Committee members from RIC for their work on the Executive Secretariat. The motion passed unanimously.

Asked for his thoughts on the future of the Association, Lewalski recommended that NEHA emphasize its position as a regional affiliate of the AHA, so as to maintain its position as an organization for all historians living in New England, not just those studying New England history. Prelinger agreed and suggested an item in NEHA News to this effect. She also recommended a session at the AHA Convention. Voll agreed with this idea but thought that a panel should be on a subject other than New England history.

Cazal reported that the Fall 1981 meeting is set for Albertus Magnus College in New Haven. Patrucco moved that the Association pursue Holy Cross for Spring 1982 and the University of New Hampshire for Fall 1982. The motion was adopted. Voll then moved that we plan for the Fall 1983 meeting in Mystic CT and the Spring 1983 meeting in either Springfield or Fitchburg, MA. The motion passed.

Cazal has received several letters from the National Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History. As was agreed at the previous meeting of the Executive Committee, he will call for contributions during the business meeting. Rutman moved that whatever would be raised by the President's appeal would be sent to NCC in addition to the sum which NEHA has already contributed. The motion was voted.

Prelinger distributed material on the NHPRC, which in the proposed Administration budget would be preserved but have its funding cut. She wanted a show of support for continued funding, as well as for Women's History Week. It was agreed that

time be set aside at the business meeting for a presentation on these topics. Prelinger proposed that the Association join the Coalition to Save Our Documentary Heritage. Rutman said that he disliked the idea of a hasty response to a proposal, all the implications of which are not clear. Patrucco said that he has unsure whether NEHA's participation in lobbying would endanger its tax exempt status. Cazal summed up the sense of the meeting not to join the Coalition at this time.

BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES, APRIL 11, 1981

President Cazal convened the meeting after lunch at Mt. Ida Junior College. Sherrin Wyntjes presented greetings from the College.

Minutes of the previous meeting are distributed in NEHA News were adopted. The Treasurer presented his report. Mr. Cazal asked for contribution to the NCC. Catherine Prelinger called for support for the NHPRC and Women's History Week. She urged members to write to the Congress on both matters.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the amendments to the Association's Constitution providing for a Host Institution and an Executive Secretary as published in the Spring 1981 NEHA News. The motion passed. Bylaw 6, also published in the NEHA News, was adopted. Cazal then reported that the Executive Committee recommended Rhode Island College as Host Institution and Kenneth Lewalski as Executive Secretary. The membership approved these recommendations. Mr. Lewalski was introduced to the membership as were the incoming officers. The meeting voted its thanks to Mt. Ida and Ms. Wyntjes for the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The election of officers for the NEHA will take place at the fall meeting of the association. The following is the slate of candidates presented by the Nominating Committee:

- Vice President: Emiliana Noether, University of Connecticut  
Catherine Prelinger, Benjamin Franklin Papers
- Secretary: James R. Cameron, Eastern Nazarene College  
Paul Fideler, Lesley College
- Executive Committee: Joseph Harrington, Framingham State College  
Robert J. Imholt, Albertus Magnus College  
Glenn Weaver, Trinity College  
Sherryn Wyntjes, Mount Ida Junior College
- Nominating Committee: John Battick, University of Maine  
Gwendolyn Jensen, University of New Haven  
Gary Lord, Norwich University  
Caroline Sloat, Old Sturbridge Village