

The Peasant Diet: Image and Reality

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At the end of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, the peasant couple Masetto and Zerlina announce that for their part, assured of the bad end of the lecherous nobleman, they are going home to have dinner together ("a casa andiamo, a cenar in compagnia!"). Their light-hearted plans are in contrast to those of the aristocratic pair Don Ottavio and Donna Anna who will wait a year for her heart to heal from the murder of her father. Donna Elvira, representing middle-class sensitivity, intends to enter a convent, there to await the end of her life. The resiliently materialistic peasants are unaffected by Don Giovanni's misdeeds, for their attention is focused on simple and immediate gratification: domestic comfort symbolized by eating.

In pre-modern entertainments for the educated classes the peasants were portrayed as uncomplicated, unscrupulous and unheroic, eager for their next meal and indifferent towards any sort of noble or renunciatory ideal. In literature the peasant is a creature of appetite rather than of thought; practical and self-centered rather than adventurous. Peasant embodiment was sometimes deployed to make fun of the high moral tone of the knightly or spiritual quest. Sancho Panza is a classic example, a foil to Don Quixote's chivalric delusions. On the road, Sancho nostalgically recollects meals at home. At inns that his master suspects of harboring sorcerers or other enemies, Sancho attempts to find something decent to eat. As governor of an island he is harassed by the attentions of his doctor who won't let him eat anything. Yet even in its seemingly fixed literary role, the peasant as principle of the most elemental materialism is subverted and rendered more

complicated: after all, Sancho has been persuaded to join the mad Don Quixote's adventures and is the victim of his own delusions that overcome his supposed attachment to physical comfort.

There is no single image of the peasant as food consumer just as there is no single "reality" of peasant standards of living in the Middle Ages. The peasants' obsession with food in literature coincides with an equally popular upper-class assumption that what is actually eaten by the peasants is unpleasant to persons of breeding. In general it is a belief of the cultivated classes that lower-class taste in food is not to be imitated, except for occasional efforts (as is the case today) to restore or rediscover rural traditions.

It is clear that the various literary and artistic images of peasants eating, starving, or feasting do not conform to experience but rather are polemical or humorous representations.¹ Threats to the social order could be symbolized by peasants depicted as consuming inappropriately elegant meals, or their essentially base character could be underscored by their greedy enjoyment of coarse food. The oppression of exemplary Christian peasants could be presented through their impoverished diet, or conversely that diet could be depicted as what the peasants actually prefer (i.e. any improvement would be unappreciated and wasted on them). In general written and visual representation of peasants by their social superiors was intended either for the purpose of amusement or as a moral or didactic lesson. Peasants eat the way they do because they are comically materialist, or because they are oppressed, or because they are escaping their proper place in the social hierarchy.²

Against such a varied set of peasant images, the reality of how peasants ate does not constitute a simple set of conditions but is rather complex by reason of the state of

research but also, as I hope to show, by changes in historiography. Christopher Dyer posed the matter very nicely in the title of an essay, “Did the Peasants Really Starve in Medieval England?”³ This formula both states a problem of social history and implicitly questions historians’ approaches to how peasants lived in the past. I would like to begin by discussing how medieval writers thought about peasants and then in more detail at what has shaped the opinions of medieval historians about rural society.

Literary Representations of Peasants

A fifteenth-century poem written in a mixture of Italian and Latin includes in a compact form a number of typical, comically exaggerated topics of peasant wickedness and lowliness. “La vita de li infedeli, pessimi e rustici vilani,” as it is entitled, regards the oppression of the peasants as beneficial to the other, higher classes. Rustics are poor, barefooted and their animals are mangy. Their exploited and unrewarded labor is appropriate, for after all, peasants are little better than animals, infidels or Jews.⁴ Besides, they are liars, robbers and generally wicked. The poem concludes with a mock prayer: “*Servi servorum*, Ass of Asses, God curse you for ever and ever, Amen. From the intrigues of the devil, the lordship of the peasant, and the furor of the rustics release us O Lord.” Included in the diatribe is a statement about peasant diet, that the *vilani* subsist on garlic, onions, roots and vegetables. Within the logic of the poem what the peasants eat is as ridiculous, low and comical as the other attributes of their quasi-bestial condition.

A song written against peasants of Flanders, who rose in insurrection from 1323 to 1328, mocks their clothes, appearance and food. Curdled milk, rye bread, porridge and

cheese are all they really need. Anything more refined would merely further dull their already insufficient wits.⁵ Thus dairy products, bread made with grains other than wheat, and root vegetables were, along with porridge, key elements of what elite observers considered to be the debased peasant diet. These observers agreed that such an alimentary regime was appropriate, but there are different meanings for the word “appropriate” depending on whether peasants actually enjoyed this food or rather might aspire to something better, closer to the culinary options of their social superiors.

On the one hand it was widely believed that peasants can't tolerate luxurious cuisine. Massimo Montanari has pointed to the agronomist Piero de Crescenzi's statement that those who do hard manual labor should not eat fine wheat bread but rather bread from sorghum and other coarse grains.⁶ Humorous accounts of peasants composed for urban or aristocratic audiences were intended to demonstrate that rustics should stick with the lowly and familiar, thus in several *fabliau* and *exempla* a well-off peasant marries a young woman of the bourgeoisie and she, quite naturally, prepares for him the sort of sophisticated food she is used to. Her husband finds his digestion is off and his complaints become more pathetic until finally she gives him peas and beans with bread soaked in milk, whereupon he is happy and his gastric difficulties disappear.⁷

Some peasants might not be quite so content with base food, but that is nevertheless what they are supposed to eat. A poem attributed to Neidhart von Reuenthal shows a village lad named Berewolf, once popular with all the girls, but now his wife keeps him closely disciplined and feeds him horseradish and cabbage, emblems of his comical misery.⁸ According to some observers, peasants, far from being happy about their diet, take advantage of opportunities to enjoy inappropriate but nevertheless coveted

luxuries. The poet John Gower, writing in the aftermath of the English peasant uprising of 1381, contrasted the obedient rustics of the past who were happy to live on bread made from coarse grains, milk and cheese, with the greedy rustics of his own time who demanded and received finer food.⁹

The late Middle Ages saw improvement in the peasants' diet and in the variety of what was available to them. Survivors of the Black Death benefited from the demographic catastrophe by reason of the reduced overall demand for food and the greater value of their labor. Peasants began to consume things that had previously been symbols of upper-class luxury such as, for example, pepper. Pepper was always the most popular spice as well as usually the cheapest, but all spices were traditionally regarded as unseemly for those of low social condition. The ninth-century *vita* of Gregory the Great has the saintly pope say that spices (*pigmenta*) should be served only to *primores*, not *pauperes*.¹⁰ Yet by the fifteenth century pepper was so widely available that a medical treatise (wrongly attributed to Arnau de Vilanova) states that pepper is appropriate for peasants in order to add flavor to their food.¹¹ The French court poet Eustache Deschamps (who died in 1404) complained that at inns he was forced to stay at during his travels he was always served unpleasant, rustic food such as cabbage and leeks plentifully seasoned with pepper.¹² By this time pepper was as much a symbol of low social condition as vegetables!

Peasant Diet and Social History

Turning now to the reality of peasants' living standards we should note in the first place that historians have obtained a good idea of what ordinary people ate. A recent

book by the late Ernst Schubert, *Essen und Trinken im Mittelalter*, offers an impressive survey organized by ingredient, beginning with salt, an absolute biological necessity, followed by bread, a cultural necessity, and then going through various basic items: meat, vegetables, fruit, fish, wine and beer.¹³ Medievalists agree on certain characteristics of medieval diet such as the overwhelming importance ascribed to cereals generally and bread in particular, or the great disparity in protein consumption between an upper class that enjoyed vast quantities of meat and fish and a lower class more dependent on grain, dairy products and vegetables. The aristocracy's infatuation with spices so often depicted in literature is fully borne out by the historical record, while the literary topos of peasant aversion to such subtle yet piquant flavorings is false, as we've just said. Beyond such fundamental observations there has been an important change in how historians approach written and archaeological sources. This comes not only from better evidence but from a change in interpreting the character and resourcefulness of peasants.

Few areas reflect quite so tellingly the historiographic evolution of the last 30 or 40 years as does the view of pre-modern food and nutrition. To pose the question of living standards of ordinary people in the past is to acknowledge a debt to the French *Annales* school that pioneered the history of nutrition as well so many other aspects of social history. Pierre Goubert, Roland Mousnier, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie and Robert Mandrou investigated the condition of the modern French peasantry and emphasized the fragility of agriculture, subject as it was to war, pestilence and climate fluctuation. They also posited an extremely restricted diet for a rural population that even in the best times subsisted on the edge of starvation.¹⁴

The two, basic, frequently reiterated aspects of the poor nutrition of the pre-modern peasantry are an overall shortage of food and an unvarying diet made up almost entirely of cereals and very little else. The vulnerability of grain crops to drought, floods and disease, the terrible state of roads, and the extortion of the seigneurial regime and the state rendered the price of grain dangerously volatile and sharpened the popular obsession with bread. Eugene Weber's *Peasants into Frenchmen*, a work about the sudden improvement of life in nineteenth-century France, emphasized an almost feral, or at least radically unfamiliar and impoverished condition of society before the centralization undertaken by the Third Republic. The book begins with a chapter entitled "A Nation of Savages". As late as the mid-nineteenth century peasants lived little better than their medieval predecessors, according to Weber. They still spoke local patois; they dwelt in isolation imposed both by wretched means of communication and their own suspicion of the outside world; and their diet was monotonous--- soup, gruel and only in relatively good times, bread.¹⁵ Weber cites a note by an official in the Département de la Haute-Loire as late as 1881 that said that 85% of the inhabitants were near-destitute, living on black bread with little in the way of even pork, let alone other kinds of meat. In the middle part of the century the peasants of Hautes-Alpes were happy to have any sort of bread even if it was year-old rye bread.¹⁶

Insistence on the degraded condition of the peasantry, including their diet, was part of an effort by historians to show in as vivid terms as possible the alterity of pre-modern life. Anyone who has taught knows the difficulty of convincing students that people in the past weren't just primitive savages who, at the same time, wanted to live in modern comfort. Both the boundaries and sufficiency of the world-view of people living

in the past are hard to get across and so teachers resort to examples of radical alterity to shock students out of their irritating, present-bound complacency. In his collection of essays *Pour une histoire à part entière*, Lucien Febvre emphasized how different and rudimentary life was in the sixteenth century, when ordinary people subsisted on soup and stale bread, unrelieved by meat from domesticated animals except poultry.

According to Febvre “the sixteenth century did not know the stimulation of red meat,” a generalization he extends to classes considerably more affluent than the peasantry.¹⁷ The alterity of the past and the primitive nature of its food supply are spectacularly presented in the work of the Italian literary scholar Piero Camporesi. In *Il pane selvaggio*, published in 1980, Camporesi dwells luridly, almost lovingly, on the desperate impoverishment of pre-industrial Italy, wracked by starvation, cannibalism, and “collective vertigo” in the countryside.¹⁸

The pessimistic assessment of material conditions of the past was also designed to counter a Romantic tendency to regard pre-modern society as more “organic” and less exploitative than modernity. A reactionary nostalgia in France that functioned as a justification for a Catholic social and religious order of the past was matched by an even stronger English anti-industrial evocation of medieval class harmony. While there was an English form of socialism that looked at the Middle Ages as an attractive pre-capitalist era of craft-guilds and individual, artisanal enterprise, the Victorian Middle Ages was particularly attractive to apologists for the old order of church, aristocracy and deference. These were countered by historians who demonstrated that what Peter Laslett called “the world we have lost” was one of harsh and enervating levels of existence.¹⁹ The chapter on the peasantry in Laslett’s book *The World We Have Lost* is entitled “Did the Peasants

Really Starve?”²⁰ Although very much a partisan of the alterity of the past (an alterity for the worse), Laslett answers that the English peasants of the sixteenth to eighteenth century were a bit better off than the model offered by Pierre Goubert for France. He also attributes the stagnant population figures as much to disease as to malnutrition, but acknowledges a high rate of infant mortality, if not quite what the French demographers found.

Of course these historians were dealing with the period after the Middle Ages, one that followed both the relatively favorable nutritional situation after the radical reduction of population in the fourteenth century and a decline in living standards, at least for France, for the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.²¹ The aforementioned article by Christopher Dyer, “Did the Peasants Really Starve in Medieval England?” puts before us Laslett’s question but with regard now to medieval rather than early-modern England. His answer is rather more confident than Laslett’s: English peasants in the Middle Ages did not generally suffer from chronic malnutrition or near-starvation. We cannot easily reconstruct an average peasant diet, but we can get an idea of the expectations of a normal level of intake through maintenance agreements that functioned as retirement annuities, whereby an elderly peasant gave money or land, usually to a relative, in return for a contractual agreement to provide supplies of food during the rest of his or her life.²² The agreements among peasants show the expectation for a varied diet, adequate quantities and meat as well as grain. Werner Rösener in discussing the medieval peasantry in general, but with particular reference to Germany found that peasants commonly ate meat, particularly pork and chicken. He refuted the statement of Johannes

Boemus made in 1520 that peasants subsist on poor-quality bread, gruel, and boiled vegetables washed down with whey.²³

Dyer disposed of a number of myths about medieval diet and that of the peasants in particular in 1983 in an article in honor of Rodney Hilton.²⁴ Here we learn that medieval peasants did not sell all the wheat they grew but rather consumed some of it; that they did not kill their livestock in the fall out of an inability to feed them over winter; that they did not eat meat only from animals that were dying of old-age; that bacon was regarded as a peasant staple, and other indications of a decent level of food consumption. Bread was thought of essentially as equivalent to food in general, but at the same time medieval Europe constituted an age of carnivores and meat was consumed by the lower as well as upper classes.²⁵ What sort of meat differed as in general the nature of what was consumed was differentiated hierarchically, not only in literary images but in reality as well. Spices, (other than pepper at least), game, imported wines, ocean fish (or fresh fish generally) were marks of upper-class taste while salted meat and fish, dairy products, and vegetables were marks of peasant or at best middle-class consumption. Ernst Shubert, however, pointed to chicken and salted herring as items that were consumed by all classes.²⁶

These newer, more favorable assessments don't stem from any particular sentiment in favor of past society since neo-feudalism or neo-Scholastic political proposals are more-or-less obsolete. Schubert, interestingly enough, does take aim at new agrarians who extol the natural farming methods of the past.²⁷ There has been a more optimistic assessment of living standards and peasant initiative even for *ancien regime* France, as in the work of Liana Vardi who studied intensively a village in the

region of the Cambrésis.²⁸ The reasons for the relatively favorable estimation of peasant diet arise primarily out of better methods of research divorced from ideological background. Yet, I would argue, very influential currently is a basic reassessment of the life, autonomy and agency of the peasantry generally and of poor, indigenous and ordinary people in both past and present.

An older orthodoxy within the field of anthropology held that peasants were not a real historical class but a kind of oppressed intermediary between indigenous tribal liberty and urban individualism²⁹. The passivity and fatalism of peasants was a common theme in rural anthropology, the peasant as hapless victim, stoical but miserable; practitioner of “amoral familialism” and so incapable of collective political assertion. In both capitalist modernization theory and Marxist historical materialism, the peasantry was viewed as outside of history, acted upon but not creative of history. Capitalist and socialist historiography and socio-economic theory, so different in fundamental respects, agreed on a contemptuous attitude towards the peasants as opposed to the progressive urban commercial classes or the revolutionary proletarian vanguard. Peasants were capable of rebellions, but these were typified by an older historical tradition as “spasmodic,” disorganized and ineffective when not actually reactionary (as with the Vendée uprising against the French Revolution).³⁰ This depreciation of the peasantry had an impact on assessments of the medieval peasantry, producing a curious agreement that the peasants stood in the way of progress, especially notable in Marxist as well as triumphalist capitalist histories of the medieval English countryside by E. A. Kosminsky and Alan MacFarlane respectively.³¹

Since the 1980s historians have been much more interested in and respectful of what is often termed “peasant agency,” the ability of peasants to act in their own defense rather than submit passively to oppression. This is notable in the treatment of modern peasant rebellions in Africa and Latin America, but also with regard to medieval Europe where peasants are now seen as engaged in collective action, capable of practical rather than visionary or Messianic goals, with even occasional success.³² Medieval peasants are now viewed as aware of the larger national political context and able to influence governmental policies and factions.³³

It is in the everyday lives of peasants, especially in mobilizing what James Scott in his study of subordinated classes called “the weapons of the weak,” rather than in insurrections that the emphasis on agency (the power to act and think independently) has been most important. Sancho Panza has become wiler and less foolish. The ability of peasants to evade, delay, sabotage or perform obligations badly is now seen as a deliberate if disguised strategy. Acquiescence to exploitation is regarded not as proof of deference to seigneurial hegemony but as cover for what Scott refers to as a “hidden transcript” of awareness and resistance.³⁴ In fact there is room to doubt just how effective the seigneurial regime was in expropriating food and revenue from the peasantry.³⁵ Far from being a passive, undifferentiated mass, the peasantry is now regarded as possessing power and a sense of purpose, that “moral economy” identified by E. P. Thompson as underlying the principled strength and coherent agenda of the English lower classes in the early modern era.³⁶ It’s worth recalling that Thompson’s famous 1971 article that gave currency to this term “moral economy” dealt with food riots.

Estimations of the resourcefulness and initiative of peasants affect how we perceive their ability to feed themselves. What was once considered a monotonous diet that imposed perpetual malnutrition is now seen by anthropologists who study food in a different light. As long ago as 1939 Audrey Richards described the meals of the Bemba people of southern Africa as consisting of two things: an inevitable millet porridge accompanied by some flavor combination or “relish” made up of small quantities of meat, fish or vegetables. Sidney Mintz and Daniela Schlettwein-Gsell have generalized this pattern but with three rather than two components of the basic food consumed by most people in most historical eras.³⁷ Mintz and Schlettwein-Gsell’s “Core-Fringe-Legume Pattern” (so well-known now as to be identified by its initial “CFLP”) involves a basic carbohydrate (rice, maize, millet), a small but significant amount of “fringe” ingredients (Audrey Richard’s “relish” but also spices), and legumes as a third and nutritionally quite important ingredient (things such as lentils or other beans). The calories are furnished by the staple ingredient, but the supplements are now seen as sufficiently diverse and nutritionally valuable to provide an adequate and, despite the prominence of the staple, flexible food regime.

Estimation of what peasants were able to accomplish also depends on how we evaluate the records left by the seigneurial administration of land. Greater attention is now given to women’s work, something that doesn’t always show up in estate documents.³⁸ The “inner economy” of the house, garden and small animal pens may have provided substantial nutritional resources that escaped direct seigneurial oversight. Peasant labor performed may amount to less than what the surviving records ordain since the peasants were on the scene and their landlords were usually absent. Evasion, foot-

dragging and other indirect forms of resistance would produce less work on the lord's demesne and in turn reduce the lord's ability to wrest a crop from the peasants' land. The repression of poaching, the control of the forest and other threats contained in the official transcript might disguise a considerable illicit caloric intake. Even apart from the degree of seigneurial supervision, there is a new-found respect for the ability of peasant and indigenous agriculturalists to adjust cultivation techniques to particular conditions, part of the declining infatuation with the brutal inefficiencies and environmental degradation of modern industrial agriculture.

Of course if all this is true, we really don't know about a substantial part of peasants' lives. The "subaltern studies" movement has argued the unreliability and self-interest of those who purport to speak for the lower orders of society and the marginalized.³⁹ If the subaltern are, according to this view, silenced and their voices not easily or even at all recoverable, the scope of their under-the-radar resourcefulness is by implication increased.

This can get rather muddled as historians have a tendency to want to emphasize simultaneously the oppression experienced by subordinated people in the past and their success at achieving a "space" or "voice" through agility, skill and indirect resistance. Much of the impetus for the rediscovery of peasant agency in the United States has come via feminist approaches to history, and to some extent the problem of empathy versus actual effective achievement of ordinary people is played out in women's history as well as rural history. There are, as Christine Pelzer White pointed out with regard to Vietnam, everyday forms of peasant collaboration with their landlords; deference and subordination are not completely undermined by inefficiency.⁴⁰ There are also ties

between lords and peasants that affect more than just who ate what. Jaume Vilaginés in his studies of the Vallès has emphasized that the tastes of the upper classes often dictated what was produced, what peasants planted for seigneurial consumption, and that this affected what the peasants were (or were not) able to reserve for their own use. The dominant classes thus directly and indirectly imposed their preferences as regards such things as wheat bread and on the rest of society.⁴¹

Such a framing or contextualization does not detract from revaluation of medieval peasant autonomy or consumption. We have to rely on the documents we have as well as (increasingly) on an archaeological record augmented by better techniques of analyzing nutrition from organic remains. What I hope to have suggested is the degree to which “literary” versus “real” notions of the lives and nutrition of peasants are not completely opposed in the sense of fiction versus fact. Both are both nuanced by the conditions and preconceptions that underlie the formation of texts about rural society.

¹ A point made with reference to clothes and food by Gerhard Jaritz, “The Material Culture of the Peasantry in the Late Middle Ages: ‘Image’ and ‘Reality,’” in *Agriculture in the Middle Ages: Technology, Practice, and Representation*, ed. Del Sweeney (Philadelphia, 1995), pp. 161-188. On peasant images and reality in general, Karl Brunner and Gerhard Jaritz, *Landherr, Bauer, Ackerknecht: Der Bauer im Mittelalter-- Klischee und Wirklichkeit* (Vienna, 1985).

² On social hierarchy and food regimes in the Middle Ages, see Antoni Riera i Melis, “Jerarquía social y desigualdad alimentaria en el Mediterráneo noroccidental en la baja edad media: la cocina y la mesa de los estamentos populares,” *Anuario de estudios medievales* 24 (1994), 857-885; *idem*, “Société féodale et alimentation (XIIe-XIIIe siècle),” in *Histoire de l'alimentation*, ed. Jean-Louis Flandrin and Massimo Montanari (Paris, 1996), pp. 397-418; Allen J. Grieco, “Alimentation et classes sociales à la fin du Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance,” in the same volume, pp. 479-490.

³ Christopher Dyer, “Did the Peasants Really Starve in Medieval England,” in *Food and Eating in Medieval Europe*, ed. Martha Carlin and Joel T. Rosenthal (London, 1998), pp. 53-71.

⁴ The poem is in Domenico Merlini, *Saggio di ricerche sulla satira contro il villano* (Turin, 1894), pp. 175-177.

⁵ Cit. Michel Mollat and Philippe Wolff, *The Popular Revolutions of the Middle Ages*, trans. A. L. Lytton-Sells (London, 1973), p. 89.

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- ⁶ Massimo Montanari, "L'image du paysan et les codes de comportement alimentaire," in *Le petit peuple dans l'Occident médiéval: terminologies, perceptions, réalités* (Paris, 2002), p. 105.
- ⁷ Frederic C. Tubach, *Index exemplorum: A Handbook of Medieval Religious Tales* (Helsinki, 1969), no. 3652, pp. 282-283 (six citations).
- ⁸ Elizabeth I. Traverse, *Peasants, Seasons and Werltsüeze: Cyclicity in Neidhart's Songs Reexamined* (Göppingen, 1997), pp. 59-60.
- ⁹ John Gower, *Mirour de l'omme*, ed. G. C. Macaulay (vol. 1 of *The Complete Works of John Gower*, Oxford, 1899), vv. 26425-26480, p. 293.
- ¹⁰ Montanari, "L'image du paysan," p. 101.
- ¹¹ Arnau de Vilanova, *Opera nuperrima revisa*. . . (Lyon, 1520), fol. 137a.
- ¹² Eustache Deschamps, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Marquis de Queux de Saint-Hilaire and Gaston Raymond, vol. 7 (Paris, 1891), pp. 88-90.
- ¹³ Ernst Schubert, *Essen und Trinken im Mittelalter* (Dusseldorf, 2006).
- ¹⁴ Pierre Goubert, *Beauvais et le Beauvaisis de 1600 à 1730* (Paris, 1960), pp. 25-67; Goubert, *Louis XIV et vingt millions de Français*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1991; originally published 1965), pp. 47-52 and see also Goubert's reflections on harvests, climate and demography twenty-five years after the original edition, pp. 27-31 and especially his relatively recent (and still pessimistic) discussion of peasant diet in *Les paysans français au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1998), pp. 105-121; Roland Mousnier, *Fureurs paysannes: les paysans dans les révoltes du XVIIe siècle (France, Russie, Chine)* (Paris, 1967); Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Les paysans de Languedoc* (Paris, 1966); Robert Mandrou, *Introduction à la France moderne, 1500-1640: Essai de psychologie historique*, 3rd ed. (Paris, 1998; originally published 1961), pp. 31-38.
- ¹⁵ Eugene Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford, 1976), pp.130-145.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 131-132.
- ¹⁷ Lucien Febvre, *Pour une histoire à part entière* (Paris, 1962), p. 537: "L'exaltation que donne la viande rouge. . . n'existe au XVIe siècle."
- ¹⁸ Piero Camporesi, *Il pane selvaggio* (Milan, 1980).
- ¹⁹ Peter Laslett, *The World We Have Lost: England Before the Industrial Age*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1973).
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 113-134.
- ²¹ Hughes Neveux, "L'alimentation du XIV au XVIIIe siècle: Essai de mise au point," *Revue d'histoire économique et sociale* 51 (1973), 336-379; Neveux, *Vie et déclin d'une structure économique: les grains du Cambrésis, fin du XIVE-début du XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1980).
- ²² Dyer, "Did the Peasants Really Starve," as above, note 3.
- ²³ Werner Rösener, *Bauern im Mittelalter* (Munich, 1985), pp. 108-109.

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- ²⁴ Christopher Dyer, "English Diet in the Later Middle Ages," in *Social Relations and Ideas: Essays in Honour of R. H. Hilton*, ed. T. H. Aston et al. (Cambridge, 1983), 191-216. See also Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages: Social Change in England, c. 1200-1520* (Cambridge, 1989).
- ²⁵ Massimo Montanari, "Rural Food in Late Medieval Italy," in *Bäuerliche Sachkultur des Spätmittelalters* (Sitzungsberichte der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-Hist. Klasse, vol. 439), pp. 307-320; Bruno Laurioux, *Manger au moyen âge* (Paris, 2002), pp. 72-74.
- ²⁶ Schubert, *Essen und Trinken*, pp. 120-125, 134.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 150. He admits that the apples of his childhood (he was born in 1941) tasted better than the "EU apples" do now, but it does not follow that everything in the distant past was better.
- ²⁸ Liana Vardi, *The Land and the Loom: Peasants and Profit in Northern France, 1680-1800* (Durham, North Carolina, 1993), pp. 17-121.
- ²⁹ Robert Redfield "Social Organization of Tradition," *Far Eastern Quarterly* 15 (1955), 13-21; Redfield, *The Little Community and Peasant Society and Culture* (Chicago, 1960); George Foster, Introduction to *Peasant Society: A Reader*, ed. Jack M. Potter et al. (New York, 1967) pp. 10-14; Eric Wolf, *Peasants* (Englewood Cliffs, 1966); Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History* (Berkeley, 1982).
- ³⁰ Eric Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Manchester, 1959); Eric Wolf, *Peasant Wars in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1969); Mousnier, *Fureurs paysannes*. See also Leo Yaresh, "The 'Peasant Wars' in Soviet Historiography," *American Slavic and Eastern European Review* 16 (1957), 241-259.
- ³¹ E. A. Kosminsky, *Studies in the Agrarian History of England in the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford, 1956); Alan MacFarlane, *The Origins of English Individualism: The Family, Property and Social Transition* (Cambridge, 1979).
- ³² Steven Feierman, *Peasant Intellectuals: Anthropology and History in Tanzania* (Madison, 1990); *Resistance, Rebellion, and Consciousness in the Andean Peasant World, Eighteenth to Twentieth Centuries* ed. Steve J. Stern (Madison, 1987); Steven Justice, *Writing and Rebellion: England in 1381* (Berkeley, 1994); Paul Freedman, *Images of the Medieval Peasant* (Stanford, 1999), pp. 257-288.
- ³³ R. B. Goheen, "Peasant Politics? Village Community and the Crown in Fifteenth-Century England," *American Historical Review* (1991), 42-62.
- ³⁴ James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, 1985). See also Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven, 1976); *idem*, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven, 1990).
- ³⁵ See, for example, Christopher Dyer, "The Ineffectiveness of Lordship in England, 1200-1400," in *Rodney Hilton's Middle Ages: An Exploration of Historical Theme*, ed. Christopher Dyer et al., (Oxford, 2007), pp. 69-86.
- ³⁶ E. P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past & Present* 50 (1971), 76-136.
- ³⁷ Sidney Mintz and Daniela Schlettwein-Gsell, "Food Patterns in Agrarian Societies: The Core-Fringe-Legume Hypothesis," *Gastronomica* 1, no. 3 (2001), 40-52.
- ³⁸ Judith M. Bennett, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside: Gender and Household in Brigstock before the Plague* (Oxford, 1987); Bennett, *Ale, Beer and Brewsters in England: Women's Work in a Changing World, 1300-1600* (Oxford, 1996).

³⁹ T. V. Sathyamurthy, "Indian Peasant Historiography: A Critical Perspective on Ranajit Guha's Work," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 18 (1990), 92-144; Gyan Prakash, "Subaltern Studies as Postcolonial Criticism," *American Historical Review* 99 (1994), 1475-1490

⁴⁰ Christine Pelzer White, "Everyday Resistance, Socialist Revolution, and Rural Development: The Vietnamese Case," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 13:2 (1986), 56. See also Sherry B. Ortner, "Resistance and the Problem of Ethnographic Refusal," in *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, ed. Terence McDonald (Ann Arbor, 1996), 287-288.

⁴¹ Jaume Vilaginés, "Societat i alimentació a l'època medieval. El Vallès Oriental (segles X-XIII)," in Vilaginés, *La gent i el paisatge: Estudis sobre el Vallès medieval* (Montserrat, 2006), p. 132.