century after the Black Death was a "golden age" for women, on the grounds that patriarchy was still the norm (something that the proponents of a golden age have never challenged), she nonetheless accepts that this was a period when new opportunities and choices were available to women. By contrast, the mid or "late" (p. 127) fifteenth-century economic slump led to a backlash that saw women driven out of better jobs in manufacturing and into domestic work, which, whether at a supervisory or a labouring level, was increasingly regarded as a female task. Unfortunately, the main evidence cited for such a change comes from York and Coventry, rather than from London itself, which, in terms of its share of England's population, trade, and wealth, was booming in the late fifteenth century. Chapter Five looks at changes in cooking and eating habits and argues that such changes could threaten notions of household hierarchy, particularly those relating to gender, although the evidence offered for this consists of two fictional narratives in which women leave their houses and husbands in order to eat and drink with their female friends. Chapter Six focuses on women's role in a number of areas: in healing, in which brooches, beads, rings, and girdles were employed for their supposed medicinal properties; in childbirth, where there was an expanding market for items such as girdles and apotropaic gemstones; and in childcare, where toys and child-size furniture were now more widely available. Finally, Chapter Seven turns its attention to domestic piety and to the increasing use of affordable devotional items, including holy water stoops and rosaries, although the evidence for this shift is strongest in the late fifteenth century rather than it being an immediate response to the Black Death itself.

As we have seen, a number of the claims made here, particularly about the relationship between change in gender roles and the economic trends of the period, and about the precise extent and chronology of changes in consumption patterns after the Black Death, may need further elaboration. As always with medieval social and economic history, the patchy and problematic nature of our evidence makes arriving at firm conclusions difficult. Nonetheless, in its exploration of how households functioned in late medieval London, in its emphasis on the historical specificity of the nature and meaning of housework, in its focus on shifting gender roles, and in bringing together documentary and archaeological evidence, this is an important and pioneering study and is likely to be a springboard for further discussions of material culture and for future debates about the changing role of women in late medieval England.

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Samuel K. Cohn, jr. Popular Protest and Ideals of Democracy in Late Renaissance Italy. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2022. xx, 260 pp. Ill. £75.00.

This volume continues the research conducted by the author in his earlier *Lust for Liberty*, devoted to popular uprisings in Italy, France, and Flanders between 1200

and 1425.[2] At the centre of that book were 1,112 revolts and social movements, information about which had been drawn from the examination of numerous medieval chronicles and some archival sources. At the core of this new, important essay are 1,100 popular protests that took place during the "Italian wars", the half-century, coinciding with the mature Renaissance, during which the Peninsula became the battleground for the clash between France and Spain. The chronological boundaries of this phase are traditionally marked by Charles VIII's entry into Italy in 1494 and the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559, and are adopted by the author for this new research, which, in addition to reducing the temporal extension of the investigation, focuses on the sole, albeit highly differentiated, Italian context. Both choices seem amply justified: it is not necessary to devote many words to the importance of the Italian states in Machiavelli's age as places of construction of political and social modernity, while the chronological span of Italy's wars ensures coherence to the mass of information gathered.

The sources on which Cohn builds this corpus of popular protests are the chronicles of the period and especially the "diaries", the timely, sometimes day-by-day, reconstructions of public life and news that were composed by various subjects associated with Renaissance administration. Unlike medieval chronicles, these diaries contain in large quantities the new documentation produced by the states of the early modern age, such as dispatches from governors, and diplomatic and military reports. They greatly increased the mass of information circulating in a period marked by wars, regime change, and heightened socio-political instability. The most striking example, and the primary source used by Cohn here, are the fifty-eight volumes of Marin Sanudo's *Diarii*, published in the late nineteenth century and now also available online. But valuable sources are also available for Modena, Florence, Milan, Fermo, and other Italian localities, especially in the central-northern area. In addition, the author uses, albeit minimally, 558 supplications from towns and villages to the Duke of Milan from the first half of the fifteenth century.

A first element of interest is that the author also includes among the "Italian territories" those of Venetian Dalmatia, the Serenissima possessions in the Mediterranean and Aegean, and the Swiss valleys under the rule of the Duchy of Milan. Unfortunately, however, no list is presented of the large and varied collection of popular protests built up by Cohn through years of work; this would have been useful for future research. Only three, fairly general charts are included in the book and no descriptive tables appear, although the author frequently uses numerical indicators, e.g. percentages. This is a singularly missed opportunity for a study of social history based heavily on data. Very useful, however, are the maps that allow the protests to be located geographically.

The fundamental methodological crux of the work is the notion of "popular uprisings" that the author adopts to collate his corpus of historical episodes. He has an easy time describing the different, often contradictory meanings of "riot", "revolt", and "revolution" used by the leading historians of the subject. However, he does not make explicit the criteria used to select the 1,100 cases filed and studied.

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[2]Samuel K. Cohn, jr., *Lust for Liberty. The Politics of Social Revolt in Medieval Europe, 1200–1425. Italy, France, and Flanders* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 2006).

The "collective protests" included in his research "are those beneath the nobility […] which were not matters principally of factional strife or mere disturbances of the peace" (p. 20). This is a questionable choice and should perhaps have been justified with more conviction and transparency, with the author indicating, for example, in a list, which uprisings were considered "popular protests" and which were not.

It does not appear, for instance, that the great and bloody "warfare" that took place in Udine in February 1511, and which is acknowledged to be "the only conflict […] north of Naples to have received more than one book-length analysis" (p. 2, n. 2), was included in the sample – even though it triggered numerous anti-feudal peasant revolts animated by the mythical idea of Venice as the bringer of justice and restorer of peasant privileges. We also find unusual the inclusion among the popular protests of the mutinies of soldiers and *galioti* (eleven per cent of cases). At a time of continuous war, this particular category of disturbance runs the risk of distorting the perception of the social significance of the popular "uprisings" phenomenon.

After the Prologue, devoted to a general analysis of the period of decline of popular protests between 1425 and 1494, the central part of the book comprises two sections, entitled "Differences" and "Convergences", to be understood with respect to the uprisings examined in Cohn's previous book. The comparative analysis of the popular protests traced in the book is conducted in relation to the chants and flags, the relationship with the dynamics of the prices of essential goods, the role of women, shopkeepers, and soldiers, the peasant component and the town-country dichotomy, the religious matrix, the role of leaders, class hatred, rituals, the behaviour of the petty people, etc. As can be seen from this list, the analysis is conducted in a cross-cutting manner, which may appear uncluttered at times, bringing together underlying causes, trigger elements, social characteristics, protagonists, mode of unfolding, and outcomes. The resulting picture is very varied and stimulating, but it inevitably tends to lack depth: without prior in-depth knowledge, and even after having carefully read the whole book, my impression is that one would not be able to talk for more than five minutes about any of the protests analysed, not even the oft-quoted ones such as that of the Straccioni of Pisa in 1531–1532, the peasant protests of Trent in 1524–1525, or the Neapolitan revolt of 1547 against the Inquisition.

One of the pivotal issues on which early modern historiography has insisted is the relationship between uprisings and famines. Cohn takes up the debate on this issue, and points out how, unlike in the period 1425–1494, a period largely within the long post-Black Death phase marked by good levels of real income for the lower classes, in the first half of the sixteenth century the ratio of population to resources was continuously deteriorating. The three Horsemen of the Apocalypse (plague, famine, and war) roamed the Peninsula relentlessly, and food crises that resulted in social unrest, even with political implications, were more frequent. However, the cause-and-effect links between rising grain prices and popular uprisings turn out to be only partially described. Between the economic trigger and the popular protest effect was a long chain of situations, institutions, norms, practices, and social figures that may or may not have led from the former to the latter. To try to explain such complex mechanisms it would have been necessary to use actual price series, to take into account the demographic variable and, above all, the different Annona systems,

which varied from town to town and which regulated supplies, hoarding, distribution, and prices in the grain markets. Instead, the author seems content to point out how, in the first half of the sixteenth century, this type of insurgency increased in frequency and intensity compared to his previous late medieval survey.

The arithmetic balance between convergences and differences from late medieval popular protests seems to favour the former (p. 177). Cities continued to be the main site of revolts, and their leaders continued to be from popular or at least non-aristocratic backgrounds. The goal of most of the protests was not religious but political: to obtain a hearing or even representation in order to influence the financial, economic, and management decisions of the city, with particular regard to the hegemonic role of the nobility, the management of taxes, and food resources. This was sometimes at the cost of invoking the intervention of foreign powers and the enemy. Women and the merchant class played a new and more important role there, and protests were more keenly felt and conducted with greater awareness and strategic capacity. Compared to the premodern model of popular protest drawn by academics, according to which popular uprisings before the nineteenth century were almost always caused by subsistence crises, had leaders who came from the upper classes, and resulted exclusively in failure, Cohn identifies a significantly higher degree of political awareness, strategic autonomy, and success.

The author's final chapter is likely to be the one most debated; it is one with which I substantially agree. The underlying instance of the popular protests in the half-century of the Italian wars reveals a perhaps only barely conscious demand for the enlargement of power, through which they revived "the ideals and democratic practices of the communal period". The growth of aristocratic regimes in this period nullified any possibility of realizing such ideals, yet the ideas of broader political representativeness and the morality of social and political equality, thanks in part to these protests, continued to work their way deep into European societies. They were not an invention of the nineteenth century, and its antecedents should not be sought solely in the age of revolutions.

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International Solidarity in the Low Countries during the Twentieth Century. New Perspectives and Themes. Ed. by Kim Christiaens, John Nieuwenhuys, and Charel Roemer. De Gruyter Oldenbourg, Berlin 2020. vii, 320 pp. Ill. € 104.95. (E-book: € 104.95.)

Memories can be kept alive for three generations; after that, they become the subject of historical research and political interpretations. This edited volume on the history of international solidarity in the Low Countries illustrates the shift from collective memories toward academic analysis. According to the editors, this history has so