

REVIEWS

Jacques Le Goff. *History and Memory*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1992. Pp. xxiii, 265. Cloth, \$29.50

According to the Greeks, the goddess Mnemosyne, the personification of memory, gave birth to the muses after sleeping with Zeus. Jacques Le Goff explores the relationship between the goddess and one of her muse offspring, Clio, in this thought-provoking work on the historian's craft. A leading member of the Annales school, Jacques Le Goff demonstrates the tools of the school that has so revolutionized historical studies. Steven Randall and Elizabeth Claman have selected and translated four of ten articles that appeared a decade ago in Italian translation in the *Enciclopedia* and later separately as *Storia e Memoria*. These texts focus on Past/Present, Antique/Modern, Memory, and History.

The challenging essay on past/present ranges from ancient Greece to the twentieth century and turns to psychology, linguistics, primitive thought, and historical consciousness to discuss figures such as Saint Augustine, Saussure, and Freud. In the second essay, a stimulating discussion of the metamorphoses and meanings of the antithesis, antique/ancient/modern, Le Goff is forced to focus "only on a few significant episodes, figures, and principles." Le Goff discusses the old quarrel in new frameworks, including modernization and the integral problem of identity, forcing the reader to see old concepts in a new light.

In the third essay on memory he analyzes ethnic memory, that is, the collective memory of people without writing; the rise of memory, from orality to writing, from prehistory to antiquity; memory in the Middle Ages-Western Europe; the progress of written and figured memory from the Renaissance to the present; contemporary revolutions in memory; and the "stake" of memory. This sweeping essay raises innumerable questions on the manipulation of memory, on what the author calls "this struggle for domination over remembrance and tradition." For him memory "is in reality more dangerously subject to manipulation by time and by societies given to reflection than the discipline of history itself." He turns to a number of authors to illustrate this theme, including Philippe Joutard, who analyzed how a historical community finds its identity in the memory of the Camisard insurrection.

In some ways the weakest essay is the last on history, perhaps because the author attempts to do so much—historical culture, the philosophy of history and the historian's craft—in such a condensed form. He examines the paradoxes and ambiguities of history, the historical mentality, philosophies of history, history as a science, and history today. His elaboration of philosophies of history from Thucydides to Foucault in 24 pages forces him into very brief discussions. For example, he argues that Foucault "plays an exceptional role in the history of history," but resorts to letting Paul Beyene characterize Foucault's philosophy of history or to letting Foucault explain himself. The reader is given in one instance one line from Foucault—"the notion of discontinuity takes on a major role in the historical disciplines"—with no further explanation. Only slighting reference without discussion is made to *The Archeology of Knowledge*. This breath-taking gallop does not prevent Le Goff from scoring some direct hits at some favorite targets: "The ignorance of historical research among most philosophers of history—the corollary of historians' scorn for philosophy—has not facilitated dialogue." He takes time also to condemn the "banal, reactionary modes of history—narrative, the history of events, biography, and political history" that he grudgingly admits "continue or stage comebacks." He lucidly encapsulates the Annales school mentality when he maintains that "the recognition of the singularity of the historical fact" has led historians to emphasize the primacy of the event, to "privilege" the role of individuals, particularly that of great men, and to reduce the particular to a narrative or story.

These essays represent the best of the Annales school in their critique of historical fact and event-oriented history, in the collaboration with other social sciences, in the replacement of history as narrative by history as problem, and in the attention to the present. Le Goff underscores the methodological problems inherent in the "new history" when he refers to the broadening of the domain of history, the documentary revolution, and the de-Europeanizing of history. For Le Goff "the paradox of historical science today is that if history has thus become an essential part of the need for individual and collective identity, it is precisely now that history is undergoing a crisis (of growth?). In its dialogue with other social sciences, in the considerable broadening of its problem, methods, and objects, historical science wonders whether it is not in the process of losing its way." Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie has contended that "while the death of history was being loudly proclaimed in certain quarters, it had simply gone through the looking-glass, in search not of its own reflection, but of a new world." [*The Mind and Method of the Historian* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 27.] This book will guide the initiated on that journey.

To illustrate the divorce between history and scholarship in the eighteenth century, Goff relates the tale of the abbé de Vertot (d. 1735) who was about to finish a work on the Turks' siege of Rhodes. When new documents were brought to him, he refused to look at them and replied "My siege is done—." This is a viewpoint one can share. For anyone who does not think his siege is done, this work will prove useful and fun. This insightful and learned treatise assumes interest and knowledge on the part of the reader and is not geared for the timorous or the timid nor for the undergraduate student.

Generally, the translation is well done, but some awkward sentences have crept into the English. For example, "it is incumbent upon professional specialists in memory—anthropologists, historians, journalists, sociologists—to make of the struggle for the democratization of social memory one of the primary imperatives of their scientific objectivity." An awkward paragraph on page 201 contradicts his meaning and the last sentence on page 210 is unintelligible. Some errors in proofing also surface, e.g. on page 139, as do a few inconsistent spellings, such as Ammien Marcelline for Ammianus Marcellinus. The note form may annoy many, for the author uses both the social science style of placing author and date in parenthesis in the text and the more traditional one. Lastly, the author fails to footnote a number of direct quotes (top, p. 11, p. 158, and top p. 204.) and to include in the bibliography some authors mentioned in the text. These technical errors do not significantly mar a lucidly written and persuasively argued work.

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Robin Neillands. *The Hundred Years War.* London and New York: Routledge, 1990. Pp. xv, 300. \$29.95. Paper, pp. 370. \$15.95.

The Hundred Years War, a series of sporadic campaigns stretching over 116 years, is best organized in eight periods of conflict, four between 1337 and 1396, and four between 1396 and 1457. What ties these campaigns together and distinguishes them from other conflicts between France and England is their focus on the English king's claim to the French crown. The simple part of dealing with them is the descriptive military narration, the complex part is tracing the familial and diplomatic circumstances shaping the alliances and motivations of the participants. Neillands does well enough with the former, not nearly as well with the latter.

The author of over forty books, some of them on modern military history, he is most at home with military narrative, and he stipulates at the outset that he does not have enough room