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# On Rural Politics in Nineteenth-Century France: The Example of Rodès, 1789–1851

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The *Route nationale 116* runs west from Perpignan, away from the Mediterranean and up the valley of the Têt River towards the heights of the Pyrenees. For about thirty kilometres, the road follows the river through a district known as the Riberal, a densely populated area of substantial villages and *bourgs* surrounded by river flats which for centuries have nourished up to six crops of vegetables annually. Just past the peach-growing town of Ille-sur-Têt, the valley narrows to no more than a gorge, and the road has to diverge to skirt a rugged granite bluff and cross over a pass called the Col de Ternère. As the road swings back around the other side of the bluff to rejoin the river and begin its steep climb through the *conflent* to the highlands, it passes a large cluster of ochre and white houses, with their characteristically southern orange-brown tiles, clinging to the lower part of the hill.

The village is named Rodès.<sup>1</sup> At its peak in the late 1830s, about 750 people were able to survive on its land; today its resident population is perhaps 350.<sup>2</sup> It is one of the two hundred communities of the Roussillon (or Northern Catalonia) ceded by Spain to France by the Treaty of the Pyrenees in 1659. Since the Revolution, with the addition of the communes of the Fenouillèdes region to the north, these have comprised the department of the Pyrénées-Orientales.

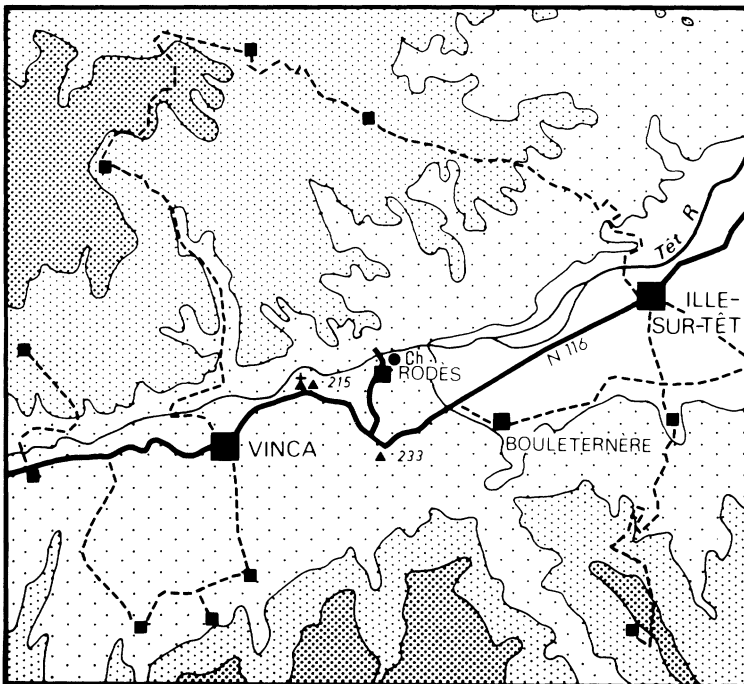
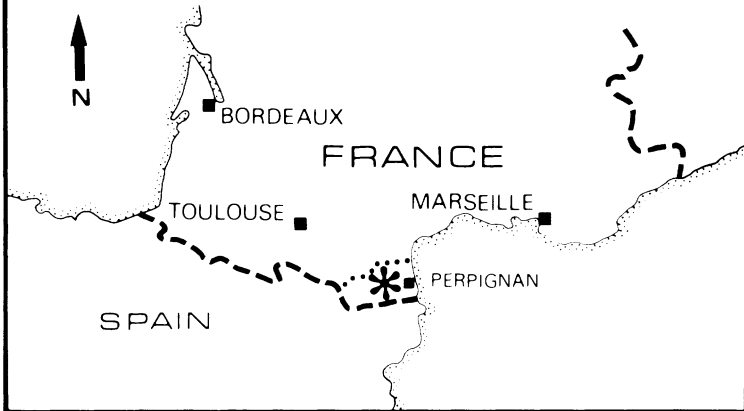
The village and most of the commune's valuable land is situated in a clearly

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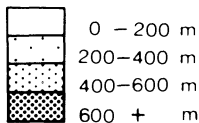
<sup>1</sup> In Catalan, the village is known as Rodés, and in the nineteenth century it was variously spelled Rhodès, Rhodez, and Rodez.

<sup>2</sup> A convenient collection of population statistics, from the eleventh century to 1968, is by M. Batlle and R. Gual, "'Fogatges' Catalans," *Revue "Terra Nostra"* (Prades), no. 11 (1973). For Rodès, the original census returns for 1841 and 1856 are in Archives Départementales des Pyrénées-Orientales, M 2520, 2479 (hereafter cited as A.D.). Series M (Administration générale et économie) is currently being reclassified.

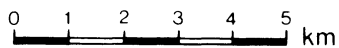
# RODÈS AND ITS VALLEY



ALTITUDE



\* Study Area



defined basin.<sup>3</sup> To the north rears the stark, granite massif de Sournia, separated from the village by the deep gorge of the Têt. To the east and west, the basin is bounded by two steep hills, one topped by the ruined château which overlooks the village, the other by the chapel of Saint-Pierre. Away to the south, across the river flats and valley, soars Mt. Canigou, a 2,784 metre peak which dominates the landscape.

About eight o'clock on the night of 2 February 1850, police and gendarmes raided a house in the village and arrested twenty-one men who were drinking and playing cards. François Glory, the mayor and a legitimist, had informed the government *procureur* at the Sub-prefecture of Prades that this was in fact a regular republican political meeting where "incendiary newspapers" were read by men of "anarchy and disorder."<sup>4</sup> Glory had known of the thrice-weekly meetings for some time; however, he had only decided to act when a prefectural circular concerning "false rumours" (a story had gone round the commune that President Louis Napoleon was dead) which he had posted in the village had been ripped to pieces.

According to the commander of the gendarmerie, "this society has no other ends but to involve itself with politics, to criticise the acts of the government and to propagate the most subversive doctrines."<sup>5</sup> It was claimed that meetings were held in buildings belonging to Joseph Tixeire, variously described as a lime-burner, landholder, or brickmaker, either in his workshed up in the hills, where "*rouges*" went to "*ruser, boire et chanter*," or in the uninhabited house where the men were arrested. Estimates of the numbers involved ranged from forty to seventy.

Those arrested offered no resistance, though some stones were thrown at the gendarmes as they led them away. At the court case in Prades several days later, at which the twenty-one were charged with having formed a secret society in contravention of the law of 19 July 1849, the prosecution was thwarted by the collective insistence of the accused on a plausible if highly selective story, and a dramatic decision by the mayor that he wished to retract his initial allegations.<sup>6</sup> The leaders of the society insisted that the group had only been meeting since the previous Christmas, and that no more than fourteen were involved: they drank and played cards and never read newspapers or discussed politics. This story, repeated again and again, and Glory's decision to retract his claims, forced the tribunal to drop the charges. In fact, Glory was suspended as mayor for his refusal to cooperate.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> J. Martimort, "Le bassin de Rodès" (Diplôme d'études supérieures (Géographie) (Montpellier, 1964)). The standard geography of the department is by M. Sorre, *Les Pyrénées méditerranéennes. Etude de géographie biologique* (Paris, 1913).

<sup>4</sup> A.D. U 1530. This file contains the judicial dossier on the incident.

<sup>5</sup> A.D. 3M'73. See also 3M'70.

<sup>6</sup> A.D. U 1530.

<sup>7</sup> A.D. M 3749, decree of 20 February 1850. The mayor and deputy were again dismissed after the coup of December 1851. *Ibid.*, decree of 7 December 1851. One of the judges in the

From the material seized in the house, and other evidence we have, it seems that the charges were accurate. Police found a number of political songs dating back to at least 1846, documents from the months of political liberty in 1848-49, and a well-thumbed copy of Pierre Joigneaux's *démocrate-socialiste* paper *la Feuille du peuple*, dated 20 December 1849; this is why those arrested stated without prompting that the group's first meeting had occurred only on 25 December and that they never read newspapers. A careful analysis of the weekly membership and subscription lists of those who had paid for candles and brought along wine and cards furnishes the names of forty Rodésiens (excepting two of those arrested who were from neighbouring communes).

This act of political repression has, because of the material seized by the police, spotlighted an episode in the history of this community. There are a number of ways in which we might seek to understand and locate the fragment of life in Rodès thus illuminated. On one level, the incident may be treated as an example of the nationwide political struggle in the years of the Second Republic (1848-51). In these years, large sections of the urban and rural masses, particularly in central and southern France, made a commitment to the elements of social and political justice they saw promised in a future triumph of *la République démocratique et sociale*.<sup>8</sup> This surge of the Left was energetically, often violently, contested by local men of "Order" - whether legitimist or Bonapartist - and by the Parisian administration.<sup>9</sup> On a second level, the episode may be treated as a pivotal time in the gradual, checkered process by which the majority of the population of Rodès turned from an acceptance of elite-dominated legitimism in the first half of the century to support for radical republicanism by the mid-1870s and for communist parties since World War II.

However, this attempt by some Rodésiens in 1850 to sidestep restrictions on political life can also be approached in a third way. It affords us a chance to pose and investigate three fundamental and disconcertingly simple questions about nineteenth-century France: What was the nature of rural politics? How did politicization occur? Why did the conflicting groups develop as they did?

court case was François Saléta, who had been involved in an acrimonious political and personal struggle since 1830 with Edouard Bonet, a republican activist in Prades. See R. Lapassat, ed., "Les mémoires du citoyen Edouard Bonet," *Conflent*, no. 10 (1962): 168-74.

<sup>8</sup> Among the best regional studies of this period are M. Agulhon, *La République au village* (Paris, 1970); P. Vigier, *La Seconde République dans la région alpine* (Paris, 1953); L. A. Loubère, "The Emergence of the Extreme Left in Lower Languedoc, 1848-1851," *American Historical Review* LXXIII (1968): 1019-1951; C. Marcilhacy, "Les caractères de la crise sociale et politique dans le département du Loiret," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* VI (1959): 5-59. The best general history is M. Agulhon, *1848 ou l'apprentissage de la République, 1848-1852* (Paris, 1973).

<sup>9</sup> For this political repression, see J. M. Merriman, *The Agony of the Republic. The Repression of the Left in Revolutionary France 1848-1851* (New Haven, 1978); and the articles by J. M. Merriman, H. Machin, and V. Wright in *Revolution and Reaction. 1848 and the Second French Republic*, R. Price, ed. (London, 1975).

These questions – on the what, how, and why of rural politics – have of course been addressed by historians, though the attraction which Paris has held for students of popular politics has, until recently, skewed attention away from small communities like Rodès, where most of the people lived.<sup>10</sup>

There are few more tenacious assumptions about the nature of rural politics in nineteenth-century France than that they never emerged from the extreme parochialism described as *la politique du clocher*. Clochemerle, Gabriel Chevallier's delightful and scurrilous portrayal of village politics before the Great War, reflects a phase of the Third Republic when some of the basic hopes of 1870 had long been met. By then, rural politics in many places may well have degenerated into a variant of patron-client relationships where national politics were often seen as irrelevant to the needs of the local population.<sup>11</sup> Even under the Second Republic, however, the view from Paris of politics in small communities had often been one of trivial, parochial squabbles to which national concerns were irrelevant or tangential or, at the other extreme, of small-scale reflections of debates in the nation's capital.<sup>12</sup>

Fortunately, in the case of Rodès we have access to a sufficiently varied body of material to enable us to reconstruct a reasonably clear summary of the conflicting world-views which were present there and which claimed to interpret the past and hold promise for the future. Even so, there are methodological problems. It is likely that as few as 10 percent of males, and few if any females at all, were literate:<sup>13</sup> this raises the problem of using written records as a medium for understanding the attitudes of the illiterate. However, in the songs seized by the police we do have a source which may reflect accurately those attitudes. There is still, of course, a danger in assuming that selected oral or written statements express accurately the attitudes of all those in a group. Nevertheless, the material we have bearing on those ideologies at work in Rodès is sufficiently varied to suggest that an adequate description may be attempted.

At the trial in 1850, Julien Déjoan  *fils*, the secretary of the society, remarked that Rodès was divided into two camps; indeed, the central element of political life there at midcentury was the polarization of the community into

<sup>10</sup> Two recent syntheses of rural politics in the nineteenth century are the chapters by M. Agulhon in *Histoire de la France rurale*, G. Duby and H. Wallon, eds. (Paris, 1976), vol. 3; and T. Zeldin, *France 1848-1945* (Oxford, 1973), vol. 1, chs. 9, 14, 17. They may be contrasted with the recent thesis by E. Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen. The Modernization of Rural France 1870-1914* (Stanford, 1976), ch. XV.

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, P. L.-R. Higonnet, *Pont-de-Montvert. Social Structure and Politics in a French Village 1700-1914* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), ch. VI.

<sup>12</sup> One example of this is the useful article by J. Bouillon, "Les Démocrates-Socialistes aux Elections de 1849," *Revue française de science politique* VI (1956): 70-95. Bouillon sees the votes only as conscious support for the program of the Left, and explains the radicalization of the countryside as the work of propaganda (p. 89). The national program of the Left is reproduced in J. Kayser, *Les grandes batailles du radicalisme* (Paris, 1962), *annexes*.

<sup>13</sup> A.D. M 3123. This figure is the estimate of the local justice of the peace in 1848.

legitimists and republicans. What were the attitudes and size of the two groups?

Royalism in Rodès took the form of legitimism, or support for Henri V and a restored Bourbon rule, which was common in southern France. Two public declarations by legitimists in Rodès furnish an opportunity to consider their numerical strength and ideology. In November 1849, a subscription was organized for a commemorative medal for the royalist publicist Genoude, "the father of universal suffrage and the martyr of the people's liberty": ninety-four made donations. The following April, ninety-seven sent a petition to Larochejacquelein supporting his call for a national referendum on "Republic or Monarchy."<sup>14</sup> All told, 126 different names appear on the two lists, which furnish a most important guide to political feelings at a time - the three months before and after the raid at Tixeire's - when they may have been acute. The willingness of a clear majority of adult males (there were about 190 adult males in 1850) to call themselves legitimists, encouraged one local paper to describe the commune as "*galvanisée d'un si flagrant légitimisme.*"<sup>15</sup>

The two lists also give us some fragments of personal political statements. Scattered through the list of those who subscribed to Genoude's medal are comments which reveal how the royalism of Rodès drew on a bitter-sweet nostalgia for its ideological style and on present interest for its substance. Several men noted that they were "*fils d'un émigré,*" Etienne Domenech (who seems to have helped the parish priest organize the subscription) adding that he had been a lieutenant in the National Guard under Louis XVIII.

Another noted that he was "a friend of Order and of the *Droit national.*" The meaning placed on these words is the key to the royalist ideology: a fervent faith that the mass of the "*honnêtes gens*" of France would choose to restore Henri V if given the opportunity, and that in this way would the spectre of revolution, with its threat to order and property presented by "conspirators and anarchists," be banished forever.

The simple appeal of such a view of the world to many Rodésiens cloaked ambiguities within it. There is no clear sign of how they saw the relationship between universal suffrage and monarchy, except in the vague slogan of "national sovereignty." As a corollary, the evidence from municipal elections suggests that, at least for the power-holding elite, concern for security of property and credit ranked higher in priority than commitment to universal suffrage. There is no trace of protest from the legitimist municipal council

<sup>14</sup> The two documents were reproduced in *Etoile du Roussillon*, a legitimist paper published in Perpignan, on 21 November 1849 and 17 April 1850.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 September 1850. Two good brief analyses of the nature of the populist royalism common in the Midi at midcentury are Agulhon, *1848*, pp. 113-25; M. R. Cox, "The Liberal Legitimists and the Party of Order under the Second French Republic," *French Historical Studies* V (1968): 454-59.

following the 31 May 1850 electoral law which disfranchised nearly half of the adult males of the village.<sup>16</sup> In the plebiscites of 1851 and 1852, approving the coup of Louis Napoleon and the reestablishment of Empire, the elite insisted that their followers should go to the polls and vote in the affirmative.<sup>17</sup> Further evidence of the primacy they placed on controlling local government may be seen in the way in which, in 1848, they were in fact prepared to claim loyalty to the new republic. In July, twelve of them (including Glory, Domenech, and another leading legitimist, Joseph Cornet) closed a letter to the prefect with the phrase: “*salut et fraternité, et vive la République!*”<sup>18</sup>

The pragmatic concerns underlying such assurances were soon revealed. Perhaps the clearest statement of the legitimist ideology, at least of the elite, was made by Jean Soléra, the surgeon/health officer, secretary to the mayor, and a member of the departmental Conseil d’hygiène. Commenting to the prefect on the local government election of 30 July 1848, Soléra wrote:

The result of the poll was favorable to Order and to the Republican Government. . . . This result, citizen Prefect, has in no way astonished us. We all know, as friends of Order and of the Republic, what greatness and energy there is in the principles we are called on to defend, the last rampart of the social order, because we make the most formal vow never to form a pact with insurrection or disorder.

The defeat of the radico-revolutionary minority has several causes which I have to enumerate. I place on the first rank, the excellent and good spirit of the majority of the inhabitants of our locality, which has always professed principles of Order and liberty (as far as I’m concerned, no liberty is possible without Order), in spite of the teachings of a very small revolutionary minority, but all good and right-thinking citizens must consider Order as the first necessity, the indispensable condition for every civilized nation.<sup>19</sup>

Several pieces of evidence suggest that about one-third of the adult males of Rodès identified themselves as republicans. When news of the February 1848 Revolution arrived in the village, about seventy gathered to elect Joseph Tixeire and Julien Déjoan *père* as provisional mayor and secretary.<sup>20</sup> At least seventy refused to sign either of the legitimist lists of 1849 and 1850.<sup>21</sup> And though only twenty-one men, including nineteen Rodésiens, were arrested in the February 1850 raid, we have seen that there were at least forty and perhaps seventy associated with the society. In May 1851, when many communes in the Roussillon were involved in an abortive *complot* against the government of Louis Napoleon, police claimed that four squads of fifteen to twenty men

<sup>16</sup> A.D. 2M’60. Indeed, the municipal council of Rodès was chastised by the *Etoile du Roussillon* on 12 September 1850 for voting to extend Louis Napoleon’s powers in order to avoid the 1852 elections.

<sup>17</sup> For the plebiscite results, see A.D. 2M’67, 68.

<sup>18</sup> A.D. 2M’59.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Archives Communales de Rodès (hereafter cited as A.C.), délibérations du conseil municipal.

<sup>21</sup> The numbers of Rodésiens on voting registers under the Second Republic were 180–95.



had been formed in Rodès.<sup>22</sup> Finally, in 1852, 66 of the 198 adult males in the village either refused to vote or voted negatively in the plebiscite to establish the Second Empire.<sup>23</sup>

Like the legitimists, the republicans of Rodès drew their style and inspiration from the past and applied it to the present. There the similarity ends, for the essential elements of the two ideologies are in stark contrast.<sup>24</sup> One of the songs seized by the police was composed in the early months of the Second Republic, for the elections of 23 April 1848. The key political premises of the song were antiroyalism and its corollary, secular democracy:

Above all, no more Bourbons . . .  
Tear up the white flags  
That make us grimace.  
. . . we are all kings.

But these repeated antiroyalist, republican sentiments were also based on an antipathy towards the rich which is not present in legitimist statements. Republicans identified themselves as "people of small means" in contrast with royalists "made prosperous by France" and who now "will have no more gold to bite on." To this was added anticlericalism - "let's vote secular" - which may have been fuelled by the local parish priest's involvement in royalist politics.<sup>25</sup>

Like their forefathers in the Great Revolution, the republicans of Rodès saw themselves as located in an international movement, a people's crusade which would strike terror into the hearts of the crowned heads of Europe:

We are citizens,  
Citizens of the countryside,  
Republican soldiers,  
As hard as a mountain . . .  
Ready to march with measured tread  
Towards every frontier . . .  
Long live the tricolour,  
Which has made the tour of the world.

Louis Philippe's crimes were to have been a king, a puppet of the rich, and a coward in foreign affairs.

Particularly striking in the republican ideology are the signs of a forward-looking perspective and of the links drawn between local life and national politics. The presence of a copy of Joigneaux's paper, the leading organ of the

<sup>22</sup> Archives Nationales (hereafter cited as A.N.) BB<sup>30</sup>393, dossier 233.

<sup>23</sup> A.D. 2M'68.

<sup>24</sup> This analysis is based on the documents seized by the police and held in A.D. U 1530. An excellent brief analysis of the ideology of the Left is found in Agulhon, *1848*, pp. 103-13.

<sup>25</sup> The priest of Rodès since 1845, Jean Bataille, was actively engaged in legitimist politics. Though the anticlericalism of the republicans of Rodès was apparently not expressed in personal attacks on Bataille, in neighboring Bouleternère there had been a long-standing and at times violent feud. A.D. 1V9.

Left's attempt to win rural communities to its cause, is evidence of this. So too is the survival of a slip of paper from the neighboring village of Bouleternère, inviting republicans to nominate representatives to go to a mass meeting in Perpignan to choose candidates for the elections of 13 May 1849.<sup>26</sup> There is no animosity shown towards Paris or other urban centres – indeed, the 1848 electoral song displays a naive faith in the militancy of the Provisional Government chosen by Parisians.

Far from seeing the new régime as a Parisian conquest being bestowed on the provinces, the republicans of Rodès seemed almost to believe the opposite. In what is perhaps the most interesting document, a song in Catalan probably dating from 1846, intriguing links are drawn between national politics and the special status of the Roussillon. One of these links is the place accorded to the nearby town of Estagel, birthplace of François Arago:

I want to depict the life  
Of a woman in Paris  
Who is from Estagel . . .  
Marianne is her name . . .  
Her god-father, who baptised her,  
Gave her this name  
When she left for Paris.<sup>27</sup>

Such, in broad terms, were the conflicting sociopolitical ideologies present in Rodès at midcentury. The impact of the February 1848 Revolution was to unleash political life in the community. From a community where, for eighteen years, only about 35 percent of adult males had been eligible to vote in municipal elections, and only about twenty men ever bothered to, Rodès became characterised by political mobilization and division. We have seen that, on 25 February, about seventy men elected Tixeire and Déjoan as provisional executives. Two days later, 130 men gathered to form a national guard. This unprecedented involvement in local government continued into the summer, when 122 voted in elections for a new council and no fewer than 56 sought election.<sup>28</sup>

However, the years of the Second Republic did not greatly disturb control of political power, though republicans sustained a strong challenge to the existing order. A majority of the pre-1848 council continued to meet with the republican executive after February, and the council was completely in legitimist hands again after July. The continuity of local political elites is

<sup>26</sup> A.D. U 1530. Six hundred delegates from all over the department attended this meeting. A.D. 3M<sup>73</sup>. On Joigneaux, see R. Magraw, "Pierre Joigneaux and Socialist Propaganda in the French Countryside, 1849-1851," *French Historical Studies* X (1978): 599-640.

<sup>27</sup> A particularly interesting source for political conflicts before 1848 is volume 3 of the *Journal* of Maréchal B. de Castellane (Paris, 1896), then commander of the garrison at Perpignan.

<sup>28</sup> A.D. 2M<sup>59</sup>; A.C. délibérations. There are some interesting insights into the significance of such displays of popular sovereignty by W. H. Reddy, "The Textile Trade and the Language of the Crowd at Rouen, 1752-1871," *Past and Present* XLIV (1977): 62-89.

apparent; an analysis of regular council elections for the period 1838-55 shows that the sixty vacancies were filled by only thirty individuals. Déjoan, who had been elected throughout the July Monarchy, was the only councillor who was involved in the minority republican group.<sup>29</sup>

Even allowing for the dangers implicit in interpreting the documents used thus far, and whatever our judgment on the ideological content of these documents, there were clearly two definable and essentially hostile sets of attitudes towards politics and society in Rodès. The mass of the population found them relevant and worth mobilizing to support, though no doubt there was considerable individual variation in levels of consciousness and interest. Illiteracy and poverty, which were both characteristic of the community,<sup>30</sup> were not necessarily barriers to political thought and action. On the other hand, it would be equally misleading to suggest that a political conflict was occurring there in the same terms or over precisely the same issues as that in Paris.

Before turning to the related questions of how this politicization occurred and why the community divided, it is apposite to point out that, because of the material with which we are working, we are talking of adult males. There is no indication in any of our political sources - electoral returns, local government records, and reports of the police, gendarmerie, and judiciary - of the political role or preferences of the women of Rodès. It may be safe to assume that, in a society where patriarchy was enshrined in law and sanctified by custom and religion, there would have been an acceptance among women of their husband's political opinions. But it is still surprising not to find evidence of female participation in politics. In many other communities in this region, it was common for women to make their own political statements in collective demonstrations.<sup>31</sup> This can be deduced even when the role of women was obscured by the assumptions of police and other public functionaries that political actions by males were far more important. So, in the case of Rodès, it should not be assumed that women were apolitical, even if the consequence of the laws, male attitudes, female self-expectations, and the bias in our sources are such that we have political information only about males.

How is the apparent politicization of public life in Rodès to be explained? Was there a type of social and geographical trickling down process, whereby the propaganda of contending national elites was transmitted to rural communities by a hierarchy of bourgeois and artisan activists, from Paris through a network

<sup>29</sup> Results of municipal elections in these years are in A.D. 2M<sup>o</sup>29, 39, 59, 63, 66.

<sup>30</sup> There is abundant evidence of poverty in the report to the Enquête sur le travail agricole et industriel in 1848. A.D. M 3123. The 1841 census listed six destitute widows, and in 1856 ten women were listed as having "*enfants en nourrice*," one way of supplementing a tight family budget.

<sup>31</sup> P. McPhee, "Popular Culture, Symbolism and Rural Radicalism in Nineteenth Century France," *Journal of Peasant Studies* V (1978): 238-53.

of provincial cities, towns, and *bourgs*?<sup>32</sup> Did linguistic and cultural particularism obstruct this process?

To begin with, we need to question the assumptions that anybody *began* a politicization process or that, when Joigneaux's paper found its way to Rodès or anywhere else, it was read by political novices. There is a common assumption that peasants per se were conservative, devout, hostile to change, royalist, and that they began to think about politics only when urban activists radicalized them.<sup>33</sup> The landmarks of the history of Rodès since 1789 follow; suffice it here to give one example of conflict suggesting that, long before 1848, Rodésiens were disagreeing about national politics. In 1831 and 1832, Carnival celebrations had been so tumultuous because of hostilities between opponents and supporters of the new régime that contingents of troops had to be sent to the village.<sup>34</sup> Thus, we may talk of a change in the level and orientation of politicization – in the case of Rodès, a surge of participation in politics and the first strong challenge to local legitimists – but not of its beginnings.

We need to understand how the people of Rodès became more involved in politics, and the sources of new ideas, by examining the process from the perspective of the rural community itself, by asking question about the points of contact between the people of this microworld and the macrosociety of which they were part. For any attempt to examine the political behaviour of Rodès in isolation is doomed to frustration.

The village was situated in a densely populated river valley with three sizable communities within a radius of four kilometres: Ille-sur-Têt (3,262 people in 1851), Vinça (2,131), and Bouleternère (925). It had long been involved in the political life of these communes, especially since 1789, and had for centuries been part of a complex, intense, and volatile popular culture which had in recent decades also been a vehicle for political display. In 1832–33, for example, groups from Ille and Bouleternère had been at loggerheads; this conflict, which local authorities regarded as at least partly political, finally erupted into apparently serious bloodshed in the summer of 1833 at the *fête patronale*, or patron saint's feast day, of Rodès.<sup>35</sup>

There exist a number of concrete examples of the ways in which Rodésiens sought political information at the time of the Second Republic. A leading republican activist, or *rouge*, in neighbouring Bouleternère was Pierre

<sup>32</sup> For examples of such an argument, see G. Dupeux, *Aspects de l'histoire sociale et politique du Loir-et-Cher 1848–1914* (Paris, 1962), p. 377; Loubère, "Emergence of Extreme Left," pp. 1026, 1039; R. Price, *The Second French Republic. A Social History* (London, 1972), p. 203.

<sup>33</sup> For some outstanding demonstrations of the way previous experiences informed popular protest, see G. Rudé, *The Crowd in History* (New York, 1964); E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, 2d ed. (London, 1968); E. J. Hobsbawm, "Peasants and politics," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 1 (1973):3–22.

<sup>34</sup> A.D. 3M'62.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* Indeed, the legitimists who won the municipal elections of 31 July 1848 claimed that Tixeire had tried to postpone them until 15 August, the *fête patronale*, in the hope of profiting from the explosive mixture of politics and popular culture. A.D. 2M'59.

Mestres, who earned his living as a rural postman delivering mail to the villages and isolated farmhouses in the area. Apparently, mail was not all he delivered. In February 1850, for example, Mestres went to a fair at Prades, the sub-prefecture fifteen kilometres further up the Têt valley, to meet other activists. According to the commissaire spécial de police at Prades, Mestres

Took their instructions in order to spread them through the communes he visited. It's he who keeps the demagogues of Rodèz [*sic*], Bouleternère and elsewhere up to date with the false information spouted at Ille or Vinça. He's even regarded generally as spreading on his rounds dangerous literature that men of disorder from Perpignan and Prades have sent him.

Months later, the legitimist municipal council of Rodès was complaining that local republicans were still using Mestres as a go-between. In the end, their complaints were heard, and in June 1850 he was dismissed by directive from Paris.<sup>36</sup> Though neighbouring Vinça was also dominated by legitimists, the tobacconist there was regarded as an active *rouge*, and it was to his shop that Rodésiens had to go for their tobacco supplies.<sup>37</sup>

An analysis of the returns for the national elections of 1848 and 1849 underlines the argument developed above, that the people of Rodès were closely linked with a number of other communities characterised by political division, and that their politicization cannot be understood in isolation. Since the legislative elections of April 1848 and the presidential elections of December 1848 were by sections of cantons rather than by individual communes, they are of little value in revealing the particular voting patterns of Rodès. What the returns do show, however, is, first, that legitimism was far stronger in this area of the Têt valley than in most other areas of the department. Second, we can see that the canton was politically – as well as geographically – divided between the areas of influence of Vinça and Ille, separated by the Col de Ternère on the eastern boundary of Rodès. The point of this, again, is that Rodès was politically interdependent with its neighbors, that changes in its politicization came at least as much from this political dialectic as from news filtering down from Paris.

Whereas, during the disarray of royalists in the early months of the Second Republic, the department as a whole in April 1848 gave 95 percent of votes cast to republicans and only 5 percent to legitimists, in the communes round Vinça (including Rodès), this near total domination was contested. Here, as everywhere else in the department, although virtually every male voted for François Arago, whose success under the July Monarchy had been partially dependent on legitimist support, the other republican candidates received a comparatively low percentage of the votes. The rest went either to the four

<sup>36</sup> A.D. M 1832. The same year, Mestres also lost a political pension which was being paid to him because his father had been imprisoned under the White Terror in 1816. A.D. 3M'77.

<sup>37</sup> A.D. 3M'73.

legitimists who stood for election (18.9 percent), or to Jean-Jacques Escanyé, a native of Vinça and a (very) conservative republican (35.8 percent). In the section of Ille, on the other hand, votes for legitimists were negligible.<sup>38</sup> Again, in the presidential elections in December, a clear division was apparent. Ledru-Rollin, the only unambivalent radical republican candidate, attracted as much as 67 percent of votes in the section of Ille and 60.7 percent in Bouleternère. On the other hand, in the six communes round Vinça, including Rodès, no fewer than 59 percent of the voters abstained, evidence of the confusion or hostility among legitimists at the fact that the national leadership of the *Droit national* had asked them to vote for Louis Napoleon. The votes cast were split between him, Cavaignac, and Ledru-Rollin, the latter attracting only 13.7 percent.<sup>39</sup>

So the development and maintenance of political awareness in Rodès was facilitated by the human geography and political climate of the region in which the valley was located. The political life there was further sustained by the comparative ease of communication provided by the important road axis along the valley of the Têt. Much of the traffic which wound its way up and down this road was in specialized produce from the highlands and lowlands to be exchanged at market towns such as Vinça and Ille. At times there were also detachments of troops travelling between the garrison at Perpignan and the strategic fortified villages of Villefranche and Mont Louis further up the valley. Police reports in the years 1849–51 regularly complained of the political dangers represented by possible fraternization between these troops and republicans in the villages through which they were passing.<sup>40</sup>

There were a number of other characteristics of Rodès which served to facilitate a politicization and mobilization of its residents. These have to do with its size, settlement pattern, social structure, and economic base, all factors which the most convincing recent analyses of provincial France have indicated as important variables conditioning levels of political awareness in small communities.<sup>41</sup> Maurice Agulhon has labelled the rural inhabitants of eastern Provence at the time of the Second Republic as *citadins en réduction* rather than peasants;<sup>42</sup> certainly, though most Rodésiens were peasants in the

<sup>38</sup> A.D. 2M'66. Escanyé's "*profession de foi*" is in A.D. 2M'60. A similar pattern emerged in the by-election of 4 June 1848 when Genoude stood as a legitimist candidate; in the section of Ille he won only 3.3 percent of votes cast, but in the section of Vinça he attracted 40.8 percent. A.D. 2M'66.

<sup>39</sup> A.D. 2M'65. In May 1849 the whole canton voted at Vinça; the 61.6 percent won by the republican slate no doubt disguises similar internal contrasts as those in 1848 outlined in the text above. A.D. 2M'66.

<sup>40</sup> For reports of this phenomenon, see A.D. U 196; A.N. BB<sup>20</sup>155; *Etoile du Roussillon*, 13 April 1851; *Emancipation* (Toulouse), 15 April 1851.

<sup>41</sup> See, for example, Agulhon's comparison of the villages of le Cagnet and Baudinard in the Var, in *La République au village*, pp. 361–75; and Loubère, "Emergence of Extreme Left."

<sup>42</sup> Agulhon, *La République au village*, p. 12.

strict sense, Agulhon's insistence on the micro-urban character of southern villages holds true for Rodès, a village with many similarities to those of the region Agulhon studied. The community was not only substantial – in the five censuses taken from 1836 to 1856 its population ranged from 683 to 752 – but this population was diversified and closely concentrated.<sup>43</sup>

This experience of living in a substantial, concentrated community fostered public life and permitted a degree of social independence from local notables and the parish priest which was not likely, for example, in the small and dispersed communities of the Sologne or the Vendée.<sup>44</sup> In a community of this size, too, a mixed social structure facilitated the development of alternative ideologies and sources of leadership. When we talk of the people or of Rodès, we are not referring to an undifferentiated peasant mass, as historians tend to when talking of rural communities; as we shall see in the next section, this was a socially complex village with a diverse economic base. To give one example here, at any one time in the 1840s and 1850s, there were twenty-five or thirty families (about 15 percent of the total) drawing their livelihood from artisan work as stonemasons, grocers, carpenters, tailors, bootmakers, weavers, cabinetmakers, farriers, innkeepers, and so on. There was also a schoolteacher and his assistant, and a well-qualified surgeon/health-officer.

The nature of the artisan element in Rodès suggests three points. First, the fact that these artisans were mostly full-time specialists, rather than peasants who were part-time craftsmen, draws out the micro-urban character of the settlement. Second, the high rate of turnover among them indicates a mobile group, which may have represented a regularly renewed source of information and ideas. Third, the nature of this group does not mean that these people played the unilinear role which has often been allotted to them: of the artisans resident in 1850, no more than six were involved in the republican society. Seven were overt legitimists, and even more do not seem to have been active on either side. In contrast with what we know about activists in many other similar communities, it emerges that the schoolteacher was a legitimist who collaborated with the priest, and that the *cabarétier* was at least antipathetic to the republicans.

Finally, it appears that a strong local popular culture and linguistic particularism were not obstacles to politicization. Indeed, in the case of Rodès, the opposite seems true. Here, as elsewhere in the Midi, the survival at midcentury of a rich tradition of communally based folklore provided a vehi-

<sup>43</sup> For population figures, see Batlle and Gual, ‘‘Fogatges’ Catalans.’’ There was only one family living on an outlying *mas*, and there is no evidence that its members had involvement in politics. It should be stressed here that Rodès can be considered micro-urban only in the sense of having a variety of specialized occupations and public places in a confined space; it was very much a small rural community, however, in the predominance of agricultural concerns and the face-to-face nature of personal interactions.

<sup>44</sup> See Marcilhacy, ‘‘Les Caractères’’; C. Tilly, *The Vendée* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964).

cle for the integration of new ideas about politics and society into the web of public life.<sup>45</sup> The people of Rodès identified themselves as Catalans, and most likely used Catalan for expressing themselves in the routines of daily life; but, as we have seen, this did not prevent them from acquiring and adapting material about French national politics. It does seem, however, that it was easier to do this when literacy in French gave them access to the written word. Thus, while the local Justice of the Peace considered only about one in ten males to be literate in French, eleven of the nineteen Rodésiens on trial in 1850 claimed to be so.<sup>46</sup>

So, while illiteracy and lack of knowledge of French did not obstruct politicization, literacy was certainly an advantage. The rank and file legitimists had a view of the world which may have been of a long-established patron-client kind, supplemented by collective memories of the Great Revolution and by more recent information – for example, about the declared commitment of the *Droit national* to universal suffrage – received through their elite. On the other hand, the disproportionate number of republicans who were literate suggests that they were able to acquire information and ideas via the written word, that is, that they were developing an ideology in its “modern” sense.<sup>47</sup>

The analysis above suggests that the most fruitful approach to understanding how politicization developed and changed in rural communities lies in a careful analysis of communal structures rather than in identifying outside social elements engaged in activism. Important as national and provincial activists were, they could do no more than present options; in any event, there are no records of outside activists visiting Rodès to win adherents. On the contrary, the inhabitants had developed their levels of political consciousness from their prior experiences and from the links which they themselves had forged with the outside world. It can be argued that, for rural communities in general, the geographical location of a commune, its access to the outside world, its size, mode of settlement, and social structure are those features which, depending on their nature, provided a more or less favorable terrain for the conflicting ideologies of midcentury.

Such an analysis does not, of course, explain why a community such as

<sup>45</sup> For a discussion of the way this occurred during the Second Republic, see McPhee, “Popular Culture”; R. Bezucha, “Mask of Revolution: A Study of Popular Culture during the Second French Republic,” in *Revolution and Reaction*, Price, ed., pp. 236–53; Agulhon, *1848*, pp. 108–10, 128–30. Among those who assume linguistic and cultural particularism to be an obstacle to politicization are A. Armengaud, *Les populations de L’Est-Aquitain au début de l’époque contemporaine* (Paris, 1961), p. 462; Price, ed., *Revolution and Reaction*, intro., pp. 41–53.

<sup>46</sup> Indeed, one of them at least must have been literate in both Catalan and French, a remarkable achievement for a peasant in a small community.

<sup>47</sup> For a discussion of the significance of literacy and proximity to written culture, see *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, J. Goody, ed. (Cambridge, 1968), intro. and ch. 1.



Rodès divided over these ideological options, and it is to this question – relating to the basis of rural political divisions – that we should now turn.

Are we observing in Rodès a resurfacing of the conflicts of the Great Revolution, with the contending groups representing family factions using the new slogans of 1848 to reactivate longstanding feuds? Given that Rodès was politically out of step with most of the department because the village was controlled by royalists until the 1870s, was there a local identity who dominated political life there?<sup>48</sup> Or, to take up a common explanation, was the emerging republican movement the work of the economically backward elements most threatened by the developing market agriculture?<sup>49</sup>

There is certainly a good deal of evidence underlining the importance of experiences under the Great Revolution as a determinant of political divisions emerging under the Second Republic. We have already remarked on the way the language of conflict in 1850 was informed by the concerns of earlier struggles. The years after 1789 profoundly affected Rodès. During the Revolution, Ille and Vinça, the two small towns bordering Rodès, had competed for administrative preeminence. Rodès had been in the canton of Ille before this canton was made part of a larger unit, with Vinça as its administrative center. The conflict over which of the two towns had best claim to the status and preferments accorded to the cantonal center remained heated throughout the nineteenth century. Under the Revolution, both towns provided a disproportionate number of departmental officeholders and politicians, each sending a deputy to the 1792 Convention (Ille sent a regicide, Vinça a deputy who absented himself when critical decisions had to be taken). Twenty priests from the two towns fled to Spain in 1792.<sup>50</sup> In late 1793, Rodès was in Spanish hands. Units of the Spanish army, which had crossed the border into the Roussillon in April, took Ille in July as they attempted to encircle Perpignan, then turned their attention to occupying the Têt valley. They occupied Rodès and the château for at least six months, following a major resistance from local troops and civilians at the Col de Ternère.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>48</sup> For examples of the application of this idea, see Agulhon, *La République au village*, pp. 471–83; Armengaud, *Les populations*, p. 461. The republicanism of the Pyrénées-Orientales is often explained by the influence of the Arago family, for example, by A.-J. Tudesq, *Les grands notables en France (1840–1849)*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1964), 2:1087. But cf P. McPhee, “The Seedtime of the Republic: Society and Politics in the Pyrénées-Orientales, 1848–1851,” *Australian Journal of Politics and History* XXII (1976):209.

<sup>49</sup> This is the argument proposed by Price, *Second French Republic*, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> P. Vidal, *Historie de la Révolution française dans le département des Pyrénées-Orientales*, 3 vols. (Perpignan, 1885–89); E. and L. Delonca, *Un village en Roussillon: Illa terra de Rosselló* (Perpignan, 1947).

<sup>51</sup> J.-N. Fervel, *Campagnes de la Révolution française dans les Pyrénées-Orientales 1793–1794–1795*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1851), vol. 1. See also D. Greer, *The Incidence of the Emigration during the French Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1951).

While the municipal council records from the period of the Empire tell us little of prevailing political loyalties, those from the Restoration leave us in no doubt.<sup>52</sup> On 15 May 1814, the council expressed its delight that “tyranny” had been overthrown and the Bourbons restored, and “the meeting was opened by repeated cries of Long Live Louis XVIII!” The great festivals of the Restoration, such as that of 1 May 1821, were celebrated with music and processions through streets lined with decorated houses.

A decade later, in the early years of the July Monarchy, Rodès experienced political strife of a kind which anticipated that which would erupt under the Second Republic and which was typical of Mediterranean France. Much of the discord was concerned with struggles for local political power. In October 1830, the mayor and deputy from the Restoration were dismissed in favor of Bonaventure Roger and Joseph Tixeire (the sons of both of whom were among those to be arrested in the raid of February 1850). By March of the following year, both had been dismissed from the council.<sup>53</sup> The restored legitimist elite immediately exhibited its bent for subordinating political conviction to expediency; by April, the council, under Cornet and Glory, was meeting in extraordinary session to vote funds for a tricolor and a bust of Louis Philippe.

Beneath this change of personnel, soberly recorded in the minutes of the council, lay a conflict with much of the flavor of those which were to follow under the Second Republic.<sup>54</sup> Late in March 1831, Cornet, “a friend of freedom, but above all of Order,” had sent an urgent letter to the prefect. On the first day of Carnival there had been a number of serious incidents and he had had to send to nearby Prades for military assistance. The commander of the responding battalion later claimed that the only source of trouble in Rodès was the deputy-mayor, Tixeire, one of the poorest men in the village. As for “*la partie saine*” of the population, the report continued, their awareness of the need for law and order clearly outweighed their personal preferences for the Bourbons.

Apparently the trouble during Carnival had been initiated by a group of young men who had paraded a white flag and chanted songs containing crude anti-Orléanist jibes. Later on, others charged with the task of distributing blessed bread had decorated their basket with a “*bâton fleurdalisé*.” Shortly before the Carnival period the following year, further fuel was added to the fire by a group of royalists who cut down the liberty tree planted in 1830. Cornet presented the sub-prefect with the tricolor which had surmounted it. Not surprisingly, the Carnival festivals were again stormy affairs, and outside forces were again sent in.

It is clear that the importance of experiences under the Great Revolution and in the early 1830s cannot be doubted in an explanation of the political

<sup>52</sup> A.C. délibérations.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> A.D. 3M'62.

division in Rodès at midcentury. But there are strict limitations to their determinative value. Not only was there a surge of popular participation in politics under the Second Republic which went well beyond the activity of 1830-31, but there was also a much more serious and sustained opposition to the continuing power of the legitimist elite. Moreover, the ideology of this opposition had been refined. In 1830, Roger and Tixeire had clearly identified themselves with the liberal constitutional monarchy of the early period of the July Monarchy. By 1848, however, following a pattern which is by no means uncommon, disillusionment with Louis Philippe had pushed these anti-Bourbons into a clearly defined republicanism. The somewhat naïve republicanism of the early months of 1848 seems, in its turn, to have been developed into a commitment to *démocrate-socialiste* success.<sup>55</sup>

The years of the Second Republic are also different from the earlier period in the prevailing modes of political behavior; there is by then an important sense in which political life had been "modernized." Whereas in the 1830s supporters and opponents of the new regime had clashed most often during the ancient rituals of collective life, especially at the festivals of Carnival and the *fête patronale*, by midcentury this behavior coexisted with and was eclipsed by more modern associational and electoral activity. By the 1870s, to extend this point, political life would have for its vehicles almost exclusively clubs, electoral campaigns, and the written word.

Are we then observing in Rodès a community divided along family lines? For this, too, the evidence seems particularly strong. For example, an analysis of the composition of the municipal council in the period 1831-60 shows that half the places were filled by the Bollo, Catala, Glory, and Imbert families. Further substantiation is provided by the 1849 and 1850 legitimist subscription lists. What is striking is that only 15 families account for no fewer than 95 of the 126 names: Glory (16), Picamal (12), Pla (8), Bollo (8), Batlle (8), Bassède (7), Bo (5), Mestres (5), Cazeilles (5), Garrigue (4), Imbert (4), Pagès (4), Molins (3), Aytonès (3), Sire (3). On the other hand there were substantial family groupings in which, supporting other evidence we have of their republicanism, no member was a declared royalist: Baudet, Buscat, Calvet, Déjoan, Deixonne, Gasch, Prohom, Roger, Saléta, Surjus, Tixeire. These were the families from which came the bulk of those arrested in February 1850 and the others involved with the society.

From the point of view of the family background of Rodésiens, the society represented a gathering-place for the older sons of those who had been involved in struggles for control of local government in the decades since 1830.

<sup>55</sup> Note the comments on the innovatory nature of midcentury developments by P. Vigier, "Un quart de siècle de recherches historiques sur la Province," *Annales historiques de la Révolution française* XLVII (1975):637. The most convincing demonstration of the role of the past in conditioning political behavior in the nineteenth century is by P. Bois, *Paysans de l'Ouest* (le Mans, 1960), pp. 30-31 and *passim*.

The average age of the nineteen men arrested was twenty-six and a half years, and only one of them was a *chef de ménage*. Of the forty known to have been members, only three were heads of households.

The coincidence of family and political ties within and between the Tixeire, Déjoan, and Roger families is apparent from Table 1.<sup>56</sup> There is evidence that five families (Catala, Bollo, Gelade, Pla, and Garrigue) were politically divided; however, these were not in any case father-son divisions but rather divisions between branches of a family. For example, although members of the Catala and Bollo families intermarried with the Tixeires and Déjoans, these were not so much marriages across political lines as marriages with small family units within the Catala and Bollo families whose republican allegiance was at odds with the dominant opinions of the family grouping as a whole.

Such evidence of family solidarity correlates well with the recent research of Angès Fine-Souriac in the pays de Sault, thirty kilometres northeast of Rodès.<sup>57</sup> Her insistence on the extended family as the core of the community, even if at any one time a majority of households were simple or nuclear, parallels what we have seen of the family structure of Rodès.<sup>58</sup>

However, even if it seems clear that the legitimist/republican split in this community was along family lines, this does not explain the relative strength of the two groups, nor why particular families opted for one side or the other. How useful is Maurice Agulhon's suggestion that, in a community such as Rodès, where the political choice was out of step with that of the department as a whole, the social influence of an important individual may be the crucial factor? Was there such an individual in this community?

Joseph Cornet de Candy was by far the largest proprietor of Rodès, owning about seven times as much land and deriving from it eight times as much taxable revenue as the next wealthiest citizen. In all, he owned no fewer than 293 separate land titles by 1835, some 296 hectares, on which the tax assessment totalled 2,782 francs.<sup>59</sup> These holdings were being added to regularly, and by the time of the Second Republic, this one proprietor controlled about 25 percent of the land and 20 percent of the taxable wealth of the community. Cornet's economic power stemmed primarily from his disproportionate con-

<sup>56</sup> This table is based on an analysis of the *Etat civil* for Rodès and the census returns of 1841 and 1856.

<sup>57</sup> A. Fine-Souriac, "A propos de la famille-souche pyrénéenne au XIXe siècle: quelques réflexions de méthode," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* XXV (1978):99–110.

<sup>58</sup> In Rodès the number of *ménages simples* declined from 59.64 percent in 1841 to 48.01 percent in 1856; moreover, when families are examined separately, it is apparent that the extended family and multiple households were the norm to which families tended to revert.

<sup>59</sup> Analysis of landholding is based on the *cadastre* and its register; the latter was uncovered, in near complete decay, in a loft in an abandoned house in Rodès. Fortunately, most pages were decipherable.



trol – he owned perhaps 30 percent – of the irrigable land or *al regatiu* between the *Route nationale* and the river. While representing less than 5 percent of the total area of the commune, this land, made highly productive by the ancient canal which bisected it and by the southern sun, was one of the two major sources of agricultural production in the community.

Cornet was of local stock, in many ways almost a caricature of the successful bourgeois landholder. He was born in the family residence in April of 1806, a residence bearing all the hallmarks of the rising bourgeois. Thus, although situated on flat land on one of the public squares, it is walled and has a tower bearing the plaque: *JOAN - MICHAEL - CORNET - M'A - FET - FE - 1661* [Joan Michael Cornet had this residence built in 1661]. At the time of his parents' marriage, two years before Joseph's birth, Joseph Cornet-Lacreu was sixty-five and Marguerite Candy thirteen years four months.<sup>60</sup> Marguerite was the descendant of one Bernard Kennedy – “Catalanized” into Candy – who had fled from Ireland under James II and was naturalized by Louis XIV.<sup>61</sup> In 1755, her great-grandfather had been granted the *seigneurie* of le Boulou, a strategic village between Perpignan and the border, in return for his services as commandant at Bellegarde, the frontier fortress. The Candys resided there until the Spanish generals Ricardos and Comte de l'Union, after crossing the border in 1793, accepted Marguerite's grandfather's offer of the use of his residence as a headquarters. For this, he was executed on 13 floréal II. Marguerite's father had already emigrated to fight with the Spanish army, and he was granted a pension by the Spanish king until his return to France in 1808. He then settled at Rodès with his daughter, recently widowed, and her young son Joseph.<sup>62</sup> Marguerite was also related by marriage to other powerful legitimist families in the region, notably to Jaubert de Passa (the conseiller général for the canton of Vinça and president of the Conseil Général under the Second Republic), and to Chef de Bien de Çagarriga, whose daughter married Justin Durand, the wealthiest man in the department, and was to become Morny's Madame Durand.

In the years 1789–1871, successive members of the Cornet and Candy families dominated the economic life of Rodès and were virtually permanent fixtures on the municipal council. The mayoral office was more often than not filled by Joseph Cornet-Lacreu in the years before his death in 1806; then by

<sup>60</sup> A.D. Etat civil, Rodès.

<sup>61</sup> The information which follows is from A. Capeille, *Dictionnaire de biographies roussillonnaises* (Perpignan, 1910–14), pp. 290–93 and *passim*.

<sup>62</sup> Marguerite's uncle had also emigrated, serving with émigré and Spanish forces until his death at the siege of Gerona in 1803. In a corner of the *mairie* at Rodès is a remarkable farm register begun by Marguerite in 1821, testifying to her interest in management and her desire for noble respectability. Even allowing for inexact measurement, it seems that the Cornets were expanding their holdings: Marguerite estimated them at 313.75 *journaux* in 1821, while an enquiry of 1775 had recorded them as 55.5. See J. Guibeaud, “Enquête économique sur le Roussillon en 1775,” *Bulletin de la Société Agricole, Scientifique et Littéraire* (Perpignan) XLIII (1902):291–336.

Marguerite's émigré father, Côme de Candy, during the Restoration; and then by Joseph Cornet de Candy under the July Monarchy. From the latter's involvement in politics come two pieces of evidence which bring his power into perspective and permit our analysis of the basis of the division in Rodès to go much further. Not only were there a number of other legitimist families who dominated politics, but occasionally Cornet's place on the council was contested. When the new council met to choose its officeholders in August of 1848, Cornet, Glory, and Soléra were locked in a contest for mayor which was only resolved – in Glory's favor – after several ballots. Domenech, also the son of an émigré but by no means a wealthy man, then defeated Cornet and Soléra for the position of deputy.<sup>63</sup> We need, therefore, to beware of assuming that the presence in a community of an individual with a markedly superior socioeconomic position means that this individual was also politically unchallenged.

More significant, a few days before that council meeting, the four scrutineers for the municipal elections had joined with seven republicans in a protest to the prefect, stating that they could provide the names of wealthy legitimists who had effectively secured their election by threatening to refuse work to day-laborers or to dismiss shepherds under yearly contract if these workers voted for other candidates.

Called on to deliberate on this, the officers declare that similar facts had already come to their knowledge and that it is indisputable that these threats, made by individuals known for their antipathy towards the Republic, produced a decisive effect on the result of the elections, which ended by establishing a hostile municipal council.<sup>64</sup>

It is important to note that, while three of the scrutineers were republicans, the fourth was Martin Catala, a legitimist who was in fact elected that day.

If we use this fragment of evidence as a point of entry into the economic substructure of this commune and the social relations predicated on it, the character of its political life is much clearer. Who controlled the sources of wealth in Rodès, and what has this question to do with political divisions?

Rodès emerges from this analysis as a community whose land and wealth were dominated by a small group of proprietors. The six largest landowners owned 40.12 percent of the land; the fourteen wealthiest controlled 45.01 percent of taxable wealth. At the other end of the scale, 33.2 percent of the landholders controlled only 3.89 percent of the land; 45.57 percent controlled 7.41 percent of taxable wealth.<sup>65</sup> That a high proportion of the inhabitants

<sup>63</sup> A.D. 2M<sup>5</sup>59.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.* It is significant that the complaint was ignored. This file also contains evidence of a similar complaint in 1843.

<sup>65</sup> This analysis is based on the *cadastre* and register described in note 59. The analysis is of the land actually owned by Rodésiens (63.86 percent of the territory of the commune). The marginal land on the borders of the commune was mostly owned by proprietors from neighboring communes.

TABLE 2  
*Area and Value by Size of Holding, Rodès, 1832*

Landholding			Tax Assessment		
Proprietors			Proprietors		
<i>Size of holding</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage of all proprietors</i>	<i>Amount in Francs</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage of all proprietors</i>
20+ hectares	6	2.65	300+	6	2.65
10-19 hectares	7	3.10	200-299	9	3.98
5-9 hectares	31	13.72	100-199	28	12.40
2-4 hectares	60	26.55	50-99	36	15.93
1-1.99 hectares	47	20.80	25-49	44	19.47
50-99 ares	34	15.04	10-24	38	16.81
0-50 ares	41	18.14	0-9	65	28.76
Totals	226	100.00		226	100.00

*Source: Cadastre 1832. See notes 59 and 65.*

owned very little property (and there were a few not even listed who owned nothing) is demonstrated also by the impact of the electoral law of 31 May 1850, which aimed to disfranchise the economically dependent, who were assumed to be those most prone to support the Left. Nationwide, about 30 percent of the adult males were struck from the rolls; in the Pyrénées-Orientales, the figure was 34.2 percent, but in Rodès, it was 47.7%.<sup>66</sup> The poorer elements of this group should be seen as agricultural laborers rather than as peasants, since their means of livelihood came very largely from working on large holdings.

About half the land and wealth of Rodès was in the hands of small peasants, whose economic power was commensurate with their numbers. The 91 landowners (40 percent of the total) who each owned 2-10 hectares (in all some 40 percent of the commune) would generally be in this group. These people shared the characteristics pinpointed by Teodor Shanin and others as distinctively peasant: the family farm as the basic unit of agricultural organization; land exploitation as the major means of livelihood; partial involvement in the market economy; a specific traditional culture; and subordination in political, educational, and economic terms to powerful outsiders.<sup>67</sup> With the large pro-

<sup>66</sup> A.D. 2M'60. Price, *Second French Republic*, pp. 23-26, has suggested that peasants were those with 0-10 hectares (all except the top 6 proprietors in Rodès), and that those with less than 1 hectare (about 2.5 acres) would need outside work (122 of the 226 landholders in Rodès were in this category).

<sup>67</sup> For definitions of peasants and the transitional nature of this social group, see T. Shanin, "Peasantry: Delineation of a Sociological Concept and a Field of Study," *Peasant Studies Newsletter* II (1973):1-8; S. Mintz, "A Note on the Definition of Peasantries," *Journal of Peasant Studies* I (1973):91-106; E. Wolf, *Peasants* (New York, 1968), ch. 1.



prietors, peasants, and agricultural laborers was a fourth broad group – analytically marginal but socioeconomically integral – discussed earlier in this article, the artisans.

A comparison of landholding hierarchies with what we know of political divisions is fruitful for Rodès. The 1840 electoral roll<sup>68</sup> lists the top ninety-five taxpayers in descending order of the amount paid; for only one of the wealthiest sixteen is there clear evidence of republican sentiments, and for twelve of the others legitimism is well documented. Many of those associated with the secret society or with republican politics in other ways, either personally or through their sons, are further down the list of these taxpayers. Cadastral records show that other republicans were too poor to qualify to vote, even in municipal elections. On the other hand, while there is certainly evidence of legitimism among the middling and poorer peasants who made up the bulk of the 1840 roll, it is clear that a disproportionate number of the 130 or more small landholders and laborers too poor to figure there at all were legitimists. Among them were members of the large Batlle, Bo, Cazeilles, Fabre, Mestres, Pagès, and Picamal families who made up the rank and file of those who supported local and national legitimist elites and participated in cultural-political festivals, but whose own economic power was minimal. Most members of these families were desperately poor, at times to the point of destitution.

The analysis which is suggested above is reinforced by the way legitimists described themselves when they subscribed to Genoude's medal in 1849. Of the eighty-seven whose occupations were stated, forty-five were laborers (*travailleurs* and *journaliers*), and twenty-one were landholders (*propriétaires*); only eight were *cultivateurs*, the most common description of small peasant landowners in this part of France. In contrast, when the nineteen republicans arrested in February 1850 were asked for their occupations, seventeen answered "*cultivateur*," and the other two were artisans.<sup>69</sup>

So it appears that, by 1850, Rodès was a community divided politically along family lines and that such a division corresponded to a complex but distinct class cleavage. Royalist landholders dominated the economic life of the commune and continued, at least for the first few years of universal suffrage, to draw on majority acquiescence in their control of political power. This came from poorer peasants and laborers, particularly those dependent for all or part of their livelihood on wage-earning on the holdings of the wealthy.<sup>70</sup> The royalists' political power was being challenged by growing support for *la République démocratique et sociale* among approximately a third of the community, especially from the largely self-sufficient peasants.

<sup>68</sup> A.D. 2M<sup>o</sup>25/2.

<sup>69</sup> A.D. U 1530.

<sup>70</sup> For a discussion of the continuing domination by legitimist landholders of the political life of the Est-Aquitain under the Second Republic, see Armengaud, *Les populations*, pp. 334, 353 and *passim*.

This conclusion supports some fundamental, but often disregarded, ideas about relationships within rural communities. The presence of economic misery is no guarantee that there will be class-based hostility between the poor and those who exploit them. Indeed, in Rodès, paternalistic or patron-client relations seem to have bonded together the large proprietors and the laborers and poorer peasants. No doubt such an alliance was underpinned by direct and even harsh economic and social control exercised by the elite, as the republican peasants had complained. But it was also sustained by religion and legitimist ideology, which were based on highly relevant concepts of hierarchy, reciprocity, and tradition.

Once the analysis goes further into the relationship between the families of Rodès and the productive resources of the commune, this class division becomes clearer and more explicable.<sup>71</sup> It was demonstrated earlier that Joseph Cornet controlled a very large proportion of one of the two key sectors of agricultural life, the irrigable land which produced six and even eight crops annually. The twenty-six legitimists, including Cornet, who dominated the municipal council from 1835 to 1855, owned well over half of this land. The second key element of the agricultural life of Rodès was winegrowing, often on plots where vines were interspersed with olive trees. By the 1830s, about 40 percent of the territory of the commune was devoted to wine production, mostly on the low hills surrounding the fertile alluvial basin. The place of wine production in the lives of those peasants who were republicans is particularly striking. Those peasants for whom winegrowing was virtually the only source of income were almost all involved in the republican movement. On the other hand, royalist proprietors and small landowners tended to have mixed agricultural interests of which winegrowing was only one or, indeed, to have few vines at all. For example, Cornet's holdings were almost exclusively in irrigable land, woodlands, and pasture; the same could be said for other members of the elite, such as François Glory, Joseph Imbert, François Molins, and Joseph Puell.<sup>72</sup> This conclusion is apparent from Table 3, a comparison of the landholdings and taxable wealth of three legitimists (Michel Aytonès, Jean Bassède and Isidore Bollo) and three republicans (Jean Gasch, Sébastien Bassède and Pierre Calvet).

It was noted earlier that there was a group of families whose members all refused to sign either of the royalist petitions of 1849-50 and that were to some extent involved in the republican secret society. All of those from these eleven families who drew their livelihood from agriculture were heavily committed to wine production, sometimes totally. The examples of Calvet,

<sup>71</sup> Note here the stress placed by A. Cobban, *The Social Interpretation of the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 1964), p. 89, on the need to go beyond figures for land ownership to an analysis of the type and wealth of land owned.

<sup>72</sup> Analysis based on Rodès *cadastre* and register: see note 59, above.

TABLE 3  
Value and Forms of Agricultural Holdings, Republicans and Legitimists, Rodès, ca. 1835

Landholder		Vines & Olives	Fields	Irrigated & Gardens	Buildings	Pasture & Arid	Totals
<i>Republicans</i>							
Jean Gasch	Area	2.35.30	—	—	0.00.40	0.00.26	2.35.96
	%	99.72	—	—	0.17	0.11	
Sébastien Bassède	Value	24.64	—	—	3.24	0.16	28.04
	%	87.87	—	—	11.55	0.57	
Pierre Calvet	Area	2.69.72	—	0.01.70	0.00.53	0.25.30	2.97.25
	%	90.74	—	0.57	0.18	8.50	
Legitimists	Value	34.41	—	1.04	2.93	0.26	38.64
	%	89.05	—	2.69	7.58	0.67	
Michel Aytonès	Area	2.84.40	—	—	0.00.22	0.17.10	3.01.72
	%	94.26	—	—	0.07	5.67	
Jean Bassède	Value	38.78	—	—	2.72	0.52	42.02
	%	92.23	—	—	6.47	1.24	
Isidore Bollo	Area	4.99.20	—	0.35.72	0.01.32	0.24.07	5.69.44
	%	87.67	—	6.27	0.23	4.34	
Jean Bassede	Value	70.74	—	15.25	15.09	0.11	101.51
	%	69.65	—	15.02	14.87	0.11	
Isidore Bollo	Area	3.05.90	0.48.77	1.33.70	0.02.30	2.13.63	8.04.30
	%	50.47	6.06	16.62	0.29	26.56	
Legitimists	Value	125.52	17.55	58.94	27.39	2.73	232.13
	%	54.07	7.56	25.39	11.80	1.18	
Jean Bassede	Area	1.58.00	0.61.20	1.39.40	0.04.73	10.42.50	14.06.33
	%	11.24	4.35	9.91	0.34	74.13	
Legitimists	Value	29.24	20.89	57.46	38.61	30.55	176.75
	%	16.56	11.82	32.51	21.87	17.28	

Note: Areas of holdings are in hectares; ares: metres. Assessment value is in francs; centimes.  
Source: *Archives Communales de Rodès, matrice cadastrale*.

Sébastien Bassède, and Gasch in Table 3 are by no means exceptions. Well over half the land owned by Joseph and Maurice Tixeire was planted with vines, and the same was true of the Deixonne and Déjoan lands.

It is thus particularly convenient for this argument, though not really surprising, that the single copy of *la Feuille du peuple* preserved by these peasants, only to be seized by the police, was primarily devoted to the issue of the drink tax. The *impôt sur les boissons* rankled with many nineteenth-century peasants as surely as had the *gabelle*, or salt tax, before 1789. It required inhabitants of towns to pay for indirect taxes levied on wine at entrances to the urban areas, and consequently it restricted wine consumption and sales. The lead article in the *Feuille* attacked the tax, and the paper reproduced the stormy debate in the Legislative Assembly which followed Louis Napoleon's decision to reintroduce the tax in repudiation of the decision to abolish it taken in May 1849 by the National Assembly. The paper also carried an article from *le Montagnard du Midi* (Montpellier) which must have echoed through the ranks of the winegrowers of Rodès:

Long live the democratic etc. Republic.  
DOWN WITH THE DRINK TAX!  
This is the cry of the socialist Montagnards of  
the Midi, given that the reaction is restoring  
the throne of its kings and re-establishing the  
eternally loathed tax of the *droits réunis*.

Whereas in 1775 the ratio of vineyards to *terres labourables* had been approximately 53:47, by the 1830s this had changed to the order of 68:32.<sup>73</sup> In 1775, fourteen other communes in the Roussillon had more land under vines; by 1841, however, even allowing for the winegrowing communes of the Fenouillèdes not surveyed in 1775, only five communes had more than Rodès.<sup>74</sup>

This increasing dependence of the peasants of Rodès on wine production is of vital importance in explaining the surge in political participation and the long-term drift of the commune towards the Left. Politicization was aided by a consciousness of politics which stemmed from involvement in a national, even international, market economy. It is the socially complex nature of Rodès, based on a mixed economy which depended on and was vulnerable to the outside world, which has to be the core of an explanation of the political divisions there and which also helps to explain why politics were important at all. The *mévente*, or market stagnation, of 1848-51, interdependent with the midcentury political crisis, was one example of this economic vulnerability.

<sup>73</sup> Guibeaud, "Enquête économique."

<sup>74</sup> A.D. M 3113. The approximate nature of all these departmentwide surveys of winegrowing must be stressed; however, the general trend is clear. On the general connection between viticulture and radicalism, see L. A. Loubère, *Radicalism in Mediterranean France: Its Rise and Decline* (Albany, N. Y., 1974).

It is the nature of the economic base and social structure of this community which also explains why we are here observing the emergence of a radical republican, rather than clearly socialist, movement. The republicans of Rodès were middling and small peasants, and some artisans, whose ideas about social justice and property were a direct consequence of their class position. The claims by the gendarmerie that the members of the secret society were spreading ideas subversive to private property reflect the stock clichés of the authorities rather than any evidence that these republicans wanted to go any further than a redistribution of wealth and power. François Glory was closer to the mark when, in recommending that Joseph Tixeire be one of those transported during the crackdown following the coup of 1851, he commented to the prefect that Tixeire's "great scheme is the division and redistribution of the land."<sup>75</sup> Given the social basis of midcentury rural radicalism, what was present in Rodès was not so much a clear class consciousness as a *petit* versus *gros* antipathy.

It seems that a correlation of rural radicalism with economic backwardness would be wide of the mark for Rodès (and for many other areas as well).<sup>76</sup> Here it was precisely those elements of the population who were the agents of economic change who found relevance in the *démocrate-socialiste* program. In this context, the location of Rodès between the area of the Riberal, centered on Ille-sur-Têt, and the area of the Bas-Conflent, centered on Vinça, is very significant. The Riberal was the most fertile and economically promising area of the department, and also the hub of the most militant *rouge* activity under the Second Republic.<sup>77</sup> The Bas-Conflent round Vinça was economically stagnant and based on subsistence; as we have seen, legitimists remained dominant there for some decades. Between 1836 and 1851, the population of the Riberal grew 7.8 percent, while the nine communes round Vinça, including Rodès, lost 7.6 percent. Rodès itself declined from 752 to 683 (9.2%); within this community there was, however, a sizable element with one foot over the hill in the Riberal in its politics and its source of livelihood.<sup>78</sup>

To return to the questions posed at the beginning of this article as to the what, how, and why of rural politics, several general conclusions may be drawn.

<sup>75</sup> A.D. 3M'87.

<sup>76</sup> Such a correlation is the least convincing aspect of A. Soboul's suggestive essays, "Les troubles agraires de 1848," in his *Paysans, sans-culottes et Jacobins* (Paris, 1966), pp. 307-50; and "The French Rural Community in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Past and Present* X (1956):78-95.

<sup>77</sup> McPhee, "Seed-time of the Republic."

<sup>78</sup> Are we then, in the case of the largest proprietors, observing a survival of old Régime agriculture which served to retard capitalist agricultural development in the nineteenth century? And were the winegrowing peasants the initiators of agricultural as well as political transformation? See C. K. Warner, "Soboul and the Peasants," *Peasant Studies Newsletter* IV (1975):1-5; A. Soboul, "Sur le mouvement paysan dans la Révolution française," *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, no. 211 (1973), esp. pp. 97-101.

The story of Rodès suggests that it is too simplistic to see French rural politics either as local factional struggles to which the substance, if not the labels, of national politics was irrelevant or as faithful small-scale reflections of national debates.

The timing of popular mobilization in Rodès, after 1830 and especially after 1848, the nature of republican and legitimist ideology, and the turnout for national elections all show that national politics were meaningful to the people in the community. On the other hand, the specific goals motivating much of this activity were also local in that political choice was clearly a result of local struggles over power and wealth. There is no inherent contradiction here. Conflict within Rodès must be explained by the social relations within that community; these divisions both explain the national orientation of local groups and were in turn informed by national politics in a dialectical way. An explanation of conflict thus had to go beyond family factional divisions to locate groupings of the various family factions within the power and wealth structures.

Similarly, we have seen that the process of politicization was not just a matter of new ideas filtering down from Paris through a network of urban activists and that collective memories conditioned responses to new situations. The process of the transmission of information and ideas was a complex one. No urban activists visited Rodès, but there were a number of local identities – the republican postman Mestres and the tobacconist at Vinça, the legitimist priest and Cornet himself – who were actively disseminating news and ideas. And where did that copy of Joigneaux's *la Feuille du peuple* come from? Most important of all, however, the structural nature of the community – the “ecology” of politicization – created a situation receptive to national ideologies. The songs composed by Rodésiens, the petitions they organized, the associations they formed all testify to the way in which they were making their own connections with the politics of the wider world.

The raid at Joseph Tixeire's in February of 1850 did not totally smother political activity in Rodès, though such evidence as we have of republican activity between that time and Louis Napoleon's coup d'état in December 1851 reflects the extremely secretive operations of the Left in the Roussillon in these years.<sup>79</sup> Though Rodésiens were not among the Catalans who mobilized in protest at the coup, Tixeire was arrested and deported to Algeria. He could not resist a final statement of his political creed as he lay on his death bed there in 1852. Though in fact born in July of 1790, he back-dated the day of his birth to 14 July 1789.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>79</sup> For evidence of activity in Rodès in 1850–51, see A.D. 3M'70; A.N. BB<sup>30</sup>392B, dossier 195 bis; A.N. BB<sup>30</sup>393, dossier 233; *Etoile du Roussillon*, 4 May 1851.

<sup>80</sup> A.D. 3M'88, 89. Though Rodès was a somewhat different community by the 1870s, the continuity of personnel is suggested by the presence of six of those arrested in 1850 on the

There is a famous passage in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852) in which Marx describes the French peasantry as “a sack of potatoes” whose individual farms and plots prevented them from working together in production or acting collectively except through a figure like the Emperor.<sup>81</sup> Marx’s scathing attack has served to draw attention to this passage and away from a later point where he makes an important qualification:

But let there be no misunderstanding. The Bonaparte dynasty represents not the revolutionary, but the conservative peasant; not the peasant that strikes out beyond the condition of his social existence, the small holding, but rather the peasant who wants to consolidate this holding, not the country folk who, linked up with the towns, want to overthrow the old order through their own energies. . . .<sup>82</sup>

Marx pointed to the changing mode of production, the increasing stratification of peasant communities, and the political role of priests and the army in the nineteenth century as an explanation of the development of a “red” peasantry.<sup>83</sup> These are among the factors which the example of Rodès has suggested as essential to an understanding of political change in the countryside.

In an earlier work, written in the same year as the arrest of those peasants in Rodès, Marx noted how crucial political developments such as the retention of the wine tax “made attack and the resistance *general*, the topic of the day in every hut; they inoculated every village with revolution; they *localized and peasantized the revolution*.”<sup>84</sup> In his awareness of conflict and change within rural communities, of the primacy of the struggle for power even at the village level, and of the role of propaganda and activism, Marx showed himself a good deal more incisive than many later historians of this critical period of rural history. If we are to understand the nature of French rural politics, the reasons for politicization, and the basis of political conflict, then we have to go to the community itself and understand public life in the context of the relation of rural inhabitants to the sources of wealth and power and of the attitudes informed by prior and present experiences.

provisional municipal committee after the Revolution of 1870, and by the election in 1874 as mayor and deputy, respectively, of Jean Roger and Julien Tixeire, whose fathers had filled the same positions briefly in 1830.

<sup>81</sup> K. Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (New York, 1963), p. 123.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125. Two useful correctives to the common conception of Marx’s hostility to the peasantry are M. Duggett, “Marx on Peasants,” *Journal of Peasant Studies* II (1975):159–82; O. J. Hammen, “Marx and the Agrarian Question,” *American Historical Review* LXXVII (1972):679–704. Only the “sack of potatoes” passage is noted – and accepted – by Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, pp. 244–45.

<sup>83</sup> Marx, *Eighteenth Brumaire*, pp. 127–30.

<sup>84</sup> K. Marx, *The Class Struggles in France 1848–1850* (Moscow, 1952), p. 113.