

more impressive and they were able in some places to mobilize electors to vote for Jacobin administrators in the districts and departments and for "patriotic" bishops and *curés*. Yet this could only be done when turnouts were apparently very low, and for all their clamouring for repression against refractory priests, most departments tried to be neutral in the religious schism at least until the flight to Varennes taught them that the king and the ministry could no longer be trusted. One also wonders how extensive or how unified the "network" (the word is used constantly) was. Kennedy does not attack this question directly, but a glance at the index seems to indicate that the large cities contained the most active clubs. How many clubs adhered to the barrage of petitions generated by those societies could have been undertaken more systematically. Where it has been done, in the examination of the clubs' attitudes following the flight to Varennes, only two clubs (Montpellier and Strasbourg) specifically demanded a republic and fewer than ten percent demanded the king be put on trial. This weakness and confusion makes the subsequent rise of the Jacobin clubs all the more interesting.

If the book does not place the clubs in the broader context of the national and local political process as well as it might, it ought to have delved much further into the sociology and geography of Jacobinism. The map of the number of clubs per department (p. 363) is never discussed, yet the relatively high number of clubs in the Midi cries out for explanation. Kennedy concludes that about 70 percent of the members were "middle class" without ever defining that category. No doubt many of them were wealthy since, as his fine study shows, somewhere between one-fifth and one-third of the buyers of ecclesiastical property at Aix and Marseilles were Jacobins whose bids were often considerable. Yet Kennedy considers comparing tax rolls and lists members a "waste of energy" (p. 83). This is a pity since Taylor showed long ago that the proprietary bourgeoisie was the backbone of *roturier* wealth in the kingdom and these groups do not appear to have been well-represented in the clubs. A detailed analysis of what kind of "middle class" joined the clubs could have made a significant contribution towards understanding the composition of the coalition which made the Revolution, something which historians have been singularly negligent at doing. Moreover, recombining Kennedy's figures (removing "shopkeepers and master artisans" from the "middle class" and including them with "artisans and petty trades" [Appendix F] indicates that nearly 40 percent of the club members comprised what later became the *sans-culottes*. This suggests that the enrolling of passive citizens and the purges of 1793-94 did not alter the nature of the Jacobin movement as significantly as was once thought. Certainly the early clubs were often as extravagant in their language and as desirous of repression as their successors under the Terror. No doubt this problem of continuity will be a major theme in Kennedy's later volumes. He has certainly made a good start.

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RHYS ISAAC. — *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982, Pp. xxxii, 451.

Rhys Isaac has put forth an original interpretation of eighteenth-century Virginia society and the changes it underwent during the evangelical "Great Awaken-

ing" and the American Revolution. Isaac describes his work as an application of ethnography to historical study. He undertakes "to reconstruct something of the participants' worlds as they experienced them" (p. 325). Isaac makes excellent use of documents, pictures, and artifacts, but he insists that participants' patterns of behaviour best expressed the meanings of their lives. He therefore reviews "action-statements" and social rituals "as though the episodes considered were displayed in a theater" (pp. 325-26). He seeks "the metaphors that inform encounters and link them together in a patterned system of socially established meanings" (p. 349).

Isaac is sensitive to the criticism that recent social historians have lost sight of power relations and temporal change in their spatial portrayals of experience. Believing that "authors of the classical anthropological ethnographies did not face the problem in acute form" because of the kind of societies they studied (p. 355), he reconstructs subcultures defined by class stratification. He argues that the Awakening and the Revolution changed social patterns greatly. Isaac stands out also in his conscious literary artistry. Extending the theatrical metaphor, he presents "*a persuasive reconstruction of the experience of past actors... through the traditional skills of the storyteller or through newer forms developed by scenario writers*" (p. 357). Such an ambitious project would evoke skepticism if the resulting book did not actually show a high level of accomplishment.

Isaac describes Virginia in 1740 as a society of landed patriarchies sanctioned by patriarchal metaphors of authority. The market economy required "patriarchy" to accommodate the discordant principle of "money", and "the two systems were closely intertwined in the society" (p. 21). The higher gentry, common farmers, and slaves belonged to distinct subcultures with different patterns of material culture and experience. Isaac excels in analysis of the private homes and public buildings that structured Virginians' lives, and of the public occasions that brought the classes together: parish church services, court sessions, militia musters, elections, races and cockfights. The "institutions all displayed principles of descending authority", but they also indicated "that the government of free men required their own participation and consent" (pp. 113-14). Stratification typified the community experience.

One should not exaggerate the traditionalism of the order Isaac depicts. He reminds readers that it had only recently solidified. His "Virginia parish was no simple, traditional Christian village sustained by a strong sense of continuity" (pp. 115-16). The population was dispersed, and its periodic community gatherings counteracted everyday isolation. Social mobility and competition produced a "success culture" that paradoxically combined "close neighborhood ties and the incessant mobility of restless striving" (p. 119). Folk and genteel culture, oral and script culture, coexisted, and the mobile moved from one into the other. In contrast, Isaac attributes to "Afro-Virginians" a genuinely communal social life. Unfortunately, he presents less evidential grounding for that thesis than for his others, and his most astute discussion of slaves' social relations (pp. 328-48) does not relate to the thesis.

Isaac devotes most of his account of the "transformation" to religious developments that undermined the Anglican establishment. In a passage so brief that hasty readers may overlook it, he asserts that the loss of gentry power really began when Scottish "factors" displaced wealthy gentry in marketing of crops (p. 137). Whatever the cause, the transformation first became visible in the church because it was "the least durable strand" of the social fabric (p. 141). As society matured, the aspiration of many clergy to professionalization and independence set them at odds with the gentry. The former's desire for guaranteed salaries and a resident bishop collided with the latter's "republican" fear of church hierarchy and insistence on

their own power as vestrymen. Gentry inconsistently upheld the established Episcopal Church as a bulwark of society, but opposed the completion of episcopal organization as an alien intrusion.

Dissenters increased the discomfiture by detaching many from the established church. The authorities permitted stable separate churches for foreign Protestants, but resisted "itinerant" Presbyterian ministers who won converts from the Anglican constituency. Baptists, Isaac argues, appeared as a radical "counterculture" that challenged the prevalent way of life. Like the Methodists who would follow, they intensified both spiritual individualism and community brotherhood. Authorities were ambivalent about whether the Toleration Act of 1689 applied to Virginia. To affirm it appeared to surrender a prop of social cohesion, but to deny it appeared to negate a value of the official ideology. Religious controversies exposed contradictions in the ruling order.

As "a crisis of authority", Isaac maintains, the Awakening "paved the way for the Revolution" (p. 266n). "The gentry ... found themselves trapped between the nether millstone of popular disaffection and the upper millstone" of imperial intransigence. They resolved the crisis by uniting with "popular forces" at home to oppose Britain (p. 266). Avoiding discussion of the imperial controversies, Isaac points out the emphasis on popular participation in revolutionary county meetings in 1774-75. Gentry leaders had to adapt to the "popular and robust styles" of the masses (p. 259), including some evangelical styles. After disestablishment of the Anglican Church, some desired a nondenominational Christian establishment and others preferred state instruction in republican rationalism. The eventual settlement, however, left the state without a comprehensive societal faith.

Isaac sums up the changes that had occurred: Evangelicalism and republicanism both fostered individualism. The home became a retreat of "private domesticity" (p. 308). Patriarchy "was being sentimentalized into paternalism" (p. 309). Contractual models of social order appeared, and "money" prevailed over "patriarchy" in the westward migration. Old parish churches were abandoned or remodeled as evangelical meeting-houses. Political authority passed from king to constitution, and elections became competitive and ideologically divisive. "A polarized world had emerged" in which gentry patriarchalism and evangelicalism coexisted in tension (p. 322).

"A meaningful social history of Anglo-America", Isaac suggests, "might be written in terms of the rise of impersonal contexts of interaction ... and the declining relevance and pervasiveness of the patriarchal metaphor for authority" (p. 346). Isaac has illuminated an important chapter of that history. His account may leave an exaggerated impression of the role of that chapter, and he may underestimate the extent to which evangelicalism became part of an order that remained generally patriarchal. He neglects to demonstrate some of the causal relationships he asserts, and to substantiate his communal interpretation of black society. His study of the transformation of Virginia society and its religious culture is a remarkable accomplishment nonetheless. Whether or not his method is properly "ethnographic history", he has shown that it is a fruitful approach. His volume abounds with insights to stimulate and challenge the researcher and the general reader.

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