

THE RISE AND FALL OF POPULAR DEMOCRACY IN LYON, 1789-1795

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The failed "Lyon plan" of 1790 and the "federalist" rebellion of 1793 marked Lyon as a centre of counter-revolution. But from 1790 to 1792 it enjoyed a different reputation. By early 1791 a network of popular societies (clubs) had been established in its thirty-one quarters, well before similar institutions were set up on a large scale in other large towns.¹ Although the first popular society was founded in Paris in April 1790, at the end of 1791 only some Parisian quarters had them and they played an insignificant role by comparison with those of Lyon, which by then had twice used their influence effectively in municipal elections. Advanced *patriotes* held up Lyon's clubs as examples to the rest of the country and the clubs justified their reputation by keeping *patriotes* in office until the Spring of 1793. But by early 1794 popular democracy in Lyon was dead.

This paper aims to explain the precocious development of Lyon's clubs, their two years of political success and their sudden downfall. It also aims to relate their history to some general issues in the field of French popular politics. Recent work has emphasized the diversity of the provincial revolution and the importance of parochialism, particularism and traditional rivalries as determinants of political allegiance.² Illuminating as this has been, concentration on local peculiarities threatens to establish the presumption that each community had its own distinctive, not to

¹ See J. Godechot, *Les institutions de la France sous la Révolution et l'Empire*, 2nd edn. (Paris, 1968), pp. 67-70.

² The work of Richard Cobb, with its deep understanding of the towns of many parts of provincial France, has been particularly influential in this respect (see J. M. Roberts, *The French Revolution* (Oxford, 1978), p. 152, and Robert Darnton, "French History: the Case of the Wandering Eye", *New York Review of Books*, xx. 5 (April 1973).) For a discussion of recent regional studies (including some by Cobb's students) see Hugh Gough, "Recent Publications on the French Revolution", *The Historical Journal*, xxiii. 4 (1980), 967-973. See also M. J. Sydenham, "The Republican Revolt of 1793: a Plea for Less Localised Local Studies", *French Historical Studies*, xii (Spring 1981).

say unique, experience of the revolution and that to generalize about the patterns of political alignment and the social factors bearing on them is to oversimplify. While it is valuable to stress variations in local conditions and mentalities and to point out that conclusions drawn from the Parisian experience cannot necessarily be applied elsewhere, it would be unfortunate if histories of provincial France were to become concerned so exclusively with local idiosyncracies as to obscure the recurrence of patterns and processes which were not peculiar to Paris but were repeated (with variations) in other places. One purpose of this paper is to suggest that the forces acting on popular political behaviour in the second city were not significantly different from those in the first.

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On the face of things Lyon in 1790 was most unpromising ground in which to plant the seeds of democracy. Mme. Roland spoke for the small group of bourgeois *patriotes* there when she informed her friend Bancal that "the place is done for, the counter-revolution has begun here".³ Her pessimism derived in part from an abiding dislike of the provincial society she had been obliged to mix in as the wife of the *Inspecteur des Manufactures*. It also reflected pre-revolutionary divisions in Lyonnais society. The merchants of Lyon were notorious for their narrow preoccupation with commerce and their indifference towards the enlightened ideas which had made conquests amongst the nobility and the bourgeoisie of the professions. Mercantile Lyon had largely ignored the academies and *sociétés savantes* founded during the eighteenth century, except for those of the most pragmatic kind. This produced sharp differences of outlook amongst the propertied classes, "a divorce between the intellectual élites and the mercantile bourgeoisie".⁴ The cleavage was deepened during the economic crisis which devastated the Lyonnais silk industry in the late 1780s when two of the most prominent members of the intellectual élite, the Abbé Bertholon and Mme. Roland's husband Jean-Marie, publicly attacked the merchants who controlled the

³ M.-J. Roland, *Lettres de Madame Roland*, ed. C. Perroud (Paris, 1900), ii. 137, 4 Aug. 1790.

⁴ M. Garden, *Lyon et les Lyonnais au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris, 1970), p. 543 and pp. 522-550. See also A. Latreille (ed.), *Histoire de Lyon et du Lyonnais* (Toulouse, 1975), pp. 276-277.

industry (*marchands-fabricants en étoffes de soie*) for ignoring enlightened economics and mishandling their workforce.⁵ In 1789 and 1790, when members of this *bourgeoisie à talents* became the core of the *patriote* party, they attributed the lack of revolutionary spirit and action in Lyon to the blinkered traditionalism of the nobility and the *bourgeoisie mercantile* alike. Mercantile Lyon returned their hostility: "Learned Inspector, you give impudent lectures to these *Merchants* who are shallow enough to believe themselves to be of some importance in a seat of commerce".⁶

In 1790 there were more concrete grounds for pessimism. One was the paucity of declared friends of the revolution. Two *patriote* clubs were formed in 1789 but they appear to have had only a handful of members between them and only one survived for long, the *Friends of the Constitution*, which became affiliated with the Paris Jacobins. By March 1791 it had accumulated 225 members, but that was hardly a solid bastion of patriotism in a city of 130,000 people.⁷ No reassurance was to be had from the composition of the first municipal council chosen by the active citizens of Lyon in February 1790. Few committed *patriotes* were elected and most of the successful candidates were *négociants* of uncertain political opinions. There were old régime *notables*—a former *conseiller* of the *Cour des Monnaies* and two *ex-échevins* (former members of the five-man *Consulat*, the town council under the old régime and, as such, nobles). Lowest in the *patriotes*' estimation was the Mayor, Palerne de Savy, formerly *premier avocat-général* of the *Cour des Monnaies* whom Mme. Roland described with her usual acerbity as "an arrant traitor, full of the prejudices of the old regime, of the pride of the *robins* and the insolence of the *gens du roi*".⁸ The General Council of the Department, chosen by second-

⁵ See J. Godart, *L'ouvrier en soie* (Lyon, 1899), pp. 86-87, 417-418.

⁶ Du Vero (pseud.), *Lettre à M. Roland de la Platière sur sa Brochure intitulée: Municipalité de Lyon* (Lyon, 1790), p. 6.

⁷ There is an account of the early patriotic societies in the *Journal de la Société Populaire des Amis de la Constitution*, N° 1 (16 Jan. 1791), 4-6. 225 Lyonnais residents are named in *État des Membres qui composent la Société des Amis de la Constitution établie à Lyon le 12 Déc. 1789, et affiliée à celle de Paris* (Lyon, 1791).

⁸ M.-J. Roland, op. cit., ii. 142, letter to Bancal, 20 Aug. 1790. The professions of the members of the Municipal Council have been identified with the help of three documents: *Procès-verbaux des Séances des Corps Municipaux de la Ville de Lyon 1787-An VIII*, 4 vols. (Lyon, 1900-1904) [hereafter C.M.], ii. 1-2, 12 April 1790; *Almanach de la Ville de Lyon pour l'année 1791* (Lyon,

degree electors in June and dominated by lawyers and landowners from outside the Lyon area, was, if anything, more conservative than the Municipal Council.⁹

It was not unreasonable for the *patriotes* to see the election results as evidence of their fellow-citizens' indifference or even hostility towards "the happiest, the most astonishing of revolutions"¹⁰ and to interpret them as symptoms of an underlying reluctance to break with the old régime. The history of Lyon in 1789 provided very little evidence of revolutionary commitment amongst the propertied classes. On the contrary, in the face of a popular uprising in July they had turned for protection to the *Consulat*. Instead of forming a revolutionary municipal government and a National Guard, they relied on the *corps de volontaires* formed by the Consulat, a force of some 800 men whose activities ranged from restoring the *barrières* destroyed during the July riots to repressing peasant insurrection in Dauphiné. The *volontaires'* personnel of wealthy and aristocratic officers (their clerks and servants made up the other ranks) was regarded with great suspicion by the *patriotes*. It was not until February 1790 that the *corps de volontaires* was disbanded and replaced by a National Guard, and it took an insurrection to complete the process.¹¹

But, while it is possible to understand the *patriotes'* gloom at Lyon's failure to emulate the initiatives of Paris, it is not necessary to follow them to the conclusion that the propertied classes there remained wedded to the old régime. During the preliminaries to the Estates General the hold of the consular oligarchy over local affairs had been vigorously contested. The *échevins'* claim to speak for the Third Estate had been rejected ("Why this eagerness to represent a group which you have abandoned and for which you have perhaps more contempt than those who have long cut

1791), p. 154; *Liste des citoyens éligibles aux places Municipales de la Ville de Lyon* (Lyon, 1790) (see Appendix III).

⁹ See M. Wahl, *Les premières années de la Révolution à Lyon, 1788-1792* (Paris, n.d.), pp. 169-172.

¹⁰ The phrase is Joseph Chalier's in an article written late in 1789 lamenting the apathy of his fellow Lyonnais (*Les Révolutions de Paris*, xxx (3 Jan.—6 Feb. 1790), 45).

¹¹ See Chalier's attack on the *volontaires* in *Le Courrier de Lyon*, N°. 14 (16 Feb. 1790), p. 323, and the general account of their formation and abolition in Wahl, *op. cit.*, pp. 12, 125-132.

themselves off from it"?¹²) and a campaign mounted to exclude them entirely from the Third's electoral proceedings on the ground that *échevinage* was tantamount to nobility. Two well-known critics of the consular oligarchy—Jean-Jacques Millanois and Jean-André Périsset-Duluc—were amongst the Third's delegation to the Estates-General.¹³ It seems unlikely, then, that the survival of the *consulat* into 1790 was for lack of hostility towards it amongst the bourgeoisie.

The *échevins* nevertheless retained control of Lyon, and for this several reasons can be advanced. One factor was Lyon's political insignificance. Because it lacked a *parlement* the city had not been directly involved in the battle between crown and courts which had been the main focus of French politics in the eighteenth century. And, in so far as public opinion was aroused by the battles over judicial reform in the pre-revolutionary period, it seems to have favoured the royal innovations which would have made Lyon the seat of a Grand-Bailliage and thus, at last, a judicial centre of the first rank. During the "pre-revolution" Lyon's élites remained as supine as they had been throughout the century, with the result that there was no such intense political activity as developed in centres such as Grenoble.¹⁴ Lyon's political passivity was encouraged by the dependence on court patronage of its industry, silk, and by the lack of elementary resources close at hand (apart from Beaujolais) which meant that it frequently needed the central government's assistance to ensure the passage of adequate food supplies through a hostile countryside.¹⁵ Preoccupied by the economic crisis which continued,

¹² *Réponse au discours de M. le prévôt des marchands ... par un des commissaires de l'Assemblée du tiers état ...* (Lyon, n.d. [1789]), quoted in Garden, op. cit., p. 521. See also Latreille, op. cit., p. 288.

¹³ See A. Metzger (ed.), *Centenaire de 1789. A la veille de la Révolution. Lyon de 1778 à 1789* (Lyon, n.d.), pp. 14-17; Wahl, op. cit., p. 74.

¹⁴ See P. Metzger, *Le Conseil Supérieur et le Grand Bailliage de Lyon (1771-1774, 1788)* (Lyon, 1913), pp. 47, 157, 387-395, 409; Garden, op. cit., pp. 494-495; L. Trénard, *Lyon, de l'Encyclopédie au Prérromantisme*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1958), i. 18, 20, 30.

¹⁵ On Lyon's problems of food supply see Verninac [Prefect of the Department of Rhône under the Consulate], *Description physique et politique du Département du Rhône* (Lyon, An IX), pp. 12-16, 33, 51-55; Archives Nationales [hereafter A.N.] F¹¹ 1173-1174, ds 9, 11, letters from the *Consulat* to the Controller-General of Finances, May-July 1789. On the silk industry see Archives Communales de la Ville de Lyon [A.C.] 1² 46 bis, *Rapport sur l'état de*

though somewhat abated, into 1790, and disinclined by habit and interest to challenge the royal government, the Lyonnais were slow to become engaged in the political struggles which marked the end of the old régime. The absence of a serious challenge to the authority of the *consulat* may partly be ascribed to this.

There was, in any case, little incentive for the bourgeois of Lyon to mount a local revolution. In June and July 1789 the battle to establish a new régime was being fought at Versailles and at Paris, where, as Professor Rose has recently emphasized, the bourgeoisie used the opportunities of July 1789 in an unequivocally revolutionary fashion.¹⁶ There the stakes were high—the success or failure of a bid to transform the national government. But in the provinces the partisans of reform had a choice: to support the revolution in Paris with action as well as words by overthrowing the local institutions of the old regime and establishing popular militias, or to wait on events and to accept the fruits of victory if it came. The former course might hasten desired changes, but it might also endanger another objective which the bourgeoisie never lost sight of—preserving property and commerce from the claims of the people.

No community in eighteenth-century France was free from the fear of popular violence. In Lyon the fear was heightened by the knowledge that if it occurred it might easily take on massive proportions, as it had in 1744, when insurgent weavers had dictated decrees to the *Consulat*, the prisons had been thrown open, and the notables had fled from the city, leaving it in the workers' hands for a week.¹⁷ Vast differences of wealth between the upper strata of aristocratic and bourgeois families and the mass of the population had produced social tensions which became deeper in the course of the eighteenth century. The silk weavers, who formed about a quarter of the population, were constantly under threat of destitution, masters hardly less than *compagnons*.

From the 1740s control of the silk industry became increasingly concentrated in the hands of four hundred or so *marchands*

l'industrie et du commerce à Lyon de 1789 à l'an XIII, par J. C. Déglise; E. Pariset, *Histoire de la fabrique lyonnaise* (Lyon, n.d.), pp. 213-258.

¹⁶ R. B. Rose, "How to make a Revolution: the Paris Districts in 1789", *Bulletin*, lix (1976-77), 426-57.

¹⁷ See Garden, *op. cit.*, pp. 586-590.

fabricants who deprived the master weavers of the independence and the opportunities for marketing their own goods which were usually open to eighteenth-century artisans. The master weavers had been reduced to a condition little different from that of their *compagnons*, and a long and violent strike in 1786 had shown that masters and *compagnons* were capable of acting collectively.¹⁸ There were grounds for fearing a general rising in the weaving and hatting quarters of the city, which included not only the quarters on the right bank of the Saône and the slopes of the Grande-Côte to the north but a pocket of poverty in the central city itself near the Hôtel-Dieu. There was reason to believe that in such a case other artisans would be involved, as they had been in 1786.¹⁹ Consequently, the propertied classes were alarmed at the idea of the people in arms and few amongst them were willing to risk the possible consequences of stirring up popular feelings for any cause. Substance was given to such fears by riots in June-July 1789, when muskets intended for the defence of property were put to use by crowds which demolished and ransacked *barrières* and bond stores after seizing weapons from their guards.²⁰ These circumstances stood in the way of a revolutionary alliance between the *menu peuple* and the leaders of the Third Estate such as was achieved in July 1789 in Paris.

¹⁸ Based on *ibid.*, pp. 173-387, a magisterial statistical analysis of Lyonnais society in the eighteenth century.

		Master weavers (<i>Grande-Fabrique</i>) (Quarters with more than 400)	<i>Compagnon</i> hatters (Quarters with more than 240)	Master and <i>compagnon</i> stocking- weavers (Quarters with more than 100)
On the right bank of the Saône	Saint-Georges	472		
	Port-Saint-Paul	492		
	Pierre-Scize	462		
North	La Grande-Côte	705		
	Saint-Vincent	549		
Near l'Hôtel Dieu	Place Confort		247	140
	Rue Thomassin		244	
	Belle-Cordière		351	104
	Bon-Rencontre	420	136	
	l'Hôtel-Dieu			143
South	Bellecour		358	

(Based on the *Consulat's* figures for 1788-1789 (A.C., 1^{246 bis})).

²⁰ *C.M.*, i. 158-162 (1-16 July 1789).

1790 brought other confrontations between the propertied classes and the *menu peuple* over the issues which divided them most, the *octrois*, the *volontaires* and the royal garrison. As taxes on basic necessities, the *octrois* were fiercely hated and the attacks on the *barrières* in July 1789 made it clear that their removal was a principal objective of the popular revolution, in Lyon as in Paris. There was an equal determination to get rid of the garrison (at this time the Swiss Sonnenberg regiment) and the *volontaires* who had enthusiastically shared with them the task of restoring order and *barrières* in July 1789. Hatred of the garrison was founded on more than attachment to Lyon's traditional "privilège de se garder", on more than dislike of "foreign troops" and on more even than resentment at their role in repressing popular insurrections and defending the tax-collectors. The garrison threatened the *menu peuple* both as producers and as consumers, and symbolised the opposition between their interests and those of the propertied classes.

The rich and the *négociants* seem to have formed a coalition and to be making every effort to persuade the authorities that [the continued presence of the garrison] is necessary and useful ... but it would cause prices to increase ... and the soldiers housed and paid by the nation who follow the same trades as [Lyonnais] would always be preferred for jobs, being able to work for lower wages since they have no rent or tax to pay.²¹

In February 1790 the *premier échevin* Imbert-Colomès ordered a company of *volontaires* to replace the National Guard detachment on duty at the arsenal. Crowds barred their way and grew so menacing that the *échevins* dared not risk bringing in the Swiss from their barracks on the outskirts of the city. The arsenal was broken into and twenty thousand weapons removed. Imbert-Colomès, who was hated as a grain speculator, was forced to flee from his house over the rooftops to take refuge with the Swiss. His remaining colleagues calmed the agitation by dissolving the *volontaires* and reducing by half the tax qualification for active citizenship which had previously been set at three *livres*, the highest level permitted under the National Assembly's legisla-

²¹ A.N., F⁹ 6, "Pétition des citoyens en trois cahiers, de Lyon, revêtue de dix mille cent quatre-vingt-dix signatures ... pour être jointe à celle précédemment envoyée avec 3,400 signatures. Au Roy des français". (Received 7 Dec. 1791).

tion.²² But the elected municipality which replaced the *Consulat* in March was no more successful in persuading the people to accept the *octrois* and the garrison. In the Summer the agitation revived. Bread was fifty per cent dearer than it had been eighteen months before; there were *taxations populaires* late in June; petitions against the *octrois* were drawn up in most quarters, starting with the weaving quarters of Port Saint-Paul and Pierre-Scize.²³ When the petitions were presented on 8 July the Town Hall was invaded by a large crowd and, although the mayor attempted to play for time by convoking the sectional assemblies for the 10th, feelings grew so hot that he and the councillors had to flee for their lives. Next day the *barrières* were attacked again and the municipal councillors at last agreed to suspend the collection of the *octrois*, possibly encouraged by predictions that if they resisted further "they could not expect to return home alive".²⁴

These troubles were threatening for various reasons. To start with, the people had arms; to those taken from the arsenal in February were added more seized from guard-posts in July and those of the National Guardsmen, who were not infrequently seen abetting the rioters. Secondly, disorders continued for nearly two months and were more prolonged and extensive than any since 1786. They affected most quarters and involved "workers of all kinds"²⁵ but particularly, and ominously, the weavers.²⁶ Thirdly, popular outrage over economic injustice was reinforced by a new sense of political rights. On 26 July a self-styled spokesman for the *compagnon* hatters told the National Guardsmen who arrested him that he and his comrades "were not English against whom [the Guard] needed to defend themselves, but citizens". Another suspect was accused of telling a crowd in the Place de la Comédie "that when the people was oppressed by the municipality or the

²² *Lettre Ecrite à Bourg, le 22 février 1790, par M. Imbert-Colomès, ci-devant chargé du commandement de la Ville de Lyon, à MM. les officiers Municipaux de Bourg* (n.p., n.d.); *Le Courrier de Lyon*, N° 34 (9 Feb. 1790), 274-276; J. Imbert-Colomès, *Aux Citoyens de Lyon* (Lyon, 1790), p. 1; *C.M.*, i. 226 (6 Jan. 1790), 240 (10 Feb. 1790), 256 (17 Feb. 1790).

²³ *C.M.*, ii. 80-104 (14 June- 6 July 1790).

²⁴ *Ibid.*, ii. 106-108 (8-9 July 1790).

²⁵ Archives Départementales du Rhône [henceforth A.D.], 2L90 *Rapport de la Municipalité de Lyon* (Lyon, n.d.), p. 3; *Journal de Lyon*, N° 5 (18 Aug. 1790), 119.

²⁶ Of 21 people listed in A.D., Bp 3536 ("Notes relatifs aux accusés") 4 were weavers and 4 more belonged to trades associated with the *Grande Fabrique*.

National Assembly, the people should make the laws itself".²⁷ To make matters worse for the authorities there was reason to doubt the adequacy and reliability of the National Guard. According to the deputy Périsset-Duluc "it could not resist the inactive citizens who fill our workshops and who outnumber it four times over".²⁸ On several occasions Guardsmen joined in attacks on the *barrières* and on 28 July the entire battalion of Pierre-Scize was disarmed for firing on the Swiss.²⁹

To avoid "making an omelette of the city" the municipality continued its policy of appeasement. Collection of the *octrois* was not resumed until 21 August, by which time there were 4,600 troops in Lyon. In July the National Assembly had twice decreed the immediate re-establishment of the *barrières*, but the Municipal Council dared not even to record receipt of the decrees much less to execute them: "would not excessive haste bring the risk of exciting a general outcry and of plunging the city into disturbances whose consequences cannot be contemplated without trembling"?³⁰

These events completed the *patriotes'* despair. No less than their opponents on the Municipal Council, they feared that Lyon had been on the brink of pillage and massacre and they were no better able than their opponents to understand what had happened.³¹ They had lent their support to popular causes, organizing meetings of protest against the delay in establishing a National Guard, denouncing the *volontaires'* aristocratic tendencies to the Parisian press, badgering the mayor to open council meetings to the public, and publishing pamphlets arguing for the abolition of the *octrois*.³² But they were not prepared to compro-

²⁷ A.D. Bp3536 ds Jean-Pierre Chabran and Pierre Devaux. The author wishes to thank M.A. De Francesco for drawing his attention to this dossier.

²⁸ *Réimpression de l'Ancien Moniteur* (Paris, 1858), v. 153 (17 July 1790).

²⁹ *Le Courrier de Lyon*, vi. N°. 27 (30 July 1790), 228; *Plaidoyer du compère Mathieu pour les habitants du Canton de Pierre-Scize* (Lyon, n.d.), pp. 1-4.

³⁰ A.D., 1L57, proceedings of the Departmental Directory of Rhône-et-Loire and of the District of Lyon-Ville (27 July 1790); *C.M.*, ii. 152-153 (18-20 Aug. 1790); Samuel F. Scott, "Problems of Law and Order during 1790, the 'Peaceful' Year of the French Revolution", *American Historical Review*, lxxx. N°. 4 (1975), 883.

³¹ *Le Courrier de Lyon*, vi, N°. 27 (30 July 1790), 239, and N°. 35 (7 Aug. 1790), 294.

³² See Chalier's articles in *Le Courrier de Lyon*, v. N°. 14 (16 Feb. 1790), 323 and *Les Révolutions de Paris*, xxx (3 Jan.-6 Feb. 1790), 45-46, and

mise the sacred principles of representative government and the rule of law for the sake of forging an alliance with the movement of popular protest. They were acutely conscious of the threat from below: "the pauper, born enemy of the rich, sees in the latter's affluence the theft of his own needs; he is angered and embittered; and if he is contained by the force of the laws, he undermines their salutary curbs by all the disorders which can escape their vigilance".³³ Even the aristocratic *volontaires* might be seen to have their redeeming features when the force of the law was uncertain, as the *patriote* Chaliier conceded: "your efforts, indeed, re-established tranquillity ... [and] earned you the thanks of all your fellow-citizens".³⁴ Believing that the solution to social conflict lay in the principle of enlightened self-interest—expressed through philanthropy on the part of the rich and submission to the law and to economic necessity by the poor—they saw themselves not as popular leaders or spokesmen of the *menu peuple* but as its tutors in the principles of representative government and ordered liberty. When they argued against the *octrois* they argued just as strongly that the people must put up with them until they were removed by proper legislative processes. But July and August seemed to show that they had failed to inculcate a true understanding of liberty in the popular mind. Roland's friend Champagneux was so disheartened that in September he abandoned his patriotic journal, *Le Courrier de Lyon*.³⁵ In Mme. Roland's view the troubles were proof of popular ignorance and gullibility. She believed that they had been provoked by agitators to prepare the way for a foreign invasion: "the aim of the ministers, of the dominant group and of most members of the municipality is to incite the people or to allow it to become worked up so as to be authorized to use force". Caught between "aristocratic" municipal and departmental authorities and "an easily deceived people" they

Mme. Roland's in *Le Patriote français* (reprinted in *Moniteur*, iii. 390); [Didier Guillin], *A Messieurs les Officiers Municipaux de la Ville de Lyon*, pp. 4-8; *C.M.*, ii. 38-39 (1 May 1790); J. B. Pressavin, *Avis aux Citoyens de la Ville de Lyon sur les Octrois. Par M. Pressavin notable* (Lyon, 1790); J.-M. Roland, *Municipalité de Lyon. Aperçu des travaux à entreprendre et des moyens de les suivre* (Lyon, 1790); Wahl, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

³³ *Le Courrier de Lyon*, v. N°. 32 (6 Feb. 1790), 255, speech to the *Société Philanthropique* by J.-M. Roland.

³⁴ *Le Courrier de Lyon*, v. 40 (16 Feb. 1790), 323.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, vii. N°. 24 (27 Sept. 1790), 212.

felt doomed to watch impotently as Lyon became a centre of reaction and misdirected popular violence.³⁶

From this gloomy prospect they were saved by the emergence of the clubs. The *Société populaire des amis de la Constitution des XXXI Sections de la Ville de Lyon* was formed soon after the end of the *octroi* riots and quickly began to play the role of winning Lyon for the revolution which the bourgeoisie might have played had it not been for the sharp divisions in Lyonnais society and the social fears they generated. The clubs were established because some bourgeois *patriotes* recognized that the *menu peuple*, properly organized, could perform the revolutionary task from which the propertied classes had shrunk. We know the names of two of the founders, François Billemaz, a *greffier* (court official), and Eloi Labrude, a school-master, and we have Labrude's explanation of his motives from an article of January 1791 in the clubs' journal: "The fault of the earliest patriotic societies was that their founders did not understand that patriotism in general is as rare amongst the rich as it is common in the class of working-men [*ouvriers*] ... Thus there was needed a rival to the Society affiliated to the Jacobins of Paris; it now exists. At the end of August 1790, a few zealous *patriotes* met and swore to propagate the spirit which animated them, and to overthrow the debris of the aristocratic empire". They proposed a popular club for each section of Lyon, with a central club made up of three delegates from each. "The petit bourgeois, the simple artisan should be able to join them, and the fees should not be so high as to hurt his pocket. Amidst the discussions of a large society the artisan will find an opportunity to speak in his own fashion, to form his own ideas. The attention with which he is heard if he has new ideas and if he makes useful proposals will be a triumph for him and an encouragement for others like him".³⁷

An important aim was thus to bring a popular organization to the aid of the so-far ineffective *patriote* bourgeoisie. The desire to educate inactive citizens in civic responsibility was shared with the popular societies which had appeared in a dozen or so Parisian sections, but in Lyon there was also an explicit intention of providing political support for the *patriote* cause. This the popular

³⁶ M.-J. Roland, op. cit., ii. 137, 4 Aug. 1790.

³⁷ *Journal de la Société Populaire des Amis de la Constitution de Lyon*, N^o. 1 (16 Jan. 1791), 5-6.

societies did very rapidly. The "aristocratic debris" was cleared away from numerous local institutions, notably from the Municipal Council, and in many cases declared *patriotes* took over the places. Billemaiz became a *juge de paix*. Roland's friend Vitet became Mayor.³⁸ Another member of the Roland circle, Lanthénas, attributed the patriot triumph in the elections of November 1790 entirely to the popular societies, and stressed that the Jacobin Club of Lyon had been of no help at all.³⁹ There is evidence of the clubs' influence in the only record of voting in a sectional assembly which survives from 1791.⁴⁰ Ten *patriote* candidates for ten vacant places received between 164 and 178 votes while all the rest got less than eleven. References in the minutes of the *clubs de quartier* show that the *Club central* played a co-ordinating role, requesting each club to provide a list of suitable candidates and then circulating a "ticket" comprising the most favoured of them.⁴¹

Conservatives like Mallet du Pan denounced these tactics as caballing.⁴² And even though the clubs had helped them politically, the *patriotes* of Lyon also feared that they might undermine the principles of representative government. Roland reminded the clubs that their main role was as educative missions to the unlettered, and stressed that they should not arrogate to themselves functions which the law reserved for the electoral assemblies and the constituted authorities. The surgeon Grandchamp, an early president of the *Club central*, warned that it might fall prey

³⁸ *C.M.*, ii. 314, 29 Jan. 1791; *Journal de la Société Populaire ... de Lyon*, N°. 1 (16 Jan. 1791), 7; *Journal de Lyon*, i. N°. 50 (23 July 1791), p. 2. On the *patriotes'* electoral victories see Wahl, *op. cit.*, pp. 288-289. See also Appendix III.

³⁹ Article by Lanthénas on the clubs of Lyon in *Le patriote français* (28 Feb. 1791), reprinted in F.A. Aulard (ed.), *La Société des Jacobins, Recueil des Documents*, 6 vols. (Paris, 1889-97), ii. 147.

⁴⁰ A.D., 34L1, Club of Rue Belle-Cordière, 9 Nov. 1791.

⁴¹ A.D., 31L41, Proceedings of the section of l'Hôtel-Dieu (6 and 20 Dec. 1791); 34L31, Proceedings of the Club of Rue Belle-Cordière (11 Nov. 1791); 34L3, Proceedings of the Club of la Croix-Rousse (6 Nov. 1791).

⁴² Quoted in *Journal de la Société Populaire ... de Lyon*, N°. 5 (30 Jan. 1791), 69. See also similar accusations in *Liste des neuf juges de paix, que la Cabale fait circuler dans toutes les sections de la Ville, avec les notes impartiales d'un PATRIOTE sur les Postulants* (Lyon, 1790), pp. 2-4; *Avis Aux Français sur les Clubs* (n.p., n.d. [March 1791]), in F.A. Aulard (ed.), *op. cit.*, ii. 265-266: "when there are elections, these clubs divide themselves into sections which express their opinions and their choices. They vote as though they had the right and the choices of the clubs become those of the people".

to demagogues and become "un foyer trop ardent".⁴³ But, on the other hand, the clubs seemed to offer the hope of preventing further disorders by revealing to the people "the traps designed to incite them to tumult".⁴⁴ And if they wished to play a political role, the *patriotes* could not do without the Clubs. The Society of Friends of the Constitution (*Club du Concert*) to which the Rolandins belonged had the prestige of affiliation with the Paris Jacobins, but this was little more than a genteel debating society, far too small and socially exclusive to have much electoral influence. Its members were drawn almost entirely from the *haute bourgeoisie* and the sixty-five whose tax records can be discovered were assessed at an average of 433 *livres* in 1791, nearly three times that for the city as a whole.⁴⁵ Even before it turned *feuillant* it had been attacked as a den of the idle and faint-hearted rich⁴⁶ and some clubs had refused to accept as members those who also belonged to the *Club du Concert*. Afterwards the clubs broke entirely with it.⁴⁷ To retain their electoral support the *patriote* politicians were thus obliged to cut their links with the only other political organization of significance in Lyon.

Having made this choice, the *patriotes* managed their supporters adroitly. The Mayor, Lous Vitet, was personally popular. Although he was a wealthy physician, he lived in a modest apartment in the very unfashionable quarter of l'Hôtel-Dieu. By 1790 he already possessed such a reputation as a man of influence amongst the people that he was asked by the *Consulat* to tour the quarters calling for order during the February troubles.⁴⁸ During their first two months in office the municipality and Vitet welcomed at least eight club delegations to council meetings and followed their recommendations on a wide variety of matters,

⁴³ *Discours prononcé à la Société centrale par J. M. Roland le 6 janvier 1791* (Lyon, 1791), p. 1; J.-L. Grandchamp, *Qu'est-ce que le comité central des 31 clubs des sections de Lyon?* (Lyon, 1791), pp. 6-7.

⁴⁴ Article in *Le Patriote français* (28 Feb. 1791), in Aulard, op. cit., ii.1147.

⁴⁵ *État des Membres qui composent la Société des Amis de la Constitution établie à Lyon le 12 Décembre 1789, et affiliée à celle de Paris*, 3 pp. (Lyon, 1791); *Registres de la Contribution Mobilière de la Ville de Lyon* (1791) (A.C., unclassified). The average assessment for 1791 in Lyon was 151 *livres* (Garden, op. cit., pp. 192-198).

⁴⁶ *Journal de Lyon*, N^o. 50 (25 July 1791), p. 2.

⁴⁷ A.D., 34L3, Club of la Croix-Rousse, 3 April 1791; 34L1, Club of Rue Belle-Cordière, 9 Oct. 1791.

⁴⁸ C.M., i. 239 (10 Feb. 1790).

including (to name a few) the prohibition of masked balls and anti-patriotic plays, the closure of premises where "superstitious" ceremonies were held, the fixation of bread prices, the introduction of a single kind of bread (*pain national*) and the repair of the parish pump at Pierre-Scize.⁴⁹ Even though this close involvement of the clubs in municipal affairs was not popular democracy fully realized—the clubs' most enthusiastic supporter, the *Journal de Lyon*, claimed only 6,000 members for them, and their influence on municipal policy depended on the compliance of the bourgeois *patriotes*—its importance cannot be measured simply in terms of the numbers recruited by the clubs or the changes they wrought. The popular democratic movement in Lyon was significant because it existed for more than two years as a framework for popular political participation and an alternative to the hegemony of the propertied classes which the National Assembly was seeking to entrench. It opened channels through which the *menu peuple* could apply political pressure in an organized way and established in practice the right of active political participation—as opposed to that of legitimizing the political activity of others—for men who worked with their hands.

When the clubs' regulations were finalized on 4 March 1791, they provided for petitions and deputations only in emergencies, and the regular despatch of delegations to the Town Hall then seems to have stopped. In any case the clubs had to avoid seeming to dictate to the *autorités constituées*, particularly during the reaction against popular democratic organizations which developed in the Spring and intensified after the Champ de Mars 'massacre' on Paris on 17 July. The National Assembly made sporadic efforts to stamp out such clubs, and attacked them by a decree on 9 October. But Lyon's clubs nevertheless maintained a view of themselves as moulders of municipal policy. According to the Club of Saint-Pierre, for example, the ordinance of 9 July which fixed the price of bread at 1 *sou* 9 *deniers* "was only enacted at the request and thanks to the foresight of the Clubs to benefit our fellow citizens". And they continued to reinforce the *patriotes* on the municipal council who, in turn, campaigned vigorously for causes such as the removal of the garrison and the disbandment of the *élite grenadier* companies of the National Guard. Where

⁴⁹ Eight deputations were recorded between 10 January and 17 February 1791 in the *Journal de la Société Populaire ... de Lyon* (N^{os}. 2-10). Afterwards they were less frequent and restricted to matters of urgency.

the municipality failed to achieve popular goals, it blamed the obstructionism of the "aristocratic" departmental directory.⁵⁰ Thus the clubs were strengthened by concrete achievements, and by justifiable pride in having engineered the triumph of the *patriote* cause. But they owed their success to more than the conjunction of circumstances which persuaded bourgeois politicians to concede them a role in policy-making. Their vitality grew directly from their roots in the quarters.

By basing them in the quarters, the clubs' founders both exploited and reinforced a well-entrenched local tradition. In Lyon the administrative changes of 1789-1791 not only left the existing quarters intact but encouraged their use as centres of local initiative, politics and administration. This contrasted with the situation in other big cities where the old quarters were eliminated or at least renamed in 1790. Bordeaux and Marseille called the new sections by numbers. Paris replaced the quarters with sixty Districts and then forty-eight sections whose boundaries bore little or no geographical relation to them.⁵¹ But until mid-1793 (when the fashion for republican names produced some changes) the sections of Lyon were the old quarters with the same names and boundaries⁵² and deep roots in the habits and traditions of Lyon. The *pennonages* of the old *milice bourgeoise* may have been ridiculed by bourgeois chafing at guard service, but they and the quarters to which they corresponded symbolized Lyon's *privilège de se garder* and hence its traditional freedom from permanent garrisons.⁵³ The quarters were used habitually when something was attempted by, for or through the *menu peuple*. Under the old régime, charitable organizations organized themselves by quarters. In 1789, when the silk-weavers drew up a plan for reorganizing the *Grande Fabrique*, they proposed that decisions should be made by a majority of the quarters, despite the fact that

⁵⁰ See L. Vitet, *Adresse à l'Assemblée Nationale* (Lyon, n.d.), pp. 1-4; Joseph Chaliier, *Adresse de Joseph Chaliier officier municipal de la Ville de Lyon à l'Assemblée Nationale* (Lyon, n.d.), pp. 2-7.

⁵¹ R.B. Rose, "How to make a Revolution. The Paris Districts in 1789", *Bulletin*, lix (1976-77), 427.

⁵² See Camille Riffaterre, *Le mouvement anti-Jacobin et anti-Parisien à Lyon et dans le Rhône-et-Loire en 1793*, 2 vols. (Lyon, 1912, 1928), i. 101. (The only change of any consequence was that four sections were divided into two subdivisions at various times in 1790 and 1791).

⁵³ *Almanach de la Ville de Lyon pour l'Année 1789* (Lyon, 1789), p. 97.

some had many more weavers than others. Later, during their campaign against the *marchands fabricants*, they entrusted the final choice of their spokesmen to delegates selected by the quarters.⁵⁴ In 1790 the campaign against the *octrois* began in the quarters and it was to them that the authorities turned in an attempt to restore calm during the troubles of July.⁵⁵ Their importance in local affairs was further reinforced when they were transformed into sections, the basic electoral units (primary assemblies) of the new regime and the homes of the National Guard battalions. For two years the clubs harnessed the political vitality of the sections to the *patriote* cause.

In the poorer areas the club membership seems to have been genuinely popular. Membership fees were left to the discretion of each club and those we know of were set low—an entry fee of 24 *sous* in one case and 30 *sous* in another, with monthly dues of 10 or 12 *sous*, compared to the Paris Jacobins' entry fee of 12 *livres* and 2 *livres* monthly.⁵⁶ In the Club of Saint-Vincent the average assessed rental value of 102 members in 1791 was 61.7 *livres*. Of 160 members in 1793 it was 58.2, compared to an average of 151 *livres* for the city as a whole, 90 *livres* for artisans other than silk-weavers, and 45 for silk-weavers. In Belle-Cordière the average was 105 *livres* for 111 members in the period August 1791-May 1793. In both cases there was a large majority of artisans amongst those whose occupations have been identified by Dr. Takashi Koi.⁵⁷ La Croisette, another quarter populated mainly by artisans

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 74-75 (describing the organization of the *Société philanthropique* and the *Institut de Bienfaisance pour les mères-nourrices*); *Doléances des maîtres-ouvriers fabricants en étoffes d'or, d'argent et de soie adressées au Roi et à l'assemblée nationale* (Lyon, 1789), p. 62; *Extrait des Registres des Délibérations des Maîtres-ouvriers Fabricants en Etoffes ... prises dans l'Eglise Cathédrale de Saint-Jean le 5 mai 1790* (Lyon, 1790), p. 7.

⁵⁵ C.M., ii. 104 (9 July 1790).

⁵⁶ A.D., 34L3, Club of la Croix-Rousse, 9 Oct. 1791; 34L1, Club of Rue Belle-Cordière, 9 Nov. 1791. On the fees of the Jacobin clubs of Paris and Lyon see C. Brinton, *The Jacobins* and A.C., 1²² (101), receipt signed Perret, *économiste*, 5 Dec. 1791. The grounds for classifying the sections as "poor" or "wealthy" are given in Appendix I.

⁵⁷ T. Koi, "Les 'Chaliers' et les sans-culottes Lyonnais", Thèse de Doctorat, III^e Cycle, Université de Lyon II (1974), pp. 157-160. Of Saint-Vincent's 102 known members (1791) Koi identified 79.4%, as silk-weavers, 1.9%, as *négociants* and 0.9%, as belonging to the liberal professions; ; for those of 1793 the figures are 80%, 1.9%, and 0.6%, respectively. Of Belle-Cordière's 111 identified

but with some pockets of wealth and numerous middling retail traders, has been intensively studied by M. De Francesco, who has shown its club to have been, in 1791, an amalgam of very diverse social groups, including two day-labourers for whom even the modest dues must have been a burden, but with a heavy majority of artisans (sixty-six per cent) amongst the 83 members identified by occupation. While some wealthy men were active in the club, nearly half its members were assessed for tax at rentals below 100 *livres*. Even in an atypical quarter which had so far resisted the disintegration of Lyon's traditional 'interclass' social geography, the popular society became by the end of 1791 a political weapon which the lower social strata were in a position to control.⁵⁸

The clubs of Lyon thus pioneered not only the systematic political education of inactive citizens but methods of electoral organization which gave them some influence over the composition of the municipal council. In their recruitment, organization and methods they were more effective than their Parisian counterparts, which tried but failed to copy the Lyonnais central committee.⁵⁹ In some quarters they were recruiting members in 1791 from at least as far down the social scale as the *sans-culotte* movement of 1793. All this gave the clubs' founders good reason for satisfaction with their success in harnessing the *menu peuple* to the patriote cause. "By our union we have won out over the aristocracy and given ourselves a *patriote* municipality", Billemaz told the *Club central* on August 1792, "we have supported it with all our strength, we have been steadfast, vigilant and wise".⁶⁰

But the clubs' position was less secure than Billemaz thought. After the king's flight to Varennes the emergence of republican

members (1791-1793), 19% were found to be stocking-weavers, 36% artisans of other kinds and 14% from higher social strata.

⁵⁸ A. De Francesco, "Le quartier Lyonnais de la Croisette pendant les premières années de la Révolution", *Bulletin du Centre d'Histoire Economique et Sociale de la Région Lyonnaise* (1979), N° 4, pp. 22-35, 40-45. De Francesco argues that the club was formed by a group of relatively prosperous citizens but became rapidly more plebeian during 1791 (*ibid.*, p. 40). The evidence for the former proposition is, however, somewhat sketchy. Unfortunately, la Croisette seems to be the only quarter for which the remaining records permit a detailed study of the clubists.

⁵⁹ See I. Bourdin, *Les Sociétés populaires à Paris pendant la Révolution française* (Paris, 1937), pp. 15-80.

⁶⁰ François Billemaz, *Discours Prononcé au Comité central ... le jeudi 16 août l'an IV* (Lyon, 1792), pp. 1-2.

feeling in some of them revealed a fundamental weakness: because of Lyon's social geography any political organization based on the quarters was likely to be polarized along the same lines as Lyonnais society. The weaving quarters to the north of the city and on the right bank of the Saône were physically remote from the quarters around the Place des Terreaux and south of Place Bellecour, and they were in every conventional social and political sense their inferiors. But they were equals within the club network and so posed a constant threat to the political dominance of the propertied classes. Varennes provided the radicals in the *Club central* and in some poorer quarters with the opportunity to express openly their opposition to the constitutional *status quo*. This provoked resistance from clubs in the better-off parts of Lyon. When the *Centre* and some *clubs de quartier* passed motions severely critical not only of the King but of the existing form of government, clubs in at least six quarters disaffiliated themselves from the *Club central*. Others split, and schisms in the *clubs de quartier* continued into 1792.⁶¹ Behind the ostensible source of their divisions—the question of the monarchy—there lay the deeper question of the social distribution of power. All the clubs which can be identified as critics of the *Club central* and defenders of the constitutional *status quo* were in wealthy parts of Lyon. Some of them demanded that the clubs confine themselves to the

⁶¹ The *Club central* was said to have called for a republic soon after the news from Varennes reached Lyon (Pelzin, *Observations, Reclamations, Motions, Petitions, Justifications de la Société Populaire des Amis de la Constitution de Lyon, de la Section des Terreaux ... lues dans la séance publique du Comité central le jeudi 22 septembre 1791* (Lyon, 1791), p. 9). The customary "vive le Roi!" was deleted from its record of proceedings for a time at least (A.D., 34L1, Club of Rue Belle-Cordière, 4 Sept. 1791). See also *Discours prononcé par un citoyen de la Société populaire des amis de la Constitution de la Section de l'Hôtel-Dieu* (Lyon, 1791) (republican); *Aux citoyens des trente-un Clubs des amis de la Constitution de la Ville de Lyon, Par les citoyens du Club de rue Neuve* (Lyon, 1791), pp. 1-4 (defending the constitution and hostile to the *Club central*). On 21 August 1791 the *Club central* lamented the loss of six of "its children" (A.D., 34L4, letter to the Club of Rue Neuve, 21 Aug. 1793). There were splits in the Clubs of Rue Tupin (A.D., 34L3, 3 Oct. 1791), Rue Neuve (ibid., 22 Jan. 1792), Porte-Froc (A.D., 34L4, letter to the Club of Saint-Pierre, 5 Feb. 1792), Saint-Pierre (ibid., 29 Dec. 1791) and Saint-Vincent (34L5, 30 Jan. 1791). Amongst the Clubs with feuillantist tendencies were Les Terreaux (see Pelzin, op. cit., p. 9), Rue Neuve (*Aux citoyens des trente-un Clubs ...*, p. 2 (see above)) and Place Saint-Pierre (see below n. 62).

study of the laws and that the words "politique" and "philanthropique" be deleted from their statement of aims; some began to drop the word "popular" from their registers; one was accused of inflating its expenses deliberately to justify raising its fees; another proposed that club membership should be confined to active citizens.⁶² The more radical elements seem to have won the day, although overt attacks on the monarchy petered out until the republican thrust of Summer 1792 revived them. With the delegates from the feuillantist clubs withdrawn, the *Centre* became still more the preserve of radical democrats. But while clubs remained in the wealthier areas the possibility of another counter-attack by moderates and conservatives remained.

Throughout 1792, as the strength of the popular forces continued to grow, so too did the fears of those who saw them as subversive of public order. In March 1792 the election of a silk-weaver, Joseph Julliard, as *commandant* of the National Guard produced a new outcry against the machinations of "a Society which, because of its organization, influences all elections made directly by the Primary Assemblies".⁶³ There was alarm because Julliard was an artisan "living from his daily toil", with so little property that he was eligible to stand for election only because of his past military service. "Should not the first Officer of an essential part of the public forces, on whose head rests such a great responsibility, offer other sureties than the votes which raised him to this place of trust?"⁶⁴ After the fall of the monarchy all the worst fears of the propertied classes seemed about to be realized. Food shortages and price rises combined with sharpened fears of counter-revolution to produce the first considerable popular disturbances since 1790. Having acquired notions of popular sovereignty and political right from the bourgeoisie, the *menu peuple* interpreted them in the light of their own social circum-

⁶² See A.D., 34L4, amendments to the regulations of the clubs proposed by the Club of Saint-Pierre, Aug. 1791; A.D., 34L3, club of La Croix-Rousse, 9 Oct. 1791, 20 Feb. 1792, 27 Feb. 1792 (attacking these and other proposed changes to the rules of eligibility and to the club's title).

⁶³ *Exposé de tout ce qui est passé relativement à l'organisation de la garde nationale du district de la ville de Lyon, depuis le mois de Mars jusqu'au 9 Mai 1792. Présente à l'Assemblée Nationale, et aux Corps administratifs du Département de Rhône-et-Loire, par les chefs de Légions, Adjutants et sous-Adjutants-Généraux* (Lyon, n.d. [1792]), p. 3.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

stances and made new demands incompatible with bourgeois notions of representative government and economic freedom. On 27 August the primary assembly of the section of la Juiverie declared itself permanent and called on the people to take justice into its own hands by punishing hoarders, speculators and counter-revolutionaries. The president of the Assembly, a print-corrector called Dodieu, was denounced by the Municipal Council and arrested.⁶⁵ But popular justice was done two weeks later. Eight officers of the regiment of Royal-Pologne were held, on suspicion of intending to emigrate, in the prison of Pierre-Scize, which was thought to be insecure. To prevent their escape a crowd forced the prison and removed them. They had not been taken far before they were killed and decapitated, together with three priests who had the bad luck to be in prison with them.⁶⁶ This began two months of disorder which Vitet and his supporters vainly tried to appease and which the National Guard made no serious effort to stop. For a week from 14 September the grocers' shops were systematically raided. Goods ranging from wood, wine and candles to mocha coffee and *bleu de Gex* were sold off at "just" prices listed on printed sheets headed "Les Citoyennes de Lyon". Nearly every quarter of Lyon was affected: "the people, almost the whole people, is raiding the shops to remove all the foodstuffs; almost all the women have come out to take them".⁶⁷ At least 113 grocers' shops were pillaged between 17 and 19 September and one wholesale merchant's stock of cheese, valued at 21,000 *livres*, was sold off in a day.⁶⁸ Fearing that "the city would be put to the torch ... and the majority of the wealthy citizens murdered" the municipality established price controls for eggs, butter, meat and bread (the cost of which was thus artificially reduced from three

⁶⁵ A.N., F⁷3686⁶, d. 9, copy of a letter to the primary assembly of Place Neuve, signed Dodieu, president of the Section of La Juiverie, 27 Aug. 1792.

⁶⁶ See A.N., F⁷3686⁶, ds 7, n^o. 28, Vitet and the municipal officers of Lyon to Roland, 10 Sept. 1792; A.C., 1², n^o. 133, report signed Arnaud, sous-lieutenant, 24 Aug. 1792; L. Vitet, *Vitet député du département du Rhône à ses concitoyens sur le massacre des prisonniers de Pierre-Scize* (n.p., n.d.), pp. 5-13.

⁶⁷ A.N., F¹¹217, d. 8, n^o. 8, municipality of Lyon to Roland, 19 Sept. 1792.

⁶⁸ A.N., F⁷3686⁶, d. 8, n^o. 3, Roland to the President of the Convention, 7 Dec. 1792 and d. 9, n^o. 2, Veuve Ziegler to Roland, 11 Jan. 1793. A copy of the sheet headed "Les citoyennes de Lyon" is in *ibid.*, d. 7.

sous per livre to two).⁶⁹ But on 9 October, after the agitation had subsided, the price controls were lifted.⁷⁰

The precariousness of the clubs' alliance with the Rolandins was now exposed. Until the Summer of 1792 it had been favoured by relatively low bread prices and by a slight revival in the silk industry. But with bread having doubled in price since the *patriotes'* early months in municipal office, and with unemployment amongst the weavers on the rise again,⁷¹ Vitet and the municipal officers were faced with popular demands for economic justice which they were quite unable to meet, particularly now that their former colleague Roland was Minister of the Interior, preaching free trade and submission to the law and berating them for their lapses into the heresy of price control.⁷² To make matters worse, Vitet could no longer fall back on his usual tactic of turning popular anger against the departmental and district administrations, for the Republic had brought purges which left Rolandins in control of them.⁷³ So, just as in Paris there was an increasingly obvious contradiction between the economic demands of the *menu peuple* and the economic principles of the Girondins, the Autumn crisis in Lyon revealed inconsistencies between the outlook of the Rolandins and that of the mass of their supporters which had mostly been obscured by the adroit manipulation of political issues during Vitet's mayoralty. The Rolandins' popularity evaporated. As one of Roland's informants put it on 28 October, "Our *patriote* municipal officers, cherished by the people until now, have become the targets of threats and hatred".⁷⁴ The

⁶⁹ A.N., F¹¹217, d. 8, n^o. 8, municipality of Lyon to Roland, 19 Sept. 1792; *ibid.*, n^o. 9, *Le Conseil-général de la Commune de Lyon en permanence*, 17 Sept. 1792.

⁷⁰ *Journal de Lyon*, 3 Oct. 1792; A.N., F⁷3686⁶, d. 8, n^o. 29, the municipality to Roland, 22 Sept. 1792; *Moniteur* (see above, n. 28, xiv. 163, 9 Oct. 1792).

⁷¹ Bread cost 2 *sous per livre* in April 1791; it was 3 *sous 9 deniers* in October 1792 (C.M., ii. 2 April 1791; A.N., F¹¹217, d. 8, n^o. 36, municipality of Lyon to Roland, 9 Oct. 1792; A.C., F⁴, f. 20, municipality of Lyon to Frossard (its delegate in Paris), 13 Dec. 1792). The new troubles of the silk industry are described in *Pétition faite à la barre de la Convention Nationale par J. B. Frossard et Chalon députés extraordinairement par les 3 corps administratifs de Lyon le ... [sic] novembre 1792* (Paris, 1792), pp. 3-4.

⁷² A.N., F¹¹217, d. 8, n^o. 15, Roland to Perret (acting Mayor of Lyon), n.d.

⁷³ *Procès-verbaux du Conseil-général du Département de Rhône-et-Loire*, ed. G. Guigue, 2 vols. (Trévoux, 1895), ii. 89, 20 Aug. 1792.

⁷⁴ A.N., F⁷3686⁶, d. 7, n^o. 18, Fleury Villieux to Roland, 28 Oct. 1792.

patriotes of 1790 were overtaken in popular favour by Lyonnais supporters of Robespierre who were prepared to abandon *laissez faire* and constitutionalist scruples in order to use the forces generated by the Autumn crisis for the defence of the revolution.

The leader of the new radicals—they will be called Jacobins here—was Joseph Chalier, a well-to-do merchant and, since 1789, a fervent revolutionary, who drew his political inspiration from Paris. In the first half of 1792 Chalier had been in the capital pursuing a vendetta against the administrators of the department in which he felt himself insufficiently supported by the municipality. When he returned in August he brought with him Robespierre's crusade against Roland, the Girondins and their sympathisers.⁷⁵ According to Vitet the popular following he acquired was won by grotesquely violent language, eulogies of the *massacreurs* of September and speeches advocating the redistribution of property delivered before audiences of poor working men at the *Club central*.⁷⁶ Chalier's social programme, if he had one, lies cloaked in the turgid obscurity of his language. There is no evidence except from his enemies that his talk of confiscating the property of the rich meant anything more than financing the Republic and Republicans in their hour of danger by punitive taxation of *insouciantes* and counter-revolutionaries, with which categories the Lyonnais Jacobins identified the rich of Lyon *en bloc*.⁷⁷ But certainly he and his supporters exploited social issues and popular hostility towards the rich to rob the Rolandins of the following they had built up since 1790. And it is also true that the Lyonnais Jacobins' ideas sometimes went further than standard *sans-culotte* solutions to the problems of the small consumer. Rousseau Hidins, for example, proposed the abolition of private commerce in grains, the nationalization of mills and the creation of a national food administration. Manlius Dodieu endorsed the silk-

⁷⁵ See M. Wahl, "Joseph Chalier, Etude sur la Révolution française à Lyon", *Revue historique*, xxxiv (1887), 1-30.

⁷⁶ A.N., F⁷3686⁶, d. 7, n^o. 28, Vitet to Roland, 11 Sept. 1792.

⁷⁷ It has been argued that Chalier sought a redistribution of wealth, but all the evidence for this comes from detractors who accused him of propagating "the agrarian law" and "the division of property" (see Riffaterre, *op. cit.*, i. 309-349). For fuller discussions of this question see De Francesco, "Le quartier lyonnais de la Croisette", pp. 45-7, and B. Edmonds, "A Study of Popular Anti-Jacobinism: the Career of Denis Monnet", *French Historical Studies*, xiii, 2 (Fall 1983), pp. 237-240.

weavers' demands for a table of minimum rates of pay (*à un tarif*) and compensation for what they had lost through depreciation of the assignats in which they had been paid since 1790.⁷⁸ It seems likely that the Jacobins' popularity derived in part from their association with ideas such as these, as well as from their espousal of more familiar popular causes such as price control and repression of the people's enemies.⁷⁹

By November the Jacobins had established strongholds in several of the more radical clubs and had obtained control of the *Club central*, which they used to great effect in the municipal elections of late 1792. Their only failure was Chalier's defeat in the mayoral election by the Rolandin Nivière-Chol. One of them, François-Auguste Laussel, was elected *procureur* and an ex-president of the *Club central*, Bertholon, became his deputy. Most of the twenty new municipal councillors were associated with the radicals, while the names of the successful candidates for the *Tribunal du District de Lyon-Ville* read like a roll-call of Chalier's followers. Chalier himself was the president; Bussat, Dodieu, the actor Gaillard, and the weaver Joseph Fernex were judges; Hidins became *commissaire national*.⁸⁰ Electoral management by the Jacobin clubists reached new levels of efficiency. In the section of l'Hôtel-Dieu 449 votes went to Laussel from a total of 503 on 28 November, and 530 out of 537 went to Bertholon on the 30th. The club ticket seems also to have a strong influence on the outcome of the election of municipal councillors. While twenty of the candidates for twenty places received over 300 votes in l'Hôtel-Dieu, no other candidates received more than 22. A similar pattern occurred in the weaving section of Port-Saint-Paul.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Rousseau Hidins, *Au Genre Humain respect et fraternité. Adresse de Rousseau Hidins citoyen français de Lyon, suivie de la Constitution française sanctionnée par la nation, le 10 août 1792* (Lyon, n.d.), pp. 1-15; Manlius Dodieu, *Mémoire à consulter* (Lyon, 1792), pp. 8, 11, 15. David L. Longfellow, "Silk Weavers and the Social Struggle in Lyon during the French Revolution, 1789-1794", *French Historical Studies*, xii, 1 (Spring 1981), pp. 1-40, discusses and in my view somewhat over-emphasises the Jacobins' role as spokesmen of the weavers (see B. Edmonds, loc. cit.)

⁷⁹ Chalier's disciple Bussat was said to have drawn up the price lists circulated in September (see De Francesco, "Le quartier lyonnais de la Croisette", p. 60, n. 34).

⁸⁰ *C.M.*, iii. 371, 383, 18 and 29 Nov. 1792; *C.M.*, iv. 18, 13 Dec. 1792.

⁸¹ *A.D.*, 31L41, ff. 10-16, Section of l'Hôtel-Dieu, 1-27 Nov. 1792; 31L20, ff. 63, 65, Section of Port-Saint-Paul, 15 and 22 Nov. 1792.

Not surprisingly, there were accusations of electoral fraud. One of the clubs opposed to the radicals, la Croisette, accused the *Club central* of imposing its choices on the *clubs de quartier*. It was rumoured that moderates were chased from some electoral assemblies and that the dead and the unborn were mobilized to swell the Jacobin vote. The records of l'Hôtel-Dieu certainly suggest that if something of the kind did not occur there, then its citizens must have been inspired by an extraordinary degree of patriotic commitment. It is not easy to believe that in a section of about 3,500 people, mostly working men and women, seventeen separate electoral assemblies were attended by never less than 300 and generally between 500 and 600 qualified voters—622 on 4 November, for example, while the thirty-one other sections could muster only 8,085 between them.⁸²

Whatever the role of fraud in the elections, it is clear that the clubs determined the outcome and that the significance of the outcome went beyond the triumph of the Jacobins. It was an unprecedented victory for the plebeians over the propertied classes which had held the reins of municipal power in Lyon. (See Appendix III). Half of the members of the new municipal council occupied premises the rental values of which had been assessed in 1791 at 100 *livres* or less, as did more than two-thirds of the *notables* whose tax records have been found. A majority of the councillors were below the city's average tax assessment (151 *livres*) and only two of them were from the wealthy quarters of central Lyon.⁸³ This does not seem to have been what had been intended by the founders of popular democracy in Lyon. Billemaz, so eloquent in praise of the clubs three months earlier, was appalled: "... of the twenty municipal officers, fourteen are rogues and cut-throats ... Our new magistrates are distinguished equally

⁸² A.C., 1²⁴, d. 45, f. 39, 24 Feb. 1793; Bibliothèque de Lyon (Bibl. L.) Fonds Coste, MS. 634, anon. letter to Basire, Rovère and Legendre [Representatives on Mission, March 1793]; A.D., 31L41, ff. 6-18, Section of l'Hôtel-Dieu, 1 Nov.-16 Dec. 1792; C.M., iii. 353-354, 5 Nov. 1792

⁸³ See Appendix III. There is a sufficiently detailed list of names and addresses to determine the tax assessments for 1791 of all 20 municipal officers and 23 *notables* out of 42 (*Tableau Des Citoyens Maire, Officiers Municipaux, Procureur de la Commune, Substitut du Procureur de la Commune, et Notables composant le Conseil-général de la Commune de Lyon, au 5 Décembre 1792, l'an premier de la République française* (Lyon, n.d.), 1 p. *Régistre de la Contribution Mobilière de la Ville de Lyon pour l'Année 1791* (A.C., unclassified). It seems likely that the unidentified *notables* were inactive citizens in 1791.

by ignorance and dishonesty, not to mention incompetence ... they are fit for the gallows".⁸⁴ By the end of 1792 the popular democratic movement, launched by bourgeois *patriotes* in 1790 to preserve their revolution for them, had moved far beyond the limits which had been set for it.

But the triumph of the Jacobin clubists was short-lived. Within five months, and just at the moment when the Parisian *sans-culottes* were successfully reasserting their claim to determine the direction of national policy, the *sans-culotte* municipality of Lyon was overthrown. This has often been seen as the work of a movement of social reaction,⁸⁵ and not without reason. The elections of November-December 1792 crystallized bourgeois fears that the natural political order created by the revolution—the rule of men of property and talent—was under threat. "Modern Solons and Lycurgi, for the most part illiterate, several receiving bread from charity ... men presumptuous by their ignorance, ambitious out of self interest, are deceiving the people to get themselves elected". A certain David later put the class issue more directly: "... a worker wasn't meant to hold the reins of an administration ... the worker should only grovel and not mix himself up in political affairs so as to enrich himself and rob the public".⁸⁶ Much of what the Jacobins had been saying was disquieting for persons of property, not because their ideas were proto-socialist but because their identification of wealth with counter-revolution led them to predict that repression be most necessary against particular groups: "notaries ... lawyers, *avoués*, *huissiers* ... factors ... commission agents ... hoarders, monopolists ... big merchants and bankers ... ex-barons, academicians ... parasitical writers ... grain merchants, flour merchants, bakers ... clerics ... swindlers".⁸⁷ Behind all Lyon's troubles the Jacobins saw "a pack of brigands, made up of ecclesiastics and émigrés,

⁸⁴ A.N., F⁷3686⁶, d. 7, n^o. 8, Billemaz to Roland, 29 Nov. 1792.

⁸⁵ See, for example, A. Soboul, *The French Revolution*, 2 vols. (London, 1972), ii. 317; G. Lefebvre, *The French Revolution from its Origins to 1793* (London, 1962), p. 266; G. Lefebvre, "Comptes rendus", *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 18^e année, n^o. 101 (Jan.-March 1946), pp. 74, 74; C. Riffaterre, op. cit., i. 334-343.

⁸⁶ A.N., F¹a Rhône 8, d. 1, n^o. 93, Rébrié to Roland, 11 Dec. 1792; A.D., 42L72, d. 49 (Claude David), denunciation by Estelle (n.d.). There are several letters in a similar vein to Roland and Vitet in A.N. F⁷3686⁶, ds 7-9.

⁸⁷ "Mémoire présentée aux citoyens Deputés Commissaires de la Convention Nationale à Lyon" [March 1793] (Bibl. L., Fonds Coste, MS. 578).

supported by the counter-revolutionary mercantile sect".⁸⁸ For them the conflict in Lyon was between the poor, demoralized by oppression but defended by a small minority of patriots, and the "aristocratic" rich with their clientele. Despite what sounds to modern ears like the language of class war, "the battle ... between the working class and the mercantile class"⁸⁹ was about politics, not the permanent redistribution of wealth, and the first priority was not economic equality but the survival of the Republic.

What mattered to those in the suspect categories, however, was that they could expect to feel the weight of repression once the radicals possessed the means to apply it. As Montagnard Representatives on Mission began to provide the means by authorizing a revolutionary army and a Committee of Public Safety⁹⁰ this fear fuelled the anti-Jacobin movement. By 28 May opponents of the radical municipality had won control of twenty-two sections using the legislation establishing *comités de surveillance* as a justification for keeping the sectional assemblies in permanent session.⁹¹ But Lyonnais anti-Jacobinism was more than a movement of social reaction. As Antonino De Francesco has shown, the leading radicals began to act less as spokesmen for the Lyonnais *sans-culottes* than as agents of the montagnards and the Jacobin club of Paris. From late in 1792 they directed their energies mainly towards the task of forcing Lyon to conform to the latest Parisian initiatives—denouncing Roland, harassing

⁸⁸ Letter to the Representatives on Mission, 11 Feb. 1793 (Bibl. L., Fonds Coste, MS. 553).

⁸⁹ A.N., AF II, 43, Plaq. 339, Committee of Public Safety of Rhône-et-Loire to the Convention, 27 May 1793.

⁹⁰ The Committee of Public Safety of Rhône-et-Loire was composed of Jacobins from the District of Lyon-Ville (Thonion and Macabéo), the Department of Rhône-et-Loire (Achard and Maillan) and the Municipality of Lyon (Roch, Noel and Richard) (*C.M.*, iv. 188, 194, 8 and 12 April 1793). The Revolutionary Army was authorized by four *conventionnels* on mission to the Alps Army on 10 April (*C.M.*, iv. 192).

⁹¹ The anti-Jacobin sections were Saint-Vincent (divisions I and II), la Juiverie, Place Neuve, les Terreaux, Rue Neuve, la Convention, Port-du-Temple, la Pêcherie, Porte-Froc, Rue Tupin, la Saône, la Croisette, Rue Buisson, la Grande-Côte (division II), Saint-Georges, Saint-Nizier, Place-Saint-Pierre, Rue Terraille, le Plâtre and le Change. (These supported the Department's decision to authorize the sectional assemblies to meet *en permanence*, a measure which the municipality energetically opposed (*Département* (see above n. 73), ii. 296-308, 25, 26 and 28 May 1793. See also A.D., 42L72, d. 62 and 42L74, d. 63, statement by Jean Deaux (Rue Terraille) and denunciation of Desrieux (le Plâtre)).

Girondin sympathizers and importing revolutionary innovations such as the Committee of Public Safety.⁹² There was immediate resistance in the clubs. La Pêcherie warned that by exceeding its powers the *Centre* was damaging the links between the clubs and risking "the downfall of our societies".⁹³ Early in February a mysterious secret assembly of Jacobin supporters in the *Club central*—called, it was said, with the intention of establishing a popular tribunal to purge the city—provoked demands for the rigorous exclusion from the *Club central's* premises of all public officials and all others except bona fide delegates from the *clubs de quartier*.⁹⁴ In March la Croisette became the centre of an anti-Jacobin movement with which fourteen clubs had aligned themselves by 10 April, including five in poor areas.⁹⁵ Possibly as a direct result of this development, the Jacobins decided that the existing clubs were disorganized and lacked public spirit.⁹⁶ Early in March it became known that they proposed to adopt a new form of organization, a single, centralized Jacobin Club, and the anti-Jacobins used this threat to the club constitution to rally support.⁹⁷ The clubs of Place Neuve and Saint-Georges proposed to re-establish a "meeting place where delegates would be sent as before".⁹⁸

At the same time as they aroused antagonism within the club movement by their attack on the autonomy of the quarters, the radicals lost popular support by failing to deal with the grievances

⁹² See Antonino De Francesco, "Montagnardi e sanculotti in provincia: il caso lionese (agosto 1792-maggio 1793)", *Studi Storici*, vol. 19, n° 3 (1978), pp. 603-626, and Bill Edmonds, "A Jacobin D  b  cle: the Losing of Lyon in Spring 1793", *History*, lxi (Feb. 1984).

⁹³ A.C., 122, n° 108, Club of la P  cherie, 9 Dec. 1792; 124, d. 45, f. 28, Club of la Croisette, 9 Dec. 1792.

⁹⁴ A.C., 124, d. 45, ff. 34 and 38, Club of la Croisette, 20 Jan. and 10 Feb. 1793.

⁹⁵ Place-Saint-Pierre, Rue Tupin, le Pl  tre, Saint-Nizier, Rue Terraille, Rue Buisson, *Place Neuve*, *Porte-Froc*, *le Change*, *Saint-Georges*, *Bon-Rencontre*, *Place Confort* (ibid., ff; 42, 44-46, 20 and 26 March and 1, 3 and 10 April 1793). Those underlined were poor quarters (see Appendix II).

⁹⁶ Achard and Gaillard to the representatives on Mission in Lyon, 17 March 1793 (Bibl. L., Fonds Coste, MS. 600).

⁹⁷ Edmonds, "A Study in Popular Anti-Jacobinism", pp. 235-236. The articles by De Francesco cited above contain valuable evidence and argument for the view that defence of sectional autonomy was an important element in popular anti-Jacobinism.

⁹⁸ Ibid., f. 46, 10 April 1793.

which they had so successfully exploited in the Autumn of 1792. By 1 April bread cost 4 *sous* 6 *deniers* per *livre*, twenty-eight per cent more than Parisians paid,⁹⁹ and, while a formal agreement seems to have been reached on higher rates for weavers, there is no evidence that it was enforced.¹⁰⁰ The Jacobin municipal officers had proved no better able to deal with Lyon's social problems than the Rolandins whom they had replaced, and before long they were being bombarded with expressions of impatience and disillusionment from both clubs and individuals.¹⁰¹ It is thus not surprising that of those who joined la Croisette after its declaration of war on the Jacobins a high proportion belonged to the *menu peuple*.¹⁰²

The Lyonnais Jacobins' problems were by no means all of their own making. Lyon had intractable problems of food supply. There were funds to buy grain with, but grain could not be got safely to Lyon. And the municipality's income was quite insufficient to support large subsidies on food prices. Again, it was not possible for provincial radicals to deal with such difficulties as their Parisian counterparts did by frightening concessions out of the Convention.¹⁰³ Until the Convention legislated appropriately, none of the significant popular demands of September 1792 could be met. Given these difficulties it might have been prudent for the radicals to await the implementation of such measures as the maximum on grain prices before antagonizing the quarters with assaults on their autonomy.

⁹⁹ *C.M.*, iv. 172, 1 April 1793; G. Rudé, *Paris and London in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1970), p. 175. The Parisian *livre* (*poids de marc*) was 2.25 *onces* more than the *livre*, *poids de Lyon* (M. Marion, *Dictionnaire des Institutions de la France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (Paris, 1923), p. 375).

¹⁰⁰ See Edmonds, "A Study in Popular Anti-Jacobinism", p. 239. Longfellow, *art. cit.*, attributes more significance to this agreement than seems warranted.

¹⁰¹ See Edmonds, "A Study in Popular Anti-Jacobinism", p. 241, n. 85. See also *C.M.*, iv. 22, 14 Dec. 1792 and 73, 20 Jan. 1793; A.C. 1²⁴, d. 45, f. 31, Club of la Croisette, 2 Jan. 1793. There were frequent but inconclusive discussions between clubs and municipality on economic questions (*C.M.*, iv. 81, 97, 132, 147, 214, 27 Jan., 10 Feb., 4 March, 19 March and 24 April 1793).

¹⁰² De Francesco, "Montagnardi e sanculotti in provincia", pp. 54-57, where it is also contended, though without decisive evidence, that fear of the tax on wealth which was to finance the revolutionary army affected artisans as well as bourgeois and drove many of the former into the anti-Jacobin camp.

¹⁰³ These problems are discussed in more detail in Edmonds, "A Jacobin Dêbâcle", pp. 11-14.

Chalier and his followers saw the solution to their predicament in the application of force by an incorruptible revolutionary élite, but sufficient force was not to be found in Lyon. They despaired of the popular democratic movement as it existed in the clubs and came to see themselves as embattled missionaries in an alien world of mercantile greed, aristocratic subversion and incomprehensible popular perversity, as "the small number of pure and incorruptible patriots whom, by a kind of miracle, the winds of the Revolution had blown into the midst of this Sodom".¹⁰⁴ Accordingly they looked outside Lyon for the force required, to Paris and the Convention. Such was their lack of faith in the adequacy of their local support that they used regular troops to guard the most important posts in the city. Nothing could have indicated better than this their abandonment of the traditions of the popular movement in Lyon. As the anti-Jacobin *Journal de Lyon* gleefully pointed out, "it was then [in 1792] the department which wished to surround the city with a double cordon of troops of the line". The demagogues of the municipality opposed it stoutly.¹⁰⁵

By breaking their links with the clubs and antagonizing their popular following, the radicals both increased and exposed their isolation. Their incomprehension of the odds against them and their repeated and badly-timed acts of provocation made them their own gravediggers. But there was a certain logic if not political sense in the line of action they chose and it is somewhat misleading to assert, as De Francesco does, that they misunderstood the popular movement in Lyon.¹⁰⁶ Their behaviour suggests that, in fact, they understood it well. The club network was not a suitable tool for montagnard purposes. It was too loose and ill-disciplined, and after the partnership with Vitet in 1791-1792 too many clubs had Rolandin sympathies. It was quite reasonable for the Jacobins to conclude that in a national crisis which required quick and decisive action this squabbling, unwieldy organization would be of little use. Sections of the club movement seem to have shared the Jacobins' views. Some *clubs de quartier* in the poorer parts of Lyon endorsed the new Jacobin Club, including Belle-Cordière and la Croix-Rousse and the clubs which

¹⁰⁴ Bibl. L., Fonds Coste, MS. 578, "Mémoire présenté aux citoyens Députés Commissaires de la Convention Nationale à Lyon" [undated]. See also Achard and Gaillard's letter of 17 March (Fonds Coste, MS. 600).

¹⁰⁵ *Journal de Lyon*, 24 Feb. 1793, p. 176.

¹⁰⁶ De Francesco, "Montagnardi e sanculotti in provincia", p. 602.

split away from the existing ones in the sections of Grande-Côte and la Croisette.¹⁰⁷ The clubs and the *petit peuple* did not turn away from the radicals *en masse*. They divided, and some stayed with Chaliier. In the poor quarter of Port-Saint-Paul, for example, the weavers Denis Monnet and Pierre Chazot had been celebrities in 1790 when they collaborated to unmask the royalist "Lyon Plan". But, after holding several sectional offices and the presidency of his club, Monnet became an associate of the Rolandin Billemaz and a *notable* under Vitet, while Chazot, a partisan of Chaliier, was a *notable* in the radical municipality of 1792. After its overthrow Monnet served as a "federalist" *commissaire surveillant*; Chazot was in gaol.¹⁰⁸

The insurrection of 29 May was provoked by the news that the montagnard Representatives on Mission at Grenoble were sending troops to Lyon. Precisely what the Representatives intended is not clear. But in Lyon, where the montagnards' commitment to the Chaliier faction was well known, it was not difficult to believe the rumours that "the deputies are coming to bring the *muscadins* to their senses". With the approval of the departmental directory, still Rolandin, the anti-Jacobin sections called out their National Guard battalions and an *ad hoc* committee despatched them to seize the Town Hall, which they succeeded in doing after several hours of fighting.¹⁰⁹

Before 29 May an ambiguous relationship existed between the clubs and the anti-Jacobin movement which developed into the "federalist" rebellion of 1793. The campaign for sectional permanence began in February with the formation of *assemblées populaires* which were obviously intended as rivals to the clubs but which were nevertheless supported by the moderate clubbists.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ A.D., 34L1, Club of la Belle-Cordière, 11 April 1793; Club of la Croix-Rousse, 25 Feb., 24 April 1793; A.C., 124, d. 45, f. 43, Club of la Croisette, 13 March 1793. See De Francesco, "Le quartier lyonnais de la Croisette", pp. 50-51.

¹⁰⁸ See Edmonds, "A Study in Popular Anti-Jacobinism", pp. 227-237, and *Procès-verbaux des Séances de la Commission populaire, républicaine et de salut public de Rhône-et-Loire 30 Juin - 8 Octobre 1793*, ed. G. Guigue (Lyon, 1899), p. 480, *acte d'accusation* against Pierre Chazot, 31 July 1793.

¹⁰⁹ For argument supporting this view of the *journée* of 29 May see A. Latreille (ed.), *Histoire de Lyon et du Lyonnais* (Toulouse, 1975), pp. 296-297; Bill Edmonds, "'Federalism' and Urban Revolt in France in 1793", *Journal of Modern History*, lv. 1 (March 1983), 43-45, and "A Jacobin Débâcle", pp. 5-7 ("Muscadin" meant the opposite of *sans-culotte*).

¹¹⁰ A.C., 124, d. 45, f. 40, Club of la Croisette, 3 March 1793; C.M., iv. 104, 18 Feb. 1793.

The tactical considerations which had caused the anti-Jacobins to move into the permanent sections were reinforced on 15 May when the Committee of Public Safety closed the Club of la Croisette, the rallying point of the dissident clubs.¹¹¹ After the overthrow of the Jacobin municipality the *sectionnaires* developed the theory that the sections *en permanence* were the complete expression of popular sovereignty, rendering "sociétés partielles" such as the clubs unnecessary.¹¹² Consequently, the clubs were banned, but the sections continued to operate in the same decentralized way. The provisional municipality was a kind of anti-Jacobin *Club central*, composed of sectional delegates which received delegations and took advice from the sections just as the Rolandin municipality had done in 1791.¹¹³ This continuity with the forms of popular democracy established in 1790, together with the extreme care taken to respect the autonomy of the quarters (no major decision was taken until a majority of the sections, individually consulted, had consented¹¹⁴), helped make the "federalist" regime acceptable to some former partisans of the clubs.

Nevertheless "federalism" followed up the Jacobins' attack on popular democracy with damaging blows. In effect the "federalist" régime re-established the political dominance of the propertied classes both at sectional and at municipal levels, and even more solidly, to judge by the available evidence, in the *Commission populaire* elected on 24 June to carry on the struggle against the Convention in the name of the Department of Rhône-et-Loire.¹¹⁵ The "federalists" used repression to consolidate their defeat of the Jacobins, and this inevitably fell heavily on the clubbists and popular militants who had sympathised with the latter. There is little detailed evidence on the victims of "federalist" repression apart from the Jacobin members of the municipality and other administrative bodies, who were arrested, and Chalier and Riard (accused respectively of incitement to murder and of murder on

¹¹¹ A.C., 1²20, d. 230, Committee of Public Safety of Rhône-et-Loire, interrogation of C.-F. Dubost, president of the Club of la Croisette.

¹¹² See *Adresse du peuple de Lyon à la République Française* (Lyon, 14 June 1793), p. 13.

¹¹³ See C.M., iv. 275-444, 30 May - 5 Oct. 1793.

¹¹⁴ See Edmonds, "A Study in Popular Anti-Jacobinism", p. 248.

¹¹⁵ For tabulated evidence on these points see the present author's "A Case Study in Popular Anti-Jacobinism", pp. 220-221, and "'Federalism' and Urban Revolt in France in 1793", p. 30.

29 May), who were executed in July. But it seems probable that the sectional *comités de surveillance* followed the principles enunciated before his section by the stationer Duperret "who said that sectional cards [which were necessary to vote] should not be given to these clubists and disarmed people ... and that there should be another review to disarm suspects ... which was ordered".¹¹⁶ The repression seems to have been socially selective. Of those arrested during the rebellion who have been identified occupationally by Longfellow (29 out of 460 recorded arrests), 11 were silk-weavers.¹¹⁷ And the National Guard battalions known to have been largely or totally disarmed were mostly from poor and traditionally militant areas.¹¹⁸ The "federalist" period in Lyon was thus a foretaste of Thermidor and a warning of the dangers of dabbling in popular politics. Supporters of the Jacobins were accused of being hired agitators "paid to assist the plots and spread the principles of the municipality",¹¹⁹ and they were persecuted accordingly. In these ways the "federalists" sought not only to reverse the transfer of political power to the *menu peuple* which the clubs had achieved but to represent it as part of a criminal conspiracy.

After the army of the Convention captured Lyon on 9 October 1793, the "federalists" suffered repression in their turn. In the process further blows were struck against the popular democratic movement. Those of its adherents who had become involved in "federalism" were denounced and executed and the institutions on which it had been built were destroyed. A Jacobin Club was set up but no attempt was made to revive the *clubs de quartier*. The Parisians sent to regenerate Lyon held the belief that its inhabitants, not excluding the mass of the working population, were thoroughly corrupt and incapable of true patriotism: "there are no innocents in this infamous city save those who were

¹¹⁶ A.D., 42L74, d. 2 (92), denunciation by Chollet, 31 Oct. 1793.

¹¹⁷ Longfellow, art. cit., p. 22.

¹¹⁸ They were Saint-Georges, la Juiverie, Bon-Rencontre, le Rhône, Pierre-Scize and Plat d'Argent (A.D., 31L19, *comité de surveillance* of Pierre-Scize, 3 June 1793; 31L20, f. 90, undated resolution by the Section of Port-Saint-Paul applauding the disarmaments; 42L63, d. 78, declaration by the Section of le Rhône, 25 Oct. 1793).

¹¹⁹ A.D., 1L987, accusation against Claude Bertholat, silk-weaver, 7 June 1793. He had been arrested for supporting the municipality on 29 May.

oppressed or loaded with chains by the people's assassins".¹²⁰ They acted accordingly, barring from positions of authority all but the demonstrably trustworthy—"les amis de Chalier", former prisoners of the "federalists" and those who had fought for the municipality on 29 May. Admission to the local Jacobin Club was closely supervised by the Representatives on Mission. Despite this, it proved prone to criticize the regenerating activities of the outsiders and so was purged both during the Terror and soon after Thermidor to be re-formed each time with a "noyau" of trustworthy militants, again selected by the Representatives.¹²¹ The Jacobins of the Year II and after were thus an imposed political élite rather than representatives of an indigenous popular movement.

Since the capture of the city one important function had been left to the sections. Their *comités révolutionnaires* assumed the task of supervising suspects and rounding up federalists¹²² and, even if their members were selected by the Jacobin Club rather than by their fellow-citizens, they represented a kind of continuity with pre-"federalist" popular politics. They used their knowledge of their quarters to provide lengthy dossiers on suspects, often with comments in mitigation of minor "federalist" offences, such as Pierre Vigne's service as a "federalist" grenadier during the siege: "it is known to the committee that the said Vigne is so simple that he could be considered without injustice to be an imbecile and it is not difficult to believe that he was forced to serve ... considering that he was so to speak the plaything of his company".¹²³ But the administrators of the Terror wearied of the committees' occasional fits of leniency, their pursuit of personal vendettas, their lapses of efficiency (it was difficult to find personnel who were both literate and "virtuous", that is to say poor¹²⁴) and

¹²⁰ Collot d'Herbois and Fouché to the Convention, 26 Brumaire, Year II (16 Nov. 1793), in *Recueil des Actes du Comité de Salut public avec la Correspondance officielle des Représentants en Mission et le Registre du Conseil exécutif provisoire*, 12 vols. (Paris, 1891ff.), viii. 479.

¹²¹ On the Jacobin club of Lyon in the Year II see R.C. Cobb, *Les armées révolutionnaires. Instrument de la Terreur dans les départements, Avril 1793-Floréal An II*, 12 vols. (Paris, 1963), ii. 788-794, and Longfellow, art. cit., pp. 25-26.

¹²² Longfellow, art. cit., p. 29.

¹²³ A.D., 42L94, prisoners of Gasparin section (Saint-Vincent), undated (Year II).

¹²⁴ Longfellow, art. cit., p. 30.

the sheer unwieldiness of collecting information from thirty-two separate sources. In January 1794 the sectional committees were abolished and replaced by nine *comités de canton*.¹²⁵ This was the end of the quarters which had been the basis of popular organization in Lyon since the old régime. Further administrative reorganization under the Directory, again based on large units, made sure that the political life of the quarters did not revive.¹²⁶

The White Terror continued the process of destruction, this time the destruction of those who had used the popular democratic movement as a springboard to municipal office. Murder gangs decimated the remainder of the *sans-culotte* municipality and District Tribunal of 1792. Of those who had not been killed by the federalists,¹²⁷ or sheltered in relatively safe places in the countryside or in Valence, Vienne and the *faubourgs* of Lyon, many were confined to the city by the decree of 5 Ventôse, Year III (23 February 1795). If they were allowed to remain in their homes they could be dealt with at leisure by their enemies, and all the more easily after the *comité révolutionnaire* of Lyon (now composed of anti-terrorists) ordered that each dwelling should bear a "very legible" list of its inhabitants which was to be posted near the entrance "at a convenient height".¹²⁸ If they were taken to prison, they could be killed either on the way there under the none-too-vigilant eye of the National Guard or in the prisons themselves, where the murder gangs operated with impunity in the Spring of 1795. Louis Dubois, Claude Vital, Jean Roullot, Roullot's wife and J.-B. Carteron were killed in the great prison massacres of 14-17 Floréal; Roux (a *notable* in 1792-1793), Joseph Fernex and Charles Turin were victims of separate murders during the Year III.¹²⁹

There is another dimension to the extinction of the popular

¹²⁵ See Joseph Fouché, *Convention Nationale. Rapport de Fouché sur la situation de Commune-affranchie* (Paris, 6 germinal, Year II), pp. 4-5; A.C., 126(8), order establishing the new committees and naming their members, signed by the Representatives on Mission Fouché, Méaulle and Laporte.

¹²⁶ The changes are summarized in *Ville de Lyon. Conseil Municipal. Procès-verbaux des Séances 1800-1870*, vol. I, An IX-An XIV (Lyon, 1913), pp. 1-2. On 7 Brumaire, Year II (28 October 1794), the *comités de canton* were replaced by a single *comité révolutionnaire de surveillance du District de Lyon* (R. Fuoc, *La réaction thermidorienne à Lyon (1795)* (Lyon, 1957), pp. 69-70).

¹²⁷ The municipal officer Sautemouche had been murdered on 26 June, the night of his release from prison (*Secrétariat* (see, n. 121), pp. 188-189). Hidins was said to have committed suicide while under detention by the rebels.

¹²⁸ Fuoc, op. cit., pp. 63, 76.

¹²⁹ See *ibid.*, pp. 122-196.

movement of 1790-1793. In October of 1806 two men were arrested in the village of Saint-Symphorien-de-Lay, north-west of Lyon. They had been drinking in the inn and speaking against the Imperial Army. Amongst their belongings were found four copper seals engraved with the eye of vigilance, a crowing cock and the words *Comité de Surveillance Extraordinaire*. There were 54 packets containing placards, each marked with the names of different cities. The placards announced the arrest of Bonaparte and the Imperial family and the establishment of a Committee of Surveillance which would re-found the Republic. The plan had been to seize arms from a depot in Roanne and then—presumably with more support—to go on via Mâcon to Paris, where the Bonapartes were to be executed. The men were the weaver Pierre Chazot and the book-keeper Jean Richard, municipal officers in 1792-1793 who had escaped the White Terror by fleeing to Valence. In their baggage they had packed their tri-coloured official scarves.¹³⁰ These remnants of popular militancy had given up the clubs' democratic methods and their goal of educating the people to an understanding of its rights—they had little choice under Napoleon—and had become blocked in the blind alley of conspiratorial Jacobinism.

The democratic movement which had been launched in 1790 to serve the purposes of a section of the radical bourgeoisie was destroyed because its aims and methods came into conflict with those of the factions which were struggling for control of France in 1793. It parted ways with its Rolandin patrons because of their opposition to popular economic demands and then with its new Jacobin allies because its political structure was incompatible with their centralized and élitist political methods. The propertied classes, haunted by the fear of insurrection and pillage, were horrified by the election of the *sans-culotte* municipality, which marked the high tide of popular democracy, and even more by the influence of Chalier's radicals over the now ascendant clubs. They gained control of the anti-Jacobin movement which had begun in the clubs and used it to crush them. After the defeat of the "federalist" rebellion, the montagnards had no more use for the clubs or the sections which had sustained the popular movement in Lyon since 1790. So were torn out the roots put down by democratic political activity into the lower strata of Lyonnais society.

¹³⁰ A.C., 1²13, ff. 37-52, interrogations of Chazot and Richard, 8-12 October 1806, and documents in evidence against them.

The pattern of Lyonnais popular politics varied from the Parisian in some ways. Because there was no strong *patriote* party in 1790, concessions from bourgeois revolutionaries towards popular democrats came early and the clubs developed early into an effective force. But the relationship between bourgeois revolutionaries and the politically active elements of the *menu peuple* was similar to that which Soboul discovered in Paris. It was an uneasy partnership founded on a shared desire to defend the revolution but unable to last because the partners held contradictory views of the revolution's social and political goals. The clubs in the poorer quarters of Lyon stood against the limited suffrage of the constitutional monarchy and for a kind of direct democracy which enabled them to influence the policy of the municipality and its composition. They gave their allegiance to bourgeois politicians only so long as their interests as consumers seemed to be protected and the autonomy of their sections preserved. If some of them became anti-Jacobins in the Spring of 1793 it was not because the *menu peuple* in Lyon and Paris responded to different impulses or because the Lyonnais possessed a peculiar particularist mentality, but because Chalier's Jacobins, having failed to satisfy popular social demands, had turned against the club movement which had placed them in power and were proposing to rely on support from Paris to keep them there. The popular democracy of the clubs could no more be reconciled with the aims of the montagnards and their local supporters than popular conceptions of economic justice with the *laissez-faire* principles of the Rolandins. As in the case of the Parisian *sans-culotte* movement, it was for this reason that the disintegration of Lyon's clubs began. By their combined efforts the montagnards, the "federalists" and the Thermidorians ensured that the popular democratic movement in Lyon could not renew its challenge to the political dominance of the propertied classes. Lyon's history during the revolution provides a clear demonstration of the reasons why, after its vigorous flowering in the early 1790s, democratic activity amongst the French working classes virtually ceased for more than a generation.

Appendix I

Two criteria have been used to determine the relative affluence of the sections of Lyon at the time of the revolution: (1) the

percentage of *éligibles* according to the table in A.D. 1L332-335, Elections 1790-1791; (2) the percentage of the population given assistance by the *Société philanthropique* in 1789 (from J.-P. Gutton, *La Société et les Pauvres. L'exemple de la généralité de Lyon 1534-1789* (Lyon, 1970), p. 55). The only census giving population figures per section was completed in January 1794 (see Riffaterre, *op. cit.*, i. 105). In view of the lapse of time between the various sets of figures used, this ranking should be regarded only as a rough guide.

The sections have been grouped in ascending order of affluence. Those italicised appear twice under A and/or B or C and/or D and so can be classified as "poor" or "wealthy" with some confidence.

A		B	
(1) Less than 5 °.	(2) More than 20 °.	(1) 5-10 °.	(2) 15-20 °.
<i>Saint-Georges</i>	<i>Saint-Georges</i>	Le Gourguillon	<i>Rue Belle-Cordière</i>
<i>Port-Saint-Paul</i>	<i>Port-Saint-Paul</i>	<i>Porte-Froc</i>	Rue Buisson
<i>La Juiverie</i>	<i>La Juiverie</i>	<i>Place Neuve</i>	Rue Neuve
<i>Pierre-Scize</i>	<i>Pierre-Scize</i>	<i>La Change</i>	Le Griffon
<i>Saint-Vincent</i>	<i>Saint-Vincent</i>	<i>La Pêcherie</i>	<i>La Pêcherie</i>
<i>La Grande-Côte</i>	<i>La Grande-Côte</i>	<i>La Croisette</i>	
<i>L'Hôtel Dieu</i>	<i>l'Hôtel-Dieu</i>	<i>Bon-Rencontre</i>	
<i>Rue Belle-Cordière</i>	<i>Le Change</i>	<i>Plat-d'Argent</i>	
	<i>Place Neuve</i>	<i>Rue Thomassin</i>	<i>Rue Thomassin</i>
	<i>La Croisette</i>	Port-du-Temple	
	<i>Bon-Rencontre</i>	Place Confort	
	<i>Plat d'Argent</i>	Bellecour	
	<i>Porte-Froc</i>		
C		D	
(1) 10-15 °.	(2) 10-15 °.	(1) More than 15 °.	(2) Under 10 °.
<i>Les Terreaux</i>	<i>Le Gourguillon</i>	<i>Place Saint-Pierre</i>	<i>Place Saint-Pierre</i>
<i>Le Plâtre</i>	<i>Le Plâtre</i>		<i>Les Terreaux</i>
Rue Neuve	<i>Rue Tupin</i>		<i>Saint-Nizier</i>
<i>Saint-Nizier</i>	Place Confort		Bellecour
<i>Rue Tupin</i>			Port-du-Temple
Rue Buisson			
Le Griffon			

Appendix II

Changes in the sections of origin of municipal councillors
(including the mayor and *Procureur*), 1790-1792

<i>Poorest sections classified under both A(1) and A(2)</i>	1790		1791 ¹		1792	
Saint-Georges (1)			1		1	
Port Saint-Paul (7)					1	
La Juiverie (6)	1				1	
Pierre-Scize (8)		2	1	4	2	10
Saint-Vincent I and II (9-10)	1		1		1	
La Grand-Côte I and II (11-12)					3	
L'Hôtel-Dieu (29)			1		1	
<i>Sections classified under A and/or B</i>						
Rue Thomassin (26)	1				1	
Rue Belle-Cordière (30)					3	
La Pêcherie (16)			1			
Le Change (5)		5		2		5
Place Neuve (4)	1		1			
La Croisette (22)						
Bon-Rencontre (24)					1	
Plat d'Argent (25)						
Porte-Froc (3)						
<i>Sections classified under B and under C or D</i>						
Port du Temple (27)			3			
Place Confort (28)					1	
Le Gourguillon (2)						
Bellecour I and II (31-32)	7	11	3	8		5
Rue Buisson (23)	2					
Rue Neuve (19)	2		1			
Le Griffon I and II (10-13)			1		4	
<i>Sections classified under C and D</i>						
Les Terreaux (15)			1			
Le Plâtre (18)	1		2		1	
Saint-Nizier (20)	1	4	2	6		2
Rue Tupin (21)	2		1		1	
Place Saint-Pierre (17)						

¹ Two councillors were from the *faubourg* of la Guillotière which was attached to Lyon in 1791.

Appendix III

MUNICIPALITY OF LYON
MARCH 1790

	Occupation	Rent Assessment (l.)	Section **
Mayor			
Fleury-Zacharie-		600	31
Simon Palerne de Savy			
<i>Procureur</i>			
Jean François Dupuis		400	3
Municipal Officers			
* Jérôme Maisonneuve	merchant hatter	600	31
Mathieu-Marc-Antoine Nohac	<i>ex-échevin</i>	750	3
Jean-Baptiste Dupont	<i>négociant</i>	450	19
André Lagier	bourgeois		9
Louis Felissent l'ainé	<i>négociant</i>	850	18
Jos. Fulchiron	banker	1,000	19
Luc Candy	mercier	400	21
Jacques-Fr. Vauberet-Jacquier	<i>ex-échevin</i>	1,000	31
Jos. Vachon	baker	200	21
Jos. Vidalin	<i>négociant</i>	410	23
Jean-Marie Bruyset fils aîné	<i>imprimeur du Roi</i>	1,400	31
Jos.-Marie Goudard le jeune	<i>négociant</i>	335	32
Jos. Courbon	<i>custode-curé</i> of Ste. Croix		4
Claude-Jn.-Marie Dervieu de Varey	bourgeois	1,600	31
Jn.-Pre Granier l'ainé	<i>négociant</i>		31
Claude Charmetton l'ainé	<i>négociant</i>		26
Jn.-Marie Servan l'ainé	draper	100	20
* Louis Berthelet	bourgeois	300	6
P.-A. Faure	<i>négociant</i>	1,200	23
Jn.-Fois Vitet	<i>avocat</i>	800	3

* 'patriotes'

** See Appendix II for the corresponding names.

MUNICIPALITY OF LYON
DECEMBER 1791

	Occupation	Rent Assessment (l.)	Section
Mayor			
* Louis Vitet	physician	900	29
<i>Procureur</i>			
* Luc-Antoine de Rozière de Champagneux	<i>avocat</i>	500	4
Municipal Officers			
* Claude Arnaud-Tizon cadet	linen draper	900	20
Claude Bonnard	master stocking- weaver		8
Dennis Breton			
Claude Carron	silk-weaver		9
* Joseph Chalier	<i>négociant</i>	320	19
Jean-François Chalon	silk-weaver		21
* Antoine Chapuy	shoemaker		18
Gilbert Combe-Pachot	<i>négociant</i>	800	18
Joseph-Honoré Curet			33
Toussaint Gleyze			27
Antoine Henri	master stocking- weaver		1
* François-Joseph Lange	'artiste'		31
* Eusèbe Morénas	mercier	150	27
* Antoine Nivière-Chol	<i>négociant</i>	800	13
* Jean-François Perret	controller of the mint	400	27
Nicholas-Simon Picard	mercier		15
Joseph Rivaux	commission agent		20
* Jean-Marie Roland	inspector of manufactures		31
* Jean-Antoine Sicard	mercantile broker	300	16
* Antoine Vingtrinier	furrier	1,000	32
* Rolandins			

MUNICIPALITY OF LYON
DECEMBER 1792

	Occupation	Rent Assessment (l.)	Section
Mayor			
* Antoine Nivière-Chol	<i>négociant</i>	800	13
Procureur			
C. Auguste Laussel	ex-priest, journalist		
Municipal Officers			
Louis Bédor	silk-weaver	10	11
Antoine-Marie Bertrand	<i>négociant</i>	100	18
Dominique Bicon	Silk-weaver	20	8
Jean-Marie Biolet		600	9
Etienne Boyet	gauze-weaver	50	29
Pierre Chazot	stocking-weaver	50	7
Jean-Jos. Destéphanis	printer's clerk	70	26
Louis Dubois	silk-weaver	70	1
François Francalet		100	24
* Toussaint Gleyze	<i>négociant</i>	360	6
Claude Gravier	vinegar maker	80	30
Jean-François Milou	taxation clerk	240	21
Vincent Noel	actor	200	11
Jean Richard	book-keeper	150	10
Gilbert Roch	second-hand furniture dealer	30	11
Jean Sallier	<i>rentier</i>	216	14
Odo Sautemouche	ink retailer	120	28
Charles Turin	stocking-weaver	45	30
Thomas Villard	hatter	60	30
* Julien Vanrisamburgh	<i>négociant</i>	1,080	13

* Rolandins

(*Procès-verbaux des Séances des Corps Municipaux de la Ville de Lyon, 1787-An VIII* (4 vols.), Lyon, 1900-1904. See also n. 83 above.)