

Records seized by the police allow Chisick to describe not only the process of publication but also the pattern of subscriptions, their geographic distribution, and the social position of the subscribers. With lists of more than 7,000 names, he is able to make a unique analysis of the paper's readership at a time when both old-regime and new revolutionary terms were being used to describe occupations and status. Perhaps not surprisingly, he finds the aristocracy and the clergy to have been overrepresented among the subscribers to the newspaper (at about 20 per cent each). Among the commoners who subscribed, the elite of the business world (*négociants*), army, and liberal professions were also overrepresented. A large percentage of women subscribed, from 16 to 22 per cent depending on the year of the sample. Chisick relates this broad conservative readership to the events of the Revolution, but also compares it to the readership of pre-revolutionary literary journals. He makes a suggestive, though tentative, link between the elite audience that read Enlightenment literature in the 1780s and the counter-revolutionary elite after 1789.

As this last argument indicates, much of the interest of Chisick's study lies in the broader questions he raises but cannot answer, given the narrow limits of this study. Two certainly warrant further pursuit. One is the role played by pamphlets in communicating ideas after the explosion in numbers of newspapers in the early Revolution. Were pamphlets also crucial for the democratization of political debate, as Popkin suggests for daily journals? The other is the relationship of the Enlightenment to the Revolution. If the elite audience for the Enlightenment was drawn to read conservative newspapers during the Revolution, what does that say about the relationship of the Enlightenment to revolutionary ideology? As far as Chisick's history of the *Ami du Roi*, historians of the press may not learn a great deal that is new about the general orientation of the paper, and they may question his views about Royou's moderation. Chisick, however, has produced a study valuable for the way in which it dissects the operation of one important journal and provides a systematic social analysis of its readers. He also presents a useful discussion of the technical and interpretive difficulties in analyzing the social categories of the early Revolution. It is hoped that Chisick or other scholars will build on this foundation to address the larger questions raised by his work.

John M. Burney
Loras College

Sudel Fuma – *L'esclavagisme à la Réunion, 1794–1848*, Paris et St. Denis, Réunion, Éditions l'Harmattan et Université de la Réunion, 1992, 191 p.

Slavery was the prominent socio-economic structure of the French plantation colonies prior to the general emancipation of France's remaining 250,000 colonial slaves in 1848. Accordingly, several recent books have developed different aspects of the French colonial slave experience. Christian Schnakenbourg published in 1980 a volume on slavery's role in the Guadeloupean sugar industry in the mid-nineteenth century (*Histoire de l'industrie sucrière en Guadeloupe aux XIX^e et XX^e siècles*, vol. I, *La crise du système esclavagiste 1835–1847*, L'Harmattan), a theme

that Dale Tomich duplicated for Martinique in his 1990 study (*Slavery in the Circuit of Sugar: Martinique and the World Economy, 1830–1848*, Johns Hopkins University Press). Between these two works, a 1986 compilation edited by Anne-Marie Bruleaux, Régine Calmont, and Serge Mam-ham-Fouck presented selected topics on the entire two centuries of slavery in French Guiana (*Deux siècles d'esclavage en Guyane française, 1652–1848*, L'Harmattan et Ceger). Now, Sudel Fuma, *Maître de Conférences* at the Université de la Réunion, has issued his analysis of slavery in the last of the leading French slave colonies, the island of Bourbon (renamed Réunion in 1848), during the decisive last half-century of French colonial servitude. In a sense, though, Fuma's book goes beyond those of his recent predecessors in presenting one of the most comprehensive surveys of French colonial slavery in a single colony since Gabriel Debien's *Les esclaves aux Antilles françaises* (Société d'Histoire de la Guadeloupe), which appeared in 1974. Fuma has produced for Réunion in the nineteenth century the same sort of detailed overview of the life, work, and living conditions of slaves as Debien did for Saint-Domingue in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In the first half of the nineteenth century the sugar industry, fuelled by the labour of some 50,000 to 60,000 slaves, was at its height in Bourbon. At the beginning of his book Fuma sets out to analyze the condition of the island's rural-based slave community. After a few preliminary pages on the demographic and ethnic breakdown of this population, Fuma launches into the most important element of his work, the nature of slavery on Réunion. He examines the organization of field work on the sugar estates, the daily tasks of growing and cutting cane, and work in the sugar mills, along with the discipline, mistreatment, and cruelty that constituted the coercive force behind slave labour. The author also depicts the daily lives of slaves, their food, clothing, health, and social relations. The picture that Fuma paints is one of increasing hardship for over-exploited slaves due to growing production demands and a diminishing servile population. These latter factors, combined with the planters' determination to preserve their absolute control over slaves for as long as possible, meant that the position of slaves on Bourbon did not improve considerably even after the imposition of standards by the French government in 1845. Slaves replied with passive resistance and isolated acts of incendiarism and *marronage*, but any attempts at open revolt were quickly stymied by the overwhelming repression inherent in the system. Slavery in Réunion, Fuma shows, was neither paternalistic nor benign.

After having devoted over half of his book to discussing slavery, the author turns to contingent topics. He explains that the crying need for additional workers led planters to experiment with free labour in the form of Indian or Chinese *engagés* already in the last decades of the slave regime. When immigration schemes of the 1830s and early 1840s proved unsatisfactory because of the Asians' refusal to be treated like slaves, these efforts were abandoned temporarily, only to be renewed again after the abolition of slavery by the Second French Republic. Finally, the author provides an interesting chapter on unsuccessful government attempts to assure sustained labour after 1848 by implementing coercive measures, developments revealing the ingrained tendency of both the authorities and plantocracy to

rely upon forced labour even in a *laissez-faire* economy. In the end, if the sugar economy of Réunion continued to function under the Second Empire, it was largely due to increased Asian immigration rather than freed black workers.

One of the virtues of this book by a Réunion native is the thorough use it makes of the colony's departmental archives. Fuma exploited an impressive array of family papers and local journals in sounding the colonial mentality prevalent in nineteenth-century Réunion. He also employed extensively the departmental archives' copies of administrative dispatches, government correspondence, and official reports from the French colonial archives now located in Aix-en-Provence. Unfortunately, though, the author appears to have limited his research almost exclusively to original sources available in Réunion. He makes no reference to the numerous documents of the *Généralités* series, not reproduced for the Réunion archives, but available in the original at Aix, which could have considerably expanded his sources and enriched his point of view. Moreover, this work, which grew out of a doctoral thesis, makes slight use of any secondary material on topics other than Réunion slavery itself. For example, it repeats the entirely dated estimation of losses of 30 per cent in the slave trade, a figure shown to be exaggerated by the massive – but here uncited – historical literature of the last 20 years. Consequently, the author often envisages the Réunion scene in isolation, not contrasting or comparing it to the French West Indian experience or even to that of the neighbouring British holding of Mauritius. Perhaps it is this limited approach that also leads the author to accept unquestioningly the sincerity of the French metropolitan government's efforts to undermine slavery in Réunion, while over-stressing the role of the local planters in preserving the status quo. The result is an interesting book, even a valuable one in its portrayal of slave culture in Réunion, but one which could have been improved by more extensive research and a wider perspective.

Lawrence C. Jennings
University of Ottawa

Jacques Dupâquier et Denis Kessler, éd. – *La société française au XIX^e siècle : tradition, transition, transformations*, Paris, Arthème Fayard, 1992, 529 p.

La société française au XIX^e siècle is an ambitious attempt to produce a “new social history” of France in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (pp. 9–10, 509, 518). The claim to be a “new social history” may be pretentious, but the anthology does represent a significant expansion of our horizons and employs an innovative methodology. Rather than basing the study on structural analysis, which the editors criticize, or on a snapshot view of a particular group or area at one time, the contributors examine the occupational dynamics of 3,000 families over six generations and through 45,000 marriage acts during the nineteenth century. This “genealogical” approach reveals a dynamism in French society that certainly has been suggested in a number of studies but not demonstrated with the thoroughness of this work or over so long a period of time.

The book includes 13 separate contributions by members of the team engaged in