

Politics and rural society



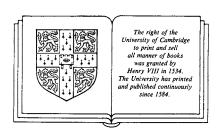
# Politics and rural society

The southern Massif Central c. 1750–1880

**쓬뜢**뵭섌꾶*첉첉첉*첉첉첉첉첉첉첉첉첉첉첉첉첉첉첉첉첉첉첉첉첉훘쓡쓡施첉첉훘쓡첉첉첉첉첉첉፠፠፠፠፠

P. M. JONES

Lecturer in Modern History, University of Birmingham



#### CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge London New York New Rochelle Melbourne Sydney



PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011–4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

http://www.cambridge.org

© Cambridge University Press 1985

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1985 First paperback edition 2004

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress catalogue card number: 84-21383

ISBN 0521257972 hardback ISBN 0521522587 paperback



## For RICHARD COBB



### **Contents**

|   | List of plates, maps, figures and tables   | page ix |
|---|--|---------|
|   | Acknowledgements                           | xi      |
|   | List of abbreviations                      | xiii    |
|   | Introduction                               | 1       |
| 1 | The regional context                       | 8       |
|   | The roof of France                         | 8       |
|   | Demographic recovery                       | 12      |
|   | Habitat                                    | 18      |
|   | Communications                             | 25      |
| 2 | The rural economy                          | 34      |
|   | The structure of landholding               | 34      |
|   | The characteristics of peasant agriculture | 48      |
|   | Market pressures                           | 55      |
|   | Migration                                  | 62      |
| 3 | Social structure and organisation          | 70      |
|   | The notables                               | 73      |
|   | Towards a definition of the peasantry      | 87      |
|   | The structure of the peasant household     | 95      |
| 4 | An enfolding culture                       | 107     |
|   | Community and kinship                      | 112     |
|   | Community and language                     | 118     |
|   | The church as cultural integrator          | 128     |
| 5 | The burden of the past                     | 145     |
|   | Atavisms: the confessional divide          | 145     |

vii



| viii | Contents   |     |
|------|--|-----|
|      | Atavisms: fiscal aggression                          | 153 |
|      | Atavisms: seigneurialism                             | 160 |
|      | Atavisms: agrarian uprisings                         | 170 |
| 6    | The crystallisation of new traditions                | 178 |
|      | 1789: disintegration and reintegration               | 186 |
|      | La République au village                             | 195 |
|      | Revolution and Counter-Revolution                    | 203 |
| 7    | The democratic challenge                             | 214 |
|      | The inception of electoral democracy                 | 215 |
|      | Techniques of influence: uses and abuses of the      |     |
|      | democratic franchise                                 | 223 |
|      | The emergence of the catholic church as an electoral |     |
|      | organisation   | 233 |
| 8    | The sources of political allegiance                  | 242 |
| 9    | Admission to the polity                              | 272 |
|      | Apogee of a rural society                            | 273 |
|      | Resistance: clericalism versus republicanism         | 284 |
|      | Acquiescence: the 'milch cow' state                  | 295 |
| 10   | Politicisation in traditional societies              | 305 |
|      | Bibliography   | 328 |
|      | Manuscript sources                                   | 328 |
|      | Printed sources and official publications            | 346 |
|      | Press  | 348 |
|      | Secondary sources                                    | 348 |
|      | Index  | 364 |



## **Plates**

| 1 | Proforma used in the municipal elections of August-Septemb | er   |     |
|---|--|------|-----|
|   | 1787   | page | 183 |

## Maps

| 1 | The southern Massif Central                             | 9  |
|---|---|----|
| 2 | The administrative geography of southern France in 1790 | 10 |
| 3 | Post roads of the southern Massif Central               | 27 |

## **Figures**

| 1 | Population change in the southern Massif Central, 1801–1975 | 15 |
|---|---|----|
| 2 | Population change in the western Massif Central, 1801–1975  | 16 |



## **Tables**

| I.1    | The rural population (%) of the southern Massif Central     | 18  |
|--------|---|-----|
| I.2    | Settlement patterns in the parish of Sénergues              | 20  |
| I.3    | Habitat structure in the Lozérian Cévennes, c. 1879         | 23  |
| I.4    | Distribution of the population of the southern Massif       |     |
|        | Central by communes (1831)                                  | 25  |
| I.5    | The growth in railway communications                        | 31  |
| II.1   | Crude size of landholdings (1882)                           | 36  |
| II.2   | Structure of landholding (1862)                             | 41  |
| II.3   | Distribution of common landholdings (1863)                  | 46  |
| II.4   | Distribution of Sections de Commune (1863)                  | 46  |
| II.5   | Rye cultivation as percentage of total area under cereals   | 51  |
| III.1  | Compensation paid to émigrés (1830)                         | 72  |
| III.2  | Household structure in southern France, 1644–1861           | 98  |
| IV.1   | Distribution of marriages within the prohibited degrees     |     |
|        | of kinship, 1926–45   | 115 |
| V.1    | Average per capita direct taxation                          | 157 |
| VI.1   | Schism assemblies during the elections of the Year 6 (1798) | 206 |
| VIII.1 | Canton of Vernoux (Ardèche): voting correlated to           |     |
|        | religious affiliation. By-election of March 1850            | 257 |
| IX.1   | Road communications in the department of the Haute-         |     |
|        | Loire (in kilometres)                                       | 275 |
| IX.2   | Political stance of successful candidates in parliamentary  |     |
|        | general elections, 1871–1893                                | 285 |
| IX.3   | Electoral mobilisation (Legislative elections, 1871–93)     | 290 |
| IX.4   | Social composition of the conseil général of the Lozère     |     |
|        | at the end of the nineteenth century                        | 298 |



## Acknowledgements

Many people helped to bring this work to a successful conclusion and I should not wish their assistance to pass unrecognised. Pride of place must go to the anonymous assessors of several grant-awarding bodies who responded magnificently to repeated claims upon their resources. Without the financial support of the British Academy (Small Grants Research Fund in the Humanities), of the Nuffield Foundation (Social Sciences Small Grants Scheme) and of Birmingham University (Arts Faculty Research Grants Fund and University Field Research and Expeditions Fund), the research for this book could never have been undertaken. That my research proceeded smoothly and with a minimum of time-loss is a tribute to the men and women in charge of the public archives of provincial France. In the Lozère Mademoiselle Hélène Latour and Monsieur Benjamin Bardy acceded unhesitatingly to every importunate request for documents and Monsieur Jean Delmas in the Aveyron, Monsieur Dominique Dupraz in the Ardèche and Monsieur Yves Soulingeas in the Haute-Loire were scarcely less accommodating. The generally welcoming introduction to the more frugal fare of the diocesan record depositories also deserves acknowledgement.

As anyone who has experienced enforced residence in small and seemingly unfriendly towns will testify, the evenings and weekends hang most heavily and I feel a particular debt of gratitude to a number of friends whose hospitality has helped to make the lot of the peripatetic researcher more bearable. The Carrère family did much for my self-confidence (and my French) when I first arrived in Rodez as a postgraduate student in 1971 and the support provided by Bernard and Claude Dausse of Lagarrigue de Druelle goes back to this time as well. At Mende, which might easily pass for the bleakest town in France during the winter months, Madame Vaccero and her husband did much to enliven the dispiriting tedium of the evenings, while Claude and Laurence Petit welcomed me to their flat in Clermont-Ferrand. To the latter couple I owe an unforgettable weekend spent in seasonal pursuit of the amphibious life of the Aubrac plateau.

On the technical side, Sue Offley turned my microscopic handwriting into legible typescript and Béatrice Gilbert and Ceri Crossley of the Birmingham



xii

#### Acknowledgements

University French Department tolerated a good deal of questioning on points of French grammar and syntax.

Final thanks must go to my wife, Carolyn, however, for agreeing to an inequitable division of the burdens of child-raising while this book was being researched and written.

University of Birmingham April 1984 P. M. JONES



#### **Abbreviations**

A.D.A. Archives Départementales de l'Aveyron
A.D.Ard. Archives Départementales de l'Ardèche
A.D.C. Archives Départementales du Cantal
A.D.H.-L. Archives Départementales de la Haute-Loire

A.D.L. Archives Départementales de la Lozère
A.D.P.-de-D. Archives Départementales du Puy-de-Dôme

A.E.M. Archives de l'Evêché de Mende A.E.R. Archives de l'Evêché de Rodez

A.N. Archives Nationales

Ann. E.S.C. Annales (Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations)

Cévennes et Gévaudan Cévennes et Gévaudan, 46e congrès de la Fédération

historique de Languedoc méditerranéen, Mende -

Florac, 1973

M.A.T.P. Archives du Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires