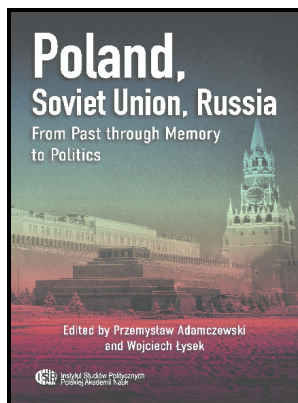


# Approaches to the study of man-environment interactions - proceedings of the Anglo-Polish geographical seminar, Toruń, September 1974

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## Past and Present: Human

With most land already under cultivation and without the technology to raise yields per acre continuously, pre-industrial societies sooner or later faced a problem of 190 Outhwaite, 'Dearth and government intervention', pp.

## Man

In this approach a crisis was defined not as a fixed proportional increase in mortality above the average level, but in terms of the probability that an upward fluctuation in mortality was so great that it was unlikely to have arisen by chance. Vulnerability was especially marked where, as in Westmorland or the West Riding of Yorkshire, these populations were also dependent for employment on the vagaries of a rural industry, itself notoriously sensitive to demand dictated by the quality of the harvest.

## All Issues

We have argued that the same process of market integration that permitted a more effective distribution of food also brought a more effective distribution of these infections.

## All Issues

In some years real wages fell savagely but the death rate scarcely rose above trend. Early modern societies were seen as victims of natural variation caught in an inexorable web of unalterable biological processes. For a similar argument about economic specialisation adding economic risk to natural risk and creating famine, see Watts, Food, Famine and Peasantry.

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Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History 51 3 : 232-355.

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