

## English summaries

### ***The Republican Ideal and the Interpretation of the National Past*** M. OZOUF

*The republican ideal, which has today, once again, been given a place of honor, which is considered entirely coherent and invoked as the unique cure for all this era's evils, continues to illustrate the difficulties that French people have with their past. From the time of its revolutionary birth, the French republican ideal was meant to be a promise of humanities eternal renewal and was thus defined by a break with time and a contempt for tradition. In order that the republican regime might, after a century of hesitating, establish itself finally in France, the founding fathers of the Third Republic had to erase the revolutionary origins of the republican ideal, reintegrate all of the national past and reject the imaginary break: these efforts resulted in a much more complex, more problematic and also more pragmatic republican ideal, than that which is magically invoked today.*

*Retracing this itinerary is a manner of persuading ourselves that our era can no longer believe in the coherence and integrity of the model of the Third Republic. It is also a means to seize upon that which the republican ideal still offers as a rectification to democratic drifts, be they despotic or prosaic.*

### ***The Middle Class in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Research, Approaches, Problematics***

G. CROSSICK

*The social history of the middle class in nineteenth-century Britain has in recent years become a prominent theme in British analysis, in spite of decades of neglect. This article is a critical survey of the main themes which have dominated work in this field in the last fifteen years, focusing especially on the questions and approaches which distinguish research and analysis in Britain within a broader European framework. After a discussion of the way social history developed in Britain, which provides an essential context in which to understand its neglect of the middle class, the article is organised around a set of themes: words, classes and the discovery of the eighteenth century; an activity-based approach to class formation; the integrative power of voluntary action; cultural forces for cohesion and division; the petite bourgeoisie's struggle for attention; and, finally, landowners, bourgeois and the changing problematic.*

*The relatively late development of the middle class as a subject for research in Britain means that it has grown at the very time when social structural history has fallen into disfavour, and when questions of representations and discourse have come to dominate the British social history agenda. Concern for the formation or appearance of the middle class in the first half of the nineteenth century has given way to questions of culture and elite relationships in the second. The distinctiveness of*

## ENGLISH SUMMARIES

*the British approach can be traced to the concerns of the national culture, to the nature of the sources for the analysis of the bourgeoisie, and to the distinctive character of the historical process itself.*

### ***Faith and Belief in the Middle Ages: Liturgical Mediations***

É. PALAZZO

*The article examines the different liturgical modes of transmission of faith in the Middle Ages. The inquiry leaves the impression of a liturgical triptych which describes the actual reception of faith by the faithful. The first panel is made up of the liturgical texts themselves which express the orthodoxy of faith as defined by the Church. The second panel contains the normative texts by which the ecclesiastical authorities attempt to harmonize liturgical practice with the content of the sacred pieces. The third panel of the triptych, containing diverse texts (hagiographical...) and images, opens the dimension of the senses by which the liturgy is "lived", a dimension indispensable for the transmission of faith.*

### ***A Two or Three Dimensional Faith: Belief Boosting Images for the Laity***

D. ALEXANDRE-BIDON

*Contrary to a generally accepted idea, images could hardly be put to use as a "Bible for the illiterates". The frescoes and stained-glasses, most of which were hardly visible or even illegible up until the end of the 15th century, were often too complex to be understood by common people. Only the very wealthy in the upper middle class or those belonging to the aristocracy had statuettes of saints and pious images in their homes. To the common people, preachers offered metaphors and mental images which were generally grounded in their daily life, i.e. their cooking, housework or furniture... In the absence of images the sign of the cross flourished on numerous house items such as the loaves of bread, the soap cakes, etc. Paradoxically, faith required a greater capacity for abstraction from the common people, even if to be helpful, priests chose examples which were quite simple.*

### ***Le "Lundi des Trépassés".***

#### ***The Invention, Spread and Reception of a Ritual***

M.A. POLO DE BEAULIEU

*The enigmatic idiom "Lundi des Trépassés" points several rituals of commemoration of all the Dead every monday of the year. Usually it consists of a mass and a ceremony in the cemetery. The first mentions are exclusively monastic, and this ritual is diffused in the secular church during the 13th century. How the church managed to justify and diffuse this liturgical innovation? In order to answer this question, we have investigated not only liturgical sources but also narrative ones. In fact only the narrative sources allow to replace this ritual inside a group of beliefs about the Soul's weekly rest. This coherency explains the long-lasting success of that ceremony aiming to control the relations between the dead and the living.*

### ***Western Attitudes to Miracles connected with Images in the Early Middle Ages***

J.-M. SANSTERRE

*Only a few texts provide us with a view of what was thought, from the 6th to the 10th century north of the Alps, about miracles connected with images. Except for*

a story by Gregory of Tours concerning the Mediterranean border of Gaul that was then influenced by the Orient, these texts relate wonders having occurred in the Orient or Italy. Two attitudes can be distinguished: either the straightforward belief in the manifestations of this phenomenon or, as in the *Libri Carolini*, the inability to refute its principle and deny that images could be a vehicle of divine powers. It is suggested, by highlighting a testimony from the mid-9th century concerning the monastery of Ellwangen in Alemania, that what appeared as a miracle connected with images may also have happened now and then north of the Alps in the Early Middle Ages. In a second part, a brief comparison is made with the Italian sources. Although the veneration of images was more intense and less controversial in Italy, the texts written there do not mention many miracles connected with them and the images took second place by comparison with the holy relics.

### **Witchcraft and Modernity.**

#### **The Stakes of the New Witchcraft Trials in Cameroon**

P. GESCHIERE

Since 1980, State courts in the East Province of Cameroon began to convict “witches”, mostly on the basis of the testimonies of “witch-doctors”, whose “expertise” thus receives official recognition. Such direct interventions by the State in witchcraft affairs are not exceptional in post-colonial Africa; they reflect a general obsession with a supposed proliferation of “witchcraft”. Striking is that “witchcraft” becomes an overriding issue precisely in the more modern sectors of society. A comparison with historical studies of witchcraft trials in early Modern Europe is of interest because in these studies as well the relation between “witchcraft” and “modernity” is a central, albeit highly differently interpreted, issue. Of special relevance is Michel de Certeau’s insistence that the witches, as much as the magistrates who convict them, are part and parcel of the modern changes. In Africa as well, witchcraft is not to be studied as a relict of a tradition that will disappear with “modernization”. It is rather modernity itself, its dreams and practices, that seems to reproduce the witchcraft imaginary on an unprecedented scale. Witchcraft trials offer a concrete setting to locate the intermediaries that play a key role in this. The African examples, like the Italian “micro-historians”, emphasize the role of seemingly subaltern actors in the crystallization of the modern changes: the *nganga* (witch-doctors) — more than the State and its representatives — figure as key actors in this modern reproduction of witchcraft discourses.