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Michael G. Finlayson

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cussed along with the Roman economy. In any event, several of the points he wishes to make could have been summarized more clearly by means of graphs or charts. All the same a reader cannot but admire the meticulous compilation of data involved in Gross's fiscal analysis.

Glimmers of Roman life and mentalities emerge when the author turns to the subject of lotteries. Although its profits were expended to the benefit of the Church and the city, Gross argues that the lotto had deleterious effects on Romans of "all classes" and generally on the economy of the city, where the substantial amounts expended might have been better used for investment. Moreover, he contends with a rather northern fussiness that it simply "gave the Romans yet one more excuse for doing no work while living in the expectation of the miracle that would make them wealthy overnight." Where, one is tempted to ask, would it have been more fitting to wait for a miracle than in Rome? And were not the expenditures of lotto profits sometimes a form of investment in a city where, in any event, it was difficult to prise capital from the relatively lightly taxed Roman citizen? Unfortunately, with this brief glance at Roman attitudes, the author titillates the reader but goes no further along this line of inquiry.

The chapters which follow continue the construction of arguments and evidence for the post-Tridentine syndrome and in many cases they are models of scholarship. The description of the *Agro Romano*, on which Rome has depended in the past for its food supply, is well drawn and explains clearly the official restrictions which led, after 1720, to the insufficiency of the hinterland to meet the capital's needs, also putting into perspective the well-known attempts to make productive the Pontine Marshes. (This section and others should be read with the background of Ricuperati and Carpanetto's general work, *Italy in the*

Age of Reason.) Thus even agriculture showed the continual ebb of Roman vitality during the eighteenth century. Because of the Roman system of food supply and the widespread and time-honoured tradition of charity, however, Romans were generally quite well fed by the standards of the day. According to Gross, Roman charity was rightly considered a generous tradition, although Rome's poor were not immune to the growing tendency (discussed by historians for a variety of places during this period) to distinguish between the "true" and "false" poor and to employ a harsher coercion in their treatment. Gross concludes paradoxically that Rome was losing its charitable zeal, but that her charitable works were still too generous for her "economic health." The subsequent chapter on crime contains interesting possibilities, although the loss of social responsibility the author identifies is not altogether clear from the evidence presented in a somewhat unsystematic description of criminality. This chapter illustrates a problem which Gross does not overcome. Criminal justice records are among the most vivid historical descriptions of individual behaviour that we possess, but the book fails to give the reader a vivid sense of life in eighteenth-century Rome. In a later and very interesting chapter on thought, he opines that "the religion of the people at times transformed itself into a tissue of beliefs consisting of superstitious dross and unbridled emotions." At this, the reader is tempted to cry out: "give us more dross! unbridle the emotions!" That having been said however, Gross's careful scholarship and the thoroughness of his documentation of Roman material civilization, learning and cultural trends in transition make this excellent piece of scholarship a solid and essential contribution to the historiography of great cities.

Malcolm Greenshields
University of Lethbridge

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Brigden, Susan. *London and the Reformation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989. Pp. xix, 676. Table, index. \$137.50

Historians of sixteenth-century England have long held the view that for most men and women who lived in London while the Tudors reigned, life was "nasty, brutish and short"—and that was on the good days, which became less frequent as the time passed. London population, it has generally been agreed, rose from fewer than 50,000 to as many as 250,000, an increase that was generated entirely by immigration from the rest of England. For most of this period, we have been told, a third of the rapidly growing population was destitute, while another third survived just above or below the poverty level. One bad harvest could make the difference for them. English society became steadily more polarised with "a fabulously wealthy elite living cheek by jowl with a thoroughly destitute majority." Desperately protecting their privileges was a progressively more oligarchic, but beleaguered government, which enabled one of the largest cities in Europe by 1600 to be "ruled by twenty-six aldermen with the limited assistance of about two hundred common councilmen." Steve Rappaport's fine study sets out to question every element in this generally accepted compound of beliefs which, he points out, stress too insistently "signs of change" while overlooking evidence which points to continuity.

Rappaport's argument is that most historians have exaggerated the degree to which London experienced change in the sixteenth century. True, its population increased sharply, so that it became one of the three largest cities in Europe by

1600, but it increased only to 150,000 by the death of Elizabeth. Furthermore, most of this increase occurred during the second half of the period and did not begin to concern contemporaries until the 1580s. Despite the population increase, the quality of life for most Londoners did not decline seriously. The Phelps Brown and Hopkins index greatly over-estimates the decline in real wages, Rappaport insists, and while "rising prices may have been a problem for ... Londoners ... it was a problem to which most were able to adapt." Nor, he says, was London's government especially oligarchic. If historians would "look beyond the Guildhall" to the decentralised wards, precincts, parishes and livery companies, they would realise how many thousand adult males actually exercised real power. Basing his study on a list of the names of 1148 men who became citizens of the City of London between 1551 and 1553, Rappaport argues that not only were three quarters of all London males over the age of 26 freemen but, of these, "four-fifths ... who survived a decade or more had their own shops" and a quarter of those who lived into their forties became livery men, members of London's elite. London was not, of course, democratic, but wealth and power were far more broadly based than historians have traditionally believed.

Thus the author is able to answer the question with which he began his study. The question is not how did London's tiny political establishment survive such challenges to its authority, but how come sixteenth-century London enjoyed such remarkable peace, contrasted with the experience of cities on the Continent? For when compared with the Comuneros movement in Spain in 1520 or the serious disturbances in Germany, Flanders or France at various times during the sixteenth century, Tudor London was a model of political stability. Here too, in the judgement of Steve

Rappaport, historians have misinterpreted the evidence. London was quite different from cities on the Continent. There were in Tudor London none of the riots, charivaris and various kinds of systematic attempt to overthrow political authority that characterised other European cities. For this he presents two main reasons. First, the social and economic pressures that might have resulted in popular political protests were not as significant as historians have traditionally believed. Secondly, urban government was not as narrowly based and tenuous as historians, myopically preoccupied "with central government," have alleged. Power was exercised by large numbers of men who flourished at many different levels within London's multi-dimensional worlds.

This is a fine book which has revised a good deal of then conventional wisdom concerning the history of Tudor London. The author does, however, concede to the upholders of orthodoxy that their view of life in Tudor London is more credible as a characterisation of the late Elizabethan period. By then, the rate of population increase was considerable and the pressures for the one square mile of London to expand outside its walls (and beyond the jurisdiction of the livery companies) was irresistible. Here in the last troubled years of Elizabeth, Rappaport suggests, but not before, may be found the seeds of change. But an investigation of that claim will require another book that will, I hope, be as good as this one.

The second book under review, by Susan Brigden, also deals with Tudor London, but from a fundamentally different point of view from that of Steve Rappaport. Brigden presents a highly detailed narrative which focuses on the inter-relationship between the City of London and the English Reformation between the 1520s and the 1550s. There is no sharply-etched argument presented here, nor does the author debate

with historians. She simply tells the story of how it came to pass that more or less religiously unified pre-Reformation London society became divided between Protestant reformers and defenders of traditional Catholicism in fewer than 40 years. In the opinion of this reviewer, Brigden's study adds lots of details to a familiar story but, unlike Rappaport's, it does not break new ground or challenge orthodoxy.

Susan Brigden has combed the manuscript collections in almost all of the repositories in London to produce her scholarly narrative. She has presented an excellent account of the Catholic community on the eve of the Reformation, although this reviewer wondered to what extent her version of Catholic England was realistic, and to what extent it represented an idealised version of how Catholicism should have operated. Given the ease with which Henry and Thomas Cromwell were able to persuade even conservative bishops like the Bishop of London, John Stokesley, to preach in support of the new order, one must be sceptical of characterisations of the pre-Reformation church as much more than a paper tiger.

A number of themes recur throughout Brigden's study which focus the narrative. She writes well about competing orthodoxies and heresies over 40 years, and has made marvellous use of the wills of thousands of Londoners to track the development of popular piety during the Reformation. In the late years of Henry's reign, she notes, there was a tendency for testators to bequeath part of their estate to clergy to preach to the living rather than to say masses for the dead. Not that the distinction between the new, evangelical piety was irreconcilable with the old, sacramental faith, as Brigden makes clear in her study of wills made during the reign of Mary when the doctrinal circle was being constantly squared: "Testators came to avow a cer-

tainty in the merits of Christ's passion to save, while at the same time desiring the Virgin and saints in Heaven to intercede and pray for them." It was prudent for London citizens, even on their deathbed, to affirm in both Catholic and Protestant orthodoxy, and many did.

One of the fundamental effects of the emergence of the reformed piety and theology was on relations between the clerical and lay estates. "In a new world where the word was, at least for some, more central than the sacraments, the status and function of the clergy had been profoundly challenged and transformed." Brigden is right to point to the clergy as being among the major losers from the Reformation, though she might have pointed out that the battle between the two estates would be joined at least once more before the clerical estate would accept a position of permanent subservience to their lay benefactors. When the other Long Parliament, not the Reformation one but that of 1640, met, it was animated more by a widely shared outrage at Laudian clericalism than at anything else.

Susan Brigden has written a good book that charts the swirls and eddies of official and popular religious belief during forty years of London's history. She describes beliefs and tells how they changed, but she draws back from explaining why. She says a little about the demographic and other social changes occurring in London during this period, but does not try hard enough to establish connections between the processes of social change and the ultimate triumph of reform. She suggests early in her study that "demographic changes would be of the greatest consequence for the religion and politics of London," but unfortunately this is not a subject that the author explores at any length.

Michael G. Finlayson
Department of History
University of Toronto

Frugoni, Chiara. *A Distant City: Images of Urban Experience in the Medieval World*. Tr. William McCuaig. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991. Pp. xv, 206. 105 black and white plates. \$35.00 (U.S.)

For students of urban history, *A Distant City: Images of Urban Experience in the Medieval World*, by Chiara Frugoni, will prove to be a surprise. Although its contents reflect the author's knowledge of medieval civic society and politics, the true nature of this book is iconography, more commonly the tool of art historians. This fact is not indicated by the title, nor is the reader made aware of it in advance since the book contains no introduction.

In the course of her narrative describing images, both literary and visual, of the medieval city from the fourth through the fourteenth centuries, Frugoni moves the general to the specific. Beginning in the early chapters with an almost overwhelming number of examples of cities as fortresses, as personified images, as churches, as people and as geographical centres, she gradually focuses attention on Siena in the late Middle Ages. Siena in the fourteenth century underwent a revolt against the old political and social order, referred to as an "urban takeoff" by Frugoni. These events resulted in a new attention to the individual and new expressions of community and civic life.

The most accessible of these tangible results of political change was the series of frescoes painted in a hall of the Palazzo Pubblico by Ambrogio Lorenzetti in 1338-39. These works, images of *Buon Governo* and *Mal Governo* (Good and Bad Government), were commissioned by the Sienese government of the day; they consist of allegorical figures and panels depicting the practical effects of both. These frescoes have today suffered some minor damage (and restoration) but nevertheless remain as a very complete and beautiful cycle of late medieval painting.

By far the longest chapter of the book is dedicated to a detailed iconographical analysis of the Lorenzetti frescoes. In this section, Frugoni utilizes the traditional methods of art historians to relate the sources of Lorenzetti's visual images to earlier medieval art and literature. In addition, she also explains the frescoes as reflections of the political situation of Siena at the time, suggesting that they served, among other things, as propaganda for the ruling authorities, the Nine. As such, the works emphasized the new secular concept of the common good but with the religious overtones which characterized earlier Italian art.

The detailed analysis of the Lorenzetti frescoes from Siena is in itself not a new subject. These works have been frequently studied since the fourteenth century. In fact, in an appendix in this edition (and obviously not included in the earlier Italian edition of 1983), Frugoni replies to comments of another author who criticized her interpretation in his own article of 1986. What is of interest in *A Distant City* is the remarkable breadth of Frugoni's knowledge of medieval literary and visual sources coupled with a comprehension of the social and political changes which shaped urban life in fourteenth century Italy. Her emphasis is on the former.

Because it deals so extensively with Siena, this book is less general than its title implies. It is particularly useful for a reader interested in methodology, because it juxtaposes conventional art historical analysis with the broader tools of social history. For the urban historian, however, it offers insight into how visual images can be seen to reflect the growth of cities in the later Middle Ages.

Sarah M. McKinnon
Department of History
University of Winnipeg