

for example, precisely what Elizabeth learned from her mother's fate, her father's actions, or her years as a subject, but we are made privy to myriad intriguing facts and the author's interpretations. That Elizabeth learned her lessons well is a plausible conclusion, but not the only one. In addition, we discover how Elizabeth, before and after her accession, walked a political tightrope, how political spin was used to fashion the image of a golden age, what limitations to her power she labored under, and what it meant to be a woman ruler and to be ruled by a woman--to be caught up in the contradiction that monarchs should rule and women should obey. Haigh's judgments will make for wonderful class discussion.

Haigh is adept at helping us understand Elizabeth: "... fury made her councillors fear her, but by her attentiveness she also made them love her." An ill Burghley, for example, was not only sent the queen's physician, but she personally fed him soup. In the marriage game, "she offered herself to the highest diplomatic bidder, but since no one could afford her price she became a royal tease rather than a royal tart." The queen's well-known vanity was even evident toward the end of her reign when, at age 64, she received the new French ambassador in her dressing gown and then kept opening it until he realized he was expected "to peep admiringly down her front."

The narrative is generously spliced with quotations from documentary sources that lend authenticity without interrupting the flow. In 1564, for example, upon learning that Mary Queen of Scots was taller than she, Elizabeth said: "Then she is too high! I myself am neither too high nor too low!"

The changes in this second edition are relatively minor, consisting primarily of occasional bits of new information and the addition of views from historians who, in the last decade, have contributed something to augment or bolster the author's interpretation. This is reflected, too, in the updated bibliography. This edition, then, refines the qualities that made its earlier incarnation successful: It presents us with a portrait of a ruling queen, warts, wigs, make-up, and all, a great queen with shortcomings and failures.

California State University, San Bernardino

Robert Blackey

T.C.W. Blanning. *The French Revolution: Class War or Culture Clash?* St. Martin's Press, 1998. Second edition. Pp. vii, 87. Paper, \$10.95; ISBN 0-312-17521-3.

T.C.W. Blanning's *The French Revolution: Aristocrats versus Bourgeois?* first appeared in 1987. In his second edition, the subtitle has been changed to *Class War or Culture Clash?* The difference shows the dramatic evolution in French Revolution and *Ancien Régime* scholarship over the course of the past decade. Fortunately the

excellence of Blanning's survey has not changed, nor has its usefulness for the college classroom.

Blanning's study, one of a St. Martin's Press series devoted to thorny historical controversies, aims to provide a brief survey of the major historiographical issues of the French Revolution. His point of departure is the Marxist interpretation; he then provides a succinct discussion of the revisionist attacks on that position, as well as the Marxist responses. Blanning focuses primarily on the major arenas in which this argument has been fought: namely, the composition of the elites in eighteenth-century France, as bourgeois *anoblis* sought to join, not overthrow, the nobility; the "pre-revolution" of 1786-1789; the intellectual roots of the revolution in the Enlightenment, a section that includes a discussion of Robert Darnton's "Grub Street" and its recent critics.

While revisionism tore down the old Marxist wall, it was unable to provide any sort of overarching substitute interpretation of similar power: thus the importance of the "post-revisionist," or "cultural" interpretation, to which most of Blanning's new material is devoted. He provides an admirably clear explanation of Jürgen Habermas's concept of the public sphere, to which most recent work is indebted, as well as of the major terms (dangerously approaching jargon) that this particular approach has made familiar but not always comprehensible. Through all of his discussion Blanning gives rather short shrift to issues of gender, which is to be regretted. Nevertheless he has pinpointed the most hotly-debated issue of the "cultural" approach: the meaning of the Terror, and whether it was an aberration born out of the pressures of foreign and civil war or inherent within the revolution from the beginning.

It is the particular merit of this book to provide not only a survey of the literature but also a thoughtful contribution in itself to the history of the French Revolution. His discussion of the events by which monarchical legitimacy was lost during the reigns of Louis XV and Louis XVI also sheds light on the rather inexplicable part played by Marie Antoinette, both as individual and as symbol. He brings into clear focus the role played by the French army (and noble army officers) in 1789, as well as the significance of the French inability to prevent the Prussian attack on the Dutch Republic in 1787, an often-ignored event that seemed to contemporaries to mark France's eclipse as a great power.

This brief (just under 70 pages) and sophisticated study is well-suited to a college audience, for either general surveys or more specialized courses. It is well-written, with welcome touches of humor and an excellent bibliography, and should become an essential part of any course on the French Revolution.

Colgate University

Jill Harsin