

nate. In his work, Grubb renders a valuable service to historians of other Italian regions by introducing important local research, such as the many studies of Gian Maria Varanini and Gigi Corazzol's useful work on rural credit, to a much wider audience.

Wary of the dangers of generalizing from such a narrow base, Grubb is as cautious in his epilogue as he is in his introductory remarks. This may not be to the liking of readers who prefer the reassurance of more definite conclusions, but it is entirely consistent with his aims and is a fitting end to this unduly modest book.

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Sue Peabody — *“There are no Slaves in France”: The Political Culture of Race and Slavery in the Ancien Régime*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. Pp. x, 210.

This compact study treats the following question: how and why did French public policy toward black slaves and freedmen of colour living in France change in the course of the eighteenth century? Sue Peabody approaches this issue by closely examining royal edicts, declarations, and administrative regulations, as well as law cases testing these regulations and the correspondence of royal officials and judges concerning public policy toward slavery and toward people of colour in general. This is not an exhaustive investigation of law cases, but an in-depth examination of a few key cases for the purpose of bringing individual contestants and their lawyers into clear focus. The book also demonstrates jurisdictional and personal conflicts that created ambiguities in public policy and warns historians once again to distinguish between law and practice.

Relatively few blacks and people of colour lived in France, only about 5,000 by the end of the century, compared with at least 10,000 in England, a country one-third as populous as France. What is curious is the belief among royal administrators that the number was increasing rapidly and constituted a major social problem by the 1760s. Peabody traces a double development. On one hand, the *Parlement* of Paris and the Admiralty Court of France continued to manumit slaves even into the 1780s. On the other, after 1762 the central administration, the admiralty courts, and most *parlements* in the provinces began to enforce a new code ending all manumissions, prohibiting intermarriage between races, and registering not only slaves, but all people of colour in France.

In the first two-thirds of the century French law was strongly influenced by the Freedom Principle, that is, the notion that once on French soil a slave was free. This principle was based on a few legal precedents such as an ordinance of Louis X in 1315 referring to *affranchissement* of serfs, a case at Bordeaux in 1571 where the *Parlement* of Guyenne freed a shipload of slaves, and Loisel's *Institutes coutumières* (1608) and especially later commentators such as Eusèbe de Laurière in

1710, stressing the maxim that masters must manumit slaves who were baptized. These precedents were deployed successfully by lawyers defending slaves' petitions for manumission in the early eighteenth century. The case of Jean Boucaux v. Verdelin in 1738 is an example of a successful case on behalf of Boucaux, a slave from Saint-Domingue, against his master based on these precedents. Boucaux, ably defended by two lawyers, was not only freed, but awarded 4,200 *livres* in back wages plus interest by the Admiralty Court of France in Paris. By examining the lists of petitions for freedom before the Admiralty Court of France, Peabody calculates that 154 slaves won their emancipation by petition and 93 more by individual acts of manumission between 1730 and 1790. This is the bright side of the story.

On the other hand, royal edicts and regulations had the cumulative effect of slowing down this flow (or trickle) of manumissions. The edicts of 1716 and 1738 took cognizance of the desire of West Indian planters to bring domestic slaves to France on a temporary basis under the pretext that they would be given religious instruction or learn a trade. This phase of control was characterized by permission of the colonial governor, registration of slaves in the ports, and time limits on sojourns in France. Before the 1738 declaration, if these formalities were not observed, the slave could be freed; after 1738, the penalty was immediate return of the slave to the colonies. These two laws were never registered by the *Parlement* of Paris. Peabody also notes that, at this stage, the law employed the word *esclave*, not *noir*.

A major policy shift occurred with the registration of all blacks in Paris in 1762. The ordinance reflected a change in the attitudes of the royal administration and perhaps of the political elite in general toward race and a growing fear of "racial pollution". Peabody attributes this shift partly to the development of scientific racism in the intellectual community and partly to planters' claims that slaves who lived in France became trouble-makers when they returned to the islands. The new policy was framed in terms of race. As Poncet de la Grave, *procureur du roi* at the Admiralty Court, stated the problem: "The introduction of too great a quantity of negroes in France ... is a dangerous consequence. We will soon see the French nation disfigured if a similar abuse is tolerated. Moreover, the negroes are, in general, dangerous men" (p. 74). This rising fear of a racial menace is surprising, given the fact that only 159 blacks and people of colour were registered in Paris in 1762, hardly the "deluge" described by Poncet de la Grave.

In 1777 Antoine de Sartine, Minister of Marine and Colonies, specialist in the surveillance of Paris, addressed the problem of blacks in France. His legislation establishing the *Police des Noirs* replaced the earlier rationale for permitting slaves to enter France with a pro-planter position against the "inconveniences" of the blacks' law cases. All lawsuits for freedom, present and future, were suspended. Sartine ordered the intendants to draw up a census of all blacks (slave or free) in their departments. Slave domestics who arrived by ship would be confined to *dépôts* in the ports of entry. Sartine's intent was not only to halt black immigration but also to encourage the disappearance or absorption of the black population (slave or free, black or mulatto) already in France. Finally, the new law banned marriages between whites and "blacks, mulattoes, and people of color" (p. 118). Fortunately

for the slaves and people of colour, the *Police des Noirs* encountered considerable provincial resistance, and petitions for freedom continued to be granted, albeit at the same low rate.

To the extent that the policies and court decisions of a relatively small fraction of the French administration can be attributed to the attitudes of a wider society, the term “political culture” is legitimate. My own view is that this public policy, especially after 1777, reflected both the growing power of the planter lobby and the growing paranoia of the police power in the face of increasing opposition to the state, especially at the street level. Blacks were one more identifiable threat, along with the poor, the grain rioters, the writers of *mauvais discours*, and the publishers of sensationalized legal briefs and banned books. Seymour Drescher is surely right to describe the wider French public as indifferent to the question of slavery. Perhaps the very lack of slaves and blacks in France explains this. Peabody has told us why there were so few.

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Harold Perkin — *The Third Revolution: Professional Elites in the Modern World*.
 London and New York: Routledge, 1996. Pp. xviii, 253.

Harold Perkin has written a wonderfully stimulating and provocative account of the development of our modern world in the last 50 years. It is the last of an “unintended trilogy” (p. xi) analysing what he views as crucial turning-points in human history. *The Origins of Modern English Society, 1780–1880*, published in 1969, and *The Rise of Professional Society*, which followed two decades later, dealt with the Industrial Revolution and its effects on English society, and with the subsequent revolution in human organization, again in its English context, characterized by the rise of the professional classes. In this third volume, Perkin extends his narrative to the present time and expands it to investigate the development of the professional elites in much of the post-industrial world: the United States, Britain, France, the two Germanies, Soviet Russia, and Japan.

A word of caution to those accustomed to more conventional notions about professionals: Perkin’s use of the term is in “its widest sense, to include not only the traditional professions, from lawyers and doctors to engineers and accountants, but also professional bureaucrats in government and professional managers in business corporations” (p. 1). For Perkin, professionals are any knowledge-based experts who provide special services. In the former Soviet Union, even the *nomenklatura*, the Communist party officials, elites, and intelligentsia, are termed professionals in that “their positions depended on their human capital, assisted by their political loyalty” (p. 23). Public and private sector bureaucrats and managers, in fact, form the “professional elites” with which Perkin is concerned, and more traditional professions are noticeably absent from these pages.