

THE PARISIAN BOURGEOISIE 1400-1600:

PROBLEMS AND ATTITUDES

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Preface

A preface is generally reserved for two things: a short account of the problem dealt with and why it attracted the writer, and a series of acknowledgements to those who helped the author see the light at the end of the tunnel.

An analysis of a pre-industrial bourgeoisie as seen through the words of their representatives is an attractive task, but developing concepts to provide an analysis of its historical development, and judging its class basis and cohesion, is more difficult. Regardless of the complexities posed by the topic, the thesis has led to an intimate acquaintance with three members of the pre-modern bourgeoisie, and some of the vast literature on the period, although there is little that bears directly on the topic.

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Abstract

The thesis deals with the nature of the pre-modern bourgeoisie, with specific reference to France and Paris, and its development in the period 1400-1600. An attempt was made to define the bourgeoisie in terms of class, while keeping in mind the complexities imposed upon the topic by the existence of the bourgeoisie in a feudal world.

The French bourgeoisie is seen to lack a strong class consciousness due to the weakness of its economic base, the strength of the emerging French national state, and the survival of feudal values.

The attitudes of the three Parisian bourgeois as seen through journals kept in 1405-1449, 1515-1536, and 1574-1613, illustrate that the bourgeoisie is a socially conservative class, fearing disorder and war, in favour of a strong monarchy, which respects bourgeois privileges.

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Introduction

In studying the problems and attitudes of the bourgeoisie from 1400-1600, we believed that a useful tool would be the examination of several bourgeois diaries. This presupposes a concordance between diarist and society as well as a monolithic concept of the bourgeoisie of any given period. This proposition proved to be false, as our first diarist, a cleric in the University of Paris, the second a member of the lower-middle bourgeoisie, and the third, an upper bourgeois, each represent different strata of society in different centuries and thus each provide partial portraits of their times. Because of this discordance, we found ourselves --of necessity-- using the journals as particular illustrations of the events of a period, rather than as the core of the study.

There is a basic methodological difficulty involved in the usage of journals. The first is that of the representativeness of a particular diarist vis-à-vis his fellow bourgeois (even of the same stratum). Even with this assumption, the difficulty comes in relating a personal and event-orientated journal-style to a more general and theoretical discussion of movement within a society, concepts of class struggle,

economic development and the like which the diarist discusses- if ~~at~~ all- in a particularized sense. We therefore must impose our framework upon the daily notations of the individual and often disregard the journal altogether when the events described have no relation or import to the framework. This creates a sense of distance from the journalist and his work, and one loses touch with the flow of daily existence which is particularly rich, we should add, in Pierre de l'Estoile's journal. Yet in order to express this richness we would have to fall into the anecdotal and lose the sense of our purpose: the description and analysis of societal forces.

Chapter I

I

The primary problem encountered in approaching the topic The Parisian Bourgeoisie 1400-1600: Problems and Attitudes, consists in the defining of the term bourgeoisie. There are two related approaches to a definition: one is to trace the functional role and position of the bourgeoisie in society, the other is to observe how the bourgeoisie as a social group, or class, or order, felt about its existence. The first approach can be developed through an examination of the major secondary literature, the second through a study of various journals written by members of the Parisian bourgeoisie during this period. Using both perspectives allows us to determine to what extent the self-conception of the bourgeoisie changes, and whether such changes correspond to shifts in its social position within French society.

The above use of the terms "class", "social groups", and "order" present immediate conceptual problems. Class, as used by Marxist historians, describes the relationships of various groups to the modes of production which exist in society, and the social antagonism that results from differences in this relationship. While this approach is valid

when applied to an industrialized capitalist society, its use in a pre-capitalist economy is more difficult. In order to apply a Marxist interpretation to the problem, we must employ a modified definition of class. We shall postulate that classes are defined by antagonism to one another, given the lesser importance of an economic base as a determining factor in feudal society.¹ In such a society, ties of relationship based on land were more important than the demands of the marketplace. Furthermore, when we characterize the members of the bourgeoisie as a class we are not speaking of the collective mass of the inhabitants of a city, but rather those who are merchants and professional men and who enjoy leisure activity and a privileged status.

The internal divisions within the population of a city are perhaps more important than the conflict between the masters of the city and the surrounding landed aristocracy. Indeed, one fifteenth century writer postulated that it was the duty of the higher bourgeoisie to hold in check the populace of the kingdom.² This hardening division of classes in the

¹This is not to deny that social ties of a hierarchical order are an explicit bond of society, while the productive forces are the implicit one. However, explicit ties shape society far more than implicit ones in some cultures.

²Christine de Pisan, Le Livre du Corps de Policie, ed. R.H. Lucas (Geneva: L. Droz, 1967), p. xxxi, introduction. The work was written in 1407 as a manual for the education of the nobility. The writer was the wife of a French man of letters. She lived from ca. 1364-1430. She dislikes the tumult of the "menu peuple" which is why she assigns this role to the upper bourgeoisie.

city went hand in hand with the closing of entry into the métiers of the city in the fourteenth century and the rise of a hereditary system of guild masters and governing bourgeoisie.³

This upper bourgeoisie, as a class, is antagonistic to the nobility in late feudal society. This antagonism is bred within the city, a repository of a market economy and non-agricultural production, which, heavily regulated as it may have been, provided fluidity in terms of social status for its inhabitants. In it the bourgeoisie was able to acquire wealth and prestige, which carried with them the means to achieve a legalized position of authority within the newly emerging nation-state.

The city generated wealth through a more highly concentrated and organized form of production than that of

³This problem will be dealt with in Chapter II, parts I and II. Bronislaw Geremek, Le salariat dans l'artisanat parisien aux XIII^e-XV^e siècles: Études sur le marché de main-d'œuvre au Moyen Âge, trans. Anna Passer and Christine Klapsich-Zuber (Paris: Mouton, 1968). Not only were guilds becoming increasingly closed through legal regulations, but the material conditions that the artisan had to supply in order to become a master were difficult to meet. "En fin de compte, l'unique cause de l'existence de la catégorie de valets est donc le manque d'argent plutôt qu'une interdiction formelle ou que des exigences d'ordre technique. Des locaux pour installer l'atelier, l'acquisition des instruments de travail, l'achat des matières premières, le versement des redevances, souvent élevées, exigées pour l'accès à la maîtrise-tout contraignait à réunir des moyens financiers assez considérables" (pp.39-40).

the countryside. The operation of craft industries, the specialization of the means of production in export industries, and the necessity to accumulate capital in order to compensate for the time differential involved in the lag between the manufacture and the sale of articles provided a dominant position within the town to a certain segment of the bourgeoisie.⁴

A second reason for the opposition between the two classes was the desire on the part of the bourgeoisie to enter the ranks of the nobility, which was the dominant class in feudal society. Bourgeois attempts at entry generated conflict and distrust between the two classes. One of the few bonds that tied the nobility together was that of noble birth. It united the nobility and was seen as the most important factor distinguishing it from the rest of society, although this sense of difference exists throughout our period, and despite legislation aimed at maintaining the nobility as an exclusive class, the bourgeoisie, and even wealthy peasants, entered it fairly frequently.⁵

⁴R. Larmour, "A Merchant Guild of Sixteenth Century France: The Grocers of Paris", Economic History Review, Sec. Ser. xx (No. 3, 1967), p.471.

⁵Edouard Perroy, "Social Mobility Among the French Noblesse in the later Middle Ages", Past and Present, No. 21 (April, 1962), p.29. The nobility, while a closed legal class, was, in reality, a socially open class (p.36).

One only has to look at the career of a bourgeois cloth merchant of the sixteenth century named Jehan Vocquelin, who in his constant striving after wealth was a "draper, rural proprietor, and landed rentier, seller of wool, seller of grain, and collector of land", and also a usurer of sorts, in order to see an example of a successful bourgeois who begins to establish himself on the land in order to reap profitable income. The next step in his rise in society is to aim at the entrance of his family into the nobility.⁶

Conflict between the bourgeoisie and other classes of late medieval Europe, while inherent in the economic process of society, assumed visible form when the bourgeoisie found itself threatened or denied rights of advancement through the social hierarchy. We shall see that this struggle took place in France between 1358 and 1600.

In dealing with the thematic problems encountered in the thesis, chronology often suffers. When defining the bourgeoisie or a class we shall jump around a great deal in offering proofs for our hypotheses. When using the terms "bourgeois class", we have assumed a social and economic base for definition. The words estate and order refer to legal groupings. Estate, order and class are all valid and often intermingle, but the use of the last term, we hope, will be

⁶Jacques Le Goff, "Une Fortune Bourgeoise aux XVI^e Siècle", Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine, I (Janvier-Mars, 1954), p. 14.

permissible.⁷

When editing the journal of Nicholas de Baye, a canon of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame and the greffier of the Parlement of Paris, Alexandre de Tuetz wrote that the journal

⁷Frédéric Mauro, in Le XVI^e Siècle Européen: Aspects Economiques (Paris: P.U.F., 1966), maintains that hierarchies were only broken to some extent in the sixteenth century through the existence of a heavy bureaucracy (p.159). Most early modern historians accept European society as being divided into orders with family units playing a large role in social life. Roland Mounier is generally considered as being most representative of this school. Mounier has written that a society of orders and hierarchies is based on the source of revenue, not the amount of revenue obtained, Etat et Société sous François I^{er} et pendant le Gouvernement Personnel de Louis XIV (Paris: Centre de Documentation Universitaire, n.d.), p.47. Mounier believes Marx's analysis to be one of transitory value and applicable only to the nineteenth century, "Le concept de Classe Sociale et L'Histoire", Revue d'Histoire Economique et Sociale (1970), p.459. He writes "L'origine de la division du travail social réside dans une série de jugements de valeur, plus ou moins explicites, sur la nécessité, l'utilité, l'importance, la dignité, l'honneur, la grandeur, les différentes fonctions sociales. Ces jugements de valeur sont différents selon les sociétés, donc les systèmes de stratification sociale sont tous différents les uns des autres, bien qu'ils puissent se ramener à des types, d'où l'esprit tire des concepts hiérarchisés. En général les concepts se hiérarchisent selon la puissance, réelle ou supposée dans la société considérée, attribuée par cette société à telle ou telle fonction sociale. De là résulte, selon les sociétés, la prédominance du prêtre ou du guerrier, de l'ancien, de l'industriel, du savant, etc., (Ibid., p.456). Mounier derives his society of orders from the work of Charles Loyseau (b.1564) Traité des Ordres et Simples Dignités, in which society is divided into three orders, the last of which comprises seven honorable divisions. This includes "officiers de justice et finances" who are nobles of function and dignity; "les gens de lettres, pour l'honneur de la science; avocats; financiers; praticiens ou gens d'affaires; greffiers, notaires, procureurs", all members of the "robe longue"; "sergents, trompettes, priseurs, vendeurs", members of the "robe courte"; and finally merchants, of whom Loyseau wrote

offers an exceptional interest which, from its day of publication struck the learned: it gives us an inner view not only of an eminent churchman, but also one of those representatives of the bourgeois class of the fifteenth century who, by their work and merit, succeeded in securing a brilliant social position.⁸

(cont'd)"tout pour l'utilité, même nécessité publique du commerce que pour l'opulence ordinaire du marchand, qui leur apporte du crédit et du respect, et pour le moyen qu'ils ont d'employer les artisans et gens de bras, leur attribuent beaucoup de pouvoir dans les villes. Aussi les marchands sont les derniers du peuple qui portent qualité d'honneur, étant qualifiés "honorabile homme" ou "honnête personne", et "bourgeois des villes" (Etat et Société, p.50). Below these are the handworkers in various trades who can be bourgeois "s'ils habitent les villes privilégiées, qui ont droit de corps et communauté, s'ils ont part aux honneurs de la cité, à ses droits et privilèges et s'ils ont droit à ses assemblées" (Ibid., p.51).

Many bourgeois however attempted to emulate the nobility. Mousnier does not deny this. "Les Parisiens, depuis 1371, étaient tous nobles. Ils avaient le droit de porter ses armoires timbrées. Entendons ceux qui avaient le titre juridique de "bourgeois de Paris"; les bourgeois de Paris étaient tous nobles avec le droit de porter ses armoires timbrées, et le privilège de tenir ses fiefs sans payer aucune finance; ils n'étaient pas soumis au droit de franc-fief, ce qui dans la pratique leur donnait des facilités pour un annoblissement tacite.

C'était un privilège exorbitant, et je crois bien qu'il a été réduit en 1577. Seuls le prévôt des marchands et ses quatre échevins ont reçu chaque année ce genre de noblesse. Mais je dois dire que les Parisiens n'ont pas cessé de réclamer leurs privilèges anciens, et de se considérer comme nobles" (Ibid., p.207).

Mousnier, however, even after writing this passage keeps to a strictly outlined system of passage as being the only possible means of entry into the nobility. For Mousnier legal considerations are of more weight than observable social fact. E. Perroy has demonstrated in his study of the Forez that one-half of the nobility was replaced in any given century by bourgeoisie or peasantry, who become members of the nobility by living like a noble over a customary period of time (op.cit., p.31 & 36). Legal categories are not the determining fabric of medieval society; social realities are more important.

⁸ Journal de Nicholas de Baye, Greffier du Parlement de Paris 1400-1417, ed. Alexandre Tuetey I (Paris: Librairie Renouard,

For a member of the nineteenth century bourgeoisie, the rise to power of a fifteenth century bourgeois is an exciting and inspiring historical sight. A member of the church, in an administrative secular position, is a member of the bourgeoisie although he owns neither a factory nor merchandise, and employs a few domestics, rents a few houses, and owns land and livings. The criteria do not relate simply to a productive capacity but more importantly to residence and participation in a social space and culture.

Can one employ terms such as success or progress in relation to the bourgeoisie? Is the bourgeoisie successful if it has the ability to enter the nobility, or does its success lie in terms of the advancement of the position it occupies within society? Can one say that the bourgeoisie of the fifteenth century is more successful than that of the seventeen-eighties because the former can more easily pass into the ranks of the nobility, or is the latter the emerging dominant economic force in society, with control of the political and legal system almost within its grasp?

(cont.,) 1885), Introduction, p.xlii. "offre un intérêt exceptionnel qui, de sa mise en lumière a frappé les érudits; il nous fait pénétrer dans l'intérieur non seulement d'un homme d'église éminent, mais encore d'un de ces représentants de la classe bourgeoise au XV^e siècle qui par leur travail et leur mérite surent conquérir une brillante situation sociale." Tuety claims the distinguishing factor of the bourgeoisie are work and merit, a form of professionalism.

Our basic problem is that we must deal with a class which while economically important, to a great degree lacks social importance within the totality of its society. It is implicitly antagonistic to that society in productive terms, yet at the same time generally accepts its framework and wishes to assume the mode of existence of the dominant feudal class.

When we speak of "modes of existence", we refer to the activities and beliefs of classes within a society. The feudal system as a comprehensive social order generated a dominant ideology generally accepted by all of its component parts. Within the feudal framework the members of each class had an accepted mode of behaviour. The society was accepted as natural and legitimate; and the beliefs and actions of its classes conformed to a strict pattern. In the feudal system hierarchical ties of dependence were considered to be of more importance than the marketplace, and capital was subordinate to "natural" social bonds rooted in the land. The ideological situation resulting from such an order exhibits a kind of formal classlessness and a positing of harmony rather than the social discord between the various classes comprising it.

Everyone [said Philippe de Poitiers at the Estates General of 1484] knows how the commonwealth is divided into members and estates; the clergy to pray for others, the council to exhort, the nobility to protect the others by arms, and the people to nourish and sustain the nobles and clergy with payments and produce. But

this division was not made for the private profit...It was made for the single end of a single commonwealth in which each person, in doing his duty, must prosecute, working not for himself alone but for the whole community.⁹

This speech, while lauding the organic feudal ideal of customary society, implies that a doctrine of opposition to it exists. The concept of "private profit" and the existence of someone who works for himself alone, enable one to recognize that the social dynamic did not necessarily follow the harmonious path outlined by the speaker.

The class blamed for disrupting the feudal system assumed coherent existence in the twelfth century:

...from the twelfth century, a new class-or if one prefers, a social group- devotes itself exclusively to well-defined economic activities: commerce and industry at the artisanal level. It is the bourgeoisie, whose primary role we have seen in the formation and in the new political power of the cities: the bourgeoisie breaks in fact, if not in law, the economic principles which ruled ecclesiastical life and nobiliar customs.¹⁰

⁹John Hale, Renaissance Europe 1480-1520 (London: Collins, 1971), p.158.

¹⁰Jacques Imbert, Histoire Economique: Des Origines à 1789 (Paris: P.U.F., 1965), p.172. "...des le XII^e siècle, une nouvelle classe-ou si l'on préfère, un groupe social- se consacre exclusivement à des activités économiques bien précises: commerce et industrie à l'échelon artisanal. C'est la bourgeoisie dont nous avons vu le rôle primordial dans la formation et dans la puissance politique nouvelle des villes: elle brise en fait, sinon le droit, les principes économiques

Historians have dealt with this new class in various ways. They have played the game of crediting "the rising middle class with almost every revolutionary event in European culture to which a more specific cause has not yet been assigned", such as "the consolidation of the national monarchies of France and England in the late Middle Ages, the dissolution of feudal powers in the fifteenth century, the Reformation"¹¹ These events are undoubtedly tied to the emergence of a city population based on a different mode of production and hence with cultural needs dissimilar to those of the feudal countryside. But the specific linkage between the bourgeoisie and such phenomena is difficult to measure precisely.

When we described the bourgeoisie we noted the antagonism that the bourgeoisie felt toward the nobility, but we did not define the legal and functional aspects of the bourgeoisie. Christine de Pisan⁸ (1344-1430) a writer of sentiments favourable to the nobility, gave the following definition of the bourgeoisie of France:

(cont.,) qui régissent la vie ecclesiastique et les habitudes nobiliaires".

¹¹M.M. Poston, "The rise of money economy in Europe", Economic History Review, XIV (1944), p.123.

Bourgeois are those who are of ancient descent, belonging to the families of the cities, and have their own surnames and ancient arms, and are the principal dwellers and inhabitants in the town with rents and manoirs upon which to live alone...and in some places some of the ancient families call themselves noble, when they have been for long people of great property or reknown.¹²

About one hundred and fifty years later a section of the bourgeoisie defined itself as follows; note the imprecision of the definition:

Under the name of bourgeois, said the Parlement of Paris in the remonstrances of 1560, "are put the good citizens, inhabitants of the city, be they officiers of the king, merchants, people living from their income, and others".¹³

The definitions are broad ones, but they do contain several points that tend to give parameters within which to place

¹² From Le Livre du Corps de Policie, British Museum, Harleian MSS. 4410, fo.61. Cited and translated by P.S. Lewis in Later Medieval France: The Polity (London: MacMillan, 1968), p.246.

"Bourgeois sont seuls ceux qui sont de nation ancienne, enlignagiez et citez, et ont propre sounons et armes antiques, et sont les principaux demourons et habitans en ville, rentez et heritez de maisons et manoirs de quoy ilz se vivent presentement...et en aucuns rapellent les lignages anciens chacun deulx nobles, quant ilz ont este de long temps gens de bel estat et de renommée".

¹³ Marcel Marion, Dictionnaire des Institutions de la France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e Siècles (Paris: Auguste Picard, 1923), p.52. "Sous le nom de bourgeois disait le Parlement de Paris dans des remonstrances de 1560, "sont compris bon citoyens, habitans de ville, soit officiers du roi, marchands, gens vivants de leurs rentes, et autres".

the bourgeoisie. A bourgeois must be a good citizen in the eyes of his peer group. He and his family must be established in a given location for a certain amount of time. He is someone who controls capital and lives primarily off its returns. He may occupy an office and he must have a sense of place and worth. The drive toward establishment and recognition, in addition to the analytic value of these concepts of social definition, had a practical side to it.

In most cities, the inhabitants obtained the right of acquiring noble fiefs. The members of the corps de ville almost always received nobility and this quality was not only attached to them but to their descendants and all their family.

The ennobled classes sought to withdraw themselves from subjection to the tailles. The bourgeoisie protested vehemently against this condition. In general it was decided that those who lived nobly were to be treated on the same footing as the old nobility; and those who occupied themselves with commerce were to be considered as simple bourgeois.¹⁴

The bourgeoisie then, is defined as a class according to its functional capacity. In order to rise out of a functional existence lower in prestige than that of the socially dominant

¹⁴Henri Sée, Louis XI et les Villes (Paris: Hachette, 1891), p. 358. "Dans la plupart des villes, les habitants obtiennent le droit d'acquérir des fiefs nobles. Les membres des corps de ville reçoivent presque tous la noblesse, et cette qualité s'attache non seulement à leur personne mais à leurs descendants et à toute leur famille.

Les classes des anoblis s'efforcent de se soustraire aux tailles. Les bourgeois protestent énergiquement contre cette prévention. En général on décide que les anoblis qui vivent noblement seront traités sur le même pied que les nobles de vieille souche; quant à ceux qui s'occupent de commerce ou de "pratique" on les considère comme de simples bourgeois."

nobility, the bourgeoisie tended to support the monarchy as the dispenser of favours, position, honours, and wealth.

The history of the bourgeoisie of Paris was intimately connected to the extension of the control of the Capetian and Valois rulers to the various regions of France.¹⁵ This is the national history of the Parisian bourgeoisie. At the same time there exists a local history which consists of the relationships of the bourgeoisie to the political and economic aspects of Parisian life. The bourgeoisie was not a class with a single source of income. Those bourgeois who derived their wealth from large-scale trading ventures were often ready to oppose the demands of the guild masters who produced solely for the local market. Overseeing both were the bourgeois who occupied office. This division in sources of income led various factions among the bourgeoisie to oppose one another, often violently.

However, violence disturbed the social order necessary to the productive functioning of the towns, and consequently alarmed the bourgeoisie.¹⁶ As the bourgeoisie strove

¹⁵One aspect of French history which provides for so much difficulty is the existence of regional identities and economies.

¹⁶Harry Miskimin, The Economy of Early Renaissance Europe 1300-1460. (New York: Prentice Hall, 1969), p.107.

to attain security for itself, its wealth and its social advancement into the nobility, it was found that peaceful penetration through financial and legal means provided easier routes to these goals than full-scale opposition to feudal society.

This slow and gradual rise into the nobility is the major cause of difficulty in studying the social composition of the Parisian bourgeoisie as a class. Lewis correctly writes that "over two centuries the human politics of a single town are nuanced beyond the hope of generalization", because, "over and over again the successful bourgeois family rose and fled into its apotheosis in the minor nobility".¹⁷ This passage back to the land gave rise to a "bourgeois d'ancien régime", a subtle and complex creature.¹⁸

¹⁷P.S: Lewis, *op. cit.*, p.246 and p.177. The opportunities for this kind of advancement were never uniform. When ennoblement was difficult, the opposition between the bourgeoisie and nobility was bound to increase. See Seysel's comment on the harmonious working of society in chapter four.

¹⁸Régine Robin, La Société Française en 1789: Semur-en-Auxois (Paris: Plon, 1970). In her introduction of some fifty pages Robin illustrates, by her analytical attempts at defining the bourgeoisie, the difficulty of doing so. She writes, "La classe se définit par un rapport complexe d'exploitation qui n'engage pas que la seule vie économique", (p.24). It is the superstructure which determines man's attitudes in early modern society. "C'est la fusion d'une fonction économique-sociale et d'un statut juridique inégalitaire qui caractérise les classes de ce mode" (p.32). However, if members of different classes or orders [Robin

II

When we described the bourgeoisie we noted that the antagonism that it felt towards the nobility existed, but we did not investigate the legal and functional aspects of the

(Cont'd) confuses the use of the two as she has earlier written that pre-capitalist society is structured in orders (p.25)] are both subject to the law, they are to some extent equal, and this is the case in the fifteenth century Parliament at Paris.

Robin defines the bourgeoisie as follows: "La bourgeoisie... serait la classe dont le statut juridique est roture, qui, à la ville comme à la campagne, groupe tous ceux qui se situent en position de domination économique-sociale dans la sphère des rapports sociaux capitalistes (bien que la production ne soit élargie); antagoniste des privilégiés non engagés dans ces mêmes rapports sociaux dans la mesure où elle postule consciemment ou inconsciemment un autre appareil d'Etat et à la longue, (avec décalage) un autre cadre productif; pouvant cependant s'intégrer au système seigneurial en s'évadant de sa sphère en entrant dans la noblesse rentière, officière ou seigneuriale à travers un "cursus honorum" plus ou moins compliqué. En s'évadant de sa sphère, elle renforce ce type original d'imbrication des rapports sociaux que constitue la société d'ancien régime. En demeurant dans sa sphère elle se sappe" (pp.36-37).

Robin believes capitalists are those who create and control a market rather than fulfilling its requirement (pp. 40-41), while "Financiers ne sont en rien caractéristiques de la bourgeoisie" (p.42, note 26). The latter are simply a transition group when a market economy is not dominant. What Robin finally does to solve the dilemma - one that exists when a strictly economic definition is postulated which is separated from a shared set of values in the superstructure - is to supply a descriptive functional definition of the bourgeoisie (what she condemns Georges Lefebvre for doing, p.42) "Je conviens donc d'appeler "bourgeoisie" entre guillemets, tout ce qui se trouve ainsi énoncé dans les textes écrits sous l'Ancien Régime; "bourgeoisie d'Ancien Régime" cette classe de propriétaires fonciers roturiers, d'officiers rentiers du sol, de "capacités" à assise foncière; et "bourgeoisie" les éléments déjà engagés dans les rapports sociaux capitalistes dans la mesure où ils ne sont pas nobles" (p.43). These all live in a society where the dominant culture is a noble one (p.49).

bourgeoisie. The Parisian bourgeoisie has both a legal and functional existence distinguishing it from the majority of the artisans of the town and surrounding nobility. A member of the bourgeoisie can in his leisure time, partake of a new city culture that is opposed to the feudal one.

The bourgeois man of affaires, differing from the common laborer, only works half a day. After the "noon meal" is the time of rest (to rest an hour - a new hour), of amusement, of visiting.¹⁹

A

This time is gained by a bourgeoisie whose productive characteristic is that "they do not assure themselves of

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Jacques Le Goff, "Le temps du travail dans la 'crise' du XIV^e siècle: du temps médiéval au temps moderne", Le Moyen Age LXIX (1963), p.612. "...le bourgeois homme d'affaires ne travaille, à la différence du laborateur populaire, qu'une demi-journée. 'Après mangier' c'est le temps de repos (reposer une heure - une heure nouvelle) du divertissement, de visites". This free time was purchased through the exploitation of labour, of the artisans or "menu peuple" who worked some sixteen hours in summer and twelve in winter. N.Z. Davis, "A trade union in sixteenth century France", Economic History Review Sec. Ser. XIX (No.1, 1966), p.54. Sylvia Thrupp, "The Guilds" Cambridge Economic History of Europe, ed. M.M. Postan, E.E. Rich and E. Miller (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1963), III, p.275. Geremek, Le Salarariat... op.cit., pp.73-85, has the best description of working conditions in Paris. It may be compared to the account of a bourgeois household in The Goodman of Paris [Le Ménagier de Paris] trans. Eileen Power (London: Routledge and Sons, 1928). She writes that the author was a member of the "haute bourgeoisie", upon which the French monarchy was coming to lean with ever increasing confidence (p.40).

their subsistence by working with their hands". The French bourgeoisie has been described as being a "rich man and nothing more than that, or rather it is a rich man who has become wealthy". And this wealth is derived from "rentes, maisons, cens, nourriture".²⁰

The bourgeoisie is then an economic class, based in a city, and searching for security of income which is more easily derived from the above than the fluctuations involved in trade. What the bourgeoisie lacks is the political powers associated with its class. In some sections of Europe, especially those advantageous for trade such as Flanders, Italy or the area of the Hanse cities, the bourgeoisie, or sections of it, was able to acquire political power on such a scale that it could oppose the feudal order.

²⁰ André Courvisier, "La représentation de la société dans les danses de mort du XV^e au XVIII^e siècles", Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine 16 (Oct-Nov., 1969), p. 525. "Le mot bourgeoisie ayant entre autres sens un sens institutionnel et un sens économique, il désigne celui qui possède le droit de bourgeoisie, dans le second, celui qui n'assure pas sa subsistence en travaillant de ses mains". For Courvisier, "Le bourgeois français est entendu dans le sens économique. C'est un homme riche et rien que cela, ou plutôt c'est un homme qui s'est enrichi", and one whose income is derived primarily from "rentes, maisons, cens, nourriture" (p. 526). The bourgeois is found to have no connection with institutional or municipal powers in the material Courvisier studied. France is the "seul pays où le bourgeois est toujours présent et prend un caractère économique, est aussi le seul où les institutions municipales soient passées sous silence" (p. 526).

The French bourgeoisie's lack of political power was due in some measure to its economic weakness.²¹ It nevertheless attempted to expand the rights that it enjoyed as a class in society. The primary method of improving the position of the bourgeoisie as a social class was through the establishment of law. The emergence of a doctrine of written and universal law in a feudal society which basically resembles the customary and status society as outlined by C.B. MacPherson,²² leads to modifications within the society. Law, when all members of society are subject equally to it, universalizes and atomizes members of customary status groups. It makes them formally equal. As such, the law is basically an instrument used by the bourgeoisie to advance itself in position in society.²³ However, groups which have hitherto

²¹Yves Renouard, Etudes d'Histoire Médiévale, I (Paris: S.E.V. P.E.N., 1967), p.613. Renouard believes that French merchants were slow to develop their commerce, and that it was not until the time of Charles VII and Louis XI that they could begin to compete with the Italians.

²²C.B. MacPherson, The Political Theory of Progressive Individualism; Hobbes to Locke (London: 1962), pp.46-70.

²³However, the problem is that many individual families within the bourgeoisie would use law to enter the confines of feudal hierarchy rather than advancing a class position.

depended on customs for status may, if under pressure from economic and social factors and unable to withstand them, turn to legislation and the law in order to maintain their position. Marx has stated that "an attitude established by the community for the individual proclaimed and guaranteed as law"²⁴ is needed to justify and enhance the control of a basically secure economic social position. This position in turn is associated with a certain style of life marking an individual as a member of a definite class, different from others. At the same time there exist important, subtle and almost infinite gradations in social groupings within classes.²⁵

Marx's statement cannot be disputed. It goes far beyond postulating a form of economic determinism as the motive force for society. But it must be kept in mind that only the segment of the community which controls political

²⁴ Karl Marx, Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations, ed. E. J. Hobsbawm and trans. J. Cohen (New York: International Publishers, 1964), p.92.

²⁵ Lewis, op. cit., p.134. He maintains that various groups within the bourgeoisie were more involved in maintaining their own position within the bourgeoisie as a class, than in attempting to advance the overall interests of the bourgeoisie. "...The variation in cultural status within each of these abstract groups was if anything more significant socially than the famous variation in function".

and economic power proclaims and guarantees the law. The law can exist as customary right or as an accepted written body of doctrine, subject to interpretation. This evolved accepted corpus of values and attitudes can, however, become archaic if subject to stress through changes in speculative thought, economic developments, or other phenomena. A new and powerful class may emerge from structural changes in society, but the attitude or cultural cohesion of the previously dominant class may remain as a desired norm for the new controlling group. If this new class fails to generate a cultural world view, the cultural life and attitudes of the newly powerful class will take on the dominant colouring of society. We shall have to deal then with the cultural problems posed by the bourgeoisie, and to observe to what extent it was able to evolve a culture that challenged the feudal one.

If this elaboration of Marx's statement is acceptable, Braudel's criticisms of Marx are answered,

Truly, even more than societies (the word however is too vague) one should speak of social economies. Marx was right in asking who owns the means of production, the earth, the boats, the crafts; the raw materials, the finished products, and not the least the dominant social position. It seems evident, however, that the two co-ordinates, society and economy, are not sufficient unto themselves; a multifaceted state, at once cause and consequence, simultaneously imposes its presence, stirs up relationships and bends them,

whether they wish it or not.²⁶

Marx indeed recognized the state in its role as the active agency of law and regulation as being of fundamental importance in late medieval and early modern society.

The state and society will interact more intensely at those points which are seen as important to the state's existence. As the secular governments of late medieval Europe had a need for wealth they were determined to maximize their revenues.²⁷ These were dependent on custom or law, both of which were liable to extension by the state. The bourgeoisie through their economic function created wealth for the monarchy in terms of taxation, and as we shall see in the journals we are using, was hard pressed to stay one step ahead of the

²⁶ Fernand Braudel, Civilisation Matérielle et Capitalisme XV^e et XVIII^e Siècle I (Paris: Armand Colin, 1967), p.436. "Au moins, plus encore que de sociétés (le mot est malgré tout bien vague) c'est de socio-économies qu'il faudrait parler. C'est Marx qui a raison: qui possède les moyens de production, la terre, les bateaux, les métiers, les matières premières, les produits finis et non moins les positions dominantes? Il reste évident cependant que ces deux coordonnées: société et économie, ne suffisent pas à elles seules: l'Etat multiforme, cause et conséquence tout à la fois, impose sa présence, trouble les rapports, les infléchit, le voulant ou non.

²⁷ One of the primary reasons for the need for revenue was, of course, the costs of warfare. Paul D. Solon, "Popular Response to the Standing Military Forces in Fifteenth Century France", Studies in the Renaissance XIX (1972), pp.78-111.

King's tax collector.²⁸

The relationship of the bourgeoisie to the state is somewhat paradoxical, as the skills honed in the operation of trade and urban self-government would also be used by the state. These skills enabled the bourgeoisie to advance through the offices of state into the privileged nobility where it would be safe from increasingly heavy and arbitrary forms of taxation. Lucien Febvre presents a picture of the bourgeoisie's rise to power:

Those who truly benefit from peace are the bourgeoisie. A class climbs...And for many reasons, but especially because the modern state constructs itself little by little with its specialized bureaucracy, its organic services, its need of competent and trained people, technicians of justice, of administration, of diplomacy and especially finance....It is the bourgeoisie and men of the church--participating moreover, in bourgeois culture--who in their patient and expert hands, took the modern state and its

²⁸ Ibid., p.83. Towns quarrelled with one another and continually tried to shift troops contingents to other towns, or to make the countryside pay an increased levy for the soldier resident in the town. For Paris taxation one should consult Jean Favier, Les Contribuables Parisiens à la Fin de la Guerre de Cent Ans, (Geneva: L. Droz, 1970).

services and made it function and prosper. They have money. They can lend it to the king. They know how to manage it for the king. Dual strength: it assures their fortune.²⁹

²⁹Lucien Febvre, Pour une Histoire à Part Entière (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1962), p.550. "Les vrais profiteurs de la paix sont les bourgeois. Une classe monte:...Et pour bien des motifs, mais surtout, parce que l'état moderne se constitue peu à peu, avec sa bureaucratie spécialisé, ses services organiques, son besoin de compétence et de techniciens: techniciens de la justice, de l'administration, de la diplomatie, de la finance surtout... Ce sont des bourgeois et gens de l'église--participant d'ailleurs à la culture bourgeoise--qui, dans leurs mains patientes et expertes, prennent l'état moderne et ses services, pour le faire fonctionner et prospérer. Ils ont l'argent. Ils peuvent le prêter au roi. Ils savent le gérer pour le roi. Double force: elle assure leur fortune". Febvre's view resembles that of Tuety, although the language is more extravagant. When we consider the journals of three bourgeois, we shall see if Febvre's view corresponds to the reality of the late medieval-early modern age. There has been a reaction to the too-neat labelling of periods of history. The medieval age is no longer equated with darkness, and the Renaissance with the brightness of a new dawn, rather the contrary. The economic expression and cultural vitality of the period from the eleventh to the late thirteenth century are no longer in doubt. However, there exists a controversy over the economic and social conditions of Europe from 1300-1600. In the following chapters, before treating the major themes of each diary, we will outline the economic and social situation for the years 1300-1600.

Chapter II

I

The town, even after long existence, was viewed as a marvelous creation by the people we are dealing with. The witnesses of the thirteenth century are concerned with extolling the virtues of the city of Paris.¹ These attitudes are common ones that are repeated until the end of the sixteenth century. However, by 1525 witnesses belonging to a certain class are less inclined to praise the existence of cities. Michael Giesmayr, a leader of the revolt of Tyrol in 1525, was one of the group of small landowning nobles who were the primary victims of the wealth of the bourgeoisie; and he describes the effects of towns on society.

From now on cities shall cease to exist and all shall live in villages. From cities result differences in situation in the sense that one deems

¹Le Roux de Lincy and L.M. Tisserand (eds.), Paris et ses Historiens aux XIV^e et XV^e Siècles; Documents et Ecrits Originaux, (Paris: Imprimerie Impériale, 1867), have several descriptions and poems praising Paris from the early fourteenth to fifteenth centuries.

himself higher and more important than another. From cities come dissention, pride and disturbances; whereas in the countryside absolute equality reigns.²

Groups which are threatened by social change usually evolve a vision of an idealized golden age, which existed before their own existence. But the view of the city that Giesmayr proclaims is, in a sense, a true one, although the city had gone through a long development before the sixteenth century.

The theories as to the origins of cities are many and varied. The towns' first inhabitants have been described as a group of merchants who settled at a given point because of the advantages of its location and around whom a community assembled in order to supply their wants; they have also been described as a group of persons who gathered together to support the needs of a garrison or several villages.

Operating initially within the confines of a subsistence economy, the inhabitants of a town found it difficult to obtain capital to support a new, non-agricultural process of

²From J.S. Shapiro, Social Reform and the Reformation (New York: Columbia University Press, 1909) in The Portable Renaissance Reader, ed. J.B. Ross and M.M. McLaughlin (New York: Viking Press, 1953), p.237.

production ; there were several means of doing so. One was through the operation of rent. The town's inhabitants could buy exemption from land rent to the town's overlord, and then in turn rent land to newcomers to the town.³ Another means of raising capital, according to Maurice Dobb, was from "a privileged class of burghers who, cutting themselves adrift from production, began to engage exclusively in wholesale trade".⁴

Although there was a high margin of profit on such trade, there was also a great degree of risk involved. As a result, the simplest way for a merchant to increase capital was to attempt to establish a controlling monopoly on goods produced, and the buying and selling of products.

³H. Von Werke, "The Rise of Towns" in the Cambridge Economic History of Europe III, p.20. Von Werke is obscure in explaining where the money would come from to provide for rent. A patrician class could arise by the purchase of land from the seigneur. Rented out, the land could bring money for merchant activities. "The patrician...is normally a merchant or a descendant of merchants. In the industrial centers he is often at the same time an entrepreneur, who puts out work in the export industry. As a sideline he can also engage in financial dealings. He consolidates his wealth by investing a part of his profits in real estate and rents within the town as well as in the country. He sits on the bench of town magistrates and as such enacts laws, fixes the scales of industrial wages, administers the town's finances" (p.32).

⁴Maurice Dobb, Studies in the Development of Capitalism (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), p.86.

The existence of rent, the operation of craft industries, and the specialization of the means of production in export industries led to the accumulation of capital. Capital, in turn, was required in order to compensate for the time factor involved in the difference between the manufacture and the sale of articles. Possession of capital provided a dominant position within the town to certain groups. This dominant urban group then expanded into the countryside where it aroused the hostility of the nobility.

The manner in which towns grew, and the economic function they performed, opposed them to the feudal class dominating in the countryside. The town existed, at its birth, as a collectivity.⁵ A sense of collectivity, that was to some extent never lost, despite the emergence of rigid social differentiation within the urban strata, marked the town as an entity separate from the countryside. The concentration of capital resources in towns, where only a small segment of the town's inhabitants controlled them, and as a consequence enjoyed certain often unstated privileges, "can also be understood as the separation of capital and landed property, as the beginning of the existence and

⁵Galbert of Bruges, The Murder of Charles the Good, Count of Flanders, ed. and trans. James Bruce Ross (New York: Harper, 1967), Introduction, (p.37).

development of capital independent of landed property- the beginning of property having its basis only in labour and exchange".⁶

Marx writes of the fundamental struggle of town man against country man as one that existed on many levels. The town, after it had generated guilds and an administrative structure, will proceed to exploit the serf, who comes from the land, as a source of labour. Functionally the town's economy "shackled men to the enterprise of the nascent bourgeoisie, but in return it gave them liberty in a legal sense".⁷ Although the inhabitants of the town enjoyed liberty in the legal sense, liberty did not signify equality of treatment either in taxation or in the rites of daily existence. To give only one example: Natalie Davis, in her fine article on "Youth Groups in Sixteenth Century France", observes that popular festivals in the city reflected class differences:

Thus the characteristic Abbeys of Misrule in the sixteenth century city were professional or more likely neighbourhood groupings which encompassed men both young and old. They also differed from the rural abbeys in the range of their social composition. whereas in the villages, the youth abbeys could include the sons of well-off peasants and landless ones, in the sixteenth century French city, not even within

⁶From The German Ideology in Karl Marx Pre-Capitalist Economic Formations, ed. E.J. Hobsbawm, op.cit., p.128.

⁷Jacques Le Goff, "The Town as an agent of Civilization 1200-1500" in The Fontana Economic History of Europe: The Middle Ages, ed. C.M. Cipolla (London: Collins, 1972), vol. I, p.79.

the individual neighbourhood could men from all estates be drawn together in a festival organization. The urban elite would be missing from the abbey and had their own entertainments as would the unskilled gagne-deniers (day-workers)".⁸

There were even residence requirements in some quarters, where artisans would not be allowed to exercise their métier as it interfered with the leisure of members of the Paris Parlement.⁹ The division of the urban population led to much disorder, but Paris differed in many respects from other cities in Europe because of the accommodations that it had to make with its resident overlord, the King of France.

II

We shall not deal with the origins of Paris as a city, but rather discuss the important moments of its early existence. In Paris the "Hanse des Marchands d'Eau" which was formed in 1050, controlled the river traffic in the

⁸ Natalie Z. Davis, "The Reason of Misrule: Youth Groups and Charivaris in Sixteenth Century France", Past and Present 50 (February, 1971), p.63.

⁹ Chris Stocker, "Office as Maintenance in Renaissance France", Canadian Journal of History, VI (March, 1971), p.32.

in the Seine and the export of Parisian wine. This did not satisfy the Parisian merchants since competition in trade from other cities continued. Philip Augustus, however, "by his edict of 1192 [enabled] Paris to supplant Rouen on the middle Seine".¹⁰ This was the opening round in the collaboration of the monarchy and the leaders of the city of Paris. It was one that benefitted both parties to the agreement, but there is no doubt that generally the kings of France maintained a strong hold on the city. Paris was "unusual, indeed extraordinary, among the large towns of northern Europe in that it never got an independent government of its own, and never had a charter of customs or privileges; the power of the crown stifled all other growth".¹¹ One does not have to travel far to seek out the reason.

It is understandable that the king accorded no autonomy to Paris, his capital, by far the most important town in France and even western Europe. Here everything depended on the king. It was he who had established the market, he who regulated commerce and industry.¹²

¹⁰ Guy Fourquin, Les Campagnes de la Région Parisienne à la Fin du Moyen Age (Paris: P.U.F., 1964), p.103.

¹¹ A Parisian Journal 1405-1449 trans. Janet Shirley from the anonymous Journal d'Un Bourgeois de Paris (Oxford: O.U.P., 1968), Introduction, p.3.

¹² Wereké, op.cit., p.29.

The weakness of municipal institutions in Paris led to the establishment of a system whereby control of municipal matters was split between different groups. The Prévôt of Paris was always a nobleman and was appointed by the king (or those who controlled Paris during interregnum or war). The Prévôt of Paris was, in fact, the administrator of an entity roughly equivalent to a baillage.¹³ His principal duty was the maintenance of order. The day-to-day supervision of municipal functions was overseen by the Prévôt des Marchands and a group of eldersmen who were elected by the bourgeoisie, in a cumbersome process in which few citizens in fact participated. In addition, the Parlement of Paris gradually assumed certain administrative functions for the city.

Paris, then, does not resemble the great cities of Flanders or Italy in its administrative structure. One of the reasons for the quiet acceptance of the king's rule was that it enabled the wealthier members of the bourgeoisie to make fief-purchasing forays into the countryside, manipulating law and custom through the juridical control of the countryside that the monarchy was trying to establish.

The compendium of law, the register of the Prévôt and the Grant Coustumier show that the bourgeoisie of the fourteenth century was involved in destroying certain nobiliar privileges. In its jurisprudence

¹³Fourquin, op. cit., p.103.

it gave the major role to the quality of possession, to the prejudice of the quality of persons, in such a way as to gain access to the possession of fiefs... All inheritable property is susceptible to purchase by rich Parisian families, who do not fail to acquire lands when they can do so.¹⁴

The desire of the bourgeoisie both to enter the nobility and to supplant it ran, at various times, into certain roadblocks. What we shall call a noble reaction in defense of nobiliar rights and privileges opposes the nobility to the bourgeoisie. If we regard the period 1340-1360 in this light it will enable us to understand the opposition of the bourgeoisie to the nobility.

III

As already indicated, traditional ideology viewed the function of the noble in feudal society as providing protection for the other classes or estates necessary to enable them to perform their own functions. However, after the

¹⁴ *ibid.*, p.102. "Les recueils de jurisprudence, les registres de la Prévôté et le Grand Coutumier montrent la bourgeoisie du XIV^e siècle attachée à ruiner certains privilèges nobiliaires. Dans sa jurisprudence, elle a mise en vedette la qualité des biens au détriment de la qualité des personnes, de façon à avoir accès à la possession de fiefs... Tous les héritages sont donc susceptibles d'être achetés par les riches familles parisiennes, qui ne sont pas fautes d'acquiescer des fiefs lors qu'elles le peuvent".

defeat at Poitiers in 1358 at the hands of the English, France was in a great turmoil. The King, who was the resident overlord of Paris, was a prisoner in England. Bands of English plunderers and assorted noble factions, the main one led by Charles of Navarre, were destroying the countryside and causing disruption of trade. The court nobility that remained, appeared incapable of conducting a rational administration of French territory. The plague had lately ravaged the country leaving a twin legacy of fear and death which further reinforced a chaotic situation.

For a description of this period there exists an excellent chronicle kept by Jean de Venette, a man of peasant background, who was the head of the Carmelite order in Paris.¹⁵ Although not a daily journal, but rather a historical work, it provides the best contemporary account of the first important challenge of the Parisian bourgeoisie to the feudal order. The editor of this chronicle describes many of the writings of the period as vehicles for Valois propaganda, unlike the chronicle of Jean de Venette. He was "careful in his observation" and no partisan.¹⁶ The chronicle

¹⁵The Chronicle of Jean de Venette, ed. Richard Kewhall and trans. Jean Birdeall (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953). Hereafter Jean de Venette...

¹⁶Jean de Venette... p.9.

covers the years 1340-1368, and there is speculation that the manuscript was written for Jeanne of Evreux, widow of Charles VI. With the help of the chronicle we can observe how the Parisian bourgeoisie regarded its society, and why the bourgeoisie tried to impose its will upon events.

At the commencement of the Hundred Years War, King Philip sent "Behuchet, a burgesse of Tours or Le Mans, with a great multitude of ships and fighting men" against Edward.¹⁷ Yet the note to this passage informs us that Behuchet was ennobled in 1329, was a member of the royal administration, and wrote a memoir on war at sea.¹⁸ The passage tells us something about both the ability of the bourgeoisie to enter the nobility, and their inability to erase the taint of their origins, although it may also simply reflect the chronicler's ignorance at the change in status.

Possibilities for social advancement appear to be open to certain sections of the bourgeoisie, yet at the same time there is an attempt on the part of the nobility to widen the gap separating the classes. This was achieved through a

¹⁷Ibid., p.33.

¹⁸Ibid., p.154. The note by the editor includes another chronicler's hostile attitudes to Behuchet because he refused to enlist nobles for this enterprise because they demanded too high pay, but he retained poor fishermen and sailors because he could get them cheaply. Behuchet was treasurer in 1331, and a master of accounts as well as admiral in 1338.

process of visible differentiation. The author of the chronicle includes a description of a new attachment to display and over-indulgence: "men were now beginning to wear disfiguring costumes. This was especially true of the noblemen, knights, squires and their followers, and it was also true in some measure of burgesees and of almost all servants... [It] gave rise to no little mockery on the part of the common people".¹⁹ He repeats his criticisms later, for "when clothes change and reveal more than they should, or when one indulges in fancy, disorder in dress will be mirrored in the state of the kingdom. The metaphor is a common one and is continually repeated.

The rule of Jacques Van Artevelde of Ghent in 1338 is described as being of an unnatural quality.²⁰ This rising of the bourgeoisie against their feudal overlord is presented as a precursor to the revolt of Paris in 1358. Van Artevelde may even have influenced Etienne Marcel, the Prévôt of merchants at Paris, since the Marcel family had trading connections with Flanders.²¹ It is not unlikely that the bourgeoisie of Paris

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 34.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 36-37. This was the revolt of the city of Ghent in 1338 against the Count of Flanders. Von Artevelde, one of the leading men of the city, was killed in a factional struggle. Ghent reverted to the rule of Louis de Mâle, Count of Flanders, in 1349.

²¹ Jacques d'Avout, Le Meutre d'Etienne Marcel, (Paris: Gallimard, 1960).

knew of the challenge to the feudal order exhibited by the cities of Flanders. Jean de Venette leaves the impression of being an informed man, as he is aware of events in the Empire and Scotland and their connection to the course of affairs in France.

He condemns harshly the economic situation in France caused by the clipping of coinage, by gabelles on salt, tailles, levies on merchandise, and church taxes. Despite all of this, the kingdom nevertheless becomes poor: "officials were being enriched, the king impoverished. Money was contributed to many nobles and knights that they might aid and defend their land and kingdom, but it was spent on the useless practices of pleasure such as dice and other unseemly games".²²

The chronicler writes that the people are angry with the nobility who, rather than fulfilling their functions, fritter away their time. The bourgeoisie is left to defend the cities on its own. Its existence is no longer the one described in the Renart le Contrefait, written in 1220.

To be a free burgher is to be in the best estate of all, they live in a noble manner, wearing lordly garments, having falcons and sparrow hawks, fine

²²Jean de Venette... p.45.

palfreys and fine chargers. When the vassals are obliged to join the host, the burgesses rest in their beds, when the vassals go to be massacred in battle, the burgesses go to picnic by the river.²³

The result of the failure of the monarchy to defend the country led the Estates General, after the defeat at Poitiers, "to pressure the regent Charles, Duke of Normandy, the eldest son of King John, to accept 30,000 armed men at the expense of the communes".²⁴ Such a force would be more likely to obey its paymasters than its commander, and the regent rejected the motion of the Estates General.

As the situation in France worsened, work was begun on the building and repair of the city walls of Paris. This was both a relief measure for those who were thrown out of employment by the crisis and a political ploy, since the

²³From the Renart le Contrefait in Joan Evans Life in Medieval France, 3rd ed. (London: Phaidon, 1969), p.42. This of course is an exaggeration but the above sentiment may have appealed to the nobility.

²⁴Jean de Venette... p.66. The Estates have their origins in the conflict between Philip the Fair and Pope Boniface VIII. The Estates of the Langue d'Oïl met in 1355 and several times thereafter until 1357. At each meeting demands were made on the Crown, at first rejected and finally accepted. However, the monarchy made no attempt to follow the advice of the Council proposed by the Estates, and the King, a captive in London, rejected the reforms forced upon the Dauphin. A short history of the episode appears in Edward P. Cheyney The Dawn of a New Era 1250-1453 (New York: Harper, 1962), pp.83-96.

existence of strong walls would put the city in a better position to bargain with the Dauphin over control of the State Council.

The following reasons may be postulated for the revolt of Paris against the monarchy in the years 1357-1358: the fall in the value of money and the general instability of the currency; the depredation of the English and various nobles whom the government seemed unable to control; precursors in the revolt of the cities of Flanders from 1300-1340; and a sense of superiority on the part of various hauts bourgeois towards the government expressed in their reactions at meetings of the Estates.

The upper bourgeoisie posed as the party of reform at the Estates General of 1356. However, when subjected to scrutiny we can observe only an attempt to control the bureaucracy and shift taxation on the poor. A tax was proclaimed "on the revenues calculated inversely to wealth: revenue of less than ten livres was to be taxed at 10%, that between 10 and 1000 at 2.2%; revenues of more than 1000 livres were to be totally exempt if they belong to non-nobles, the same to nobles with revenue of more than 5000 livres".²⁵

²⁵Régine Pernoud, Les Origines de la Bourgeoisie (Paris: P.U.F. 1969), p. 48; "en raison inverse de la fortune: les revenus de moins de 10 livres seront taxés à 10%; ceux compris entre 10 et 1000 livres, à 2.2%; les revenus de plus de 1000 livres

The impasse reached between the upper bourgeoisie and the Regent, who refused to subordinate himself to the Estates General, led to the killings of the Marshalls of Normandy and Champagne in the Regent's presence. The Regent withdrew from Paris, which then had four foes to contend with: freebooters, the English, Charles of Navarre, and the Regent, all of whom devastated the countryside around Paris.

The 1358 revolt was led by a bourgeois elite which, as it was in their interest, proclaimed themselves the true defenders of the King and the kingdom. Jean de Venette writes that "Etienne Marcel [was] a man very solicitous for the commonweal".²⁶ This merchant elite ordered that "all should wear caps which were half-blue and half-red, in token of this league for the defence of the state".²⁷ This visible sign of support of the party is one that will continually

(cont.,) seront totalement exemptés s'ils appartiennent à des non-nobles; de même ceux de plus de 5000 livres appartenant à des nobles". Of course we would have to know what percentage of the population was in each income group before making a final judgment over the meaning of the tax, but it appears to favour the wealthy at the expense of the poor.

²⁶ Jean de Venette... pp.67-68.

²⁷ Ibid., p.68

reappear in French history. However, in this case it does not appear to be a spontaneous act on the part of the people of Paris, as one historian believes: "In Paris in 1358, the citizen wore for the first time the revolutionary cap of red and blue, and for the first time showed that citizenship is not patriotism".²⁸ Professor Evans ignores Venette's use of the word "ordered", and when she employs the word "citizen" does not define it. By this stage in the history of Paris, the word citizen no longer applies to a member of the collectivity, but rather describes those who control the city.²⁹ The shock of the king being held captive by the English allowed a section of the bourgeoisie to seize power in the name of the king in order to supervise the affairs of the kingdom. In earlier disturbances the bourgeoisie had supported the monarchy, as it provided law and order necessary in the maintenance of property. In 1307 the Prévôt of Merchants, Firmin de Coquerel, had advised the artisans to disperse after a day of rioting against the monarchy. In 1382 the same pattern

²⁸ Evans, op.cit., p.141.

²⁹ M. Mollat and P. Wolff, Ongles Bleus: Jacques et Ciampi (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1970), p.24. "Ces aristocrates de la ville se partagent la possession du terroir urbain: ce sont des "hommes héréditaires"... La possession d'une parcelle de ce sol urbain fait d'eux les vrais "bourgeois"... à eux la considération, la prudence; ils sont les "bonhommes"... Plus simplement, on les dit "grands" ou "riches". Le langage courant leur accordait même le titre naguère réservé aux seigneurs et aux prélats: "sire"... Les maîtres de la ville se détachent de la commune".

was to be followed, with the upper bourgeoisie helping the Prévôt of Paris to suppress the uprising of the "Maillotins", the city poor.

After the Dauphin left Paris, Etienne Marcel and his supporters assumed control of the government of the city. However, the bourgeoisie in Paris was doomed to failure in its attempt to control the situation in France. The following reasons may be cited for this failure. The first concerns the locus of the revolt: Paris was situated in the middle of the Ile de France, a region full, even after the defeat of 1356, of nobles. A second was the rivalry between the cities of France, which meant that there was little support for Paris in its struggle against the monarchy. Just as the aloofness of Ghent to Bruges and Ypres in their struggle against the French king led to their destruction, so now Paris stood alone against the French crown. Particularism in city life seems to have played a greater role in French society than class cohesion. The third and most important reason for the defeat of the Parisian bourgeoisie lay in the strength of the French monarchy and state. Although the Valois line may have had disputed claims to the throne of France, its representatives were seen as the leaders of the country. The letters of Etienne Marcel proclaim loyalty to the king who is a prisoner.³⁰ The

³⁰ In a letter to the Dauphin, Marcel states that the people of

bourgeoisie is presented as simply defending itself from bad government and the ravages of the nobility. Etienne Marcel wrote a letter to the bourgeoisie of Ypres asking for aid so "that we can live in a free France as it was ordained in old times in the Kingdom of France".³¹ This appeal for a return to an earlier age, when society was more peaceful and just is coupled with anti-nobiliar sentiments as the nobles are described as being no better than the bandits who attack the good city of Paris.

In the struggle that followed the artisans were defeated in an engagement at Meaux and were successful in a defense of Senlis. Marcel tried to create an alliance with the peasantry during the Jacquerie, but this movement was suppressed by the actions of Charles of Navarre. Although Charles of Navarre and the Dauphin were opposed to one another they were both representatives of the nobility and aware of

(cont.,) Paris were patriotic but caught between two foes, the English and the French. "Firstly, those who are enemies to you, to us, and to the kingdom prey upon us and pillage us from all sides in the region towards Chartres, and you, who give directions in matters of this sort, do nothing about it. Likewise all the soldiers who for some time past have been coming by your orders from the Dauphiné, Burgundy, and elsewhere, for the defense of the realm, are neither a credit nor a profit to you nor to your people, because they eat up the whole countryside, pillaging and robbing the people, despite the fact that they have been well paid." Jean de Venette...note 13, p.234. The letter continues to attack the Dauphin for his hostility to Paris rather than to the English.

³¹Cited in d'Avant, op.cit., p.307.

where their class interests lay as they combined to suppress the peasants. However, Marcel and Navarre attempted to establish an alliance which was broken and then renewed. Finally Marcel attempted to let the Duke of Navarre enter Paris, but was killed by a faction of the bourgeoisie and his followers taken prisoners.³² A large number of the bourgeoisie were tired of the ravages of war and the cost of rebellion, and were willing to return Paris to the control of the Dauphin. The major followers of Etienne Marcel, before the entry of the Regent, were "beheaded according to judicial procedures. They were men who had governed the city with the Prévôt and by whose counsel everything had been done. Among their number were some very distinguished and eloquent and learned burgeses".³³

The upper bourgeoisie had a great deal of power in France through its oligarchic control of the governments of various towns. Members of the bourgeoisie were sent along with nobles, as hostages for the release of the king.³⁴ The

³² Mollat and Wolff, op.cit., p.119. Mollat and Wolff maintain that family quarrels are important for the outbreak of the Paris revolt and the course that it took. Being a work of popularization, and lacking references, this is difficult to prove.

³³ Jean de Venette... p.81.

³⁴ Ibid., p.115.

strength of these oligarchies, as demonstrated in the revolt of Paris and in the Estates General of the "Langue d'Oïl" held during 1350-1360, must have made the king uncomfortable and inclined him for the moment to undercut their authority. In 1364, "a great dispute arose between the populace or less powerful men of the city of Tournai on the one hand and the burgesees or the greater and richer on the other", because "the burgesees assented to the levy of gabelles and heavy exactions on merchandise by the king of France to meet the expenses of the wars, whereas the populace opposed it altogether".³⁵ The populace maintained that the bourgeoisie was paying less than the rest of the population, and rioted against them, chasing some bourgeois out of the city. The king favoured the people; withdrew the taxes and sent a governor to the city and made several concessions to the populace in the interest of peace. He could afford to do so as he had replaced the control of an oligarchy with direct rule. Power within the city was directly related to wealth and position, and the conflict which existed between rich and poor was utilized by forces exterior to the city, leading to the extension of royal power.

The bourgeoisie of Paris had realized its strength in a period of crisis, attempted to use it to overcome the feudal

³⁵Ibid., p.129.

structure of government, and lost the battle.³⁶ As Marc Bloch has written:

The fourteenth century had been marked by a violent reaction against the nobility. In the war of the 'non-nobles' against the 'nobles', to use a contemporary description, the burghesses and peasants had often found themselves allies. Etienne Marcel had made common cause with the 'Jacques'. ... Move on a century or a century and a half and we find the 'Etienne Marcel' of the day transformed by royal decree into nobles, by the process of economic change into landlords. The whole weight of the bourgeoisie and those aspiring to enter its ranks, is now directed towards maintaining the seigneurial structure. But new men, new manners.³⁷

³⁶Fourquin, *op.cit.*, p.259. "C'est là que la bourgeoisie marchande la plus riche, la plus nombreuse et la plus puissante du royaume, et c'est elle qui souffre le plus dans sa vanité de n'être guère admise au sein de la noblesse ou des notables des offices... Certes, les rois ont anobli certains hommes, mais ils ne s'agissent que de représentants de quelques-unes des plus grandes familles des notables. C'est bien peu comparativement à la masse des Parisiens jaloux des privilèges et du renom encore attaché à la noblesse, en dépit de ses revers militaires. D'ailleurs le mouvement d'Etienne Marcel procède aussi d'une autre cause: les Parisiens ont plus nettement pris conscience de leur puissance dans l'Etat et profitant des malheurs des Valois, ils ont voulu le confisquer à leur profit". The forces of monarchy were, however, too strong, and the economic position of the bourgeoisie too unstable, to resist the growing power of the state.

³⁷Marc Bloch, *French Rural History*, trans. Janet Sandheimer (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), p.125.

Chapter III

The first journal to be examined covers the years 1405-1449.¹ In previous years, the madness of Charles VI in 1392 had caused a rivalry between the Dukes of Orléans and Burgundy for the control of the throne and its revenues.² This conflict led to the murder of the Duke of Orléans in 1407. In 1413, the Burgundian faction, led by a family of Parisian butchers, attempted to seize control of Paris. However, by the end of the year, the Orléanists, also known as the Armagnacs, gained control of the city. This régime was overthrown in 1418 with the entry of the Anglo-Burgundian forces, following the defeat of the French in 1415 at Agincourt. In 1419, during an attempt at reconciliation, Jean sans Peur, the Burgundian Duke, was murdered

¹ A Parisian Journal 1405-1449, trans. Janet Shirley from the anonymous Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris (Oxford: O.U.P., 1968). Hereafter, Journal 1405...

² A. Colville, Le Premier Valois et la Guerre de Cent Ans, vol. IV, Part I of Histoire de France, ed. Lavisse (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1911), pp. 322-328. Both dukes' revenues were insufficient to meet their expenses. Therefore, they sought to control the revenues of the kingdom itself and to impose new taxes. As Orléans was more successful, he had his opportunity to raise taxes in 1402. The Duke of Burgundy opposed this tax and became more popular with the people of Paris than his rival.

with the contrivance of Charles, the Dauphin. The royal family, with the exception of the Dauphin, was taken prisoner by the Anglo-Burgundian party, and Henry V, by the treaty of Troyes in 1420, was declared the heir to the French throne. However, both Henry V and Charles VI died in 1422, the former leaving a son. The conflict was now one between the Anglo-Burgundian faction, fighting on behalf of the young king Henry VI, and the Dauphin, Charles VII, who also claimed the throne. In 1429, Charles was crowned and in 1435 at Arras the French and Burgundian factions joined together. In 1436, the French re-occupied Paris, and in 1453 took Bordeaux a second time, ending the war.

For an outline of the history of the Parisian bourgeoisie, it is necessary to go back to an event that took place in 1382: the revolt of the Maillotins.³ In March 1382,

³Harry A. Miskimin in "The Last Act of Charles VI: the Background to the Revolt of 1382", *Speculum*, xxxviii, No. 3 (July 1963), p. 435. Also his *The Economy of the Early Renaissance Europe 1300-1460* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1969), pp. 106-107. "In France the struggle within the cities frequently worked to the long-run advantage of the monarchy: first by weakening the old power structure; then either, in exceptional cases, by substituting a new or, more normally, by dividing and thus cancelling the effective force of the old structure through the creation of a parallel leadership, composed of the more easily controlled lesser artisan-ante. Although urban rioting pushed this process along when it occurred, it seems to have had more complex origins than class struggle alone. In France urban disorder was associated with royal taxation; with the class struggle between the great and the small, and with the urgent need for the protection from the effects of economic contraction".

after the suppression of taxes from 1380-1382 upon the death of Charles V, a new purchase tax was proclaimed. An incident in the marketplace where an old woman refused to include a sales tax on some watercress led to a riot in Paris. However, after several days, the upper bourgeoisie took control of the city and disarmed the menu peuple, obtained a truce with the monarch by which taxes were to be suppressed, and beheaded several rebels. The king then left Paris to suppress a revolt in Flanders. On his return in 1383, after a great victory at Roosebeke, he proceeded to subdue the upper bourgeoisie. A proscription of the wealthier bourgeoisie was carried out, and the elective positions of the government of the city were suppressed.⁴ These harsh and rigorous measures so frightened and domesticated the "haute-bourgeoisie" that they thereafter became and remained the king's "cows", docile and productive. For money, generated by the bourgeoisie, "is in the body politic what blood is in the human body", as a speaker at the Estates General of 1494 noted.⁵

⁴ Joseph Aynard, La Bourgeoisie Française (Paris: Librairie Académique Perrin, 1934), p.122. These were of course restricted to a small group of families. In reality it was the governing structure of the major guilds that controlled the city government, or at least the authority allowed to the city by the monarchy.

⁵ Cited in John Hale, Renaissance Europe 1480-1520 (London: Collins, 1971), p.158.

The bourgeoisie subsequently regained, to some extent, their powers of representation. Between 1409 and 1412, a Prévôt of Marchands was once again elected, a Paris militia established, and Parisians went about armed. With the gradual breakdown of government due to the quarrel of Burgundy and Orléans, they were even courted by both sides. At the funeral of one of the chiefs of the butchers' guild, Legois, Jean sans Peur, the Duke of Burgundy, followed the funeral train. Parisians favoured the Duke of Burgundy as he played the role of reformer, advocating the lowering of taxes and the establishment of a better government for the kingdom.

There was an attempt at reform on the part of the university and various upper bourgeoisie during the meeting of the Estates General in 1413. Then a rising against the Orléanist régime was led by Caboché, a butcher, and power was seized in Paris by his followers. An ordinance of reform was drawn up and accepted by the crown.⁶ However, the upper

⁶ P. S. Lewis, Later Medieval France: The Polity (London: Macmillan, 1968). Lewis has a citation expressing sentiment against the régime (p. 114). "...we've got enough to do with all this taxation, the king is mad and off his head and monsieur le duc d'Orléans is young and likes playing dice and whoring". The Cabochiens wanted to reform the court rather than to make changes in forms of production. However, administrative reform is to a certain extent a revolutionary program. According to l'Ordonnance Cabochienne, "royal officers concerned with justice were to swear that either directly or indirectly they would not receive...gold, silver or any revenue, perpetual or for a term; that they would not procure

bourgeoisie and the Armagnacs rallied, the Cabochians were broken, and their erstwhile ally, the Duke of Burgundy, fled Paris.⁷ Taxes were levied and an Armagnac regime controlled Paris until 1418. Then the Burgundian party returned, finally to be forced out in 1436. From 1413 to 1436, whichever faction controlled Paris made and unmade officials, taxes were levied, and the population of the city dwindled. Finally peace returned.

(cont'd) any gifts, rents or revenues to be given to their wives...excepting only foodstuffs ready to eat and drink without excess and without fraud...and that they would not take drink except in little kegs, bottles or pots, without fraud or corruption, and [only] from those who are rich and have enough, and without asking them for it; and that they will never sell what's left over, but that they would give it to charity; and also that...they will as far as they are able to prevent their wives and [all] the other persons named above from taking the gifts enumerated above, and that if they learn that in fact they have, they will force them to give up and hand back what they have thus taken, as soon as it comes to their notice". (p.146). Unless the ordinances were drawn up simply with the intention of discrediting the previous regime, it describes the myriad ways the administration was able to profit from corruption.

⁷Mollat and Wolff, op.cit., pp.231-235. The authors believe the revolt was due to four factors: the many unemployed in 1413, tension in the métiers, rich butchers wanting to enjoy social prestige along with the important guilds as they led the people in revolt in the hope of seizing power, and a reformist current in the university. They maintain that the ordinance was not a revolutionary one in that it deals with the desire for an honest administration. The reformers only want to dominate the state, not overturn it. (p.235).

II

The journal to be considered in this chapter is that of an anonymous bourgeois of Paris. Needless to say, the journal has been extensively mined by historians searching for a "mentalité collective" for the age. The greatest of these, Johan Huizinga, wrote of the fifteenth century man's outlook on life:

For the contemporary mind cannot help seeing all the national misfortunes which the struggle of the House of Orléans and Burgundy was to unchain, in the light of that sole dramatic pastime of princely vengeance. It finds no explanation for historical events save in personal quarrels and motives of passion.⁸

Huizinga set out to discredit a reductive analysis which postulates that men act as they do because of economic pressure or the desire for gain. "The desire to discover economic causes is to some extent a craze with us, and sometimes leads us to forget a much simpler psychological explanation for the fact".⁹ In opposition not only to economic determinism, but to any economic causation, he describes the psychology of man in the late Middle Ages as one defined by attempted integration into a larger system of set and complete values, that of feudalism. This attempted integration was

⁸ J. Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages (New York: Doubleday, 1954), p.18.

⁹ Ibid., p.22

based on a social order, which Huizinga holds was collapsing in reality: "Long after nobility and feudalism had ceased to resolve essential factors in the state and society, they continued to impress the mind as the dominant forms of life",¹⁰ and he adds:

Nobody perceived that the nobility only maintained itself, thanks to the blood and riches of the commoners. No distinction in principle was made, in the third estate, between townsmen and country-people. The figure of the poor peasant alternates indiscriminately with that of the wealthy burgher, but a sound definition of the economic and political functions of these different classes does not take shape.¹¹

Huizinga's statements cannot be left unchallenged. They are rather simplistic; while he knows full well that the noble ideal is "a cloak for a whole world of self-interest and violence",¹² so, in fact, did the contemporary bourgeoisie. The latter is not, by any means, as Huizinga maintains, "always striving to institute the forms of noble life".¹³ It is

¹⁰ ibid., p. 57.

¹¹ ibid., p. 60. Rosalie Colie, "Johan Huizinga and the Task of Cultural History" American Historical Review (1964), p. 619. She remarks that Huizinga "had been busy with the very important but tenuous problem of society's self-image".

¹² Huizinga, op.cit., p. 77.

¹³ ibid., p. 128.

also trying to protect itself from the ravages of nobility.

We have observed, in the revolt of Etienne Marcel, that certain sections of the bourgeoisie were willing to work against the nobility. The bourgeoisie furthermore exhibits by its various actions--such as the revolt of the Maillotons--that class differences exist within the Third Estate.

When Huizinga settles on the Court of Burgundy, in his attempt to create a human face for the late Middle Ages, he only describes the more spectacular rites of existence. When he employs the journals of the members of the Parisian bourgeoisie he narrates the macabre, giving full play to the mixture of credulity and fear that is present in the records, rather than the precision with which prices are noted and the vigour of the diatribes against the nobility. He chooses to ignore the prejudiced, but still valuable, analysis of the grounds for, and conduct of, conflict; the history of legal and political manoeuvres; an awareness of the importance of time in relation to success (more often, non-success) of political and military policies; and the disruption of the body politic, all of which are discussed in the journals. In reality, and in contradiction to Huizinga's presentation, "the individual's chief concern was to increase his standard of living within his class, whether noble, bourgeois or church

man, or peasant proprietor".¹⁴

"Standard of living", of course, refers to more aspects of life than simple economic differentiation. We must deal not only with the amount and quality of bread consumed, but with psychological modes of existence. In addition to enjoying a certain standard of living, one must also be secure in the maintenance of the standard.

The conception of the bourgeoisie of the fifteenth century as portrayed by historians such as Huizinga, is based on a selective reading of the source material. Huizinga's work provides interesting insights into certain aspects of the bourgeoisie, but it cannot be relied upon to give a rounded picture of their existence. For this issue we must turn to the monographs by Favier, who illustrates how the bourgeoisie managed tax evasion, or to Geremek who shows the masters gradually tightening guild regulations. The themes mentioned above, omitted in Huizinga's study, in fact represent major concerns of the bourgeoisie. This can already be seen in the first journal we shall examine.

Although the Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris has long been used as a standard source for the period, little is

¹⁴

John Hale, op.cit., p.176

known about its anonymous author.¹⁵ He was probably associated with the university, that reservoir of ambitious literates, and was perhaps a clerk. His social status was, it appears, somewhere between the poor and the "moyen". His taste for metaphor may obscure the "truth" in certain instances, but he seems to be accurate in his observations.

The journal has one major theme running through most of its entries. The writer's response to his times is conditioned by his search for security and a beneficial order. Under this theme we can deal with his attitudes to learning, the cost of living, the depredations of the nobility, and the breakdown of customary ties of dependence. Considering the political struggles that took place in these years, it is not surprising that the writer should feel that "Fortune kept changing in this kingdom and no one, greatly born or otherwise, could tell what rank was best--the great hated each other, the middle classes were burdened with taxation, the very poor could not earn a living".¹⁶

This disorder appears to have given licence to the

¹⁵And a faulty one. See the reference to 24,000 empty houses in M. Aston, Fifteenth Century: The Prospect of Europe (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968), p.27.

¹⁶Journal 1405... p.80.

nobility to commit various crimes in the name of the causes that they supported, in contrast to the ideal behaviour of the nobility which was set out by the "Sire de Bueil" in the novel Jouvenal, written in the early fifteenth century:

It is the duty of the very noble and very excellent estate of chivalry to conserve, to defend, and to guard the people in tranquillity...it is the duty of the men of war to defend the "orateurs" (those who pray, the men of the church) and the labourers from all public injustice and from those who commit wrong.¹⁷

The attitude expressed by our journalist shows the ideal to be a hollow one. When an expedition into the countryside was mounted by the Burgundians to clear the supporters of the Orleanist cause from several castles from which they harrassed Paris, causing high food prices, the nobles proved poor and corrupt leaders.

These noblemen then accepted large sums of money from the Armagnacs to get the siege raised and this when they had the money they did. They told the honest people that they knew for certain that a strong

¹⁷ Charles Petit-Dutaillies, Charles VII, Louis XI, Les Premières Années de Charles VIII, vol. IV, part 2 of Histoire de France ed. Laviisse (Paris: Hachette, 1911), p.86. "Ont esté ordonné le très noble et très excellent estat de chevalerie pour conserver, deffandre et garder le peuple en tranquillité... aux gens de guerre ordonnée la défense des orateurs (ceux qui prient, les gens d'église) et les laboureurs de toute chose publique et de ceulx à qui on fait tort".

relief force was on its way to the castle, that it was now each man for himself, that they were not staying, and off they went. The common people seeing that they went away, were very angry and when they got to Paris the gates were shut against them. They remained for two or three days and nights at Saint Germain, Saint Marcel and Nôtre-Dame-des-Champs, the Armagnacs as soon as the siege was raised came down upon these villages to surprise our people. But in spite of their numbers they were not able to harm them. Yet they had no officers except from among themselves, for the nobles who had abandoned them thought they would all be killed by the Armagnacs; but the Armagnacs did not dare to attack them. The fact is that if the common people had been allowed to carry on they would have cleared away every Armagnac cut of France in two months--and that is why the nobles hated them because all the nobles wanted was war, whereas the commons wanted to put an end to the fighting.¹⁸

While it has been written that our journalist favours the claims of the Burgundian party, he is as harsh on the nobles who comprise it as he is on nobles in general.¹⁹ He writes that in 1422:

Indeed he [Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy] led day and night, just the same darnable kind of life as the Duke of Orleans used to do and the other lords who died such disgraceful deaths. He was ruled entirely by stupid, arrogant young knights, regulating his behaviour by theirs and they by his. In honest truth, none of them cared about anything, except getting their own way.²⁰

¹⁸ Journal 1405... pp.120-121.

¹⁹ George Puppert, The Idea of Perfect History: Historical Erudition and Historical Philosophy in Renaissance France (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970), p.53.

²⁰ Journal 1405... p.168.

The lethargy of the nobility, and the chances they lose by their sluggish behaviour is noted. In 1436, when the French re-occupied Paris and the English were driven out, a change was expected. The Constable of the forces of Charles VII is recorded as saying:

"My good friends, the good king Charles gives you a hundred thousand thanks, and so do I on his behalf, for having so peaceably returned the chief city of his kingdom to him. If anyone of any rank present or absent has done wrong to our lord the king, it is entirely forgiven him." And at once, without dismounting, he had trumpets sounded and proclamations made forbidding his men on pain of hanging by the neck to take lodging in any citizen's house against his will, to insult or rob or in any way to annoy anyone of any rank, except natives of England and mercenaries. The Parisians loved them for this and before the day was out every man in Paris would have risked his life and goods to destroy the English.²¹

But little change occurred in the life of the city.

...none of the French captains did any good worth mentioning ever since the entry into Paris, nothing but looting and robbing day and night...[There is no protection against the English because]...they [the soldiers] said that they were not getting their pay. In fact everything earned by the poor people in a good town under their control belonged to them, they took all the earnings from the people in the villages, leaving nothing more behind than a fire dce. Indeed, people said they may just as well--in fact, would rather--fall into English hands than French.²²

²¹Ibid., p. 306.

²²Ibid., p. 312.

For the journalist there was little to choose between the two sides: "No one could decide which lot was the worse bargain, the French or the English".²³

The nobility is viewed as forsaking its customary role in society to the extent that the nobles do not participate in jousts for fear of injury, and "in short, all the French lords have become more like women than men, valiant only against the poor unarmed working men and merchants".²⁴

The antagonism towards the nobility, as expressed in the foregoing passage, is based upon two premises. One involves anxiety over the general breakdown of order in society, the other derives from criticism of the social cost of nobiliar deprivations. Chivalry is important because its "right operation" signifies that order exists in society. When the chivalric ideal has ceased to work, those who normally provide the labour of society are taken away from their occupations in order to defend themselves, and the economic activity of society is disrupted:

²³Ibid., pp. 316-317.

²⁴Ibid., p. 352.

...nothing could be brought into the city, without twice its value being paid in ransom; every night watch had to be kept, fires, lanterns in the streets, and the doing soldier's work and earning nothing.²⁵

The war was a costly business for the people because of the levying of taxes, the duties put on food, and the disruption of trade.²⁶ As a result, when in 1413 certain partisans of the Burgundian cause wished the populace to oppose a settlement that the Duke of Burgundy had agreed to with the Orleanist party,

...the common people, who had already flocked to the Place de Grève with what weapons they could already get hold of, all anxiously desperate for peace to be made, would not let them speak. Instead they all began shouting with one voice. "Peace! Peace! Those that want war, move over to the left; those who are for peace to the right." Everyone moved to the right hand side, not daring to oppose the people in the state they were in.²⁷

While the people could make immediate choice felt in a democratic fashion with weapons in their hands, they could not control the struggle of the nobles, or even gain a say in the

²⁵ Ibid., p. 125.

²⁶ Favier, Les Contribuables Parisiens... p. 35. "The tax classification of 1438 illustrates the "recul des changeurs, drapiers, orfèvres et épiciers, recul qui expliquent à cette date les bouleversements politiques, l'absence de la cour et les difficultés économiques nées de l'échec aussi bien que d'un hiver terrible. Les métiers de luxe devaient être le plus frappés".

²⁷ Journal 1405... p. 77.

government of the city. This change in government meant little for Paris except that extortion, in the form of taxes, was carried on as before.

Next Monday, the first day of Pentecost, everyone in Paris of what rank soever, priest, clergy, or anyone, began to clean the streets or pay to have them cleaned. The money was collected rigorously; everyone, whatever his condition in life, had to pay up every five days-- and if you paid a hundred, barely forty of it went toward the work, and the ruler had the rest.²⁸

After the Burgundians regained Paris, Phillip de Marvilliers, first president of the Parlement and the man appointed to govern the city, "was the harshest tyrant Paris had ever known..." and under his government many were "compelled to sell their belongings in the street and leave Paris in despair."²⁹ Peace was impossible of course, for if the Orléanist party controlled Paris, the Burgundians would begin operations against the city and vice-versa. A siege mentality and the existence of hostility within the walls to the régime occupying the city, led to both a heightened sense of and a precarious existence for the majority of the town's population.

As anyone could be a potential threat to the Armagnac régime established in 1413, strict controls were imposed on

²⁸ Ibid., p. 103.
²⁹ Ibid., pp. 165-166;

the daily rounds of existence. In 1414 it "was proclaimed that none of the common people should carry arms, on pain of hanging,"³⁰ and the royal officials appointed by the Duke of Burgundy "were all dismissed or deposed and no good came of it for anyone."³¹ An order was issued that everyone had to wear a sash as a token of support for the cause of Orléans, while those who did not came near to having their property confiscated.³²

Uneasy in their control of the city government, the Orléanists took good care that no possibility of revolt existed, going so far as proclaiming "throughout Paris that no one should dare to have any box or pot in his window, any basket or pannier in his garden, or a bottle of vinegar in any window looking on the street, upon pain of loss of goods and body," in order to prevent ready access to hidden arms.³³ Such close control over the means of expressing dissatisfaction within the city was realistic and practical. It also implies that there was a large body of inhabitants who were willing to defend themselves against the régime and its exactions.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 84.

³¹ Ibid., p. 82.

³² Ibid., p. 89.

³³ Ibid., p. 101.

The regulations of the market place were subject to change by officials appointed by the Orléanist government. The market of the butchers on the Pont Notre-Dame was closed and transferred to Saint Lefoy, where "it was also announced ...that stalls in the butchery would be allowed to the highest bidder for the king's profit, and that the butchers would have no privilege there."³⁴ It is not surprising that four months previously, "all weapons were removed from the butchers' houses in Saint-Germain, Saint Marcel, Sainte-Geneviève, and Paris."³⁵ While the possible connection between the two events is not pointed out in the journal, the reader cannot ignore the equation that arms provide a form of resistance to decrees from above.

The continued exploitation of the inhabitants of Paris by the Armagnacs and their leaders led to a violent reaction on the part of the townspeople. When the Burgundians entered Paris in 1418 they were welcomed by the people, and it appears that the Parisians had managed to evade the ordinances and secret their arms away. "The people took up their arms much faster than the soldiers did," and "all that they found, of whatever rank, whether they had been taken prisoners by the soldiers or not, they hauled into the street

³⁴

Ibid., p. 102.

³⁵

Ibid., p. 100.

and killed them at once without mercy, with heavy axes and other weapons. There was not a man there this day who had not yet more weapons with which as he passed he struck at the dead confederates as they lay there stone dead."³⁶

This last statement by our journalist introduces the theme of collectivity. The horrors of the war help to explain the readiness of the people to take advantage of their position when they have a chance to eliminate their enemies. When they do, it is important to note that each person partakes in the act of killing or striking an already dead corpse. In 1436, when the forces of the Dauphin entered the city, they were welcomed by the populace of Paris in the following fashion: "the news ran through Paris; everyone at once put on a white upright cross on a Saint Andrew's background."³⁷ A symbolic gesture signifying solidarity which repeats itself each time the city changes hands. Considering the number of proscriptions that took place in Paris between 1410 and 1440, the move is a valid one.³⁸

³⁶

Ibid., pp. 113-114.

³⁷

Ibid., p. 303.

³⁸

Favier, op.cit., p. 10.

Confraternities were quickly formed because they gave a sense of group solidarity and protection to their members, for the customary order of society was breaking down.

Our journalist believes in the hierarchical sense of society and sees the collapse at the top of the system reflecting itself in the anarchy at the base: "When a great lord or lady openly commits great sins it encourages his knights and his people to sin".³⁹ The machinery of justice, which maintains order, is thought to be in ruins: "Foreign kings used to say to French merchants visiting their countries that the king of France was a complete elm tree for every thief in Christendom".⁴⁰

The effects and result of the breakdown of order are given through contrasting descriptions of two banquets. The first occurred on Saint Luefredus' Day, the twenty-first of June 1428, when "there was the most sumptuous banquet given at the Palais that any man then living had ever set eyes

³⁹Journal 1405... p.367.

⁴⁰Ibid., p.338. The meaning of the passage is that the king, who traditionally meted out justice at the base of an elm tree, was incapable of maintaining order in the kingdom. It is interesting to note that it is merchants who are the carriers of this tale, but that the king is condemned by other kings. There are many instances given in the journal of merchants being held to ransom by nobles in search of gain.

upon".⁴¹ The description of the feast, which celebrates the reception of four doctors of canon law into the university, shows the population of the city divided into ranks of wealth and position, contrary to what Huizinga maintains. The description of the feast runs as follows:

Everyone, whatever his rank, was welcomed to dinner, according to his rank: the Regent of France and his wife and the chivalry were served in the place and with such food proper to their rank; the clergy first, such as bishops, prelates, abbots, priors; then doctors of all the sciences, the Parlement, then the Provost of Paris and the people of the Châtelet, and then the Provost of the Merchants, the aldermen, citizens, and merchants together; then all ranks of the commons. One with another, at least 8,000 guests sat down to their dinner, for a good 700 dozen loaves were served, three penny loaves, which were the big ones, excellent corn being 12s. p. the "setier". At least forty muids of wine were drunk. Also there were at least 800 meat dishes, not including mutton and beef which were past reckoning.⁴²

Besides illustrating the journalist's empirical bent (he calculated the number of guests from the amount of bread served), the importance of this passage lies in the fact that the third estate, and for this paper the crucial one, aldermen, citizens and merchants are distinguished from the commons, which is also divided into groups of varying social status. The general hierarchical ordering of society is reflected within the bourgeoisie, on the basis of both office and wealth.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 222.

⁴² Ibid., p. 225.

Everyone knows his or her place, and occupies it, a fact noted with approval by the author.

A somewhat different process takes place during the banquet of 1431 to celebrate the coronation of Henry VI:

...nothing was properly arranged. The common people of Paris had gone into the hall early in the morning, some of them to look, others to guzzle, or to steal food and other things besides.... There was such a crowd there for the king's consecration that neither the University, nor the Parlement nor the Provost of Merchants nor the aldermen dared try to make their way up because of the people, there were so many of them there. They did attempt two or three times to get by, but the crowd shoved them back so angrily that they could not help more than once stumbling and falling against each other, yes, even eighty or a hundred at once, and meanwhile the thieves were breaking hay. When the mob had all gone by, they went up after them and then when they were in the hall it was so full that they could hardly find anywhere to sit. However, they sat at the tables appointed for them, but along with cobblers, mustard-sellers, packers, winestall keepers, stonemasons' lads. People tried to shift them but, if one or two did move, another half-dozen would sit down instead. The food was shocking, no one had a good word for it. Most of it, especially what was meant for the common people, had been cooked the previous Thursday, which seemed very odd to the French--the English were in charge of all this. The honour involved meant nothing to them; all they cared about was how soon they could get it over and done with. Really, no one could find a good word to say...⁴³

⁴³Ibid., p.272.

Order and degree are of central importance to the journalist. Some occupations are considered obviously to be of low status. There is a sense of reciprocity and disapproval when it is not met.⁴⁴ Good food was expected from the master of the city at such a function; its lack was noted. Characteristics which separate the French from the English are observed.

What is even more damaging to the King's reputation--and in this society one's reputation depended on one's ability to adhere to or to surpass an expected norm or customary sense of values--are the general remarks on Henry VI's visit.

There was a small tournament the day after his coronation, but, really, many a time a Paris citizen marrying his child alone has done more for trades people, for goldsmiths, gold beaters, all the luxury trades, than the King's consecration now did, or his tournament or all his Englishmen. But probably it is because we don't understand what they say and they don't understand us. ...the King left Paris without granting any of the benefits expected of him--release of prisoners, abolition of such evil taxes as imposts, salt taxes, fourths, and similar bad customs that are contrary to law and right. Not a soul, at home

⁴⁴A. Gurevic, "Représentations et attitudes à l'égard de la propriété pendant le Haut Moyen Age" trans. B. Kreise *Annales E.S.C.* vol. 27, No. 3 (mai-juin, 1972). "La richesse pour le féodal était l'arme qui permettait de soutenir son influence sociale, d'affirmer son honneur. La richesse en soi ne suscitait aucun respect, au contraire: le marchand qui conservait d'innombrables biens et qui n'utilisait son argent que pour le faire fructifier dans des opérations commerciales ou usuraires inspirait dans la société médiévale divers sentiments négatifs", (p.540). Personal relations expressed through gifts are more important than money exchanges (p.545).

or abroad, was heard to speak a word in his praise-- yet Paris had done more honour to him than to any King both when he arrived and at his consecration, considering, of course, how few people there were, how little money anyone could earn, that it was the very heart of winter, and all provisions desperately dear, especially wood.⁴⁵

The journalist's testimony about the effects of the war on the luxury trades and the emigration of people from the city has been substantiated by detailed work on the remaining tax records of the city.⁴⁶ The king does not do what is required of him, despite the honour, achieved with difficulty, accorded him by the city. A Paris citizen can even make more of an impact on the economic life of the city than the monarch of France and England. Custom required that the monarch and his officials not simply accumulate wealth, but also spend it. The journalist continually complains that the English lords, with the exception of the Duke of Bedford, do little to stimulate trade.

Hierarchy is disturbed in the banquet which, like the representations of the Dance of Death, gives an indication of status. In his article on the importance of the motif of Death in society, Courvisier writes that men find it necessary to have visible manifestations of their culture in order to provide support for a social hierarchy and the organic functioning of society.⁴⁷ We have seen this manifested in

⁴⁵Journal 1405..., p.273.

⁴⁶Favier, op.cit., pp.8-10.

⁴⁷Courvisier, op. cit., pp.489-539

the accepted structure of the banquets; even their debasement gives evidence of the role of order and legitimacy in this society.

Order and legitimacy are important, however, not merely in and of themselves, but because social privilege brings with it fiscal privilege.⁴⁸ In 1437

...another very peculiar tax was levied in Paris, the most extraordinary there had ever been, since no one was exempted from it--no one, whatever his standing, not bishop, abbot, prior, monk, nun, nor sergeants, musicians, parish clerks, nor any person of any condition whatever. First of all they levied a heavy tax on the clergy, then on the richer merchants, men and women. They paid four thousand, eight hundred or six hundred, each according to his estate. After that the less wealthy paid a hundred or sixty, fifty or forty; the very least paid twenty francs or more. The less rich paid between ten and twenty francs.... After this deplorable tax they made another thoroughly immoral levy--the rulers took the churches' silver treasures.... They took the better part of the coined silver in the confraternities' treasuries.⁴⁹

Customary privileges are accorded to various groups or occupations, but these are allowed to lapse when the demand for money cannot be met out of revenue ordinarily available for the monarchy. However, this period coincides with a decline in production and trade, the life blood of the city, due to the deprivations of an 'organization' such as the French army.

⁴⁸Favier, op.cit., p.49.

⁴⁹Journal 1405... p.317.

The wealthy were generally in the fortunate position of having their tax assessments moderated because of influence; the poor had no such hope.

At the same time as the bourgeoisie were being plundered, opportunities to create wealth (or rather to seize upon revenue) from a specific office existed, both within the confines of the municipality and in a greater sphere of action--the country as a whole. We can watch the rise of Pierre Baillé, a Paris shoemaker's boy, to a position of Grand Treasurer of Maine,⁵⁰ or the extension of the sovereignty of the Parlement of Paris to Guyenne (until 1462).⁵¹ For these reasons an administrative bourgeoisie could be counted upon to serve the monarchy in the hopes of making a windfall in office. Others might speculate in the price of foodstuffs⁵²

⁵⁰Ibid., pp.221-222.

⁵¹M.G.A. Vale, "A Fifteenth Century Interrogation of a Political Prisoner", Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research vol.XLIII, no.107 (May, 1970), p.79.

⁵²Journal 1405...., p.305. These speculators were disappointed in 1436 as Paris did not fall after the siege, but opened its gates to the French army which was accompanied by victuallers, who had expected to make a profit from the townspeople. "By their own account there were a hundred or more wagoners bringing corn and other victuals along after the army, who said 'Paris will be sacked; then when we've sold our provisions to these wretched Parisians we'll fill our own carts up with the loot; we'll take gold and silver and furnishings and be rich men for the rest of our lives'".

or through the manipulation of coinage.⁵³

Our journalist, however, as a member of the lesser bourgeoisie, has little to hope for in this regard. His expectations function on a more local level. He is proud of the inhabitants of the Grand Rue Saint-Martin who, when opening their walled-up gate, "spend both their money and their labour so well and diligently that one would truly say their heart was in their work".⁵⁴ The writer obviously is heartened by this manifestation of spirit and sense of collective action.

His attitude to intellectual speculation is one of hesitance. While he attacks the nobility, time and again, he remains a prisoner of an allegorical mode of thought and expression. His description of the events of 1413 is an example of this tendency:

⁵³Ibid., pp.138-139. "Next week it was proclaimed that 165 moutons mentioned earlier were to be reckoned at 24 s.p. This made it even less likely that merchants from a distance would come to Paris, nor did anyone come who reckoned the coin at these rates. These were Burgundian Planes known as lubres current in Paris at 8 d.p. each, which were not worth 3 d. and were as red as tiddlywinks. Thus, there were arguments all over Paris, wherever anyone was buying or selling, whether it was wine or bread or anything else". There are innumerable entries in the journal describing revaluations of currencies. These affected the poor elements of society more than the wealthy who would take advantage of changes in currency. (Favier, op.cit., p.36).

⁵⁴Journal 1405...., p.271.

Then the goddess of Discord arose in the castle of Ill Council: She awoke Anger the Lunatic, Greed, Madness, and Revenge; they armed themselves and contemptuously cast Reason, Justice, Remembrance of God, and Moderation from amongst them. When Anger and Greed saw that the people were on their side, they excited them more and more and went to the royal palace.⁵⁵

This tendency to interpret human action within the framework of allegory, while reflecting a kind of primitive psychological analysis, prevents investigation in anything like a systematic, empirical manner. The event overwhelms the chronicler's capacity for analysis and he turns to an accepted model to express himself. At other times, he has a detached scientific air to problems. Once when a baker baked a batch of discoloured bread, and everyone was quite worried, the author accepts the explanation of some merchants who say that it was caused by a plant that grew among the wheat: "This was quite correct, but it did not calm the people of Paris".⁵⁶

At other times he displays a sense of awe before the trappings of knowledge and learning. He provides a description of a youthful scholar-prodigy whom he witnessed in debate with the masters of the Sorbonne.

⁵⁵Ibid., p.116.

⁵⁶Ibid., p.267.

This year a young man was arrived who was only about twenty years old and who thoroughly knew all the seven liberal arts, as all the clerks of Paris University could testify, and who could also play all musical instruments and sing both tune and descant better than anyone else and could paint and illuminate better than any man in all Paris or anywhere else. Besides this, there was no one to touch him when it came to fighting.... He is a master of arts, master of medicine, doctor of laws, doctor of canon law, doctor of theology, and has, indeed, carried on a disputation against us in the College of Navarre-- we were fifty of the most experienced clerks of the University of Paris and more than 3000 other clerks, and he replied so excellently to all the questions put to him that no one could believe it without hearing him themselves; it was astounding. Also, he speaks most expert Latin, also Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, Arabic, and all other languages... than it is human nature to know; he resumes all the four doctors of the Holy Church. His learning, in short, is the wonder of the world.⁵⁷

The journalist feels that "he knows more than it is human to know" and consequently devotes a page to sizing up the scholar for the role of Anti-Christ, the conditions in France, wars, fancy dress, and hated nobles, being ripe for his appearance.⁵⁸

In our investigation of the journal, we have not dealt with several themes such as the use of preaching to advance various explanations for either side in the wars, or paid close attention to the horror with which our journalist views the war. One theme which is missing, is that of personal awareness and reports of family or friendships. The journalist appears to be absolutely alone in the world, yet has a

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 360-361.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 361.

fund of general sympathy for the plight of the people of Paris. We can see a basic conservatism expressed in his attitude towards learning and his trust in an ordered hierarchical society. At the same time, he exhibits a hatred towards the nobility. However, we see little awareness of any interior conflict between an upper bourgeoisie and the populace, for which the author feels pain at the deprivations that it undergoes. Finally, there is his call for peace, in which society can function in a normal ordered fashion.

A "sixteenth century revolution" has been postulated by Henri Hauser.¹ This supposed revolution involves religious, intellectual, moral, political, and economic dimensions. That is to say, the Reformation, the rise of scientific and philological studies, the emergence of humanism, the development of the nation state, the transformation of international relations, the secularization of the political sphere, and finally the emergence of capitalism. The latter phenomenon includes the extension of the division of labour, the concentration of credit, and an intensified class struggle as employers and seigneurs tried to maximize profits and rents.

We shall try to outline the development of the national state, capitalism and humanism, over the period 1450-1550 and see whether Hauser's model has any validity. It appears, however, that connecting strands with the fifteenth century remained strong.

As we saw in an earlier chapter, the great nobility continually opposed the King of France. During the Hundred Years War, Paris itself was occupied by the forces of the

¹ Henri Hauser, La Modernité du XVII^e Siècle, (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1963), passim.

Duke of Burgundy. In 1465, four years after Louis XI came to the throne, a league of Dukes, including the King's brother, banded together to oppose the King in "La Guerre du Bien Public". The struggle between the Dukes of Burgundy and Louis XI continued until the death of Charles the Bold in 1477. During the reign of Francis I, a rebellion by the Constable de Bourbon occurred (1523). Doucet states that in 1550 there remained a feudal legacy within France, and that despite institutional and social changes, the monarch remained dependent, in feudal terms, on his grand vassals:

The situation of the king vis-à-vis these grand vassals nevertheless remained what it had been during the preceding centuries...the political power still belonged to the duke or count, the king only preserving theoretical supremacy, which consisted mostly in the right of supreme jurisdiction. And moreover, the exercise of this jurisdiction was impeded in fact by the Counts of Artois and of Flanders, whose subordination to the King of France was purely fictional.²

²R. Doucet, Les Institutions de la France au XVI^e Siècle, vol. I (Paris: A. et J. Picard, 1948), pp. 73-74. "La situation du roi vis-à-vis de ces grands vassaux n'en restait pas moins ce qu'elle avait été pendant les siècles précédents... les pouvoirs politiques appartenaient encore au duc ou au comte, le roi ne conservant qu'une souveraineté de principe, qui consistait surtout dans le droit de juridiction suprême. Et encore, l'exercice de cette juridiction était-il entravé en fait par les comtes de Flandres et d'Artois, dont la subordination du Roi de France était purement fictive".

This picture is far removed from the one painted by Régine Pernoud, who suggests that Louis XI proceeded to organize "the nation in terms of the bourgeois class, and to model the state on a trading house, the ups and downs of which were seen solely in terms of the state of the budget".³ It is Major's contention that a new aristocracy arose in the sixteenth century. While not necessarily in control of vast tracts of land, their wealth and exercise of office enabled them to assume the role of patron for vast members of the lower nobility, who became their clients.⁴ The webs of protection, and clientage were quite large and they often came into conflict with royal authority. Indeed, the King himself, because of his status, "was the greatest patron",⁵ and this led to struggles for control of the system of royal administration when the monarch was incapable of exercising his rights to their fullest extent. This rise of the client system has been noted previously, by Perroy, who dates it much earlier

³Régine Pernoud, Les Origines de la Bourgeoisie (Paris: P.U.F., 1969), p. 53. "organiser la nation en fonction de la classe bourgeoise et l'Etat sur le modèle d'une maison de commerce, dont les hauts et les bas se traduiront essentiellement par l'état du budget".

⁴J. Russell Major, "The Crown and the Aristocracy in Renaissance France", American Historical Review LXIX (1964), pp. 631-645.

⁵Ibid., p. 644.

than Major.⁶

At the same time as the feudal order was losing its vitality, there was a reorganization and gradual centralization of the various pays that comprised the French state, which previously provided a larger market and sphere of operation for certain members of the bourgeoisie. If a merchant could dispose of large amounts of capital he could quickly seize a dominant position in trade. It is in the middle of the fifteenth century that one observes French merchants assimilating Italian techniques.⁷ Jean Jouvenel, a contemporary chronicler, wrote about Jacques Coeur (1395-1456), the greatest French merchant administrator of his time that

He took into his hands all the merchandise of the kingdom everywhere by means of his agents, which enriched one person and impoverished a thousand

⁶E. Perroy, "Feudalism or Principalities in Fifteenth Century France", Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research XX (1943-45), p.185. Perroy would place the change at some point near 1400.

⁷Yves Rencuard, Etudes d'Histoire Médiévale (Paris: S.E.V.P.E.N., 1968), vol.1, p.750. C.H. Wilson, "Trade, Society, and the State", in Cambridge Economic History of Europe, IV, p.491, observes that "the rising mercantile economies of the north not only borrowed the economic ideas and techniques of Italy but reproduced as best they could the social and aesthetic context in which the Italian economy had flourished".

good merchants.⁸

However, the major financial officiers of the kingdom usually led checkered careers. From 1350 until 1522, of the twelve chief officials of the kingdom, eight died violently, three suffered banishment and imprisonment, and one survived with his wealth intact.⁹

The financial bourgeois of the kingdom had as their greatest desire the wish to become members of the "rentier class". The primacy of land in society, and the privileges conferred upon those who controlled it, did not give way to a new cultural ethic.¹⁰ The value of land fluctuated, new

⁸ Jean Bouvier and Henri Germain-Martin, Finances et Financiers de l'Ancien Régime (Paris: P.U.F., 1964), p.39. "Il a employé toute la marchandise de ce royaume, et partout à ses facteurs, qui a enrichi une personne et appauvri mille bons marchands".

⁹ ibid., p.11.

¹⁰ Eugene F. Rice, "The Patrons of French Humanism 1490-1520", Renaissance Studies in Honour of Hans Baron, ed. Anthony Molho and John A. Tedeschi (University of Northern Illinois, 1971), pp.687-702. Rice's study is based on dedications in works by humanists and evangelists, although he makes no distinction between the terms. He observes that royal and noble patronage dominate after 1520 (p.690). "Until then it was an intellectual movement confined to some among the masters and students of the university's faculty of arts, the higher echelons of the city's secular and monastic clergy, and the proliferating corps of the royal officers, notably the magistrates of the Parlement of Paris. The families of Ganay, Briçonnet and Ruzé are prominent in the support they give the movement". However, because

techniques of cultivation were introduced, customary rights regarding land were re-examined and changes introduced, but the keystone of position in society remained the land. And yet those who owned land were often in a perilous state, having sold rentes, squeezed by a bourgeoisie desirous of purchase and suffering the destruction of assets during a time of war, and simultaneously of being affected by the appearance of a price rise during the sixteenth century.

Doucet saw the above transformation as creating a fundamental change in the sixteenth century, in that feudal property was broken up, bought and sold through commercial

(cont'd) humanism was "politically, socially and economically neutral", there was perhaps nothing in it except for rhetoric that attracted these patrons, (p.701). However, Rice then proceeds to develop a theory of why these families supported the movement. "In Paris in the early sixteenth century the link between humanism and the bureaucratic nobility was, I suggest, the need of 'new men' for cultural ideals distinct from those of the groups with whom they shared and competed for power, the older nobility. Distrusted and patronized by the traditional aristocracy, envied and resented by the moyen état, nobles, but not nobles d'armes et de race, their recent bourgeois extraction known to all, the social position of the 'new men' was ambiguous. A flattering dedication was a tuba fama. Legitimate pre-eminence in the republic of letters helped legitimize an earned pre-eminence in the wider republic of men. A humanist education inculcated a self-confident dignity independent of both office and birth and helped bridge the gap between legal nobility, the reward of service, and acceptance as a gentleman".

"But even if we agree that social insecurity and group rivalry predisposed "fourth estate" families to support humanists, it remains noticeable that clerical members were more active patrons than laymen...and that although almost all patrons were members of officier families the reverse is

transactions, and used by newly enriched families to "consolidate their social ascension".¹¹ This statement expresses the desire of the bourgeoisie, but it remains to be seen whether it was fulfilled. Fourquin, in his investigation of the situation of the Parisian bourgeoisie, found that the notables and gens de robe did purchase fiefs, while the bourgeoisie de négoce bought little. Further, the nobility, while suffering some loss, managed to hold on to most of its land during the period 1450-1550.¹²

Within the city, the bourgeoisie can be divided into various groups in terms of wealth and prestige. In a commercial sense, the bourgeoisie can be divided into those who supply a foreign, and those who supply a city, market.

(cont'd) not true; Only a small minority were actively interested in humanistic studies. Clearly individual inclination and taste directed patronage as effectively as social position predisposed it. Nor did members of the fourth estate retain their quasi-monopoly of patronage for long. Soon the King, then members of the military aristocracy, became patrons of humanism. By the end of the reign of Francis I it had become the function of a humanist education not only to make gentlemen out of merchants, but to make courtiers out of nobles, moulding them both to a common end of service in the territorial state" (pp.701-702).

¹¹ Doucet, op.cit., Vol.II, p.874

¹² Fourquin, op.cit., p.483.

In directly productive terms, between those who supply capital for large semi-industrial manufactures and those who are simply working masters of guilds. The bourgeoisie can again be divided into directly capitalist and office-holding strata. At the same time as the upper bourgeoisie is trying to enter the ranks of the nobility, the bourgeoisie attempts to limit the contours of its own membership. It does so by increasing guild restrictions and by limiting offices to family interests through purchase. The bourgeoisie also becomes more segmented and more exclusive through inter-marriage.

Hauser admits that the period 1400-1600 saw the slow development of the exclusion of the worker from the government of the corps de métier:¹³ The regulation of the modes of production, beneficial to the bourgeoisie, tied those elements of it who can be characterized as the industrial bourgeoisie to the central administration.¹⁴ For instance, the establishment of government control over corporations, and the fixing of a maximum but not a minimum wage, was to be

¹³Hauser, op.cit., p.96.

¹⁴The beginning of royal control over the métiers occurred in Paris in 1467. These regulations were extended to other cities, and by 1581 an ordinance was passed establishing "le régime corpratif obligatoire dans l'industrie des villes et des campagne", (Pernoud, op.cit., pp.53-54).

welcomed by an established upper bourgeoisie. However, the over-regulation of trade and the limitations of entry for newly generated capital it entailed, was bound to oppose the newly wealthy and the old bourgeoisie. This new section of the bourgeoisie, if it wished to compete with the old, had to search elsewhere for labour and the right to production; "Industry is above all urban, but from the beginning of the fifteenth century merchants desiring to escape corporative regulations directed production toward the countryside".¹⁵

II

Claude de Seyssel, a bishop and advisor to the French monarchy, asserted that when an opportunity to pass from one estate to another exists, a society is in a state of tranquillity socially. He describes such a society: "because the hope of rising in the world makes each person content in his estate and without cause to machinate against

¹⁵J. Imbert, op. cit., p. 375. "L'industrie est surtout urbaine mais dès le début du XVI^e siècle, les marchands désireux d'échapper aux règles corporatives dirigent la population vers les campagnes". In addition to these benefits, the countryside provided cheaper waterpower and lower food prices. Since wages included meals, this was a factor in moving to the countryside.

the other estates, since he knows by proper and lawful means he may enter into them".¹⁶ This passage, purportedly describing French society in 1515, illustrates the fact that estates exist, and that it is possible to pass from one to another. But Seyssel is not necessarily describing "what is", but rather "what should be", in an attempt to win intellectual allegiance to the French state. The argument is a prescriptive one, and because society is a finite concept rather than an infinite one, false. French society allowed both for hard-won advancement, and for social decay. Seyssel does not take into account the limited number of positions and possibilities within French society available for members of the bourgeoisie.¹⁷ There exists the paradox that the drive for security, which is provided from income derived from the possession of land, encounters resistance from those who own land, and who are being led to alienate their source of income.

Although Fourquin illustrated the resistance of the

¹⁶ La Grande Monarchie de France, ed. J. Poujol (Paris: P.U.F., 1951), cited by P.S. Lewis, op.cit., pp. 124-125.

¹⁷ Our view differs from that expressed in Eugene Rice, op.cit., pp. 697-698, who accepts Seyssel's description of French society. Rice also paraphrases Lucien Febvre's description of the rise of the bourgeoisie which we quoted at the end of chapter I of this thesis.

nobility to the bourgeoisie in the Paris region, it is generally agreed that entry was fairly easy in the years 1480-1530, and that the hierarchy of social order was ruptured to a certain extent.

Until at least the fifteenth century the bourgeoisie had continued to augment itself with enterprising popular elements to which a happy fate had given fortune. Starting from the sixteenth century, already, the most important of its members furnished a new nobility supplanting the old, or allying with those of the old families who had grasped that it was better to share power with its new rivals than to wear itself out and disappear through vain competition.¹⁸

One cause which has been postulated as bringing about an assimilation of elements of the bourgeoisie into the nobility sees the Renaissance concept of man as "putting in question the rational basis of the traditional division (of society) into orders. The liberation of the individual goes hand in hand with the crumbling of the feudal castes. The bourgeois situated outside of a social framework, benefits from a new

¹⁸ E. Deronne, "Les origines des Chanoines de Notre-Dame de Paris de 1450-1550", Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine, vol. XVIII (janvier-mars, 1971), p. 22. "Jusqu'au XV^e siècle au moins la bourgeoisie avait continué à s'augmenter d'éléments populaires entreprenants auxquels un heureux sort avait donné la fortune. A partir du XVI^e siècle, déjà les plus importants de ses membres forment une nouvelle noblesse, supplantant l'ancienne, ou alliée à celles des vieilles familles qui avaient compris que mieux valait partager le pouvoir avec ces nouveaux rivaux que de s'épuiser et disparaître dans une vaine compétition".

perspective which blurs his characteristics as a member of a class", and the bourgeois renounces the attempt to reverse the regime and contents itself with making the best possible use of the advantages it offers them.¹⁹

A new group, a mixture of legal bourgeoisie and an aristocracy having its antecedents in the wealthy bourgeoisie, emerges. This is a humanist nobility characterized by the trait of "politeness". It retains its connections with the incubator of its wealth, the city, and emerges as one of the more culturally rich sections of French society. The family Eyquem provides a pure example of this type of transformation of the bourgeoisie into the nobility. The great-grandfather, born in Bordeaux in 1402, was a dealer in herrings. In 1477 he purchased the title, ruined chateau and coat of arms of a fief. His son enlarges the family's wealth and rank and remained in the herring trade in Bordeaux. The grandson, Pierre, fought under Francis I in Italy, served

¹⁹ Jean Alter, Les Origines de la Satire Anti-Bourgeoise en France: Moyen Age-XVI^e Siecle (Geneva: L. Droz, 1966), p. 152. Alter approaches medieval society with a Marxist framework. He writes that the "marchands ne sont pas seulement les fondateurs de la classe bourgeoise, mais par ce renversement des attitudes économiques et sociales ils font renaître les classes en général, sous leur aspect antagoniste et militant", (p. 27). As the nobility remained socially and culturally dominant, the bourgeoisie later developed its own hierarchical pattern.

the city in every capacity including that of mayor, looked after the wine business and rebuilt the chateau. He gave his son a legal education and bought him a position in the Parlement. The son abandoned the name Eyquem after his father's death and assumed that of the fief. Michel de Montaigne was a noble who travelled to Italy, exemplified a form of aristocratic humanism and yet, like his father before him, served as mayor of the city of Bordeaux.²⁰

Hauser's model of a sixteenth century revolution has value as a thematic guide to the period under discussion, but there appear to be no striking changes from the years 1450-1550; all is very much of the same piece. There was rather a gradual evolution, instead of a revolution, in the development of the national state, capitalism, and humanism. Undoubtedly, the first two grew stronger, and the latter spoke with a louder voice, but the hierarchical stages of the society remained in force.

²⁰ Donald Frame, Montaigne (Harcourt, Brace and World, 1965). The process of ennobling by purchase of fiefs was condemned at a meeting of the Estates General in 1576, and in 1579 the King issued an edict denying ennoblement to a person who bought a fief. The bourgeoisie as a class opposed the purchase of fiefs because those who did so narrowed the remaining tax base of the bourgeoisie. The nobility opposed purchase as it felt threatened in its status.

Our journalist, Nicholas Versorie, is far removed from the society of the rich and the reformist humanist currents of French society.²¹ He is quite simply a member

²¹Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris sous François Premier, hereafter Journal sous François I..., ed. Philippe Joutard (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1963). At the end of the English wars, the status of Paris had changed. No longer the residence of the king, since the monarchs had found a more temperate and less turbulent climate in the Loire Valley in which to erect their chateaux, Paris nevertheless remained the first city of the kingdom in terms of income and the wealth that it provided its ruler, despite the claims of Lyons. After the destruction of Burgundy, and during what can be called the time of recovery from 1450-1550, Paris continued to grow in wealth. There exists a description of the city on the eve of the religious wars by a Venetian ambassador: "A very large, beautiful, and rich and populous city; alone in my opinion is it fit to compare with Venice, indeed it is much more populous, and has very many more shops and much more trade...Paris is in truth beyond my power of description, and, I can best end by saying no city in Europe is as large or fine". Cited by K.H. Helleiner, "The Population of Europe from the Black Death to the Reformation", Cambridge Economic History of Europe, vol. IV, p.82. For two short sketches of Parisian life, see N.M. Sutherland, "Parisian Life in the Sixteenth Century", in French Humanism, ed. W. L. Gundersheimer (New York: Harper, 1969), pp.51-64; and V.L. Saulnier, Paris Devant la Renaissance des Lettres (Paris: Société d'Édition d'Enseignement Supérieur, 1951).

of the lower strata of the bourgeoisie, an avocat at the Parlement de Paris. (Neither his dates of birth nor death are known. He does however appear to speak for the Parisian bourgeoisie, and his complaints against the royal authority of the state are frank. The journal covers the years 1519-1530, and is shorter in terms of length, both in years and in entries, than the previous journals we have examined. We shall investigate Versoris' attitudes to the customary order of society, to the nobility and to the intellectual currents of his day which we described in the first part of this chapter.

Versoris reveals close ties to the mentality of our first journalist. He is unaware of the new intellectual currents and appears to share the same concerns and values as his earlier forebear. The major theme of the journal is fear, engendered by the belief that disorder in society will cause its collapse.

To speak truthfully, the rich and the poor of these times had good reason and argument to be afraid, as there was neither hope of peace nor reason that anyone cared to occupy himself with the care and welfare of the kingdom. Rather at this time, everyone thought solely of his personal profit, even those people who by their position and by their office were meant to think of the well-being, order and prosperity of public affairs and the poor.²²

In another entry, Versoris attacked the princes and other great personages, for creating war, and times of famine.

In the passage cited above, one can see that he views the population as divided in terms of wealth, possession of office, and estate. A definition of the public good is advanced as is the requirement of good conduct in office.

Versoris gives several accounts of the opposition of the bourgeoisie to the new taxes, even those raised to collect a ransom for Francis I, who had been taken prisoner by Charles V at the battle of Pavia in 1525. On his return from captivity, the King made prisoners of

...several good and honest bourgeois, to wit Messieurs Marlin, canon and penitentiary of Paris, Bouchart, Duget, Boeleau, lawyers at the court. The cause of the said imprisonment was that while the King was a prisoner in Spain, they with several others of the bourgeoisie of Paris, held that in their opinion it was not proper that the bourgeoisie of Paris should have responsibility, each one in particular, for the payment of several large sums, which Milady, the regent, had accorded and composed with the English concerning the old differences between the French

(cont.,) argument de s'esbahir, autre qu'il n'y avait espoir de paix ni bruyt que aucun voulut prendre le soin ou la sollicitude du royaume, mais de ce temps chacun pensait seulement à son profit particulier, mesmement les personages qui de leur estat et offices, devalent penser au regime, estat et prosperité de la chose publique et des pauvres".

and the English.²³

Open criticism directed against the monarchy was not tolerated by the crown.

The longest passage in the journal is for the year 1527. It describes the execution, at which Versoris was present,²⁴ of the great financier Jacques de Beaume, sieur de Semblançay, who was accused of embezzlement. The journalist sums up Beaume's character as follows:

He was very wise, modest and gracious to the gentlemen and people who had business with him, and also, in truth, he was a prudent man, wise and of good conduct, but avarice and the desire to have possession of abundance caused him to go astray.²⁴

²³ Ibid., pp. 106-107. "...plusieurs bons et honnetes bourgeois, c'est asçavoir messieurs Marlin, chancine et penitencier de Paris, Bouchart, Duguet, Boeleau, avocats en la court. La cause dudit emprisonnement fust parce que, le Roy estant en Espaignes prisonnier, eulx, avec plusieurs autres de bourgeois de Paris tinrent en leur opinion qu'il ne convenait pas que les bourgeois de Paris s'obligassent chacun en particulier pour le payment de quelques grosses sommes, à quoy ma dame le régente avait accordé et composé avec les Angloys touchant les différens anciens entre les François et les Angloys."

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 111-112. "...il estait homme prudent, saige et de grant conduite, mais l'avarice et désir d'avoir biens a faisson fust cause de perdre congnoissance de raison".

The position that he obtained, as observed by his bourgeois contemporaries, raised him to the level of the king: "for in my time, I have seen him esteemed almost as a king of France".²⁵ The story of his career has a moral for the journalist :

This story shows the instability and change of fortune, as well as the fact that service to a seigneur is neither an inheritance nor an external benefit.²⁶

De Beaume, the son of a merchant, rose to be quasi-king of France. He was ennobled, by the purchase of a fief or the granting of nobility by the monarch, and after reaching that rank became mayor of Tours, illustrating the inter-connection between the new nobility and the town.²⁷ Marx's thesis, that the greatest division of material and mental labour is in the separation of town and country, does not hold validity for a certain group in French society.²⁸ The holding of administrative posts in the city is not in opposition to a new aristocracy that emerges from the city.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.112. "...car de mon temps je l'ai vu estre estimé quasi roy en France".

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.112. "De ceste hietoire est bien cognu et entendu l'instabilité et mutation de fortune et aussy que service de seigneur n'est pas heritage ni grace eternelle".

²⁷ H. Lemonnier, Les Guerres d'Italie, vol.V, 1, Histoire de France, ed. Lavissee (Paris: Hachette, 1911), p.241.

²⁸ Marx, op.cit., pp.127-128.

The lower bourgeoisie, who are not in the position to make this transition, suffer from the state's concrete need for wealth. Rentes from the revenues of the Hotel de Ville in 1522 established the legitimate taking of interest, although this view of events was not necessarily accepted by society.²⁹

Versoris views the method of forcing the Parisians to make loans to the monarchy as a virtual extortion (extorquée) on the part of the king. He writes that the rentes were purchased more by craintes et tixeurs than by goodwill. There were grosses murmurations against the king's council for this forced loan. Versoris himself is forced to buy a small share of the rentes, three hundred livres worth, for which his return was to be twenty-five livres a year. He does so with reluctance, fearing the result, but he has no choice.³⁰ This fear of change in the customary manner of life, as well as in traditional ideology, is understandable, because of the direct social cost of change. The impositions

²⁹Lemonnier, op.cit., p.241.

³⁰Journel sous François I..., p.41. Several important bourgeois were imprisoned for protesting against this loan. There was much commotion in the city and after six weeks the prisoners were released, without being compensated--as Versoris believes they should be--for their punishment (p.42).

of the government came to be related to a general unease, as exemplified in a fear of learning and new religious ideas.

Culture is a social phenomenon. Its availability in the sixteenth century was increased as some 25,000,000 books were published in Paris in the sixteenth century.³¹ While the argument has been made that the production of manuscripts was to some extent rationalized in the fourteenth century, their cost was still far too high to attract a large number of purchasers. The printing of books made available a new source of learning and information. However, its dissemination was regulated by both the state and the church.

In his analysis of three studies of Parisian libraries by Doucet, Schutz and Lehoux, H.J. Martin observed that only a few Lutheran works and none at all by Calvin or his followers were found in the inventories examined by the above scholars. Martin postulates that "it seems fairly clear that the experts were none too keen on inventory books which were 'tainted' or which had about them the whiff of heresy and that the inventories do not tell all".³² This

³¹H.J. Martin, "What Parisians Read in the Sixteenth Century" in French Humanism, ed. Gundersheimer et al., p.144. The vast majority of these were small religious missals.

³²Ibid., p.135

surmise has some validity, as Versoris wrote in the following entry in 1522:

At this time, a German monk named Luther wrote several books in which he summed up several faults within the church, which nevertheless were upheld by several Parisians of standing. However, these were forced to desist once Luther and his writings had been judged heretical and anti-catholic by Messrs., the theologians of the city of Paris, who with all their force resisted the aforementioned Luther, his errors and accomplices.³³

However, the writings of Luther spread and because of their availability led certain persons astray. Versoris regards the doctrine of reform with a certain horror, and he believes that books can be the bearers of error.

One ought to note that because the said hermit (a Protestant) had been partly induced to preach by the books of Luther which he had read and considered. The books of Luther, those that could be found were burnt on the Church square, and a penalty inflicted upon those who would from this time on keep them to read.³⁴

³³Journal sous François I..., p.44. "En ce temps ung moine des Allemaignes, nommé Luther composa plusieurs livres, auquelz il résuma plusieurs erreurs de l'église, que néanmoins quelques uns de Paris ayant dignité soutenaient en leur pouvoir, touteffoys ils furent contrainctez en partie de se desister, après que Luther et ses compositions furent jugées damnables et non catoliques par mess. les theologiens de la ville de Paris, qui de leur pouvoir resisterent audit Luther et à ses erreurs et complices".

³⁴Ibid., p.44. "Faut noter que parce que ledit ermite avait esté induict en partie à ce prescher par les livres de Luther qu'il avait lus et regardés. Les livres de Luther, ceux que l'on peut trouver, furent bruslez au parvey, peine imposée à ceux qui dorenavant et cy après en auroient et retiendroient pour lire".

A new element has entered society. Books and their diffusion are noted as making an impact on accepted modes of belief. Certain words and their representation are seen as demonic and capable of corrupting men. Learning becomes a private matter, and hence less capable of regulation. However, in order to maintain the stability of an accepted framework of theological and secular ideology, attempts at suppressing the production and distribution of books were instituted. King and Pope were allied in this censorship, and by 1563 secular censorship was theoretically complete.³⁵ Needless to say, pamphlets and books opposing the royal power continued to appear.

Versoris is aware of neither the complex relationships between church and state, nor evangelism and humanism. Figures such as Euseb or Erasmus do not appear in his journal. When Berquin, a gentleman highly educated in the art d'humanité, is burnt for heresy in 1529 and his books with him, Versoris believes that he must have used his great knowledge in an evil fashion, and directed it against "notre Roy".³⁶

³⁵ Lucien Febvre et H. J. Martin, L'Apparition du Livre (Paris: Armand Colin, 1971), p. 345. For Luther, pp. 412-439.

³⁶ Journal sous François I..., p. 126. His sentencing and punishment are made as public as possible.

The nobility is seldom commented upon in his journal. Some of its members appear to play an important role at court and others cause some disorder in brawls and quarrels, but the actions of the nobility as a whole appear to have little effect on the bourgeoisie. The primary reason for this was the internal peace of the country in these years. The bourgeoisie of Paris have much more to fear from the demands of the court than they do from the nobility. While still allowed general assemblies to make its wishes known, the bourgeoisie has little power to effect the course of events.

The journal fastens on social problems similar to those of the earlier journal. Versoris is also moved by the suffering of the poor and angered at those who manipulate prices.³⁷ Descriptions of plagues, taxes, and processions abound, but now a more personal note enters, with the mention

³⁷ ibid., p.33. "Audit temps furent pris et pugns par justice des boulangers qui avaient delinqué en leur estat car ils furent accusés d'avoir comploté ensemble sur le pain, qui estait pour lors fort cher, et iceulx ne voulaient cuire ni boulangier que à leur plaisir pour vendre leur pain et danrée à leur gré. Par sentence confirmé par arrest, ils firent amende honorable au Parquet, de là à Notre Dame de Paris, à la compaignie desdits boulangers y estait une boulangère. Le peuple n'estoit guères content de telle amende, mais eust bien voullu que l'on leur eust tranché les testes". Considering the importance of bread in the early modern age this is not a harsh judgment. All of the journals give accounts of the difficulty of supervising the bakers; Hauser has an article on a bread riot in 1530 in Dijon in Travailleurs et Marchands dans l'Ancienne France (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1929), p.123.

of wives and the birth and death of children and accounts of the deaths of friends. Versoria does not try to comprehend his time, but to draw moral lessons from it. He does not appear to reflect the changes that were occurring in society described at the beginning of this chapter; he only suffers them. As such, he is a typical bourgeois of the middle, squeezed rather than rising.

Chapter V

French society in the last half of the sixteenth century is dominated by one event, the religious struggle between Catholics and Huguenots. The wars of religion are not, however, a simple subject; within their confines, many competing and opposing factors are at work. The various strands involved in the wars are political, institutional, economic, and intellectual in nature and they cut across the entire spectrum of French society.

Doucet's magistral work on sixteenth century institutions concisely outlines the reasons for conflict as he describes the intimate union of the church and the civil power, reflected in the concordat of Bologna, effected between Crown and Church on the eve of the Reform, in 1516:

Beyond the monarch, it was the state as a whole and society which conformed to the principles of the church, seeking to assure individual salvation as well as material existence. From this stems the impossibility of conceiving the state as acting solely on the temporal plane, and tolerating the existence of a dissident religious sect. This would have represented both a moral weakness on the part of the government and a lessening of its political authority. From this also stemmed the necessity of the king to support the church.¹

¹R. Doucet, *op.cit.*, p.73. "Par delà le roi, c'était l'Etat tout entier et la société qui se conformaient aux principes

As the church tended to complement the state, the government of France--which can be defined as the king, his councils, and officers responsible to his directives--would have to oppose any religious organization opposed to the Gallican church. For the unity of church and state in the sixteenth century was a two-edged sword; a religious organization could potentially be transformed into a secular structure challenging the institutions of government.

The use made of church organization by, both Huguenots and Catholics can be considered as one of the last attempts by members of the great nobility to retain their political position. The wars of religion can, in these terms, be described as a struggle over patronage. The conflicts between the Guise, the Châtillons, the Montmorency connections, and the Ecurbons, are struggles for relative positions within the hierarchy of the state.

The situation of the clients--the lesser nobility--

(cont.,) de l'Eglise, visant à assurer le salut de chacun en même temps que son existence matérielle. Delà, l'impossibilité de concevoir l'Etat, comme agissant seulement sur le plan temporel et tolérant l'existence d'une secte religieuse dissidente, ce qui eût été à la fois une défaillance morale pour le gouvernement et une diminution de son autorité politique. De là aussi, la nécessité pour le roi de faire partie de l'Eglise".

constitutes one of the more important controversies of early modern French history. The standard interpretation for the period is that as the purses of the nobles grew lighter, the names added to their genealogies grew longer. As their income declined due to inflation and the alienation of feudal rights, a more complex codification of privileges and statuses arose as a last barrier separating them from infiltration by the bourgeoisie.² The behaviour of the nobility is noted in the reports of two Venetian ambassadors. Suriana, in 1562, wrote that the nobles were poor and liable to bankruptcy, and Lorenzo Friuli stated that "the common people...are tyrannized and oppressed by a great number of poor gentlemen who want to feed and dress themselves and live an easy life at the people's expense".³

This has led one historian to designate the period as "the ultimate reaction of the feudal spirit".⁴ Henri Sée

²Pierre Goubert, Cent Mille Provinciaux au XVII^e Siècle (Paris: Flammarion, 1968), pp.380-381. "Un bien très précieux restait pourtant aux nobles ruinés: leur naissance. Et sur ce point précis, qui lui fut toujours douloureux, la bourgeoisie ne put vaincre la noblesse qu'en essayant de pénétrer en son sein".

³J.C. Davis (ed.), The Pursuit of Power: Venetian Ambassadors Reports on Turkey, France and Spain in the Age of Philip II 1560-1600, (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), pp.194 & 252.

⁴Marx, op.cit., p.123.

believes the reaction occurred because of the price rise of the late sixteenth century:

This monetary revolution which is one of the essential features of the sixteenth century, had as its consequence the ruin of the "rentiers", of office-holders, and of the country nobility. On the other hand, it was more favourable to cultivators, to merchants, and much more so to financiers and speculators.⁵

However, this does not, in Sée's opinion, lead to a change in the idea of an aristocratic caste, nor does this caste change its approach to life.⁶ It may even intensify its way of life in order to further distinguish itself from the bourgeoisie. An increased ideological emphasis on "orders" in society in fact means that these are increasingly being threatened in concrete terms by basic transformations within society. The nobility's reaction to its falling position is outlined by Doucet:

The wars of religion, which were the creation of idle gentlemen, ruined by the Italian ventures and the economic upheavals, could not but revive the hopes

⁵Henri Sée, Histoire Economique et Sociale de la France, vol. I, Le Moyen Age et l'Ancien Régime (Paris: A. Colin, 1939), p.93. "Cette révolution monétaire, qui est l'un des faits essentiels du XVI^e siècle, a eu pour conséquence la ruine des rentiers, des fonctionnaires, de la noblesse compagne. Par contre, elle a été favorable aux cultivateurs, aux marchands et plus encore aux gens de finances et spéculateurs".

⁶ibid., p.137.

of this aristocracy. Within the provinces, where the governor created a kind of autonomy for himself, in the cities where the municipalities usurped the political power, in the seigneuries, where the action of the central government no longer made itself felt, everywhere ordinances were promulgated and troops and taxes were levied, as in the centuries of the Middle Ages, with the representatives of the royal power preserving nothing but a useless title.⁷

The bourgeoisie in the cities of France were faced with three major problems: the actions of the nobility, the rigid stratification in terms of class in the city, and the loss of their traditional rights as the royal authority attempted to increase its control over the kingdom. In response to these pressures Braudel thinks that there was an attempt to recreate the early medieval city-state or commune, which saw "the entire population carried away from their bourgeois to the most humble of their artisans".⁸ Braudel over emphasizes this sense of collectivity, which undoubtedly existed

⁷ Doucet, *op.cit.*, p.79. "Les guerres de religion, qui étaient le fait des gentilhommes désœuvrés, ruinés par les aventures Italiennes et les bouleversements économiques, ne pouvaient que reviver les espérances de cette aristocratie comprimée depuis un siècle. Dans le cadre de la province, où le gouverneur se constituait une sorte d'autonomie, dans les villes où les municipalités usurpaient le pouvoir politique, dans les seigneuries, d'où l'action du gouvernement ne se faisait plus sentir, partout où promulgaient des ordonnances, on levait des troupes et des impositions comme au siècle du Moyen Age sans que le représentant du pouvoir royal conservât autre chose qu'un vain titre".

⁸ F. Braudel, "Noble Factions and Republican Independences: Provence and Marseille", in *The French Wars of Religion*, ed. J.H. Salmon (Boston: Heath, 1967), p.75. These attempts at independent existence fail because the cities needed larger economic units to survive.

in some cities. Bad government and a well-managed campaign, by the supporters of the Duke of Guise saw Paris, as a whole, resist the King in 1588 when he brought Swiss troops into the city. But this sense of collectivity could not last, due to endemic hostility between classes in the city. Maillard, a councillor in the Cour des Aides, and generally representative of the upper bourgeoisie, wrote that

It is a true maxim of state, that a people were [...] never wise, only the terror of penalties and the power of the magistrate restrain them, that the people do nothing, seeing that they don't dare to do ill, that they are not just, that it is not regulated.⁹

There was a continuous, bitter internal struggle within many cities between the aristocratie echevinale and the classes populaires. The former gained a position of continued ascendancy, which only collapsed during the pressure of war. One has only to consider the execution, by the Council

⁹Myriam Yardeni, La Conscience Nationale en France pendant les guerres de religion (1559-1598). (Louvain: Editions Nauwelaerts, 1971), p.261. "C'est un maxime veritable d'estat, que jamais peuple ne fut bon, que jamais peuple fut sage, sinon autant que le terreur des peines et la puissance du magistrat l'ont retenu tel, que le peuple ne fait bien, que autant qu'il l'ose le mal faire, qu'il ne peut estre impunement injust impunement deraiulé, et qu'il est contraint de ployer sous les loix, que le peuple est un barbare. Gamellon qui toujours hait l'estat present...ingrat, suable, menteurs farouches, ennemi de vertu, qui ne prise que ce qu'est vil et ce que les bons condamnent, et qui est un estat trouble, suit toujours le plus maschant et le plus injust parti".

of Sixteen, of the President of the Parlement of Paris in 1593 and the response of the Duke of Mayenne, the leader of the Catholic League, to this execution--the execution in turn of the "democratic" leaders of the council--to see a breakdown of an alliance due to class differences.¹⁰ This conflict between the "grands" and the "petits", was used by the central power to intervene in urban affairs. If the upper bourgeoisie felt threatened by the exercise of royal power in terms of taxation, it would turn to regional loyalties and appeal to the nobility and other towns in its area for support against the monarchy. However, if the leading sector within the bourgeoisie felt threatened by urban unrest, it might welcome the imposition of royal authority. A municipal aristocracy predicated on office and law becomes more and more privileged as its social base within the city becomes narrower.¹¹

Simultaneously, the city as a social unit of production attempted to advance its interests by extending its control

¹⁰ J.H. Salmon, "The Paris Sixteen 1584-94: The Social Analysis of a Revolutionary Movement", The Journal of Modern History (December, 1972), pp.607-630.

¹¹ Yardeni, op.cit., p.251. "C'est déjà un véritable schéma de lutte des classes dans la meilleure tradition marxiste. Les ennemis, ce sont les grands et les riches..." J.W. Allen, A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century (London: Methuen, 1960), p.286. "It [Calvinism] was one form that was taken by the growing discontent and irritation, especially in the "pays d'état"; and if Geneva influence counted for much in it, the increase of taxation and the attack on municipal freedom probably counted for more. In any case, French Protestantism as it developed and spread in spite of spasmodic persecution, allied itself inevitably with groups and classes concerned merely with defense of local or class privilege".

over the countryside. A noble who had served in the armies of Henri IV noted that

The large cities extract all the profit they can, make a great noise about their privileges, and throw all the burdens and miseries on the miserable rural people.¹²

The leaders of this expansion were the doctes, who

formed a close knit, wealthy and powerful group. Most of them were gens de robe longue, new men trained in the laws whose family roots were firmly established in the bourgeoisie of provincial cities. Their fathers were mayors and city councillors; their brothers were royal officers and administrators in towns like Sens, Provins, Beauvais, and Troyes. Other members of their families had studied theology and added clerical benefices to the family fortunes. Still others had practiced medicine, taught at provincial universities, or were notaires. Some had married into the old nobility. However, the highest goal of the bourgeoisie de robe, the climax of their career and their fortunes, was membership in one of the Parlements, the sovereign law courts.

It was among these parlementaires, many of whom had made it to the top of the social pyramid only recently, that French culture in the sixteenth century found its social setting. One need only consult the "who's who" of this world, Francois de la Croix du Maine's Bibliothèque Française (Paris, 1584) to be stunned by the preponderance of Robins among the writers, artists, philosophers, historians, scientists, physicians and other intellectuals, in France.¹³

¹²Cited in Doucet, op.cit., p. 362. "...les grosses citéz tirez tous les profits qu'elles peuvent, faire bruire leurs privilèges, et jeter sur le pauvre peuple chaspestre toutes les charges et les misères".

¹³Huppert, op.cit., pp. 6-7.

The type of education this elite was given is best expressed in a lecture given by the Italian jurist, Alciato, who taught at Bruges in 1539, and whose fame as a jurist "made him one of the highest paid professors of the sixteenth century":

And in order that I may not keep you in suspense with regard to the method I propose, I shall say that I consider the best method for anyone who hopes to approach the study of civil law is to provide himself first with a knowledge of good literature, and lest any of you young men fail to understand, I call good literature the art of speaking, grammar, dialectics and rhetoric. Intellectual science I name likewise, the knowledge of history and poetry. I call also by the name of intellectual sciences those parts of philosophy on the one hand, which are concerned with the investigations of the secrets of nature, and on the other, those which fashion the morals of citizens. Finally I call international science a knowledge of Greek and Latin literature, which receives the name of scientific culture, because, although they can contribute in a more lofty manner to other professions, yet they contribute chiefly to the advantage of jurisprudence.¹⁴

Our last journalist, Pierre de l'Estoile, likewise revered learning and his education partook of the curriculum described by Alciato.¹⁵ We know much more about his background

¹⁴Linton C. Stevens, "The Contribution of French Jurists to the Humanism of the Renaissance", Studies in the Renaissance, VI, (1954), p.48.

¹⁵Journal de l'Estoile, ed. Louis-Raymond Lefèvre and A. Martin (Paris: Gallimard, 1943-1960). This edition is in four volumes. The first covers the reign of Henri III, the next three that of Henri IV and several years of the reign of Louis XIII. Hereafter referred to as Journal sous Henri III, and Journal I sous Henri IV, etc. Use has also been made of an earlier edition, Mémoires-Journaux, ed. Brunet, Champallion, et. al., (Paris: Alphonse Lemerre, 1875-96) in 12 volumes. Hereafter, Estoile-Brunet...

than we do of the other journalists we have been examining. He was born in 1546 into one of the great parlementaire families at Paris, and was connected by marriage to others of the elite. He studied at Bourges. Between 1569, the year of his marriage, and 1571, the date that his position is named in a document, he acquired the office of audiencier en la chancellerie de Paris. There were six audienciers in the kingdom. They had the title of notaires and secrétaires of the king, signed letters, and were charged with recettes. His first wife died in 1580, leaving seven children, and he married again in 1582, this union producing ten more. During the wars of religion, he assumed the stance of a politique, that is, one who believed in the supremacy of the monarchical order. He was a Catholic, but he was tolerant of Huguenot sentiments. During the occupation of Paris by the League, 1588-1594, he led a checkered life. He was imprisoned in 1589, suspect because of his belief in the power of the monarchy. However, he was released and occupied the position of grand-audiencier for the Catholic League. This did not keep him from being suspected as loyal to Henri IV, and he was listed on the papier rouge, a document circulated by some members of the Paris sixteen, the leaders of the Catholic League in the capital. On it were those who were to be hung, stabbed, or exiled. L'Estoile was in the middle category.

At the same time, he was considered in an unfavourable light by the supporters of Henri IV for remaining in the employment of the League, rather than joining the future king's Parlement, at Tours. He suffered the rigours of the siege of Paris in 1590, and his wife, who was sent from the city, fell into the hands of the Spanish and had to be ransomed. A fief came into his hands, through the death of his wife's brother, but L'Estoile only visited the estate once and sold his rentes. He also sold his office, but repented of the deal as it lost him 800 écus and caused a long law suit.

He suffered from ill health, and from such natural catastrophes as twice having the roof of his house blown off, and increasing financial hardships. L'Estoile was a member of the upper bourgeoisie, but one who far from advancing his position in life, was left behind, having time to write his journals, mull over the fate of the world, and add to his collection of curiosities--pamphlets, verses, placard inscriptions and books. With the aid of those he copied into his journals we are provided with a view of the world of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century France, albeit with all the prejudices of the author of the journal.

The portrait one draws of him after reading the journal is that of a man searching for order in a society

where force reigns. He begins his journal in 1574; its entries end with his death in 1611.¹⁶ There is nothing to distinguish its beginning from those of other journals we have looked at, except that his entries are more involved and thorough. This may be due to the fact that he apparently revised the journal for the reign of Henri III, leaving out any examination of himself. It was not until 1606 that l'Estoile set out a justification for his "register", but then he does so under the influence of Montaigne. The entry which follows gives evidence of a self-critical spirit which did not exist for the earlier journalists:

In the register (which I shall call the store-house of my curiosity-) one can see me there (as the sire of Montaigne said in his Essays speaking of himself) all naked and as I am, my natural self from day to day, my soul free and all mine, accustomed to behave in its own fashion, yet it is not wicked or malicious, but too given to a useless curiosity and freedom (about which I am grieved). And yet whomever would wish to curtail it would harm my health and my life, for whenever I am forced, I am worthless being extremely free both by my nature and by artifice. I only beg that my friends and those who know me excuse and put up with these weak and useless occupations of mine, these pleasures to which age and illness drive me. For which (to prevent a greater illness) I provide toys and amusements as in childhood, to which I feel I am progressively regressing. And all I force myself to do at this stage (but I am incapable of accomplishing it) is to render the conversation of my life (somber and hidden) sanctionable before God (who has done me much good) without worrying much about the verdict of the men of this

¹⁶Estoile=Brunet, vol. 12...has a good summary of l'Estoile's life.

world who judge only through appearances. For also, he who is a good man solely through appearance is worth nothing, and here I agree with the sire of Montaigne, my vade recum, that, aside from life and health (and I add the honour of God and the dread of him) there is nothing else I would bite my fingernails or which I would buy at the price of torment of the spirit and constraint. I take as my motto the saying of the apostle Saint Paul "Gloria nostra, testimonium conscientiae nostrae".¹⁷

¹⁷Journal sous Henri IV, pp. 93-94. "En ces registres (que j'appelle le magasin de mes curiosités), on m'y verra, (comme dit le sieur de Montaigne en ses Essais, parlant de soi) tout nu et tel que je suis, mon naturel au jour le jour, mon âme libre et toute mienne, accoutumée à se conduire à sa mode, non toutefois méchante ni maligne, mais trop portée à une vaine curiosité et liberté (dont je suis marri). Et laquelle toutefois qui me voudrait retrancher ferait tort à sa santé et à sa vie, parce qu'cù je suis contraint je ne vaud rien, étant extrêmement libre et par nature et par art. Je prie seulement mes amis, et ceux qui me connaissent d'excuser et supporter en moi ces vaines et chétives occupations, des plaisirs où mon malade et mon âge se poussent. Auquel (pour éviter un plus grand mal) je fournis de jouets et d'amusements, comme à l'enfance, en laquelle je me sens retomber petit à petit. Et tout ce à quoi je m'efforce aujourd'hui, (mais je n'en puis venir à bout) c'est de rendre approuvée devant Dieu (qui m'a fait tant de biens) la conversation de ma vie (obscure et cachée), sans grandement me soucier du jugement des hommes de ce monde, qui me jugent par l'apparence. Car, aussi, qui n'est homme de bien que par la contenance ne vaut guère et j'en suis là, loyé avec le seigneur de Montaigne, mon vade recum, que, sauf la santé et la vie (j'ajoute l'honneur de Dieu et sa crainte) il n'est autre chose pour quoi je veuille ranger mes ongles, et que je veuille acheter au prix du tourment de l'esprit et de la contrainte. Je pour ma devise le dire de l'apôtre Saint Paul: 'Gloria nostra, testimonium conscientiae nostrae'."

There is nothing like this passage in the previous journals we have examined. Nevertheless, the journal itself, running to some 2,000 closely printed pages in the best edition, does not present a man reflecting on his condition at every moment. Rather, he is a medium through which we can view the world of the latter half of the sixteenth century. His contacts are wide and varied: he has access to ambassadors' letters, personal gossip with those who are on intimate terms with the king, and conversation with anyone who was liable to cross his path during the day. The journal includes satiric verses passed hand to hand, accounts given verbatim by participants in affairs, testimony heard at the Parlement by l'Estoile, and the messages he copied from the placards put out to communicate with the public by various groups, and quickly torn down by agents of the government.¹⁸

¹⁸Journal I sous Henri IV, p.62. One example of a placard for 1590 supporting Henri IV is given below. L'Estoile agrees with its sentiments. "Pauvres Parisiens, je déplore votre misère, et j'ai encore plus grande pitié de ce qu'êtes bad-auds. Ne voyez-vous point à vue d'oeil que cette âme damnée d'ambassadeur d'Espagne, qu'a fait tuer notre bon roi, se moque de vous en vous faisant manger tant de bouillie qu'il voudrait que vous en aussiez ja tous crevés, pour s'emparer de vos biens et de la France s'il pouvait. Lui seul empêche la paix et le repos de la pauvre France tout désolée, ensemble la réconciliation du roi et des princes en une parfaite et vraie amitié. Il a mangé vos crucifix, reliques d'or et couronne royale, si longtemps et si chèrement gardés. Croyez qu'il en fera autant de la France si vous l'enfurez. Que tardez-vous donc que vous ne le jetez subitement dans un sac à vau l'eau, pour s'en retourner plus tôt en Espagne". The message of the placard needs no analysis.

One reason for the use of clandestine means of communication was the punishment meted out to those who expressed in books, opinions that were considered inimical to the standing of the king, church and government. One old Huguenot seigneur was executed in 1584 for having written libels against the king. L'Estoile believes that the man was a fool, for instead of disowning his arguments, the author maintained that he spoke with the voice of the people. L'Estoile, however, kept his eye on what happened to the man's property, and he notes that the execution enabled the king to give the estate to one of his favourites.¹⁹ It is understood that L'Estoile condemns this move on the part of the king.

Le Breton, a lawyer whom L'Estoile considered to be a good man, was executed in 1586 for writing a book that attacked the king, and holding to his opinion when questioned. His mistake according to L'Estoile, lay not in holding his beliefs, but in putting them under press to be seen and read by all.²⁰ The printer of the book was whipped and banished from Paris, as censorship covered both the writer and his means of production. L'Estoile's recognition and respect for learning crossed traditional bounds. When Henri III's forces captured the town of Fontenay, among the outrages

¹⁹Journal sous Henri III, pp. 365-66.

²⁰Journal sous Henri III, p. 492.

committed, "Du Moulin, a [Huguenot] minister of the city, a learned man and who knew three languages, Latin, Greek and Hebrew, was hung and strangled".²¹ The execution which made the most impact on l'Estoile was that of a learned personage. Whenever someone dies, l'Estoile is careful to note whether he was learned or not, as he considers it important to be educated.

Even though he partakes of a humanist culture, l'Estoile remains a modest man, who is often superstitious and sometimes credulous. This links the upper bourgeois to the rest of the population. In 1582, a great light appeared in the sky: "one interprets this as a bad foreboding". Two days later there was another sign of bad times, thunder. These portents appear to afflict almost the entire population of the city. The same feeling of unease occurs in 1586 when three men are hanged. Such an interpretation of events is not unlikely when social disorders are prevalent, and rumors and gloomy interpretations are often in evidence.²²

²¹Journal sous Henri III, p.50.

²²Journal sous Henri III, pp.507, 309, 447

L'Estoile is a man caught between a spendthrift Henri III influenced by his courtiers, and a restive population. In such a situation, L'Estoile postulated that modesty is the greatest virtue, yet he lives in a time when "the sickness of the century is the marriage of passion and slander".²³ His attitude extends into the reign of Henri IV, "such a continuation of ballets, duels, blasphemy, and all sorts of debaucheries and madness".²⁴ When people die whom L'Estoile respects, he notes that they were just, incorruptible, or well-esteemed; but such entries are few.

The disorder of the kingdom is reflected in the behaviour of the monarch, the nobles and the common people. In the journal kept by the anonymous bourgeois of Paris, we observed his sentiments about the sins of a great lord and how these sins then permeated society. This concept remained valid in the late sixteenth century. L'Estoile wants to

²³ Journal sous Henri III, p. 50.

²⁴ Journal 2 sous Henri IV, p. 228. "Continuations de ballets, duels, blasphèmes et toutes sortes de débauche et folies". Before duels were outlawed, L'Estoile feels 7,000 noblemen were killed in them in a twenty year period, and he describes some eight or ten of them in his journal (Ibid., p. 466). He even describes dynasties of noble bandits (Ibid., p. 101).

support a strong and just monarchy, but unfortunately his king was Henri III. The people of Paris believed that the king was surrounded by Italian favourites and these are accused, according to a document included in a journal entry of 1574, of dividing Frenchmen into two camps.²⁵ The occupation of offices and the favours that the king bestowed on the Italians would be bound to alienate his subjects. But the contempt in which Henri III was held by his people was due to more than this alone. Warfare was an extravagant business, and the costs of the court were high. L'Estóile includes a fine sonnet that uses the traditional organic image of the kingdom as a corporeal body, to criticize the state of affairs:

Si la France est un corps dont le roi est la tête
 La justice les yeux, la noblesse les reins,
 Le peuple en soit les pieds, les jambes et les mains
 Pourrait-on jamais voir plus monstrueuse bête.

Le corps dessus le chef veut élever la crête,
 Le chef avec les yeux font des actes vilains,
 Les reins sont sans rigueur, imbéciles, et vains,
 Et les pieds seront recrus, tous chacun moleste.

Las, verrons nous jamais ce monstre être un vrai corps?
 Et par douce harmonie et gracieux accords
 Les membres et le chef tenir bien leur partie?

Si ferons si. Dieu veut, mais pour bien commencer.
 Il faudrait voir le chef les membres devancer
 Et chacun le suivrait ou bien de sa patrie.²⁶

²⁵ Journal sous Henri III, p. 58.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 56.

It is not the idea of hierarchical government that is called into question, but its faulty operation that is criticized. The conflict between the king and his citizens was rooted, as L'Estoile believed, in the consequence of bad government. Factions that opposed the monarchy called into question the absolute right to power that the king maintained was his due. L'Estoile opted for the supremacy of the monarch in the state, as the right operation of society which would guarantee the status quo; although the monarchy was understood to have an awareness that other groups in society enjoyed various rights that were customary. The bourgeoisie was quite willing to become noble, to hold offices, or to be merchants, and desired that its rights not be intruded upon by the monarchy. As such, L'Estoile was representative of a class, the politiques, which even while opposing extended royal impositions, nevertheless feared social change more than the extension of a mild form of royal oppression.

This oppression took the form of heavy and arbitrary taxation. Henri III is assailed by L'Estoile for abusing his position in attempting changes in customary relationships, in order to raise money to support the tottering financial structure of the kingdom. The king continually taxed Paris to pay the wages of soldiers, gradually alienating groups within the city. He imposed special taxes on taverns and inn-keepers. The latter payed under protest, after being threatened with

prison. The king gave his favored courtiers the right to sell offices of masters in the guilds.²⁷ Artisans were compelled to pay the monarch upon becoming masters, and were imprisoned upon refusal. Cities were sacked or forced to pay ransoms to the royal armies and even the usually privileged upper bourgeoisie was not exempt from taxation.

On one occasion, the notable bourgeois of Paris were present at a meeting when the king said he would end the war in two years, risking his life at the head of his armies if need be. All cheered at this announcement, upon which the king turned to them and added that he desired a contribution of 600,000 écus from them. They blanched and lost their powers of speech. This attempt on the part of the king to seize upon rentes due to the bureau de ville failed, but Henri III did receive a special levy from the citizens.²⁸

The king had many conflicts with the Parlement of Paris over the right to publish his edicts, his demands for new taxes, and his attempt to create new courts of law and new positions in the bureaucracy. The members of the Parlement, an elite of the upper bourgeoisie, opposed the king and

²⁷ Ibid., p.451.

²⁸ Ibid., pp.491-495. This allows the upper bourgeoisie who purchased rentes, to shift the tax burden onto the entire population of the city.

refused to exercise their function when he ordered them to do so, as they supported customary rights and privileges. L'Estoile supports the stand of the Parlement as he too is an office-holder. L'Estoile, fearful for the social and monetary position he has achieved, illustrates the mentality of the established bourgeoisie.

The king sent from Saint Maur where he was, some official letter, in the form of a commission, by which he named three presidents, twelve masters of accounts, and several auditors and correctors, [...] in this by commission. They did not wish to do this, saying that they were officers of the king by right, and that it was not right or proper that one made them devote themselves to the exercise of this profession as commissioners.²⁹

When, as a result of this conflict, the machinery of justice broke down, sedition and social disorder increased. Consequently, a settlement between the king and Parlement followed.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 452. "Le 4^e jour de juillet, le roi envoya de Saint Maur, où il était, des lettres patentes en forme de commission, par lesquelles il nommait trois présidents, douze maîtres de comptes, et quelques auditeurs et correcteurs pour faire l'exercice de la justice en ladite chambre des comptes durant l'interdiction, et ce, par commission. Ce qu'ils ne voulurent faire, disant qu'ils étaient officiers du roi en titre, et qu'ils n'étaient ni raisonnables ni honnêtes qu'on leur fit vaquer à l'exercice de leurs états comme commissaires".

This disorder was caused, to some extent, by the manipulation of various magnates. L'Estoile thinks that they used preachers in order to advance their special interests, and he believes Henri III has made a valid observation when he is reported to have said that the Duchess of Montpensier, the sister of the Duke of Guise,

...payed wages to Boucher, Lincestre, Pigement, Aubrey, and other priests and preachers of Paris, with promises of bishoprics, abbeys and other benefits, so that they keep on with their seditious and bloody sermons.³⁰

The pulpit played an important role in the communication of aims and ideas. Many parties within the church opposed the monarchy. Indeed, in 1589, the theological faculty of the Sorbonne declared the king (Henri III) deposed, and four bishops sat on the council of forty which attempted to depose him. L'Estoile, as a good politique whose loyalty was given to the established customary laws of France, viewed the Catholic League as an association of diabliques, even though he was part of their administration. He assembled a

³⁰ Ibid., p. 542. "...donnait gages à Boucher, Lincestre, Pigement, Prévost, Aubrey et autres curés prédicateurs de Paris avec promesses d'évêché, abbayes, et autres bénéfices pour continuer leurs séditieux et sanglantes prédicateurs". L'Estoile's attitude is similarly hostile to a Jesuit priest, Father Cotton, who preached at the court of Henri IV. L'Estoile reports Cotton as preaching that it is better to pay taxes to the state than to give alms, so that consequently the king wished to re-instate the Jesuits in France. Cotton is thus a "Jesuite, grand théologien, mais encore plus grand courtisan". (Journal 2 sous Henri IV, pp. 105, 120).

large collection of political pamphlets for a specific purpose:

Amongst which are the following, printed by the Privilege of the of the Sainted Union [L'Estoile's name for the League], signed by Senault, reviewed and approved by the Doctors of Theology, which I have extracted from my inventory, which I have kept and do keep as witnesses to posterity of their doctrine, by which they would sell the places in heaven to assassins in their employ.³¹

In these troubled times, the nobles are continually seen as being a scourge on the kingdom. The king outfitted them with clothes, horses, and arms. Local people are forced to resist their extractions, brigandage is another name for warfare. The upper bourgeoisie, however, is caught between two forces, for if the nobles cause disorder, the menu-people represent another threat.

L'Estoile observes that when the people of Paris rose against the monarchy in 1588, they acted as one body:

³¹ Journal sous Henri III, p.512. "Du nombre desquels sont ceux qui suivent, imprimés avec. Privilège de la Sainte Union, signé Senault, revues et approuvées par les Docteurs en Théologie, que j'ai extraits de mon inventaire, et que je gardai et garde pour temoins à la postérité de leur doctrine, par laquelle ils vendaient les places de paradis aux assassins..."

...the artisan left his tools, the merchant his trade, the University its books, the lawyers their caps, the presidents and councillors themselves grasped halberds.³²

But this sense of collectivity could not last. L'Estoile shares the hostility of the upper bourgeoisie for the menu peuple to whom he continually refers as "rot people". L'Estoile's hostility to the Sixteen is as much an expression of class conflict as his hostility to the nobility. With the failure of a campaign for reform carried out by the Sixteen, there was no real focal point for opposition to Henry IV, and with his re-entry in 1594 royal control over Paris was re-established. The two chief reasons for the end of opposition to royal power were the desire of the upper bourgeoisie to remain in a privileged position, and the destruction of trade. Merchants had too much to lose from a protracted war. In one of the innumerable pamphlets that were written, a partisan of Henry IV wrote that if one continues to carry arms against the king for a long time "It must be that the merchants of the said

³²Journal sous Henri III, p.551. "L'artisan quitte ses outils, le marchand ses traffics, l'Université ses livres, les procureurs leurs sacs, les avocats leurs cornettes, les présidents et les conseillers même mettent la main aux hallebards".

good cities would be ruined".³³ Order, essential to the bourgeoisie, could best be provided by a monarch regardless of his faults.

L'Estolle's journal is one which proclaims this message. He dislikes the nobility and fears the dangers of war and insurrection. However, L'Estolle's picture of his own times is one of decay in general and perhaps his personal situation reinforced this view. He senses his lack of status and increasing poverty. When he was not named as a godfather to his niece's son, he feels he would have been if he were a baron or intendant: "but such is the way of the world".³⁴ Finally for L'Estolle there is only a sombre moving pessimism.³⁵ His last entry reads: "Tout est triste comme noirci d'encre".³⁶

³³Yardeni, *op. cit.*, p.27. The citation is from Utile Remonstrance faicte par une fidele subject du Roy aux habitans de la ville de Lyons... (Tours, 1590).
 "...faut que la pluspart des marchands suedite bonnes villes soient ruinez".

³⁴Journal 3 sous Henri IV, p.457.

³⁵Journal sous Henri III, p.190. When Custer, a well-esteemed doctor in law committed suicide in 1576 out of despair at the state of affairs in the kingdom, L'Estolle does not condemn him, but sympathizes with his act.

³⁶Journal 3 sous Henri IV, p.263. We were not able to touch on many of L'Estolle's attitudes, such as condemning merchants for avarice, his outlook on religion, or other themes.

Conclusion

We began this thesis by attempting a definition of the bourgeoisie. After a study of this class, with the Parisian bourgeoisie as a focus, extending over two centuries, it is apparent that it is difficult to generalize about its nature, its composition, and its historical development.

In 1300 we could refer to the bourgeoisie as the wealthy and privileged stratum of a town's inhabitants, bearing in mind that different towns had different specific requirements for bourgeois status. By 1600, the bourgeoisie was composed of two groups, the first a merchant entity engaged in manufacture and trade; and a newer element of officials in the service of the monarchy. Both of these were citizens of a city, but a city which had been gradually drawn under royal control.

From 1302, when Philip the Fair called an assembly of his domain to support his claim against the papacy, to 1600, when Henri IV was established on the throne, we have seen the extension of monarchical authority from the feudal domain to the territory of France. This extension of royal power took place with the aid of the bourgeoisie, but also at its expense.

The local privileges of towns fell before the demands of the monarchy or had to be confirmed by payments of money. In Paris, the bourgeoisie as a local privileged stratum, had little chance to develop class cohesion when faced with the power of the king. Its abler members rose through the ranks of the royal bureaucracy to become nobles, and its merchants needed royal legislation to reinforce and control guild structures and to extend royal protection to merchants.

From 1400 to 1600, land, because of the status and exemption from the taille it conferred upon its holders, remained a magnet attracting the upper stratum of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie who became nobles were, in a sense, traitors to their class, as they preferred the power and prestige which continued to reside with the nobility. However, the bourgeoisie did not always view the nobility or its actions in a favourable light. The conflict between the bourgeoisie and the nobility, aggravated by the economic crisis of the early fourteenth century, was particularly virulent in 1358. The attitude of the bourgeoisie between 1410 and 1440 was one of fear of, and loathing toward, the nobility. Between 1580 and 1595, we saw further overt expressions of hostility on the part of the bourgeoisie to the nobility. The primary reason for this hostility was the social cost of nobiliary disorder. The violence and hardship that the nobility inflicted on society was of a random and

anarchical nature. The weight of taxation, bad administration, and weakness on the part of the monarch were other crosses for the bourgeoisie to bear during these years.

The three major uprisings that occurred in Paris in 1358, 1413, and 1588-93, were responses to the breakdown in order and the resulting hardships. In the first instance, the upper bourgeoisie of Paris led the revolt, in the second a wealthy but socially inferior group of the bourgeoisie provided leadership, and in the final rebellion the group that led the way was not of the first rank of the city or administrative bourgeoisie, which remained loyal to the monarchy. In each situation the bourgeoisie, when faced with an immediate problem, acted less as a class than as interested groups of individuals and families. However, this is not to deny a genuine reformist current among some sections of the bourgeoisie. But as the bourgeoisie became increasingly stratified, and increasingly divided in terms of interest, the chances of creating new structures to reform the administration became increasingly remote, as vested interest sought to maintain privileged positions in society.

Ideal government, from a bourgeois point of view, meant a king who ruled justly, with restraint, and with respect for the privileges of the bourgeoisie. This meant control of municipal government, low taxation, and the

possibility to gradually acquire fiefs and titles of nobility. This upward mobility was what prohibited a more intense form of class consciousness among the bourgeoisie.

The ideological hegemony of the feudal world and its structures, while in part modified over time, nevertheless remained basically unquestioned. The bourgeoisie did not develop an exclusive culture with which to challenge the noble one; humanism, which most closely approached this role, in France became an expression of court and law school.

We have shied away from discussing the bourgeoisie in terms of representing a capitalist challenge to the feudal world, although a gradual evolution extending over three or four centuries took place in commercial and administrative techniques. Wealth, as well, played an increasingly more important role in the productive process leading to a greater degree of labour alienation.

If however, we restrict the term bourgeoisie to the owners of capital and the means of non-agricultural production, we leave out the sections of it who gradually became known as the fourth estate--lawyers, judges, officials, and those who speculate in finance and land. The bourgeoisie is not simply a capitalist class, but a wealthy urban class, seeking gain, protecting itself, and trying to enter the nobility. This bourgeoisie as a whole gains in relative position to the nobility, but remains subject to the monarchy,

and to the values of the aristocratic world.

Our three journalists had, in terms of their attitudes toward order and hierarchy, been considered in relation to three general topics: their view of the nobility, the monarchy, and culture. All three journalists believe in an ordered, privileged society. The first (1405-1449) and the last (1574-1613) exhibit a deep-seated hostility toward the actions of the nobility, primarily because they both lived during a time of civil war. The middle journalist (1515-1536) displays less concern with the nobility because France was not plagued by internal conflict.

The monarchy, which was supposed to provide order, was viewed in an ambiguous light by all three bourgeois writers. The first journalist believes in a strong monarch as necessary for the maintenance of order, by which he means the respect due customary rights and privileges and the cessation of extraordinary taxation and local impositions. Unfortunately he lived during a time of civil war, and consequently, corrupt administration. Verrier lived in a stable society under François I, but the administration was forced to raise money for foreign wars; consequently, he too suffered from taxation. L'Estoile, on the other hand, observes the monarchy attempting to reverse the established bourgeois privileges through the sale and multiplication of offices, leading to a lowering in revenue. Henri III, furthermore,

increased taxation in order to give gifts to his nobles. L'Étoile was faced with a dilemma: in this time of disorder, the king was weak and spendthrift, yet he felt that he must support him. The attitude displayed by all three bourgeois is a form of "constitutional conservatism" expressed as a defence of the customary privileges due the members of this class.

In their attitude to the people of Paris, we see a radical difference. The anonymous chronicler cares very much about the suffering of the poor during a period of hardship. Versoris less so, but only because internal conditions have improved. L'Étoile is seldom moved by suffering, preferring to believe that the people have brought it upon themselves and, more importantly, upon him. In this respect we see a class division in the city, but this may be more the result of the differences in rank of our journalists than in mere class division. The first journalist is more concerned with the price of bread, l'Étoile with the price of his pamphlets.

In general our three Parisian bourgeois are typical members of the bourgeois class during the pre-modern period, tossed and turned on the current of events rather than directing it. Admittedly society became more stratified with the passing of time; capital became more important within the productive process; and the bourgeoisie had greater opportunity

to enter the nobility; but aristocratic modes of existence nevertheless dominated the territory of France.

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<u>Annales: économie, société, civilisations.</u>	<u>A.E.S.C.</u>
<u>Past and Present.</u>	<u>P.P.</u>
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