

bourgeoisie and the education of their children; it would also expose the roots of the struggle for control of that education between secular and clerical forces. But it remains for his readers to judge whether the beginning that Huppert offers us is a convincing one.

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MORRIS SLAVIN — *The French Revolution in Miniature. Section Droits-de-l'Homme, 1789-1795*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984. Pp. xvii, 449.

As Morris Slavin points out in his preface, despite the substantial work done on the lower classes in Paris during the French Revolution, no one has traced the history of a particular neighbourhood through the whole revolutionary decade. He finds this surprising in light of the vast amount of evidence available, and remarks that it is not inconceivable that his study might be the first volume of a forty-eight volume series covering all the sections in Paris. He argues that in the meantime it is worth doing one section, Droits-de-l'Homme, on the assumption that, despite differences in topography and social composition, the sections had enough in common that what happened in one will cast light on the whole Revolution. This assumption probably has much truth in it, but surely it is going too far to claim, as the subtitle of his book suggests, that the result will be a history of the Revolution in miniature. As his book shows, one will not learn much about successive national executives, national assemblies, national armies, foreign affairs, or developments in the provinces by studying one ward of Paris *d'en bas*. In fact, a prior knowledge of such wider developments is essential to understanding his book.

Slavin proceeds with his microcosmic history in a very systematic and detailed way. He begins with a description of the physical setting of what was to become the section Droits-de-l'Homme. This reads somewhat like a tourist guide to surviving buildings in the Marais, and in fact he reproduces a modern map of the area for visitors rather than one of several contemporary maps such as that called the *Plan de Turgot*. One does, however, get some sense of the quarter. He then examines the socio-economic base, providing the reader with data about the number of buildings per street, density of population per acre, occupation, incomes, and taxes, illustrated by tables. This provides valuable insights into the material conditions of the quarter. He then traces the role of this and other districts in the storming of the Bastille, how the section Droits-de-l'Homme was created out of two original districts, and its part in the fall of the monarchy, the expulsion of the so-called Girondins, the emergence of the revolutionary government, and the overthrow of Robespierre.

In studying any organism, whether biological or social, there is always the question of whether to dissect it before looking at it in action, or to study it in motion and look at its parts later. Slavin has chosen the latter course. Examination of the problem of shortages and the struggle for price controls are treated separately, although they were involved in many events treated earlier. The administrative structure of the section — primary assemblies, electoral bodies, the civil committee, the revolutionary committee, the welfare committee, and local officials — is also treated after the events. So too are such vital matters as the armed forces and the popular society. Patriotism and religion share a brief chapter. The book ends, apart from some concluding remarks, with the popular uprisings in the last days of the Convention as it completed the conservative constitution of Year III. Like other historians of the upheaval from below, Slavin believes that the dismantling of the sectional institutions and the disarming of the sans-culottes in 1795 marked the real end of the Revolution.

Slavin's painstaking research throws new light on sectional politics, but he seems to be unwilling to draw the obvious conclusions. As the heir to the work of Mathiez, Lefebvre, Soboul, and other leftist historians of lower classes, he continually searches for a class basis for political struggles,

but the empirical evidence suggests a different explanation. He adopts Braesch's view that it was the intrusion of legally passive citizens into the National Guard and the local assemblies which was responsible for the overthrow of the monarchy, but he does not adduce evidence to show this was the case in the section Droits-de-l'Homme. Certainly those who came to power do not seem to have been from the lower classes: they had fixed residences, had already held government posts, and were members of the liberal professions or had small shops of their own. Many of the leaders of Year II had been activists since 1789, adapting themselves to changing regimes. Slavin also does not have evidence to show that in the section struggles over the purge of the Girondins, or later over whether to side with the Convention or the Robespierriest Commune on 9 Thermidor, were between groups with different social origins. In fact at the time of the so-called royalist revolt of 14 Vendémiaire Year III, the social composition of the sections had not changed much. Nevertheless, Slavin does not draw the revisionist conclusion that these were *political* conflicts over government leadership, management of the war, and how to cope with scarcity and soaring costs.

Perhaps it is asking too much, but one would also like to see more on some other aspects of sectional life — how news and ideas were spread, participation in the great festivals, dechristianization and the cult of martyrs, and the role of women. These are either not treated or dealt with cursorily. Overall, however, the reader gets new insights into many of the activities and institutions of a section, and above all a moving close-up view of the lives of ordinary people.

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DONALD SUTHERLAND — *The Chouans: The Social Origins of Popular Counter-Revolution in Upper Brittany, 1770-1796*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1982. Pp. xiv, 360.

“As a movement, chouannerie has no history” writes Dr. Sutherland. Historians have usually presented the Breton peasant guerilla war against the Republic as an inchoate chronicle of raids, brigandage and botched skirmishes. With this compelling and tightly-argued book, together with Maurice Hutt's admirable *Chouannerie and Counter-Revolution* (Cambridge, 1984) chouannerie now has not one history, but two. But whereas Hutt, though taking into account the social background of rebellion, concentrates on the course, organization and logistics of the struggles in Brittany, Sutherland's purpose is different. True, he does manage in one closely-packed chapter to make narrative sense of this war, which broke out in late 1793, feeding on earlier tensions and confrontations in the countryside. But the main interest of this book lies in his elegantly-structured analysis of the social tensions which made counter-revolution possible in the north-eastern, French-speaking part of the province.

Like Paul Bois, Charles Tilly and Marcel Faucheux in their studies of the royalist risings in the nearby Sarthe and the Vendée, Sutherland has a region, the Department of the Ille-et-Vilaine, which was split into revolutionary and counter-revolutionary zones. Like them, he sees antagonism between peasants and bourgeois at the bottom of the insurrection; but for Sutherland, the nature of the bourgeois-peasant clash was different, because it was unconnected with anything resembling an “urbanization” or “modernization” process. In the Ille-et-Vilaine the urban market pulled in goods from the countryside but did not “commercialize” the rural world. Market demand neither accustomed the countryside to bourgeois leadership, thereby smoothing the way for the Republic (as Bois claimed for the eastern Sarthe) nor created rapid and unbalanced modernization in the form of the introduction of handkerchief weaving whose boom-and-bust shocks impelled the rural world of the western Vendée towards counter-revolution (according to Tilly). Indeed, the contradiction between these two explanations is what pushed his analysis in a different direction. There were no abrupt