

Raymond J. Jirran

A. Introduction

The course goal for this topic is **to evaluate the relationship between politics and economics in England during early modern times** and **to evaluate the legitimacy of human rights in Seventeenth-Century England**, according to a criteria of the people, places, and times involved and the degree of certitude warranted. This lesson is a sort of catch-all lesson, picking up odds and ends which seem pertinent, but which are not generally treated. The William and Mary of these lectures are not the William and Mary after whom their namesake college was named. That William and Mary ruled from 1689 to 1702.¹ William is indexed in the fifth edition of Chambers as William III, Stadholder of Holland;² in the sixth edition as William of Orange, king of England, in the seventh edition as William I (of Orange) stadholder of Netherlands (r. 1579-1584).³ William the Conqueror of Lecture 20 ruled from 1066-1087. That other William is indexed in the fifth edition of Chambers as William, Duke of Normandy;⁴ in the sixth edition as William I, the Conqueror, king of England (1026-1087).⁵ The Mary of this lecture ruled England from 1553 to 1558. The mixed drink is named after her.

B. Religion

The history of late medieval religion in England reveals a church eminently successful, about to be politically ruined for standing up for truth. Geoffrey Chaucer, who died in 1400, is mentioned in the seventh edition of Chambers on page 412.⁶ Chaucer wrote Canterbury Tales toward the end of his life. William Langland, who wrote Vision of Piers Plowman about thirty years earlier is also mentioned on page 477. Both authors described failings of the Church.

That description need not be taken at face value. Since the Protestant Revolt, writers have described the late medieval English church as in need of reform. Contemporaries were able to accept the Church as it was.⁷

The state infiltrated the church by utilizing churchmen in the government. This use hid the fact that the church was losing political strength. Henry VIII would demonstrate how the economic strength of the church was dependent upon political strength.⁸

Before Henry VIII, the Church owned between a fifth and a fourth of the agricultural land in England. In medieval towns monastic communities often owned more than twenty-five percent of the land.⁹ The most important Church income, the tithe, was also the most unpopular. The tithe was a tax unevenly applied. While the Church was a wealth-generating institution, the Church did not cave into political power. Such placing truth before politics is what gives Western civilization its endurance.

C. Parliament

The reign of Mary Tudor (1553-1558) is traditionally regarded as a turning point between government-led reform in the first half of the Sixteenth Century and gentry-led reform in the second half. Her reign is regarded as at the depth of a mid-Tudor crisis. She is portrayed as gathering the ingredients of Elizabethan Puritanism, out of which the U. S. was eventually founded.¹⁰

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Tudor England does make a convenient focus for the development of Parliament. Mary Tudor had a chance to return Roman Catholicism to England. Traditional thinking regards taking that opportunity as an error. Such thinking is under academic scrutiny. The seventh edition of Chambers treats the matter on page 481.¹¹

More careful scrutiny shows that Roman Catholicism was a source of early political support for Mary. Traditional thinking regards Mary as involved in a breakdown of communication with the gentry, setting the stage, a hundred years later, for Cromwell. Mary, on the other hand, regarded her last Parliament as worth saving. The point is that Mary did demonstrate worthwhile legislative, managerial, and political skills. There is a danger of reading history backwards and portraying Mary as an inevitable loser, when what actually happened was that her rising to the occasion was simply not quite high enough.

Mary Tudor, nonetheless, did have a difficult personality. She was responsible for burning heretics with an unseemly vindictiveness. She did seem to rule too much by caprice, rather than by reason. Everything which could go wrong for her, did seem to go wrong for her.¹²

Stuart England (1603-1714) is generally regarded as the time when Parliament emerged from the shadows of English government to take control. Oliver Cromwell transformed middle class people into soldiers of the New Model Army, of standing up to the royal army. With the Glorious Revolution of 1688, Parliament was in command.

D. Conclusion

By studying the original lecture, including the Introduction, Religion, Parliament, and this Conclusion and by reading the supplement, including the Introduction, Peasantry, Animal Husbandry, Witchcraft, Dueling, Plagues, and the final Conclusion, the student will be able to meet the course goals. The course goals for this lesson are to evaluate the legitimacy of human rights in Seventeenth-Century England and to evaluate the relationship between politics and economics in England during early modern times. The student is to do this according to a criteria of the people, places, and times involved and the degrees of certitude warranted.

In Religion both church and state had difficulty facing the truth that politics overly influenced them both. Henry VIII accused the Church of playing politics with his need for an annulment; the Church accused Henry VIII of playing politics with the sacredness of his marriage vows. Parliament had the truth-politics problem as part of the mainstream of what historians treat. The problem was how to both honor human rights and maintain order. Human rights is based on truth, order on politics.

Supplement

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E. Introduction

Because of their impact on later United States history, the impact of some religious concepts merits careful consideration. The Professor wants to write a little more about Puritanism in Parliament (continued). Other topics are added here not so much to write more as to bring different considerations to bear on the material.

Peasantry, Animal Husbandry, Witchcraft, and Plagues are still outside the mainstream of historical considerations. Specialization tends to place all historians, in one way or another, outside of the mainstream of what is being done. All topics are chosen for these lectures because they are important for Thomas Nelson Community College students and anticipated internet students, world-wide, not because they are either important in and of themselves or are important to Dr. Jirran.

The professor considers witchcraft primarily as an expression of feminism. By defying the status quo, witches defy the patriarchy which establishes the status quo. This observation is a theme feminist scholars often use. The course goal for this section remains to evaluate the legitimacy of human rights in Seventeenth Century England and to evaluate the relationship between politics and economics in England during early modern times.

F. Parliament (continued)

John Milton (1608-1674) served as secretary to Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658) not in order to establish popular government, but in order to establish a free state. Milton never believed that the English people had the civic virtue required for self-governance. Milton wanted ". . . a Free Government, wherein so single person should enjoy any power above or beside the laws."¹³ Milton expected General Cromwell to mold the people into civic virtue. Eventually theorists gave up on the idea of civic virtue and took up, instead, the idea of self interest and a politics of popular participation and diversity.¹⁴ This is an idea

G. Peasantry

While eras are named after kings and queens, civilization rests upon the lowest level of rights, found in the peasantry. Peasants have already been treated in Topic 16, The Making of Western Europe July 25, 1999, Section F., Medieval manorialism and Feudalism Continued. Peasants have also been treated in Topic 17, Nationality July 5, Section I. Peasantry. Peasants have been described as White slaves. Like Black slaves, peasants have been defined by their economic status, rather than by their political or religious status. This part of the lecture is designed to expose the narrowness of the economic definition. The material is found in this lecture because the research demonstrating the inadequacy of a definition limited to economic matters is limited to England.¹⁵

No one has ever questioned the fact that peasants acted as jurors, paid taxes, and served in the military.¹⁶ Historians of villages have incorporated these political facts into the meanings used to explain what happened. Historians of society and of the state have resisted incorporating such facts. The democracy which has blossomed in Western civilization requires that both the

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economic and political dimensions of the peasantry be understood. Dr. Jirran is suggesting that the economic limit to the definition of peasant is what makes understanding peasants difficult.

H. *Animal Husbandry*

To a large extent, the history of modern times is about the history of transferring the need to do physical labor away from humans. For a long time, horses served this purpose. Horses were mentioned briefly in Topic 16, The Making of Western Europe July 25, 1999, Section G., The Horse. A more extensive treatment is found in Topic 19, Medieval Russia July 25, 1999, Section I. Genghis Khan, 2. Horseback Riding. Topic 19 begins the treatment of horses in 4300 B.C. and continued to 1000 B.C. Topic 19 also comments on the introduction of horses into the Americas between 1680 and 1750. This topic fills in what was happening in England between 1500 and 1700. Topic 26, Commerce, Section B. Technology, will have more.

When Henry VIII (1509-1547) decided that his army needed better horses, he sought to improve the stock by importing Continental breeds. This demand was augmented by the demand of farmers for horses to replace oxen for plowing their newly enclosed lands. Heightened production called for better transportation for hauling goods overland. The stage coach industry also flourished in the latter half of the Seventeenth Century.¹⁷

The need to breed horses developed from monks to nobles to businessmen. At the beginning of the Sixteenth Century, monasteries produced the best horses. Once Henry VII confiscated monastic lands, nobles took over. Later, recognizing the opportunity to make a profit, entrepreneurs got into the business.¹⁸

Documenting the expansion of horse trading can be done through court records. At first stealing a horse must have been like stealing an eighteen-wheeler today. The thief gets caught relatively easily. As more and more horses got into the market, however, catching thieves became more and more difficult.¹⁹

I. *Witchcraft*²⁰

Students frequently deny that witchcraft is diabolical and insist that witchcraft is merely neopagan. Some scholars have trouble with the distinction. The European witchcraft of Puritan New England was a diabolism formed out of ancient sorcery, paganism, folklore, heresy, scholastic theology, and inquisitorial trials. Recent historians are stressing the role of magic and that of popular tradition. The Salem witchcraft trials have been more studied than any other early modern witchcraft cases²¹ Where Chambers treats Witchcraft in the seventh edition on pages 573 and 574, he seems oblivious of what happened at Salem.

It is not necessary to stress the role of the witch as a rebel against Church and society. The best contemporary historians agree with those students who say that diabolical rites, if ever practiced, were rare. What the better historians are now saying is that the witch-craze was an aspect of the all too human desire to project evil on others, to define them as outsiders, and then to punish them horribly.

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Modern historians can view witchcraft as "a valid expression of religious experience." "Polytheism and feminism are two ancient religious ideas whose time has come again."²² The better view is that one can develop individual creativity, be attuned to nature, and appreciate feminine principles without restoring that paganism out of the past which can never be restored.

Generally, accused New England witches were women over forty about to receive a large inheritance. The real problem was an independently wealthy woman. Exorcism amounted to a negotiation about the legitimacy of female discontent, resentment, and anger.²³

In the conflict between political and economic reality, political reality won out. Legitimacy of human rights can be taken as political, economic, or religious. Originally, the notion was economic, emanating from the increased capital available at the beginning of modern times. In the late Twentieth Century, that notion was far more political, emanating from groups of people demanding political rights.

Historians are comfortable linking events with politics. This is the history of rulers. Historians are also comfortable linking events with economics. This is neo-Marxism. Historians used to be comfortable linking events with religion. The problem with using religion is the self-righteousness associated with proclaiming that God has elected the writer to pursue his craft.

Historians using either politics or economics are not so self-righteous. United States historians like to present the material as political. Because of freedoms in the United States, economic prosperity has materialized, along with religion. Others would write that, in the final analysis, everything is economic. Sound economics eliminates religion which gets in the way and delivers workable politics.

The third view is the one followed by this professor. First we have to get right with God. Witchcraft is about the disparity "between godly aspirations and sinful reality." The examination of both confessions and possessions served to examine disparities between the ideal and real as well.²⁴ Once that is done, sound politics and sound economics follow.

The professor does write as a self-righteous Christian. If one is not self-righteous, one has no business on the cross, and if one does not accept the cross, one cannot be Christian. The protection is a love and devotion to the facts, the facts, the facts, in spite of whatever may be politically correct at any given time in any given religious or secular environment.

J. Marriage

The transition from Witchcraft to Marriage can be made via a consideration of magic. In the seventh edition of Chambers, magic is indexed for pages 544, 545, 572, 573, 574, though not for 571. The focus is records from the Venetian Inquisition from the late 1570s through 1591. The crime was using magic "in order to bind one person to another through live illicitly won."²⁵ The records imply that those unused to power, especially women, found power in magic.

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Marriage can be viewed as an economic institution with a political dimension. The understanding of marriage underwent development during this period. The way to get at what was happening is through a study not only of court records, but also of the institutional context in which the courts worked. Recent scholarship maintains that church courts have an undeserved reputation as archaic and ineffective. While there is not enough evidence for maintaining that the energetic prosecution of sexual irregularity resulted directly in increased premarital chastity and marital stability, at least that is the direction in which the evidence leads.²⁶

One of the authors of Chambers, David Herlihy, a past president of both the Catholic Historical Association and the American Historical Association, takes another scholar to task for ridiculing the medieval penitentials. Herlihy comments that sexual norms "will always reflect a society's deepest assumptions concerning the nature of the cosmos and human destiny within it."²⁷

During the period 1570-1640, church marriages increased and binding spousals decreased. A binding spousal is a marriage not blessed by the church. Society provides marriage as a political and economic institution for the raising and protection of children.²⁸

French legal theory helps develop what was happening. In the 1570s once woman accepted a marriage contract, women were no longer able to enter into other contracts. Contrary to the theory, in practice, women continued to exercise many contractual rights and obligations.²⁹

On the one hand, children were dependent upon their parents; on the other hand children were granted permission to love, but not by their parents. The church was used to settle the conflict between parents and children. The courts were of particular value to married women who needed to defend their sexual reputations. That the poor were forced to turn away from church courts in the Eighteenth Century may account for why religious conformity, especially in marital matters, began to disintegrate. The economically disfranchised were not accepting established political authority.³⁰

K. Dueling³¹

If marriage was an institution designed for women and children, dueling was for men. The first duelers were pre-historic. Dueling was the bonding of the aristocracy. As the military fell behind other classes in both intelligence and education, character became more important. Character meant the ability to face either military or personal combat undaunted, i.e. as all in a day's work.

This attitude enabled small European forces not only to conquer much of the world, but, more importantly, to crush domestic rebellions. Domestic tranquillity was essential for economic prosperity. Neither did women object, being raised to believe that dueling was "an inescapable duty of their men-folk, like going to the wars, or like childbirth in their own case."³²

Renaissance Italy, to be seen in Section III, Conceptualization, originated the modern duel. The peak of dueling, which the Church always opposed, reached its height between 1550 and 1750.

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On this point, the Enlightenment agreed with the church. For the Enlightenment, dueling was foolish; for the church, wrong. The French revolution had its own effect. In condemning

everything feudal or aristocratical [sic], the ensuing twenty years of European war seemed to revive and reinvigorate it, as though with the smell of fresh blood. It lingered on in Britain to near the middle of the nineteenth century, on the continent until the deluge of the Great War made bloodshed over petty private grudges meaningless. Meanwhile it had been carried overseas, especially to the Americans, by the expansion of Europe.³³

Alexander Hamilton died in his duel with Aaron Burr in 1804. Despite the research, just how widespread dueling was has yet to be established. Actually, dueling eventually involved the middle class German university students, common soldiers, and, but rarely, women.

L. Plagues

The plague was developed in Topic Eighteen as an aspect of Mamluk travels. The suggestion was made that the Muslims suffered more than the Christians because the Muslims saw the plague as something sent by Allah to be endured. There is a study of what happened in England which bears consideration.³⁴

This study purports that rates of mortality fell not because of either economic growth or crop diversification but because of lack of the provision of public goods developed by administratively centralizing governments. The plague was different from other epidemics. During the Fourteenth Century, during the Black Death, European population declined from about 79 million to 60 million people.³⁵ From 1470 to 1670, eight hundred twenty-thousand people died from the plague in England. Public health was aided by such amenities as public hygiene, which a central government could offer. The quarantine was a type of public hygiene.

From 1518 to 1578, ideas about what to do were brought up by the crown, but not acted upon. From 1578 to 1625, coherent social policies were developed, but not vigorously enforced. The Enlightened Absolutism, more of which will be indexed in the seventh edition of Chambers on pages 690-692, of Charles I (1625-1649) helped curb the plague. Charles I is indexed on pages 526-529. Enlightened Absolutism is treated in the next course, HIS 102, Western Civilization II, Charles is treated in this course in the readings for Topic 38—Spain. From 1630 to 1665 these social policies were vigorously enforced. The most unpopular policy was to lock up together all members of an infected household. The quarantine policy did help to reduce the ravages of the plague on the population at large. Political power enforced the health requirement essential for a flourishing economy.

M. Conclusion

The tensions described in Topic 20—William also serve to delineate the incompatible inseparables under this topic. By studying the original lecture, including the Introduction, Religion, Parliament,

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and this Conclusion and by reading the supplement, including the Introduction, Peasantry, Animal Husbandry, Witchcraft, Dueling, Plagues, and the final Conclusion, the student will be able to meet the course goals. The course goals for this lesson are to evaluate the legitimacy of human rights in Seventeenth-Century England and to evaluate the relationship between politics and economics in England during early modern times. The student is to do this according to a criteria of the people, places, and times involved and the degrees of certitude warranted.

This catch-all topic has been about aligning politics with truth, despite political pressures to the contrary. In the main lecture religion and parliament were studied. In the Supplement, peasantry, animal husbandry, witchcraft, marriage, dueling, and plagues were incorporated into politics as aspects of truth determining what would be the politics of Western civilization.

Comments on the Seventh Edition of Chambers, pages 0278-0295

In the opinion of the professor, Chambers is the most scholarly textbook on the market. Chambers well represents mainstream thinking in the history profession. The professor, however, disagrees in many significant ways with mainstream thinking. These disagreements are set forth in the following comments.

Page	Column	Paragraph	Line

0282	2	2	3	“Dialectic . . . “
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When Chambers writes that dialectic is an art, the professor wonders why not a science. Dialectic is associated with Marxism on page 882. The professor regards philosophy as both an art and a science. The professor thinks that Chambers is using dialectic as a part of philosophy. Certainly the scholastics, Anselm, and Abelard were philosophers.

Dialectic is also used

Page	Column	Paragraph	Line	
0282	2	3	3	
0283	1	2	2	(dialectical theology)
0284	1	2	7 th	last
0286	1	2	2	

0285	1	1	4	“. . . do justice to all truth . . . “
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The professor regards this as asserting the primacy of truth over politics.

0285 2 2 4 “. . . he observed very little.”

Scholars examining Thomas’s science have found him amazingly current.

0286 1 2 last “. . . worship of Mary.”

0286 1 3 1 “Worship of Mary”

0286 1 3 3 “. . . worship.”

0286 2 3 4 “. . . worship of Mary . . . “

As a practicing Roman Catholic, the professor wants to distinguish between worship and veneration. Chambers seems to recognize the distinction, because veneration is used elsewhere.

0289 2 2 3 “. . . reflective of all truth.”

The quest is for truth undetermined by politics.

0291 caption Also see the illustration on page 1098.

Endnotes

¹ The Concise Columbia Encyclopedia (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), page 921.

² Fifth edition of Chambers, pages 607, 671, 687-688, and 690.; seventh edition of Chambers, pages 509-510, 536.

³ Sixth edition of Chambers, pages 492, 539, 550b, 551-552, 554.

⁴ Fifth edition of Chambers, pages 307, 309.

⁵ Sixth edition of Chambers, pages 223-225.

⁶ Geoffrey Chaucer, who died in 1400, is mentioned in the fifth edition of Chambers on page 477; in the sixth edition of Chambers on page 372; in the seventh edition on page 412.

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⁷ Joseph Dahmus, review of Church and Society in Late Medieval England, by R. N. Swanson in The Catholic Historical Review, Vol. 76, No. 3 (July 1990), pages 592-593.

⁸ Joseph Dahmus, review of Church and Society in Late Medieval England, by R. N. Swanson in The Catholic Historical Review, Vol. 76, No. 3 (July 1990), pages 592.

⁹ Constance H. Berman, review of J. Patrick Greene, *Medieval Monasteries* The Catholic Historical Review, Vol. 79, No. 4 (October 1993), pages 735.

¹⁰ Rex H. Pogson, review of Jennifer Loach, Parliament and the Crown in the Reign of Mary Tudor, probably The Catholic Historical Review, The Catholic Historical Review 74 (July 1989), but certainly pages 599-600.

¹¹ The fifth edition of Chambers treats the matter on page 513, columns 1-2; the sixth edition of Chambers treats the matter on page 440, column 1; the seventh edition on page 481.

¹² Lacey Baldwin Smith, review of David Loades, Mary Tudor: A Life, The American Historical Review, Vol. 96, No. 4 (October 1991), page 1192.

¹³ John Toland, "Life of John Milton, in ?? Darbishire, *Early Lives of Milton* as cited by Steve Pincus, "Neither Machiavellian Moment nor Possessive Individualism ??," The American Historical Review, Vol. 103, No. 3 (June 1998), page 727, fn. 116.

¹⁴ Steve Pincus, "Neither Machiavellian Moment nor Possessive Individualism ??," The American Historical Review, Vol. 103, No. 3 (June 1998), pages 727, 730

¹⁵ R. B. Goheen, "Peasant Politics? Village Community and the Crown in Fifteenth-Century England," The American Historical Review, Vol. 96, No. 1 (February 1991), pages 42 and following.

¹⁶ R. B. Goheen, "Peasant Politics? Village Community and the Crown in Fifteenth-Century England," The American Historical Review, Vol. 96, No. 1 (February 1991), page 62.

¹⁷ Richard Lachmann, review of Peter Edwards, The Horse Trade of Tudor and Stuart England, The American Historical Review, Vol. 95, No. 3 (June 1992), pages 814-815.

¹⁸ Richard Lachmann, review of Peter Edwards, The Horse Trade of Tudor and Stuart England, The American Historical Review, Vol. 95, No. 3 (June 1992), pages 814-815.

¹⁹ Richard Lachmann, review of Peter Edwards, The Horse Trade of Tudor and Stuart England, The American Historical Review, Vol. 95, No. 3 (June 1992), pages 815.

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- ²⁰ The first part of this section draws heavily from John E. Weakland, review of Jeffrey B. Russell, A History of Witchcraft, Sorcerers, Heretics, and Pagans in The Catholic Historical Review, Vol. LXVIII, No. 3 (July 1983), pages 431-432.
- ²¹ N.A., "In This Issue," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 101, No. 2 (April 1996), page xiii.
- ²² Jeffrey B. Russell, A History of Witchcraft, Sorcerers, Heretics, and Pagans, pages 174 and 175, as cited in John E. Weakland, review of The Catholic Historical Review, Vol. LXVIII, No. 3 (July 1983), pages 431-432.
- ²³ Richard P. Gildrie, review of Carol F. Karlsen, The Devil in the Shape of a Woman: Witchcraft in Colonial New England in The American Historical Review, Vol. 94, No. 2 (April 1989), pages 211-212.
- ²⁴ Richard P. Gildrie, review of Richard Godbeer, *The Devil's Dominion: Magic and Religion in Early New England* in *The Catholic Historical Review*, Vol. 80 ??, No. 1 ?? (January ??1994 ??), pages 680-681.
- ²⁵ Paul F. Grendler, review of Guido Ruggiero, *Binding Passions: Tales of Magic, Marriage, and Power and the End of the Renaissance*, in *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 100, No. 2 (April 1995), page 549.
- ²⁶ John R. Gillis, review of Martin Ingram, Church Courts, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1570-1640. (Past and Present Publications) in The American Historical Review, Vol. 95, No. 1 (January 1990), pages 160-161.
- ²⁷ David Herlihy, review of James A. Brundage, Law, Sex, and Christian Society in Medieval Europe in The American Historical Review, Vol. 94, No. 4 (October 1989), pages 1073.
- ²⁸ John R. Gillis, review of Martin Ingram, Church Courts, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1570-1640. (Past and Present Publications) in The American Historical Review, Vol. 95, No. 1 (January 1990), pages 160-161.
- ²⁹ John R. Gillis, review of Martin Ingram, Church Courts, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1570-1640. (Past and Present Publications) in The American Historical Review, Vol. 95, No. 1 (January 1990), pages 160-161.
- ³⁰ John R. Gillis, review of Martin Ingram, Church Courts, Sex, and Marriage in England, 1570-1640. (Past and Present Publications) in The American Historical Review, Vol. 95, No. 1 (January 1990), pages 160-161.

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³¹ Russell Major, review of V. G. Kiernan, The Duel in European History: Honour and the Reign of Aristocracy in The American Historical Review, Vol. 95, No. 2 (April 1990), page 485.

³² V. G. Kiernan, The Duel in European History: Honour and the Reign of Aristocracy, page 13 as cited by Russell Major in his review in The American Historical Review, Vol. 95, No. 2 (April 1990), page 485.

³³ V. G. Kiernan, The Duel in European History: Honour and the Reign of Aristocracy, page 7 as cited by Russell Major in his review in The American Historical Review, Vol. 95, No. 2 (April 1990), page 485.

³⁴ Harold J. Cook, review of Paul Slack, The Impact of Plague in Tudor and Stuart England in The American Historical Review, Vol. 92, No. 5 (December 1987), pages 1203-1204.

³⁵ Jerry H. Bentley, "AHR Forum: Cross-Cultural Interaction and Periodization on World History," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 101, No. 3 (June 1996), page 768.