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**Laurence H. Winnie**, *Family Dynasty, Revolutionary Society: The Cochins of Paris, 1750-1922*. Westport, Conn. and London: Greenwood Press, 2002. vii + 247 pp. Notes, illustrations, appendix, bibliography, and index. \$72.95 U.S. (cl). ISBN 0-313-31361-X.

Review by Carol E. Harrison, University of South Carolina.

The men of the Cochin family, from the old regime to the Third Republic, shared a sense of moral probity and public responsibility imposed by their notable status. Increasingly, their image of self and family found itself at odds with French public life. Following male generations of the Cochin family across the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Laurence H. Winnie considers the gulf that opened between French notables and the state. He proposes to examine the "issues that separated these beneficiaries of the Old Regime urban framework from the age after the Revolution," to explain why these notables found themselves unable to adapt to new circumstances, and, finally, to explore what France lost with their "disenchantment" (p. 1).

Winnie starts with the domestic circle in chapters that examine family relations, particularly between fathers and sons, and financial management (chapters two and three). Winnie then takes the Cochins from conjugal home to public sphere in chapters on charity and social reform and their relationship to the Roman catholic church (four and five). These issues lead to what, for Winnie, is the heart of the matter, a pair of chapters on "Politics and the Revolution" (six and seven) that trace the Cochins' engagement with French political life from 1789 into the Third Republic. Within each chapter we move chronologically forward from the old regime through a series of Cochin men and the revolutionary backdrop of French and Parisian politics.

The dynastic story begins in the late seventeenth century, when Claude Cochin, mercer, moved the family business to Paris where the Cochins soon became respectable pillars of city life. The Cochins were an old regime success story, taking advantage of guilds, venal office, ecclesiastical connections, and careful marriages, and they were on their way into the ranks of nobility by 1789. The familial strategies of prudent investment and prudent marriage remained productive after the Revolution when the Cochins established themselves as liberal Parisian notables. Cochin politics in the new regime were similarly prudent, committed to moderate notions of a *juste milieu* more fervently than to any particular regime or party. Cochin loyalties adhered to family, public service, especially to the city of Paris, and to the church: the Cochin dynasty and its principles mattered more than any royal dynasty.

As the nineteenth century wore on, however, the Cochins did not change nearly as much as France did. While the Cochins could ride out the French Revolution, they ultimately could not come to terms with the permanent institutions of mass politics. The 1885 secularization of the Hôpital Cochin, the centerpiece of the family's catholic-inspired public service, epitomized the conflict between the family and the republic: the Sisters of St. Mary were forced out, and the Bureau of Public Assistance

reconstituted the hospital's administrative council, eliminating the Cochin seat on the board (p. 101). Denys Cochin, the head of the family who waged an unsuccessful legal battle to maintain control of the hospital, also ran several unsuccessful electoral campaigns before finding a safe seat in Paris' eighth arrondissement. In Denys' hands the Cochin tradition of social reform became increasingly defensive, and in the next generation it diminished to a purely personal, even secretive, charity. Denys' son, Augustin, became the first Cochin in seven generations to avoid public office, turning instead to the writing of history, but always remaining conscious that "his historical work did not measure up to his duty that he owed the family name" (p. 186).

The contrast between the historian Augustin (1876-1916) and his grandfather, also Augustin (1823-1872), exemplifies the alienation of notables like the Cochins from democratic politics in France. The grandfather, a denizen of liberal catholic circles, came of age in 1848 and, during his career in opposition to the Second Empire, remained firm in his conviction that liberty and catholic faith were compatible. Believing that vice was the principal cause of political disorder, he nonetheless reserved his strongest disapproval for the vices of the elite: bourgeois greed that turned its back on the responsibilities of notables and on the injustices suffered by the poor. He chose to be buried in the chapel of the Hôpital Cochin. His grandson, however, the final Cochin in the book, despaired of his fellow citizens and dedicated himself to justifying the Cochin legacy by writing bitter histories of the failures of the French Revolution. The grandfather would hardly have recognized Cochin family tradition in the younger Augustin's insistence that "the people" were a meaningless abstraction and "that the political 'machine' was the center of democratic rule" (p. 189).

Winnie's story of the end of the notables is not new, but he reminds us that their alienation from politics was an "eclipse" (p. 2) that was a century in the making. French democratic politics and a modern, class-based social order did not emerge fully formed from the Revolution; rather, they worked themselves out slowly across the nineteenth century. The rich archives of the Cochin family, on which *Family Dynasty, Revolutionary Society* is based, allow Winnie to trace these developments as a function both of individual opinion and of family tradition. The focus on individuals, however, means that the reader is sometimes uncertain of the answers to Winnie's initial questions. Were the Cochins and notables like them excluded from public life by republican mass politics, particularly anticlericalism? Or did they exclude themselves by their unwillingness to give up their sense of dynastic privilege? The Cochins themselves offered different answers to this question, with the two Augustins representing the extremes. If the reader should opt for some combination of these possibilities, in what proportions should they be mixed?

*Family Dynasty, Revolutionary Society* would have benefited by greater attention to recent literature on bourgeois culture and gender. Winnie notes that women's voices are silent in the Cochin family archive, although "the record implies that they were active, forceful, and upright" (p. 37). He follows that self-consciously constructed archive in presenting the Cochin family as a dynasty of men. There are clear hints, however, that reading the sources against the grain might offer some insight into the lives of the Cochin women and clarify the role of family in nineteenth-century political life. The first Augustin Cochin, for instance, appears to have recorded many of his most carefully articulated thoughts on religion and social reform in letters to his wife. Adéline Cochin herself wrote and published devotional *Méditations* and annotated some of the family papers, noting, for instance, that early nineteenth-century political upheaval had weakened her father-in-law's faith (p. 45 n. 57 and p. 134 n. 10). Adéline Cochin did not confine her commentary to religious matters; her correspondence also reveals the extent to which the judgment and the salons of Cochin women contributed to the political careers of the Cochin men. (p. 175)

Certainly it would be nice to know more about the Cochin women, and the records' silence is unfortunate, if familiar. But the question of gender nonetheless imposes itself on the history of the Cochins, in their political and religious commitments as well as in their affective lives. In particular, the Cochins' devout catholicism raises questions about gender, public life, and religious faith. While scholars

commonly associate the nineteenth century with the feminization of the church, generations of Cochin men lived through the same period as faithful Catholics. They looked to the church not only for direction in their relationships with their wives and children but also for guidance in their roles as political and economic actors. The Cochin men declared themselves to be Catholics in the most public forum possible, and their engagement with their faith as husbands and fathers as well as notables and candidates suggests promising lines of inquiry into gender and Catholicism.

Finally, Winnie's account of what France lost in the conflict between republicanism and the politics of the notables is troubling. Clearly Winnie admires the Cochins, and there is much that is admirable in their record of public service. However, Winnie's insistence that the family represented "tolerance and pluralism" is unconvincing (p. 181, see also p. 172). Denys Cochin confronted the Third Republic's anticlericalism with incomprehension and regret. It seems likely, however, that Denys' disappointment stemmed from a belief that history granted Catholics a special status within the French nation rather than from a pluralist sense that religion should be a private matter and that a French republic should accommodate multiple beliefs, including Catholicism. Winnie is closer to the mark when he notes that Denys "was reduced to declaring that France was great according to how much it protected notables and Catholics from the power of the State" (p. 173.) We may well wish to argue that republican anticlericalism was a rejection of pluralist democracy; that does not mean, however, that victims of anticlerical policies were necessarily defenders of pluralism.

Ultimately, the Cochins do not need these particular political credentials to engage our interest; the complexities of their lives as men in a revolutionary era, doing their best in their relationships with their fathers and their sons, their peers and their inferiors are quite sufficient. The principal virtue of Winnie's book is that, with the aid of the family's own remarkable archive, it breathes life into the often stuffy figures of bourgeois men, including their hesitations and failings.

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