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**Images of social division in the propaganda of the Parisian Holy League,
1585-1594**

by
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August 1995

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for the partial fulfilment
of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

La Sainte ligue parisienne, mouvement insurrectionnel qui luttait à la fois contre le gouvernement royal et les élites sociales, exprimait malgré-elle une idéologie sociale conservatrice et nobilaire. D'après les libelles répandus par la ligue, l'essence de la noblesse était la vertu, et la société humaine s'organisait selon le modèle tripartite et hiérarchique voulu par Dieu. Néanmoins, en rejetant les idées raciales de certains nobles, et en s'efforçant de mettre en vigueur l'idéologie traditionnelle de la noblesse, les ligueurs ont chargé cette dernière d'une portée radicale et anti-nobilaire.

* * *

The Parisian Holy League, an insurgent movement in conflict with both royal government and the social elites, expounded, in spite of itself, a conservative, nobiliary social ideology. According to the pamphlets published by the League, the essence of nobility was virtue, and human society was organised in conformity with a divinely-ordained, hierarchical tripartite model. Nevertheless, in rejecting the racial ideas of certain noblemen, and in striving to apply the traditional nobiliary ideology, the Leaguers charged that ideology with a radical and anti-noble purport.

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INTRODUCTION

The Parisian Holy League has attracted renewed scholarly attention during the past two decades, and considerable debate over its historical significance and revolutionary character. Although much of this new scholarship discusses the League's social thought, it generally does so only briefly and in passing.¹ At the same time, recent historians studying the evolution of social thinking in sixteenth-century France have either ignored the League altogether or given Leaguer beliefs a cursory treatment.² No in-depth study has yet been devoted to the social ideology of the Paris League, unlike its political ideology, which has received a full exposition.³

The present work hopes to fill this lacuna, and by drawing on the voluminous pamphlet literature produced by the League (itself the subject of several monographs),⁴ attempts to reconstruct the social assumptions, beliefs and theories held and advocated by the Parisian Holy League. For reasons of economy, I will refer to the bourgeois Parisian League, known as the Sixteen, simply as "the League" throughout, except where a distinction between it and the national League, commanded by the Guise family, is indicated.

Chapter 2, based entirely on secondary sources, will discuss the material situation of the social elites with whom the Paris League did battle. It finds a nobility which, rightly or wrongly, perceived itself as in decline. Alongside it was a relatively new class of magistrates and royal officers who had acquired many of the privileges of the traditional nobility, and who had begun to occlude the paths of social ascent, blocking the way of those below them.

Chapter 3 draws on both primary and secondary sources to sketch out the social attitudes current at the time of the League. We see a nobility both fearful and disdainful of its social inferiors, and increasingly obsessed with signs of its status. Nobiliary literature lamented the perceived decline of the Second Estate while criticising noblemen's vices as literally ignoble, unworthy of their rank. The traditional belief had been that virtue was the essence of nobility, and noble status was therefore contingent upon individual merit, not birth. Noble writers insisted that virtue must be actualised in the fulfilment of duty, principally the nobility's martial role in a hierarchically-organised tripartite society.

Nevertheless, noblemen were beginning to move away from this traditional social schema, to believe that they were distinct from the rest of humanity and that an aptitude for virtue, once inculcated in a noble line, could be transmitted hereditarily.

Chapter 4 turns to the League itself, and using secondary sources supplemented by references to Leaguer pamphlets, attempts to develop a synthesis view of the historical significance of the League. It presents the League as a complex phenomenon woven of many threads, a manifestation of political, fiscal, civic, institutional and social conflicts. It also discusses the League's religiosity and moralism, concluding that these aspects of the League in no way excluded the movement's serving as a vehicle for the Parisian "bourgeoisie seconde" in the conflicts that pitted that class against the social elites.

Chapter 5 examines the concept of virtue in Leaguer writings. It shows that the Leaguers' social and moral vocabularies were identical, and notes that their equation of virtue and nobility was quite conventional, being part of the traditional nobiliary ideology. Although the League emphasised the religious aspect of virtue, this too had ample precedent, and the Leaguers expected that socially significant virtue must include martial qualities as well. The true nobleman as imagined by the Leaguers was a Christian soldier.

Chapter 6 argues that Leaguer social ideas as expressed in the pamphlet literature assumed not only the traditional equation of virtue and nobility, but the overall nobiliary ideology. The Leaguers' espousal of nobiliary values was in part an effort to win noblemen over to the Leaguer cause, but was also a reflection of the Leaguers's hierarchical concept of society. League writers accepted that noble status and privileges were noblemen's due, provided they fulfilled their designated social role. Human society for the Leaguers was organised in a divinely-ordained tripartite structure, in which their own function was less august than the noble "profession of virtue." The bourgeois Leaguers shared many of the nobility's social prejudices, including their fear of the labouring classes. When Leaguers criticised the nobility, it was in terms similar to the earlier *traités de noblesse*. The Leaguers saw personal ambition as incompatible with the ideal of nobiliary disinterestedness. They objected to Henry III's *mignons* on the grounds that this group represented a rupture in the natural social order.

Chapter 7, also based mainly on League pamphlets, contends that despite the

Leaguers' wholesale adoption of traditional nobiliary ideas on social organisation, Leaguer social thinking constituted a threat to the dominance of the Second Estate in a number of ways. The Leaguers maintained the traditional outlook at a time when noblemen themselves were moving towards the notion that virtue was hereditary, an idea which the Leaguers categorically rejected, along with any suggestion that noblemen were racially distinct or superior. League writers broke with the traditional social ideas in their attitude towards commerce, speculation and usury. Although they did so with a nobiliary vocabulary, League pamphleteers expressed genuine and deep-rooted anti-noble sentiment; particularly in late League writings, they went beyond conventional criticism to fierce invective and blanket condemnations of the entire Second Estate. The Paris League was in conflict not only with *politique* and Huguenot noblemen, but increasingly with Leaguer nobles and jurists, whose aims and interests were incompatible with theirs; social polarisation became increasingly overt. Leaguers understood that the nobility's tax exemption exacerbated their own fiscal load, and moreover that much of the tax collected represented a transfer of wealth to the elites, a form of centralised feudal exploitation. The Leaguers intended to put the traditional theory into practice, and specified an identifiable section of the nobility who were deficient in virtue and therefore liable for degradation; they proposed new mechanisms of enforcement, and went about intimidating and seizing the property of members of the social elites. In such a context otherwise anodyne social ideas became menacing and radical, particularly when proclaimed by members of movements locked in struggle with the nobility and magistrature. Although Leaguer political thought was highly derivative, it went farther than the Huguenot *monarchomachs*; noblemen understood that a movement which justified regicide could just as easily devour the nobility. Finally, Leaguers asserted themselves as the moral superiors of wicked noblemen, and flirted with the idea of ennoblement for conspicuous zeal.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

¹P.M. ASCOLI, "«The Sixteen» and the Paris League, 1585-1591," (Ph.D. diss., Berkeley, 1971); J.H.M. SALMON, "The Paris Sixteen, 1584-1594: The Social Analysis of a Revolutionary Movement" Journal of Modern History vol. 44, no. 4 (1972), pp. 540-576; Elie BARNAVI, Le Parti de Dieu: Etude sociale et politique des chefs de la Ligue parisienne, 1585-1594 (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1980); Arlette LEBIGRE, La Révolution des curés (Paris: Albin Michel, 1980); Robert DESCIMON, Qui étaient les seize? Mythes et réalités de la Ligue parisienne (1585-1594) (Paris: Klincksiek, 1983); Denis CROUZET, Les Guerriers de Dieu: La violence au temps des troubles de religion, vers 1525-vers 1610 (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1990); Henry HELLER, Iron and Blood: Civil Wars in Sixteenth-Century France (Montréal: McGill-Queen's, 1991).

²André DEVYVER, Le Sang épuré: Les préjugés de race chez les gentilshommes français de l'Ancien Régime (1560-1720) (Brussels, 1973); Arlette JOUANNA, Ordre social: Mythes et hiérarchies dans la France du XVIIe siècle (Paris: Hachette, 1977); Ellery SCHALK, From Valor to Pedigree: Ideas of Nobility in France in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (Princeton, 1986).

³Frederic J. BAUMGARTNER, Radical Reactionaries: The Political Thought of the French Catholic League (Geneva: Droz, 1975); R.P. COLE, "The French Catholic League, 1585-94: Radical Political Ideology and its Relationship to Collective Political Consciousness during the Wars of Religion," (M.A. thesis, Saskatchewan, 1988).

⁴Denis PALLIER, Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue (1585-1594) (Geneva: Droz, 1975); B.W. LATIMER "Pamphleteering in France during the Wars of Religion: Aspects of Ephemeral and Occasional Publications, 1562-1598" (Ph.D. diss., Duke, 1976).

CHAPTER II

THE MATERIAL CONTEXT

Any discussion of Leaguer social ideas must first reconstruct the social context of those ideas: both the actual social conditions, and the social attitudes and assumptions which prevailed at the time. To study social ideas in isolation is to risk developing an extremely distorted understanding of them. Roland Mousnier, for example, has proposed a highly original and insightful interpretation of Leaguer ideology, but it is based on only two Leaguer pamphlets and makes no reference to the earlier literature on social hierarchy, thus giving the impression that Jehan de Caumont's equation of nobility and virtue was entirely innovative and revolutionary. As I shall argue later, Caumont's version of this equation had revolutionary implications, but must be understood as part of a larger debate on the meaning of nobility, and placed within a tradition which makes the same equation.¹ Since the social conditions of the sixteenth century are not the principal focus of my research, I have based the following discussion largely on secondary material and have benefitted from the wealth of scholarship in the field.

The Nobility

The scholarly attention now directed toward sixteenth century social structures is not an entirely new phenomenon. At the beginning of our century, the historian Pierre de Vaissière traced the evolution of the Ancien Régime French nobility, and its relations with other classes. For Vaissière, the early and mid-sixteenth century was the "age d'or" of the French nobility. He describes a prosperous and confident class, rooted in the country-side, exercising seigneurial justice over a peasantry which gratefully accepted its leadership. Vaissière's stated purpose was to rehabilitate the nobility of the Ancien Régime, and he paints a picture of a harmonious society, a "joyeux concert, qui fait de la France un pays où nul ne s'ennuie, ni seigneur, ni manant."² Only late in the century did this idyll break down, under the strain of the Wars of Religion, and by the seventeenth century the French nobility was split between the rustic "gentilshommes campagnards" who remained in a diminished condition on the land, and the "noblesse de cour" who were uprooted by the absolutist state.³

If Vaissière's bucolic depiction now appears exaggerated, to the noblemen of the late sixteenth century, the lifetimes of their immediate ancestors may well have seemed a golden

age. François de L'Alouette, writing in 1597, imagined the former glory of the French nobility:

Comme petis Rois ils vouloient avoir la conduite & domination de tout le plat païs.
Aians la force & la justice en main pour se faire obeir, & les sujets pour cōmander.
Des serfs & esclaves de cors & de biës, taillables a volonté, pour se faire suivre &
relever.⁴

Perhaps a more satisfactory account than Vaissière's was given by Lucien Romier in the 1920s. Romier presented a thorough portrayal of French society in the year 1560, and particularly with regard to the nobility, his has become the conventionally accepted version of the social structures of the time.⁵ During the sixteenth century, according to Romier, the landed nobility, the dominant social group in France, found its preëminence increasingly challenged from below. At the same time its economic position steadily deteriorated. Many of the processes which contributed to this trend, however, had their origins much earlier.

Social structures in France during the late Middle Ages had been relatively porous, and the mediaeval nobility did not cease to renew and replenish itself by recruiting from below. Although the nobility was acknowledged to be an hereditary elite, it was possible for new families to slip into the nobility "by the tacit recognition of their peers."⁶ During the early sixteenth century, ennoblement continued unabated, and even quickened its pace. It has been shown that the rate of official ennoblements by royal letters patent remained generally constant from the fourteenth to seventeenth century, with the largest number in the fourteenth century, and another rise during the reign of Henry III.⁷ Official ennoblements, however, were of scant importance next to the numbers of families entering the nobility by virtue of office, or infiltrating "par prescription." By purchasing a fief and living nobly, a socially ambitious man could assume the style and title of nobility, and hope to win the acceptance of the local *gentilshommes*. He might then arrange good marriages for his sons, and make a point of appearing in person if the *arrière-ban* were summoned, using this precedent to claim exemption from the payment of the *franc-fief*. Unless its status were formally challenged or investigated, such a family might insinuate itself unnoticed into the nobility, and after a few generations all trace of its humble origins would be forgotten. By its very nature, this quiet form of ennoblement cannot be quantified, but it is safe to conclude, with J.-R. Bloch, that "une foule de roturiers passaient ainsi, chaque année, de la bourgeoisie à la noblesse."⁹

If the nobility was accessible from below, this was permitted by a concomitant mobility within the second estate. The first sixty years of the sixteenth century are remembered in the popular imagination as the "beau seizième siècle," the French Renaissance, the age of the Loire Valley châteaux, although as Henry Heller has pointed out, these years were beautiful only for the elites.¹⁰ While the invasions of Italy brought France into contact with Italian culture (and Italian loot), they also offered ambitious nobles opportunities for advancement. The royal army was open to talent, and able commanders could win the king's favour, and expect to be rewarded. Particularly after the treason of Charles de Bourbon in 1522, Francis I set out to create a "new and loyal aristocracy."¹¹ Old but minor noble families, such as the Guises and Montmorencys, the great antagonists of the Wars of Religion, achieved prominence, wealth, and power at this time, "upon the ruins of the feudal nobility."¹²

"Feudalism," in the strict and narrow sense of relations based on homage, had ceased to be an important mechanism of social bonding by the sixteenth century, and had been replaced by relations of "clientage". The old forms were now only "parroted."¹³ Moreover, feudal independence was a thing of the past: the great princely appanages had reverted to the crown and the sovereign mediaeval fiefs had been reduced to mere provinces. Provinces, however, require governors, and among the principal assets of the new upper aristocracy was its control over provincial governorships and over the great offices of state such as constable and admiral. If sixteenth century nobles could conduct themselves like "petis Rois", it was no longer as over-mighty vassals, but as recalcitrant governors.

Robert Harding has devoted an admirable study to the provincial governors of the sixteenth century. Harding's research shows that governorships generally went to lesser nobles during the early sixteenth century, often to mere barons, while by the end of the century, such posts were increasingly monopolized by the peerage.¹⁴ These new magnates based their power as much on their personal and family networks of loyalty as on their legal authority. Their clienteles consisted not only of the nobles in their retinues but also of large followings of commoners, for whom they would secure offices, pensions, and other rewards for service.¹⁵

Despite the social mobility I have described, or perhaps because of it, social antagonisms appear to have been muted. Some present day historians have found "bonne entente", "harmony", and "mutual respect" between social strata in the early sixteenth century.¹⁶ In the second half of the century, however, social lines began to harden, mobility slowed, and conflicts intensified. Whether this break came "brusquement", in 1560, as André Devyver contends, with a "brutal" change in nobiliary attitudes, or whether it occurred more gradually, it is generally agreed that around the middle of the century the doors of social opportunity started to swing shut.¹⁷

To introduce the question of social attitudes to this discussion of social mobility is not to confuse attitudes with realities, but simply to recall that mental and material structures exist in a dialectical rapport. Where entry into the nobility depended on the consent of the nobility, the influence of attitudes on realities became particularly visible.¹⁸ From the Estates-General of 1560 on, the nobility protested the infiltration of their order from below, and demanded that legislative action be taken to arrest this trend. A series of royal proclamations, culminating in the Ordinance of Blois in 1579, were directed against the usurpation of nobility, and particularly against the tacit ennoblement of roturier fief-holders.¹⁹ The attitude of those excluded by the closing of noble ranks will be explored later; it should be remarked, however, that the blockage of the safety valve of social mobility coincided with a deepening of anti-nobiliary sentiment.²⁰

If upward mobility had previously replenished the second estate, the need for such recruitment derived not only from the extinction of certain noble lines, but also from the declining fortunes of some noble houses, a concomitant downward mobility.

The sixteenth century witnessed a "price revolution" in every part of Europe. Whether the consequence of an increase in the money supply from the silver mines of Spain's American empire, or whether it was a long term secular trend associated with economic and population growth, the phenomenon of inflation made itself felt from the beginning of the century.²¹ Reflecting on the differences between his father's time and his own, François de La Noue wrote in the 1580s, "ce qui ne coustoit alors que cinq sols, en couste maintenant vingt."²² The price rise particularly affected the grain market, with prices moving in a generally upward zigzag over the course of the century.²³

Feudal rents such as the *cens*, however, had long before been transmuted from payment in kind to fixed cash payments, and therefore diminished in relative value; in Henri Hauser's words, "la petite noblesse rurale est ruinée."²⁴ One must not exaggerate the impoverishment of the nobility, of course. The *cens* may not have represented more than a small fraction of seigneurial income in any case, and as Fernand Braudel has pointed out, nobles might compensate for the loss of income by the cultivation of their demesne.²⁵ Apart from more efficient direct management of their lands, seigneurs might also turn to harsher exploitation of their tenants. Despite L'Alouette's nostalgic fantasy, cited above, serfdom had all but disappeared by the sixteenth century.²⁶ Nevertheless, certain seigneurial obligations remained, and a fief-holder might employ legal (or illegal) means to aggravate these burdens. Such a "feudal intensification" can only have contributed to provoking the "unprecedentedly strident" anti-noble sentiment among commoners in the late sixteenth century.²⁷ Even a noble apologist such as Louys Musset was dismayed by the practices which nobles with insufficient revenue were given to, and particularly deplored their quasi-legal labour *corvées* and seizures of livestock.²⁸

Declining seigneurial revenue was by no means the sole cause of noble impoverishment. The Huguenot *gentilhomme* La Noue placed the blame for its circumstances squarely on the nobility itself, on its "folles & superflues dépenses" on fine clothing, houses, and other luxuries.²⁹ Denis Crouzet has studied the accounts of the Nevers family, and demonstrated that the financial problems of France's great aristocratic houses derived largely from excessive spending on ostentatious luxury, on maintaining a standard of magnificence which was a psychological necessity.³⁰ Contrary to Vaissière, such extravagance was not confined to courtiers and magnates, but extended to the simple "gentils-hommes guerriers" who imitated them.³¹ Since revenue was never sufficient to meet such expenditures, noble families fell progressively deeper into debt; by the 1560s the French nobility was "criblée de dettes," in the words of the Venetian ambassador.³² As a last resort, many were reduced to selling their lands, and La Noue estimated that eight noble houses in ten were seriously in debt and forced to alienate at least some land.³³ Other families were driven by financial distress to arrange marriages with those they considered their inferiors, a practice reviled as "mésalliance."³⁴

Recent historians have challenged the idea that the nobility was in economic decline,³⁵ and there are well-documented exceptions to this picture. James Wood argues that, at least in one small region in Normandy, the old nobility was not in debt and losing its land, but on the contrary, was prospering.³⁶ Wood dismisses the historiographical tradition of a destitute nobility as based on literary evidence, and it is true that La Noue's estimate has no statistical value. More important for the history of attitudes, however, is the nobility's belief that it was impoverished and in decline, for warranted or not, such beliefs may translate into action.³⁷ Crouzet interprets noble involvement in the Wars of Religion, as "la lutte pour la survie d'un groupe social menacé dans sa fortune,... la fuite devant l'endettement d'une aristocratie en crise."^{37bis} Apart from the relief the wars may have brought individual aristocratic families, however, the destruction they wrought added a further aggravating factor to an already unfavourable economic conjuncture. Even without the civil war, the "second XVIe siècle" did not enjoy the good fortune of the earlier years of the century; a warming cycle came to an end in 1555, and as temperatures fell, so did agricultural yields, and demographic growth levelled off.³⁸ La Noue characterised his own time as "une laide saison."^{38bis}

Nor was bankruptcy confined to the nobility. Until the late 1550s, the king had compensated the loss of seigneurial income with pensions, grants, benefices, and offices, but by 1557 the treasury was empty, drained by the costs of the Habsburg wars.³⁹ The collapse of royal finances was to haunt France for the remainder of the century. This collapse suddenly constricted the flow of royal largesse on which the clientage system depended. Robert Harding sees the formation of religious parties in the 1560s as an expedient which governors turned to as their clientage networks crumbled, in other words, as a shift from patronage to partisanship. No longer able to reward their followers by directing the "bienfaits du roi" toward them, aristocrats attempted to build power bases on regional and religious loyalties.⁴⁰ The Habsburg wars which so strained the treasury were themselves brought to a close in 1559 by the nearly simultaneous bankruptcy of the French and Spanish monarchies.⁴¹ Armies were disbanded or reduced in size, and those that remained were irregularly paid. Many *gentilshommes* were deprived of their principal source of income, and only a small minority of nobles could still hope for military employment.⁴²

In truth, however, despite the nobility's traditional martial vocation, it had long ceased to be an exclusively military class, just as armed service had ceased to be exclusively nobiliary. The replacement of mounted feudal levies with infantry and mercenary units was a long-term trend, common to all parts of Europe, and was accelerated by new weapons and new forms of warfare.⁴³ The *ban et arrière ban* was moribund, and even Henry II, who attempted to revive it, finally judged it "abastardi et diminué de son ancienne grandeur."⁴⁴ Roturiers had meanwhile entered the compagnies d'ordonnances, and had even attained positions of command in other units.⁴⁵ Such intrusions were resisted by military-minded nobles, who were for their part often so hide-bound as to disdain the arquebus and pike, and to refuse service in infantry regiments.⁴⁶

Awareness that "noble" and "warrior" were no longer synonymous lent itself to discussion of the "utility" of the nobility, particularly as noble privileges were theoretically tied to their martial function.⁴⁷ Beginning with the Estates-General of 1560, the Tiers advanced proposals that "idle" nobles pay the *taille*, or even lose their status, and as the fiscal burden became increasingly onerous, noble tax exemption attracted mounting criticism.⁴⁸ As Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie has shown in his study of Romans, the perceived failure of the nobility to pay its share heightened social animosities, and conflicts over taxation could turn to civil strife.⁴⁹

Although the Third Estate may have castigated the nobility for its idleness, it also resisted any participation by the nobility in commerce, and it is only around the middle of the sixteenth century that the law of *dérogeance* began to be strictly enforced. When the nobility of Touraine proposed at the Estates-General of 1560 that this rule be relaxed, their suggestion was vigorously opposed by the bourgeois deputies, and in January of the following year the Ordinance of Orléans forbade nobles "tout fait et trafic de marchandise" on pain of having their legal status revoked.⁵⁰

Released from the army, deprived of pensions, in debt and losing their land, unable or unwilling to live from the reduced revenue of what remained, many nobles took advantage of the disorder of the civil wars and resorted to banditry. In Romier's words, the *hobereau* of the time was "un rustre brutal, un pillard, et parfois un brigand."⁵¹ Bands of marauders terrorized the countryside, and the line between royal or factional armies and troops of

freebooters was blurred. While these brigands were by no means all nobles, they were at the very least usually led by nobles, and noble commanders of royal armies were blamed for failing to restrain their soldiers. Plays upon words such as "gens-tuent-hommes" and "gens-pillent-hommes" circulated, and peasants formed defensive leagues which rose against all armed bodies regardless of their religious affiliation.⁵² The *gentilshommes*, for their part, banded together not only for plunder but also to strike out against the class George Huppert describes as their "natural enemy," the men who held the mortgages on their land and manipulated the auctions at which it was sold.⁵³

L'Alouette tells of nobles reduced to selling not only their lands and houses, but even "les Images & statues de leurs parens & ayeuls" to common bounders, and he deplores how "des Artisans se vantent & glorifient d'estre descendus des maisons qu'ils occupent."⁵⁴ One imagines a sixteenth-century Giscard "d'Estaing", naming himself after an estate he has bought, and lining his chateau with portraits of other people's ancestors.

The Third Estate

Who were these men acquiring noble lands and sometimes noble status? It is improbable that many of them were in fact "artisans", and if their grandfathers had been "petits épiciers", as Denis Richet put it, they had since climbed several rungs up the social ladder before attempting to leap into the nobility.⁵⁵ La Noue's answer is perhaps more realistic than L'Alouette's: "les gens de justice, les financiers, & quelques marchans [qui] ont esté si bons mesnagers, qu'ils ont encores escornés une bonne partie desdits fiefs."⁵⁶ Crouzet shows that Nevers's creditors came mainly from among the ranks of the *parlementaires*, the *gens de robe*.⁵⁷

Royal offices multiplied rampantly over the course of the sixteenth century; in 1554, for example, Henri II doubled the number of councillors in the Paris *Parlement*.⁵⁸ Since offices were venal, sold to raise money, this proliferation was in part a product of the monarchy's financial distress, but it was also a product of expanding state power. The Rouen *Parlement* was founded in 1499 in response to a genuine need for a better judiciary in Normandy, and even Musset, otherwise so critical of office-holders themselves, defended the number of *officiers* as necessary "pour reprimer la multitude des fautes, malices & iniquitez des hommes."⁵⁹

At the same time, seigneurial justice was gradually being eclipsed by the expanding royal law-courts, and traditional noble posts such as those of the *baillis* and *sénéchaux* were losing judicial and administrative responsibilities to their better-trained subordinates.⁶⁰ It had not been unusual during the fifteenth century and the early years of the sixteenth for noblemen to hold judicial and financial offices. With the expansion of the royal bureaucracy, however, and with the increasing complexity of *officiers'* legal and administrative tasks, all but the most exalted offices became monopolised by non-nobles.⁶¹ At the same time, many nobles came to affect a disdain for office holding and for the learning which became prerequisite. La Noue tells us that noblemen tended to mock any *gentilhomme* who devoted himself to study: "ces compagnons disoient qu'ils falloit faire un clerc ... comme si les sciences eussent esté empeschemens qui l'eussent rendu moins valeureux."⁶²

The venality of judicial and financial office, common in quattrocento Italy, was practised with increasing openness in France from 1499 on, despite frequent protests and repeated prohibitions.⁶³ As well as providing an important source of royal revenue, venality opened an avenue of advancement for ambitious roturiers. Offices were treated as private property, to be bought and sold, rented out or used as collateral, and were considered a stable and profitable investment, particularly in times of turmoil.⁶⁴ Wages were negligible, and eroded by inflation, but the other rewards of office holding were impressive: outright bribes, as well as the "épices," or fees charged to the public for their services, were exorbitant and generally resented, but made many *officiers* rich men.⁶⁵ Perhaps even more important were the many perquisites of office, and the benefits which an office-holder could derive for his other business interests: exemption from the *taille* and other obligations, local political influence, legal authority. In the words of one historian, "the lawyer-judge-sheriff is indispensable to the landowner."⁶⁶ Offices were irreplaceable political and economic instruments in the hands of such men, but their most valuable assets lay elsewhere, in land and loans, and their sport was the purchase of land from destitute nobles and entrapped peasants.⁶⁷

The wealth and power of office-holders was noted with bitterness by their contemporaries. One *gentilhomme* described the most prominent of them as the "demy dieux du temps present."⁶⁸ Musset venomously represented *officiers* as "s'escoulant comme

serpens, [qui] peuvent attirer beaucoup de la substance publique par rapines."⁶⁹ As Romier put it, "leur fortune devient une insolence qui met le peuple en colère et fait gronder la noblesse."⁷⁰

This resentment was directed towards *officiers* not only as individuals, but as a class. Office-holders formed what Montaigne called a "quatrième état," and what historians have since described variously as an "état nouveau, entre la bourgeoisie d'affaires et la noblesse d'épée," an "étage intermédiaire de privilégiés," and a "catégorie sociale ambiguë."⁷¹

The ambiguity of their situation was largely an effect of ennoblement by office, or more precisely, of the concession of certain aspects of nobility to office-holders. It is misleading and anachronistic to speak of a "noblesse de robe" in the sixteenth century; this is a seventeenth century expression for a seventeenth century reality.⁷² During the sixteenth century a small number of high offices conferred nobility of the "first degree," immediate and hereditary noble status, upon their holders. The best most offices accorded were the personal privileges of nobility; this "second degree" ennoblement became hereditary only after a family had exercised an office for three generations.⁷³ The extension of nobiliary franchises to a large and powerful group of non-nobles meant that no single criterion could be identified as marking the legal frontier between noble and commoner. Even as social mobility was retarded in the second half of the sixteenth century, this anomalous ambiguity remained.

It would be wrong to conclude, however, that the slackening of social mobility observed within the *noblesse* did not affect the world of the *robe* as well. Like any social group, office-holders tended toward endogamy and heredity of occupation. In the mid- to late sixteenth century, these tendencies became more pronounced, as magistrates and other *officiers* began to exclude newcomers from their ranks. As Barbara Diefendorf points out in her study of the Parisian elite, social mobility can be a "self-limiting" phenomenon, with yesterday's parvenus consolidating their position and becoming a closed establishment.⁷⁴ The principal mechanism of exclusion was the hereditary transmission of charges. Mousnier has demonstrated that decades before the *Paulette* regularised heredity of office, *officiers* had passed their posts on to their heirs through a series of increasingly dependable devices such as the "resignation" and "survivance"⁷⁵

Despite the continued proliferation of offices in the late sixteenth century, their accumulation and hereditary transmission by certain families prevented a second wave of bourgeois candidates from entering the magistracy. Diefendorf characterises the urban elite as an "hereditary caste."⁷⁶ Among those now excluded were ambitious merchants' sons, but also a great raft of *avocats*, *procureurs*, *notaires*, and minor functionaries, who did not enjoy the privileges and quasi-nobility of the magistrates. Mousnier writes of the frustrations of such men, and the heightening of "les colères de ceux qui voyaient se fermer de plus en plus les classes supérieures de la société."⁷⁷ It is from the ranks of these lawyers and petty officials that many members of the Paris Sixteen were drawn. With the disorders of the civil wars, offices appeared an especially safe investment,^{77bis} far safer than commerce, but the population bulge left over from the earlier years of the century, combined with the monopolisation of posts, meant that too many place-seekers were chasing too few openings. This log-jam occurred at every level of society, from the nobility to the guildsmen, as each group blocked access to new arrivals.⁷⁸ One may infer a chain reaction of sorts, with the lower strata responding defensively to economic and political conditions, but also to the upper strata's petrification.

A study of the jurists of Rouen by Jonathan Dewald calls into question this view of the *gens de robe*. Dewald argues that the magistrates and *gentilshommes* were not distinct and hostile social classes, but rather "components of a single, reasonably cohesive landed elite."⁷⁹ Any evidence of antagonism between these components is thus reduced to a professional rivalry within the elite, as "between soldier and civilian."⁸⁰ But Dewald is not suggesting a symbiosis between robe and sword of the sort Franklin Ford finds in the eighteenth century.⁸¹ Rather, Dewald sees the magistracy emerging within the traditional nobility, recruited not from the bourgeoisie, but from the "milieu of poor nobility and well-off peasants who clustered around the wealthy nobility and rose through seigneurial offices."⁸²

It is true of course, that most magistrates were landowners, and as they gained the privileges of nobility, and sometimes noble status itself, they came to share many of the interests of the nobility, not least of which was their fear of popular disturbances. It is also true, as Dewald notes, that some robe families "relied constantly on aristocratic patronage"

in their acquisition of office and subsequent advancement.⁸³ As mentioned earlier, many *officiers* were the creatures and clients of great magnates, and notwithstanding the practice of venality, aristocratic brokerage at court was often essential in securing an office.⁸⁴ To show office-holders allied with great aristocrats, however, or even in their entourages, does not warrant the conclusion that magistrates and *gentilshommes* were part of a single elite.

Even allowing for the peculiarities of Normandy, Dewald's argument cannot be accepted as conclusive. Because inadequate data prevent an examination of the crucial first forty years of the Rouen *Parlement*, his quantitative analysis of the origins of Rouen magistrates, based on the genealogies compiled by Henri de Frodeville, begins only in 1539. The statistics for the decades after 1539 show relatively little bourgeois recruitment, but show an even smaller proportion of *parlementaires* coming from the nobility, and some of these latter were of recently ennobled families. From 1539 on, a growing majority of *parlementaires* were the sons of magistrates or lawyers.⁸⁵ What is at issue is precisely the ancestry of this group: what was the origin of this class which controlled the Rouen *Parlement*? If the fathers of the magistrates of 1539 were themselves jurists, who were the grandfathers? The case Dewald makes for the shared identity of magistrate and *gentilhomme* can only be judged "not proven," but his study has made an important contribution by stressing what *officiers* and noblemen had in common, something too often forgotten. In any case, the origin of a given social group is less significant than its actual evolution, just as an individual's membership in a class is not a function of his birth or family background (though they may indeed determine his social role), but of his actual position within the socio-economic structure. At Paris, during the League years, the magistrature and nobility were to learn that, despite their differences, many forces worked to unite them.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

¹Roland MOUSNIER, Les Hiérarchies sociales (Paris: P.U.F., 1969), p. 53. Admittedly, Mousnier does employ the two most important pamphlets, De la vertu de noblesse by Jehan de CAUMONT (1585), and Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant (1593). However, these two pamphlets were written almost a decade apart, under very different circumstances: one just after the League's foundation, the other just before its collapse. Given that Mousnier seeks to trace the evolution of the League's social outlook by examining the structural changes in its organisation, it is surprising that he neglects the evolution of its propaganda. Although he fails to refer to it here, Mousnier elsewhere demonstrated his familiarity with the tradition within which these pamphlets must be placed. See MOUSNIER, "Les Concepts d'«ordres», d'«états», de «fidélité» et de «monarchie absolue» en France de la fin du XVe siècle à la fin du XVIIIe," Revue historique vol. 247 (1972) pp. 289-312.

²Pierre de VAISSIÈRE, Gentilshommes campagnards de l'ancienne France (Paris, 1904), pp. 11, 104-108, 310ff.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 176-261.

⁴L'ALOUETTE, Des affaires d'estat, 2nd ed. (Metz: Jean d'Arras, 1597), p. 14. This passage is not from the reprinted section of the Traité des nobles. See chapter 3, note 3, *infra*.

⁵Lucien ROMIER, Le Royaume de Catherine de Médicis (Paris, 1925)

⁶Edouard PERROY, "Social nobility among the French *Noblesse* in the Later Middle Ages," Past & Present 21 (1962), p.35.

⁷Ellery SCHALK, "Ennoblement in France from 1350 to 1660," Journal of Social History vol. 16, no. 2 (1982), pp. 101-110.

⁸J.-R. BLOCH, L'Anoblissement en France au temps de François Ier (Paris: Alcan, 1934), p. 55.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 26. The degree of social mobility in the early 16th century was so high that by the 18th century all those families who could trace their noble ancestors to 1550 were considered "la noblesse d'extraction." J.-P. LABATUT, Les Noblesses européennes (Paris: P.U.F., 1978), p. 48.

¹⁰Robert METHIVIER, L'Ancien régime en France (Paris: P.U.F., 1981), p. 90; Henry HELLER, Iron and Blood: Civil War in Sixteenth-Century France (Montréal: McGill-Queen's, 1991), p. 5.

¹¹Daniel HICKEY, "The Rise of the Guise Family and the Development of their Political Policy (1515-1560)" (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1967), p. 18.

¹²*Ibid.*, p.1.

¹³J.H.M. SALMON, Society in Crisis: France in the Sixteenth Century (London: Benn, 1975), p. 19. The "clientage" model is called into question, however, by Kristen NEUSCHEL in Word of Honor: Interpreting Noble Culture in the Sixteenth Century (Ithaca: Cornell, 1989).

¹⁴Robert HARDING, Anatomy of a Power Elite: The Provincial Governors of Early Modern France (New Haven: Yale, 1978), p. 132. The governorships were "both an instrument for the extension of royal authority and a superb mechanism for the preservation of noble interests" according to Michael PARKER, The Making of French Absolutism (London: Edward Arnold, 1983), p. 26.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 21-28. It should be mentioned that Harding emphasises the governors' cooperation with royal power, and views the *intendants* as assistants to the governors rather than as agents sent by the king to reduce their independence. See pp. 106, 171, 190-199, et passim.

¹⁶André DEVYVER, Le Sang épuré (Brussels, 1973), pp. 7, 58. SALMON, op. cit., p. 101. This view is challenged by HELLER, op. cit., pp. 6-7, passim.

¹⁷DEVYVER, op. cit., p. 7. George HUPPERT gives a later dating for this closing: "In 1582 we may still have been in the heyday of tacit ennoblement." But by the early 17th century, advancement had become much more difficult. Les Bourgeois Gentilshommes (Chicago, 1977), pp. 7-8. See also Arlette JOUANNA, L'Idée de la race en France au XVIe siècle (Thèse d'état, 1975; revised ed., Montpellier, 1981), p. 630.

¹⁸The importance of the recognition of status in the social structure of early modern France has led Roland Mousnier to assimilate realities and attitudes, and to describe *Ancien Régime* France as a society of orders, wherein an individual's position was determined by the esteem in which he was held. Mousnier finds an "hiérarchie de degrés... distingués... d'après l'estime, l'honneur, la dignité attachés par la société à des fonctions sociales qui peuvent n'avoir aucun rapport avec la production des biens matériels." MOUSNIER, Hiérarchies, p. 19.

¹⁹BLOCH, op. cit., p. 29; R. DOUCET, Les Institutions de la France au XVIe siècle (Paris: Picard, 1948), pp. 68, 489. Bloch confused the ordinance of Orléans (1561) with that of Blois (1579). An area which, to the best of my knowledge, remains to be studied, is the matter of investigations of noble status. One would suppose that the number of legal challenges increased in the late 16th century, but this supposition has not been confirmed by research. An individual called upon to prove his status might in any case produce a forged genealogy, or arrange to have three of his cronies testify that his family had lived nobly for three generations. See HUPPERT, op. cit., pp. 8, 104; BLOCH, op. cit., pp. 31-34, 55; and Denis RICHET, "Elite et noblesse: la formation des grands serviteurs de l'état. (fin XVIe - début XVIIe siècles)", Acta Poloniae Historica (1977) p. 48.

²⁰See chapters 4 and 5, infra.

²¹J.H. ELLIOTT, Europe Divided, 1559-1598 (Glasgow: Fontana/Collins, 1968), pp. 63-65.

²²François de LA NOUE, Discours politiques et militaires (Geneva: Droz, 1967), p. 201. La Noue's contemporaries were intensely aware of the price rise, which generated a controversy between Jean Bodin and Jehan de Malestroit, regarding its origins. See J.-Y. LE BRANCHU, ed., Écrits notables sur la monnaie. XVIe siècle 2 vols. (Paris: Alcan, 1934).

²³Henri HAUSER, Recherches et documents sur l'histoire des prix en France de 1500 à 1800 (Paris: Presses Modernes, 1936), p. 65, passim.

²⁴HAUSER, La Prépondérance espagnole 3rd ed. (Paris: P.U.F., 1948), p. 204. See also ROMIER, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 174ff; and Henri DROUOT, Mayenne et la Bourgogne: Etude de la Ligue (Paris: Picard, 1937), vol. 1, pp. 31ff.

²⁵Manfred ORLEA, La Noblesse aux Etats généraux de 1576 et de 1588 (Paris: P.U.F., 1980), p. 65. Fernand BRAUDEL, The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, trans. S. Reynolds, (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 704-709.

²⁶Supra, note 4. See METHIVIER, op. cit., p. 98; DOUCET, op. cit., pp. 481, 493-496.

²⁷Davis BITTON, The French Nobility in Crisis (Stanford, 1969), pp. 6-7. It seems probable that the newly ennobled or non-noble fief-holders, who had got their land through ruthless business practices, contributed to the growing severity of the seigneurial régime. As George Huppert points out (op. cit., pp. 49, 115), such men were "likely to be far tougher masters than the insouciant seigneurs of old." Whether the bourgeois acquisition of noble lands represents the feudalisation of the bourgeoisie or the embourgeoisement of the nobility cannot be discussed here. Alfred Cobban has put forward the bizarre argument that in the late 18th century the enforcement of *banalités* should be regarded as rural capitalism. See COBBAN, The Social Interpretation of the French Revolution (Cambridge, 1964) pp. 36-53. HELLER argues that the "massive redistribution of property in favour of the wealthy" began earlier in the century; op. cit., p. 23.

²⁸Louys MUSSET Discours sur les remontrances et reformatons de chacun estat (Paris: Chesneau, 1582), ff. 73r-73v.

²⁹LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 191. (Discourse VIII). There is a strongly moral tone to La Noue's condemnation of noble luxury and "des ordures italiennes." pp. 32-33, 115-119, 241-242.

³⁰Denis CROUZET, "Recherches sur la crise de l'aristocratie en France au XVI^e siècle," Histoire, économie et société, vol. 1, no. 1 (1982), pp. 18-22. See also DROUOT, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 35. A differing account of Nevers's financial situation is given by Michael WOLFE in "Piety and Political Allegiance: The Duc de Nevers and the Protestant Henri IV, 1589-93," French History vol. 2, no. 1 (1988), pp. 6-7.

³¹LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 192. See also Romier, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 176-177; and VAISSIÈRE, op. cit., pp. 59, 199ff. Only toward the end of the century does Vaissière see his *gentilshommes* coming under the immoderate influence of the court (pp. 226ff.).

³²Cited by CROUZET, loc. cit., p. 7.

³³LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 197.

³⁴DEVYVER, op. cit., p. 160.

³⁵HELLER, op. cit., pp. 4-5; Arlette JOUANNA, Le Devoir de révolte (Paris: Fayard, 1989), pp. 92-98.

³⁶James WOOD, The Nobility of the Election Bayeux, 1463-1666: Continuity through Change (Princeton: 1980). Davis Bitton's survey of regional monographs, however, confirms the impression of a nobility under economic pressure. See BITTON, op. cit., pp. 168-174. It is, as Jean MEYER

points out, misleading to speak of the general "decline" of the nobility. See his Noblesses et Pouvoirs dans l'Europe d'Ancien Régime (Paris: Hachette, 1975), p. 62, et passim. This does not prevent us from noting the economic and social difficulties which the nobility had to face at a given moment.

³⁷HELLER makes a similar point, op. cit., p. 61.

^{37b}CROUZET, loc. cit., pp. 9, 47. Crouzet's later work moves away from any economic interpretation of the Wars of Religion.

³⁸METHIVIER, op. cit., pp. 126-127.

^{38b}LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 72.

³⁹ROMIER, op. cit., pp. 188-191.

⁴⁰HARDING, op. cit., pp. 31ff, 46ff, 68ff, 214.

⁴¹ELLIOTT, op. cit., p. 11.

⁴²HARDING, op. cit., p. 80. ROMIER, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 198-199. ORLEA, op. cit., p. 58. One League pamphlet, written three decades later, traced the origin of the civil wars to the sudden influx of unemployed *gentilshommes*: "Ce royaume estoit plein d'hommes ... accoustumez aux guerres estrangeres nouvellement pacifiees, & plusieurs grands Seigneurs se malcontentoyent, parce que la mort subite ... du Roy [Henry II] leur avoit osté l'esperence d'estre recompensez de leurs services," Histoire au vray du meurtre & Assassinat proditoirement cõmis au cabinet d'un Roy perfide et barbare [(Paris: D. Millot], 1589), p. 15.

⁴³MEYER, op. cit., pp. 43-44. See also André CORVISIER, "La Noblesse militaire. Aspects militaires de la noblesse française du XVe et XVIIIe siècles," Histoire sociale, vol. 9 (1978), pp. 343-345, 355; and I.A.A. THOMPSON, "The Impact of War" in The European Crisis of the 1590s, ed. Peter CLARK (London, 1985), pp. 262-263, 270-271. For differing views on the abiding military importance of mounted noblemen, see Ronald S. LOVE, "«All the King's Horsemen»: The Equestrian Army of Henri IV (1585-1598)," Sixteenth Century Journal vol. 22, no. 3 (1991), pp. 510-533; and Mark MOTLEY, Becoming a French Aristocrat: The Education of the Court Nobility, 1580-1715 (Princeton, 1990), p. 10.

⁴⁴Cited by ZELLER, op. cit., p. 314. Cf. BLOCH, op. cit., pp. 16, 55n. The *ban et arrière-ban* was of limited effectiveness, and seldom summoned after 1560.

⁴⁵ZELLER, op. cit., p. 299. BITTON, op. cit., p. 31.

⁴⁶LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 316. La Noue reports this disdain with disapproval and seeks to correct it.

⁴⁷Arlette JOUANNA, "Le Thème de l'utilité publique dans la polémique anti-nobiliaire en France dans la deuxième moitié du XVIe siècle," in Théorie et pratique politique à la Renaissance (Paris: Vrin, 1977), pp. 287-299.

⁴⁸BITTON, op. cit., pp. 15ff, 34. The *taille* increased from 7 million *livres* in 1576 to 18 million *livres* in 1588, and the *gabelle* from 1 million to almost 3.5 millions. J.H. MARIEJOL, La Réforme et la Ligue (Paris: Hachette, [1904]), p. 231.

⁴⁹Emmanuel LE ROY LADURIE, Carnival in Romans, trans. M. Feeney, (New York: Braziller, 1979), pp. 35-59, passim.

⁵⁰Article 59. Cited by ZELLER; op. cit., p. 16. See also ROMIER, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 171; and BITTON, op. cit., pp. 65-69.

⁵¹ROMIER, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 162; DROUOT, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 42.

⁵²JOUANNA, "Utilité publique," p. 290; LE ROY LADURIE, op. cit., pp. 81ff; SALMON, op. cit., pp. 208-211; BITTON, op. cit., pp. 9-12; L.S. VAN DOREN, "Revolt and Reaction in the City of Romans, Dauphiné, 1579-1580," Sixteenth Century Journal, vol. 5, no. 1 (1974), pp. 76ff.

⁵³HUPPERT, op. cit., p. 108.

⁵⁴L'ALOUETTE, op. cit., p. 245.

⁵⁵RICHET, loc. cit., p. 58; see also DROUOT, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 44ff.

⁵⁶LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 264.

⁵⁷CROUZET, loc. cit., pp. 39, 48.

⁵⁸Roland MOUSNIER, La Vénalité des offices sous Henri IV et Louis XIII 2nd ed. (Paris: P.U.F., 1971), p. 40.

⁵⁹Jonathan DEWALD, The Formation of a Provincial Nobility: The Magistrates of the Parlement of Rouen, 1499-1610 (Princeton, 1980), p. 5n. MUSSET, op. cit., f. 134v. Many offices, on the other hand, were functionless sinecures or parasitical inspectorships, and some were alternates, the result of single offices being split. See MOUSNIER, Vénalité, p. 42.

⁶⁰DOUCET, op. cit., pp. 497-498, 503-506, 253-254.

⁶¹MOUSNIER, Vénalité, pp. 32, 77. SALMON, op. cit., pp. 96-97. BITTON, op. cit., pp. 43-47. RICHET, loc. cit., p. 49. Cf. VAISSIÈRE, op. cit., p. 87. See also L'ALOUETTE, op. cit., p. 164: "ce ne sont pas les plus Nobles & ancienes races qui sont maintenant apelez aus premiers degrez d'honneur, & ne sont plus les Gentils-hommes qui tiennent les charges & Offices de la maison du Roi, ni les sieges de Judicature: mais bien souvent des plus infames & vils mercenaires Païsans, & autres Roturiers."

⁶²LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 232. In this passage, La Noue, writing in the 1580s, was referring specifically to "[le] temps de nos grands peres," but sought also to overcome such prejudices in his own day.

⁶³Jacob BURCKHARDT, The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy (Oxford: Phaidon, 1981), p. 31. MOUSNIER, Vénalité, pp. 35-39.

⁶⁴MOUSNIER, Vénalité, pp. 72-73.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 73-77. See also Mark GREENGRASS, France in the Age of Henri IV (London: Longman, 1984), p. 146.

⁶⁶HUPPERT, op. cit., p. 118.

⁶⁷As Denis Richet put it, "l'essentiel, dans la formation de ces fortunes, demeure l'acquisition de terres et de seigneuries." RICHET, loc. cit., p. 58. Barbara Diefendorf's study of the Paris city councillors, most of whom were royal officers, shows that in the mid-16th century about 2/3 owned fiefs, but resided in town. These bourgeois families had been acquiring small parcels of land for generations, but it was only after the purchase of major offices that they became large and wealthy landowners. Barbara DIEFENDORF, Paris City Councillors in the Sixteenth Century (Princeton, 1983), pp. 65-69.

⁶⁸Pierre de SAINT-JULIEN, Meslanges historiques (Lyons, 1589), p. 600. Cited by HUPPERT, op. cit., p. 47.

⁶⁹MUSSET, op. cit., f. 82r.

⁷⁰ROMIER, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 36.

⁷¹MONTAIGNE Essais book XI, chap. 23. Cited by ROMIER, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 23. Other quotations in respective order from MOUSNIER, Vénalité, pp. 78-79; BLOCH, op. cit., p. 81; RICHET, loc. cit., p. 47.

⁷²ZELLER, op. cit., p. 19; HUPPERT op. cit., p. 174; and Ellery SCHALK, "Changing Conceptions of Nobility in France during the Wars of Religion" (Ph.D. diss, Berkeley, 1970), p. 159. Although not listed in Edmond HUGUET's Dictionnaire de la langue française du seizième siècle (Paris, 1925-1967), the figurative senses of *robe*, as in "gens de robe" and "robe longue", were in use in the 16th century. According to the Grand Robert, the word "robin" was not used to mean "magistrate" till 1627, but the unrelated homonym "robin", meaning "homme de peu, sot," had been in the language since the 15th century; this latter is recorded by Huguet.

⁷³BLOCH, op. cit., pp. 75-78. It was not until 1715 that *parlementaires* were automatically ennobled (p. 88). The municipal officers of certain cities, including Paris, were also granted noble privileges, but this "noblesse de cloche" was not of great consequence, and most sought ennoblement by letters patent, or other means, as well (p. 123).

⁷⁴DIEFENDORF, Paris City Councillors, p. 304.

⁷⁵MOUSNIER, Vénalité, pp. 44-54. Of the yearly payment by which the *Paulette* insured heredity, Mousnier wrote: "Il n'a rien créé. Il a rendu plus facile et plus fréquente l'hérédité à laquelle tous les officiers tendaient" (pp. 240-241).

⁷⁶DIEFENDORF, Paris City Councillors, p. 304.

⁷⁷MOUSNIER, Vénalité, p. 53. See also HUPPERT, op. cit., pp. 8, 18; and RICHET, loc. cit., p. 60.

^{77b}Maïté ETCHECHOURY, Les Maîtres des requêtes de l'hôtel du roi sous les derniers Valois (1553-1589) (Geneva: Droz; Paris: Champion, 1991), p. 71.

⁷⁸BRAUDEL, op. cit., p. 704. ELLIOTT, op. cit., p. 65.

⁷⁹DEWALD, op. cit., p. 309.

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 16, 108.

⁸¹Franklin FORD, Robe and Sword: The Regrouping of the French Aristocracy after Louis XIV (New York: Harper & Row, 1953).

⁸²DEWALD, op. cit., pp. 307, 160.

⁸³Ibid., pp. 307, 89-110.

⁸⁴See Christopher STOCKER, "Office as Maintenance in Renaissance France," Canadian Journal of History, vol. 6, no. 1, (1971), pp. 21-43. See also HARDING, op. cit., pp. 179-189; MOUSNIER, Vénalité, p. 39.

⁸⁵DEWALD, op. cit., tables, pp. 76-78. It should be mentioned that within that majority of *officiers* who came from legal backgrounds, the proportion who were the sons of magistrates grew over the course of the century, while the proportion of lawyers' sons fell. Finally, fully 25% of Dewald's sample cannot be identified, and it would be unjustified to project the findings about those whose origin was identifiable for those who were not, since those of humble origin were less likely to leave records, and less likely to register their status.

CHAPTER III

THE MENTAL CONTEXT

To what extent were the social changes I have described accompanied by changes in social attitudes? Was there a "renversement de valeurs sociales," as Henri Hauser would have it?¹ Social questions generated clamorous debate in the sixteenth century, and have since generated debate among historians. An examination of some of this primary and secondary literature has allowed me to draw a number of provisional conclusions about the social ideas current during and immediately before the League period.

The Literature of Nobiliary Anxiety

The mid-sixteenth century witnessed a remarkable awakening of interest in the way human society was organised, and the nobility, the summit of society, attracted particular attention.² Manifestations of this interest can be found in many literary works of the period, but most notably in the peculiar genre it spawned, the treatise of nobility. These books enjoyed wide currency in the late sixteenth century, at least among the nobility, to whom they were addressed. Such treatises generally advanced a definition of nobility, and then exhorted noblemen to live up to the definition, while lamenting the nobility's decline from its former glory.

Probably the most influential of the genre, and also the best known, was François de L'Alouette's Traité des nobles et des vertus donts ils sont formez, which was first published in 1577 and went through several subsequent editions.³ Little is known of L'Alouette, but it can be established that he was *bailli* of Vertus,⁴ which would imply that he was a member of the lesser Champenois nobility. If noble, L'Alouette was atypical, though not unique, in taking the course he himself urged upon *gentilshommes*: to enter the world of jurisprudence and letters. The Traité in any case, was commissioned by an illustrious noble family for the instruction of its scion, the young Jean de Coucy,⁵ and can be taken as a model of nobiliary social ideology. I have supplemented L'Alouette with an examination of two other works of more general interest, which also demonstrate a concern with social questions: François de La Noue's Discours politiques et militaires (1587), and Louys Musset's Discours sur les remonstrances et reformatons de chacun estat (1582).⁶ Although all three authors were at least legally noble, as literary men they were unusual among their class. They cannot rightly

be regarded as spokesmen for the nobility, but they did develop systems of ideas meant to defend the prerogatives and peace of mind of the nobility.

Historians have discerned in the late sixteenth century symptoms of a nobiliary "identity crisis," or a "malaise psychologique."⁷ Nobles were acutely, sometimes exaggeratedly, aware of the economic difficulties of their order. A further cause for alarm was the perceived threat of popular anger and insurrection, the belief that the lower orders wished to annihilate the nobility. Treatises reminded nobles that attempts to extinguish the nobility were not without precedent, citing the German peasant war, the Anabaptist commonwealth at Münster, and the Jacquerie.⁸ L'Alouette was particularly sensitive to the menace of anti-noble sentiment: "Le Laboureur murmure contre eus ... chacun est prest de s'armer pour leur courir sus ... et ne void-on pas qu'on ne cerche que de les exterminer tous les jours."⁹ For L'Alouette, the root of the danger was the nobility's own neglect of its duties, which bestowed upon the people not only a rationale for abolishing the nobility, but also the means, since the *menu peuple* were now armed: "Chose tre-dangereuse ... qui leur aportera quelque jour un traitement de Suisse, s'ils ne mettent peine d'i remedier, tant par le redressement & reformation de leur vie que par le r'establissement de leur ancien Etat."¹⁰ It is difficult to determine today how real the threat from below actually was, since until the time of the League, the *manants* were mute, their resentment expressing itself only in periodic outbreaks of inarticulate violence. What seems clear, however, is that noblemen sensed a menace, and imputed to the lower orders the desire to eradicate them.

Another manifestation of the nobility's social hypochondria was its mounting obsession with external signs, part of an effort to distinguish itself. For L'Alouette, the wearing of a sword by non-nobles constituted not only a physical threat to noblemen, but a threat to the nobility's identity: "l'usage du Glaive qui étoit donné en titre d'honneur pour le signe & remarque de leur charge & vocation, êt maintenant si commun à toutes personnes qu'on ne voit plus la difference de l'un a l'autre."¹¹ L'Alouette proposed a series of measures to impede the usurpation of nobility, and enumerated several signs, by which he hoped to distinguish the nobility, "certaines marques, esquelles on le doit toujours visiblement conoistre & discerner par dessus tous."¹² Among them were the rights to carry a sword, to possess a coat of arms, to hold fiefs, and to engage in the hunt.¹³

The authors of treatises were not alone in insisting on nobiliary distinctions. Twelve sumptuary decrees were instituted between 1543 and 1594, and nobles called for ever more stringent regulation, so that "distinction soit faicte & notee des personnes."¹⁴ Davis Bitton has skilfully described the anxiety nobles felt when confronted with the "seepage" of commoners into their order by ennoblement, office holding, and intermarriage, and the consequent ambiguity of noble status.¹⁵ The perceived decline in the nobility's wealth and power compounded this anxiety, and put noblemen on the defensive. A picture develops of a demoralised yet quixotic nobility, nostalgic enthusiasts of heraldry, genealogy, and fatuous chivalry.¹⁶ More important than the preoccupation with petty privileges, to which this desire for differentiation gave rise, was the growth of the cult of honour.

The late sixteenth century saw the outbreak of an epidemic of duels, which caused great carnage among noblemen. Duels served as a sign of nobility, since roturiers could not take part, and gave nobles a theatre in which to prove and exhibit their honour.¹⁷ The "point d'honneur" provided the pretext for combat, and reflected the value which nobles placed on personal honour and glory. Arlette Jouanna interprets this concern as a change in the nobiliary ethic, as a narrowing, of the traditional sense of honour. Where honour had formerly been synonymous with generally virtuous behaviour, it now focussed on reputation alone, particularly on reputation for courage. In Jouanna's precisely worded summary, "il devenait de plus en plus difficile de conserver une qualité sociale spécifique qui les différenciât suffisamment," leading certain nobles to "rejeter le modèle de conduite que leur proposait la société tout entière, pour se conformer aux normes de leur propre groupe social."¹⁸ La Noue, who opposed duelling, associated it with "un faux honneur qui ... ne consiste qu'en bravades, piaffes, injures de parole, outrages de fait, coups d'espee & meurtres." He contrasted this with "vray honneur" which was based on "prudence, justice, prouesse, temperance, verité, courtoisie, & autres pareilles vertus."¹⁹

Many of the more thoughtful nobles joined La Noue in his condemnation of the fashion for duelling,²⁰ but La Noue was perhaps unusual in his austere mistrust of external signs. He cuttingly sketched the haughty and swaggering *gentilshommes* of his day, ostentatious in speech, dress, and behaviour:

Ils pensent que la grandeur & beauté de vertu n'apparoit sinon lors qu'elle est bien diapree, & avec grosse suite.... C'est estre esblouy de l'apparence des choses externes, lesquelles empeschent qu'on ne peut bien appercevoir la nature des interieures.²¹

La Noue was equally critical of those surly nobles who displayed their status by abusing their social inferiors:

On trouvera aussi des gentils-hommes qui imaginent ... que les marques de noblesse soyent de se faire redouter, de battre, & prendre d'audace sur leur sujets tout ce qui leur est commode, comme s'ils estoient esclaves ... [de] tirer tous les profits qu'elles peuvent, faire bruire leur privileges, & jetter sur le pauvre peuple champestre toutes les charges & miseres.²²

Apart from trumpeting their nobility, *gentilshommes* sought to reinforce their distinctiveness by widening the gulf between themselves and the rest of their society. They protested excessive ennoblements, while insisting on the other hand that nobles be prevented from engaging in ignoble pursuits, specifically commerce. With few exceptions, the nobility and their representatives "clung to the theory of dérogeance with all their strength," as Bitton put it.²³ Commerce was seen as incompatible with noble status, and it is significant that the Second and Third Estates were in agreement on this matter. Since nobility was itself a "vocation" or "profession," it could not be exercised concurrently with another occupation, particularly with an occupation tainted with private gain and plebeian associations.

L'Alouette spelt out the consequences of violating this rule:

S'ils prennent une vocation diferente, cōtraire, ou desrogeante à Noblesse, comme sont tous mestiers, arts mechaniques, offices de procureurs, solliciteurs & autres semblables, ils sont quant-&-quant reputez comme Roturiers, & perdent pour eus & leur posterité la qualité & condition de Noblesse.²⁴

To these grounds for *dérogeance*, L'Alouette would have added marriage to roturiers, "car cêt Etat est maintenant si confus, tant de gens s'i sont mêlez par les alliances, acquisitions des Fiefs, ou usurpatiōs des titres & signes de Noblesse ... qu'il n'i a tantôt plus moyen de les reconnoitre.... Les Nobles ne se conoissent point eus mêmes."²⁵ For L'Alouette, *mésalliance* was a betrayal of nobility, and those nobles who married commoners, or married their children to commoners, deserved of be deprived of their fiefs and status.²⁶ Many nobles shared L'Alouette's concern over *mésalliance* and royal legislation in 1556, which required parental consent for marriage, was intended to prevent undesirable

unions.²⁷ As a final remedy to the confusion of orders, L'Alouette proposed that noble families be obliged to keep genealogical records, and to deposit them with the local *bailli*.²⁸

The effort to define the boundaries of social division, to reassert the identity of their order, led nobles to withdraw from contact with their inferiors,²⁹ and ultimately from the culture of their inferiors. The cleavage between élite and popular culture which characterises the early modern period in all parts of Europe, originated in the sixteenth century, when the shared culture of the mediaeval world split apart.³⁰

L'Alouette realised, in any event, that it was not sufficient for the nobility to constitute "un cors certain & séparé des autres" if other groups continued to rival its power and wealth.³¹ To restore the substance as well as the symbols of nobility, L'Alouette suggested major reforms which would reestablish nobiliary predominance in France. Fiefs, according to L'Alouette, ought to have been made inalienable, and their ownership limited to the nobility, since fief-holding was both a token of nobility and the traditional basis of noble might.³² Recognizing the enhanced importance of state function, on the other hand, he reasoned that noble supremacy could ultimately be restored only by the massive entry of noblemen into the king's service.

Noble office-holding was central to L'Alouette's vision of a renewed nobility, and his recommendation that the royal government appoint nobles to office was echoed in other treatises, and in successive *cahiers* of the Second Estate, which demanded that offices be reserved for *gentilshommes*, and which decried venality, contending that offices should be assigned for merit and virtue.³³ Even as they bewailed their order's loss of influence, though, nobles tended to display a certain aversion to posts generally filled by roturiers.

Like the authors of many other treatises, L'Alouette urged noblemen to seek office. An office-holder himself, he extolled the exercise of office as a fitting and honourable position for a *gentilhomme*, since the functions of office, after all, were only an extension of the nobility's traditional social leadership. The glory of the mediaeval nobility, he argued, had rested on its command over the levers of authority, whether royal or feudal, and he pointed to seigneurial justice as evidence of a judicial aspect to nobility.³⁴ According to L'Alouette, then, office-holding was not merely a suitable noble occupation, but a fundamentally noble function, and it was only by "le défaut & negligēce des Nobles [qu']on

a mis des Roturiers en leurs place."³⁵ L'Alouette hoped to reverse this unnatural situation, so that "tous les ordres, ofices & dignitez du Roiaume seront remplis & fournis de Gentilshommes François."³⁶ Such would be a "grand biē commodité au public," since "les charges & ofices en serōt plus fidelement administrées, étans és mains des Nobles," and state finances would be so much improved that the king could live without the *taille*, "comme au tems de ses predescesseurs."³⁷

To this end, L'Alouette proposed that the law be simplified and standardised, "car en ce cas le Noble mediocrement versé aus lettres, pourroit sans grand peine rendre la justice à un chacun."³⁸ As a man with some legal training, L'Alouette must have known that law reform alone would not enable rustic *gentilshommes* to fulfil the demands of office, and he advised noblemen to study, to become eligible for office, "en cognoissant les letres avec les armes; la science & sagesse avec la force à l'exemple des plus vaillans & plus renomez Capitaines."³⁹

This stress on nobiliary education was a commonplace in the literature of the time, but it was more pronounced in other treatises. La Noue was especially concerned with education, and advocated the establishment of *Academies de Noblesse* for "la bonne nourriture & instruction" of young gentlemen.⁴⁰ Such academies would teach both military and humane arts, but above all would instruct their pupils in virtue, and it was expected that proper formation would "fructifier en belles actions de vertu."⁴¹ In fact, in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, a number of noble academies were founded, and their principal effect was to stamp noble boys with a distinctive identity, since they provided an expressly aristocratic education and excluded commoners.⁴² Whether, by reinforcing nobiliary separation, the nobility was "revestuë de vertu," as La Noue had hoped, cannot be said.⁴³ The presumed necessity of inculcating virtue was of great significance, however, given the widespread perception that the nobility's conduct was far from virtuous.

Nobiliary vice was a constant theme in the late sixteenth century, and not only in anti-noble polemic. The treatises of the time, generally written by and for the nobility, depicted the *gentilshommes* of France as sunken in depravity, neglecting their duty, and mistreating the people. La Noue contrasted the vice of his contemporaries with the virtue of the "florissante & tres-grande" nobility of old: "la pluspart de celle qui aujourd'huy a succédé

aux biens des ancêtres, n'a hérité la même vertu, ainsi demy ensevelie en la corruption commune, s'est abastardie & esloignée des anciennes mœurs."⁴⁴ In very similar terms L'Alouette lamented the moral decay he saw: "O les honorables & saintes meurs! Combien maintenant elles sont changées! Et combien les Gentils-hommes François ... sont éloignés de cette simplicité & vertu."⁴⁵ In this diminished nobility, wrote L'Alouette, "on ne voit plus ... que des ombres de l'ancienne vertu."⁴⁶ Musset was no less harsh in his discussion of noble comportment:

Aucuns se disans gentils-hômes, sans suivre leur Prince, ny à la guerre, ny autrement, & se tenans en leurs maisons, faisans ménage & trafic de marchans seulement, & se faisans seulement craindre à leurs pauvres sujets & voisins, pour avec face furieuse & rude, cōme d'un charretier, jurer et blasphemer le nom de Dieu à chacun mot cōtre les pauvres paysans, qu'ils appellēt pieds-gris.⁴⁷

By their misconduct, Musset feared that noblemen had earned the hatred of the people, and were now "par haine appelée le vinaigre de la composition du monde, qui cuit sur la chaire blessée," or simply called "la noblesse qui nous blesse."⁴⁸

Popular anger, however, was not the only consequence of noble vice, and L'Alouette viewed the nobility's material decline as a symptom of its moral decline: "par leur imprudence, ils font perte de biens ... n'ayant la vertu pour résister à l'adversité.... Dieu a commencé de les châtier en leur propres terres. Les aïeux déjà privés de l'exercice de la justice."⁴⁹ Worse still, unvirtuous nobles could forfeit their nobility itself, according to L'Alouette:

Si lâcheté de cœur, si l'infidélité, déloyauté, injustice, paresse & autres vices le viennent à saisir & occuper le lieu que doit tenir la vertu, il est certain qu'en partant de lui elle défait tout le lustre & dignité de la Noblesse qu'elle y avait mis, & le réduit & met au rang & estime des Roturiers, tant par un général mépris de tous que par quelque vile & mécanique vacation.⁵⁰

Most treatises, needless to say, exempted a virtuous core of noblemen from this general condemnation. Musset went further, and distinguished a "vraie noblesse" from the wicked nobility which tormented the people.⁵¹ The evil *gentilhomme*, according to Musset, was not simply a nobleman who was guilty of ill conduct, "mais vilain qui fait vilanie."⁵² In other words, there could be no corrupt or lapsed nobility; such men were in effect usurpers, to whom Musset denied all legitimacy. By this artifice Musset preserved the fictional identity of nobility as a moral quality, and nobility as a social class. That fiction lay

at the heart of the treatise writers' admonitions, since nobility and vice were assumed to be fundamentally contradictory properties.⁵³

The Essence of Nobility and the Tripartite Society

The treatises of nobility unfailingly preached virtue, insisting that *gentilshommes* must manifest virtue in their behaviour. This stress on virtue was of tremendous significance, for the treatises held that virtue was the very basis and criterion of nobility. In L'Alouette's words, "la premiere & principale marque de la Noblesse, c'êt l'action vertueuse, sage & genereuse, par laquelle l'homme est reconnu & estimé Noble."⁵⁴ More than just an indicator of nobility, virtue was nobility itself, "l'ame de la Noblesse,"⁵⁵ and justified the other signs and franchises of nobility. L'Alouette exhorted his readers to "rendre leurs noms & actions dignes de telles enseignes."⁵⁶ Otherwise, they would be nothing more than "des fausses parure de vanité, tirées de la gloire d'autrui, qui se voit defailler en eus, pour n'avoir rien de cet insigne fondement."⁵⁷ The privileges of nobility, specifically the possession of fiefs, had originally been granted "pour recompense de quelque vertu," and their continued enjoyment depended on the maintenance of that virtue.⁵⁸ Each generation of nobles, according to L'Alouette, was obliged to prove itself worthy of the noble status it had inherited:

Tous ceus qui sont descendus des premiers Nobles, ne seront point tenus au rang & qualité des Nobles, & ne jouïront des droits, prerogatives & privileges de Noblesse, s'ils ne continuent la charge, vocation, profession & exercice de vertu de leurs pere & ayeuls.⁵⁹

For Musset also, virtue was the sole basis for nobility:

C'est pourquoy plusieurs beaux dons ont esté faicts, plusieurs trophées proposez, plusieurs immunitéz, exemptions, franchises & libertéz octroyées, aux vrais-nobles, qui ont esté & son mieux cogneuz, & aux peuple par leurs heroïques & vertueux faicts plus recomãdez, que par la cognoissance qui puisse avoir entierement le peuple de leur descente & genealogie.⁶⁰

Although noble status was generally inherited, then, it was nevertheless contingent and personal, resting on the individual's own merit, at least in theory. Nobility, for L'Alouette, "depend de la seule & propre vertu d'un chacun."⁶¹ In emphasizing personal virtue as the foundation of nobility, treatises sometimes contrasted virtue with birth, maintaining that nobility was a matter of virtue, rather than birth. In L'Alouette's words, "ce n'est au sang, ni au parentage que la Noblesse se forme, mais en la seule vertu que Dieu inspire."⁶²

Now, if virtue "engendre & produit Noblesse,"⁶³ and if those deficient in virtue cease to be noble, it follows that virtuous roturiers are, or should be, ennobled. While treatises of nobility deplored ennoblement by office or stealth, and especially by the purchase of letters patent, they found it untenable to deny ennoblement for signal virtue.⁶⁴ The stock example of such ennoblement was the soldier who was "fais Noble" by his prince in recognition of conspicuous valour on the battlefield.⁶⁵ The king alone, as "le chef & Soleil des Nobles," could be the arbiter of virtue, according to L'Alouette,⁶⁶ and it was the royal prerogative to ennoble at will, whether "pour fait insigne & vertueus" or "sans expression de cause, & du pure grace benifice du Prince."⁶⁷ Those to whom the king conferred nobility on a whim, however, were accorded little respect by their peers, warned L'Alouette: "on en tient peu de conte entre les vrais & anciens nobles."⁶⁸

To be worthy of ennoblement, moreover, it did not suffice for a roturier merely to live "droitement & justement"; such conduct was laudable, but amounted only to a "vertu commune & civile," for which he could be reputed a "bon Citoyen."⁶⁹ His "vocation & conditiō mecanique" precluded ennoblement, since nobility was the "profession de vertu," and noble virtue was far more exalted than the simple rectitude such a man displayed; "il n'aquerra jamais aucun Noblesse par cete vertu."⁷⁰

The core of noble virtue was courage, or more specifically martial valour; in Jean Delumeau's words, "le courage au combat" was placed "au sommet de la hiérarchie des valeurs."⁷¹ To reduce this credo to its simplest terms, "le chevalier est courageux; le vilain est lâche."⁷² But while courage was central to this concept of virtue, the treatises of nobility affirmed that courage must be "accompagnez ... d'autres bonnes qualitez."⁷³ Courage alone, in fact, was morally indifferent, and could degenerate into mere "audace & temerité," or "fureur."⁷⁴ La Noue expressed this balanced concept of virtue with great precision:

Je sçay bien que la fortitude (qu'on dit estre prouësse ou vaillance) est une excellente vertu,... mais si elle est destituee de justice, elle est nuisible aux bons.... La noblesse doit avoir pour but toutes les vertus, & non une seule.⁷⁵

L'Alouette advanced a definition of noble virtue which subsumed courage within it:

Une perpetuelle affection & volonté de droitement vivre, faire dignement & sans reproche leur charge, supporter le povre, aider leur voisin, resister aus meschans, domter leurs propres vices & passions.⁷⁶

Noble virtue in this sense was a potentiality which actualised itself in the fulfilment of duty.^{76bis} The primacy assigned to courage reflects the nature of nobiliary duty, which was principally one of protection and command. Musset celebrated the "vrais nobles & gentils-hômes" who sacrificed themselves for the "sauvegarde & protection de tout le peuple, suyvât la bonne volonté de Dieu."⁷⁷ The nobleman's duty was to preserve order and defend the people, "tant cōtre les seditions populaires que contre les assauts & invasions des ennemis estranges."⁷⁸ A civil war in which many noblemen had a hand in the depredation of France, and many more neglected their duty, threw this warrior ideal into sharp contrast with reality. This contrast was made more striking still when peasants and townsmen organised and armed themselves for mutual defence.⁷⁹ As warfare ceased to be seen as a nobiliary sport, but instead as the bloody business of common soldiers, the nobility was perceived to be surrendering its social function and its very *raison d'être*. Moreover, the fiction of chivalric combat became impossible to sustain after four decades of sectarian civil war.

To fail to fulfil military duty, "le principal & plus ordinaire exercice des Nobles," was to be bereft of virtue, of all but the vestigial trappings of nobility, the "vain & inutile titre de Noblesse."⁸⁰ The noble vocation of social guardianship was the "profession de vertu," and the virtuous discharge of the nobleman's proper function was the very essence of nobility. A secondary element of the nobility's social rôle was its didactic function: *gentilshommes* were ideally exemplars of human excellence, in La Noue's words, "professeurs de vertu."⁸¹ This ideology has been described by Delumeau as "une justification d'un pouvoir ... un schema théorique ... qui autorise les hommes de guerre à gouverner."⁸²

With this conception of the nobility's function in mind, the proscription of commerce becomes more intelligible. A nobleman who made "expresse profession ... de vertu" had "une particuliere vocation separée du rang commun des autres."⁸³ He must therefore have been disinterested, and singularly devoted to the service of God, the king, and society as a whole. A *gentilhomme*, wrote L'Alouette, ought to be motivated solely by a pure desire to perform his duty honourably, for it is a "chose indigne de la vertu & profession des armes, d'avoir attente ou esperānce d'aucun gain pour defendre ses concitoyens & sa patrie."⁸⁴

Treatise writers mourned the passing of the code of disinterested responsibility, and saw it supplanted by the ethic of the mercenary and the merchant, "en quoy le malheur est, que

chacun prefere son particulier profit au bien public."⁸⁵ Fief-holding and the other material rewards of nobility were needed to enable noblemen to follow their exalted calling and carry out their "devoirs tres-antiques"⁸⁶ unimpeded by pecuniary considerations. For La Noue, the connexion between fief-holding and armed service was straightforward: those who "jouissent des prerogatives & honneurs de fiefs" were obliged to perform "des actions militaires, qui doivent accompagner ceux qui les possedent."⁸⁷ Perhaps the paramount justification of nobility, however, was not its immediate utility, but its divine sanction. God himself was the "divrain auteur des Nobles."⁸⁸ Sixteenth century writers frequently drew parallels between the ecclesiastical and social hierarchies, and more significantly, between the natural and human order. Human society was conceptually integrated into a divinely ordained, hierarchically structured, cosmos.

This view was more than a set of social attitudes, and in fact amounted to "une conception de l'univers et un mode de pensée," as Roland Mousnier has put it.⁸⁹ Such a way of conceiving the universe, characteristic of scholastic philosophy, tended to arrange all of creation into hierarchical categories: angels, animals, plants, elements, men, even trades and states of being. In Mousnier's words, "la société est appréhendée ... par une saisie intuitive globale" and organised from the divine downwards, "selon des rangs immuables."⁹⁰ Nobility, then, represented the apex of human society and of God's human and societal creation. Arlette Jouanna has pointed out the tendency on the part of social treatises of the period to begin by discussing the hierarchy of plants and animals before moving on to human society. She argues, in effect, that culture and nature were not seen as discrete realms but as shades on a continuum established by Providence.⁹¹ Man's place in society was then the result of the "volonté ... d'une Nature bienveillante," and social structures were mythified by this assumption, so that "des étiquettes sociales sont vues comme les indices d'une hiérarchie naturelle."⁹²

It must be remembered, however, that God instituted the nobility for a purpose. According to this vision, noblemen were appointed by the Almighty as adjuncts to the king, to assist him in the protection and governance of his kingdom. L'Alouette gave this account of the theoretical origins of the monarchy and nobility:

Il a fallu faire choix par toutes nations de personnes insignes genereuses, de plus renommé en sagesse & plus notoirement reconnus de tous pour estre les plus dignes d'avoir la conduite & domination par dessus les autres. Dieu même, comme dit le Sage, les a élus, distribués & etablis, pour être Princes, Dominateurs, Cōducteurs & Protecteurs des autres, leurs en aloignant plusieurs, pour l'aide & soulagemēt de leur charge, des autres de même condition."⁹¹

This passage implies a complex tetrahedral social covenant, involving God, the king, the nobility, and the ill-defined participation of the people. Protection in return for obedience was, of course, the basis of the feudal contract, and in theory, of the seignorial relation as well. For L'Alouette, the nobleman's protective function was in practical terms defined by the "obligation reciproque, dont il èt tenu singulierement envers ses sujets qui le nourrissent, de cōserver leurs personnes & biens contre tout danger."⁹⁴

The nobiliary creed of virtue and duty, then, revealed an ideology as well as a mentality. That is, apart from fitting into the moral order of the universe, it also invoked a particular social structure, one organised according to function. The idea of a tripartite society divided into interdependent functional orders dated from the eleventh century or earlier, but found its fullest expression in the late sixteenth.⁹⁵ A representation of the world as composed of those who toiled, those who fought, and those who prayed, had never been a satisfactory understanding of society, and by the early modern period the gap between this mental construct on one hand, and lived reality on the other, had become a chasm. Yet despite its delusiveness, sixteenth century writers clung tenaciously to the idea, and even endeavoured to revive it. As a Protestant, La Noue could not admit the clergy as a separate order, but adapted the tripartite theory to include an order of clerks temporal and religious, "tous ceux qui s'emploient aux lettres divines & humaines."⁹⁶ In his amended version of the society of orders, "la noblesse" was promoted to first place, while the third estate remained "tout le reste du peuple, tant des villes que des champs."⁹⁷

The people, according to the tripartite schema, were bound by social obligations, just as the nobility was. The lowly could be reckoned virtuous insofar as they acquitted themselves of their humble duties, though their virtue was of lesser excellence than noble virtue, since their function was inferior to the nobility's. But notwithstanding their inferiority, the people and their function were no less necessary than the nobility. Musset reminded noblemen of the mutual dependence of all orders: "le vray noble aussi cognoist

bien [que] le labourage est le secours & ayde de la vie de tous."⁹⁸ The nobleman protected the roturier in order that he might go about his base but indispensable business unmolested. The commoner, for his part, owed his superiors both sustenance and deference: "le paysant, laboureur, manouvrier & artisan doit estre reverant & obeyssant de tant qu'il est possible."⁹⁹ The society of orders was viable only if all constituents were content with their lot, for usurpation of status threatened not only the nobility, but the stability of society as a whole. Explaining the restriction of the hunt, L'Alouette wrote that such constraints were required to insure that non-nobles would perform their function, "afin que le Laboureur ne laisse sa charue, l'Artisan son mestier, le Marchant son trafique, l'homme de l'Eglise sa charge, ni autre vocation."¹⁰⁰

French literature during this period evinces a preoccupation with order, a preoccupation not surprising in a time of civil war and social and religious turmoil. The widespread interest in social order, though not confined to treatises of nobility, was especially pronounced in those works. L'Alouette returned repeatedly to this theme, deploring the "desordre" he witnessed, and regretting the demise of the mythical, tidily compartmentalised world where all things were allotted and apportioned "selon les rangs & degrez d'un chacun."¹⁰¹ The perfect society was rigidly and visibly differentiated, divided into discrete but complementary components.

Jouanna notes that sixteenth century authors occasionally compared society to a musical instrument, whose harmony was the sum of the distinct tones proper to each string.¹⁰² A more common metaphor was the body politic. L'Alouette affirmed that all the body's limbs and organs were needed, but some were honourable while others were vile."¹⁰³ For L'Alouette, noblemen "sont en ce cors de la Monarchie cōme les bras & les espaules du cors humain," and it was their function to tend and protect the other "membres ... jusques aus moindres & plus abjects."¹⁰⁴ "Roturiers, plebeians & mecaniques," by contrast, were "gens de servile condition, destinez & acoutumez à porter le frais & fardeau universel, comme parties inferieures du cors & edifice de la chose publique."¹⁰⁵ Extending the metaphor, L'Alouette described the anatomical anarchy that would result if one part attempted the function of another: "Si le pié vouloit faire & entreprendre la charge de la

main & la main du chef, il s'ensuivroit un mélange & desordre, qui feroit déchoir & ruiner tout le cors."¹⁰⁶

The system of ideas which vindicated nobiliary social dominance must be interpreted in the context of that dominance. An ideology which made individual nobility contingent upon virtue, and made the existence of the order itself contingent upon the recognition of its utility, was only effective as long as nobility was not in question. But what bearing had these attitudes on the real world?

J. H. M. Salmon has argued that the equation of virtue and nobility, which was prevalent in the late sixteenth century, should be regarded as a "vogue" of the time, as little more than a literary convention, the fruit of a fashion for ancient satire, particularly Juvenal.¹⁰⁷ L'Alouette cited Juvenal, and alluded elsewhere to other classical poets and philosophers, or to Greek and Roman institutions,¹⁰⁸ and it was indeed quite customary for authors of treatises of nobility to stock their books with antique flourishes. Literary conventions, however, reflect either the consciousness of the dominant class at a given time, or a writer's wilful choice. Salmon's caveat is well taken if one concludes from it that texts such as these treatises should be approached obliquely, in full awareness of their mannered biases. A literal and ahistorical reading of L'Alouette, for instance, might lead one to suppose that he was advocating a pure meritocracy.

The equation of nobility with virtue, and the system of ideas which followed from it, had precedents long before the treatises of nobility encapsulated them. The precept that nobility was a matter of virtue rather than birth was a commonplace in Valois France, as it had been in Renaissance Italy.¹⁰⁹ Johan Huizinga's study of the late mediaeval mentality shows that the idea that nobility is based on virtue was an accepted truism during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and was related to the belief in the equality of all men before God. Mankind was understood to be fundamentally equal, differentiated only by personal virtue. Huizinga cites the fourteenth century courtly poet, whose mouthpiece was Adam addressing humanity, his progeny:

Tous estes descenduz / Naturellement de ma coste et d'Evian; / Vo mere fut. Commen est l'un villain / Et l'autre prant le nom de gentillesce / De vous, freres? dont vient tele noblesce? / Je ne le sçay, se [si] ce n'est des vertus, / Et villains de tout vice qui blesce: / Vous estes tous d'une pel revestuz.¹¹⁰

This concept of equality, however, and its attendant idea of nobility, remained "stereotyped and theoretical;" in Huizinga's words, "it had been repeated in all keys, but an actual social purport was not attached to it. It was a moral sentence, nothing more."¹¹¹ The fourteenth century notion of equality implied no egalitarianism, but by the sixteenth century, writers had discarded the principle of equality altogether, retaining only the principle's corollary: that virtue was the great divider. Another instance of continuity in the collective imagination between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries was what Huizinga called the nobleman's "sterile" pity for the miseries of the populace, echoed by the early modern *traités de noblesse* as they regretted the cruelties suffered by the "pauvre peuple."¹¹²

Noble Blood

Ellery Schalk, whose work documents the evolution of these ideas, has discovered a "prise de conscience," a dramatic reversal of noble attitudes towards the end of the sixteenth century.¹¹³ According to Schalk, the traditional assumptions regarding the meaning of nobility, which he calls the "feudal-military view," were uncontested in the early sixteenth century. Evidence of these assumptions can be found in many literary works of the period, most notably in Symphorien Champier's Le Fondement et Origine des titres de noblesse and Dialogue de Noblesse (both 1535), in which "virtue" and "nobility" are used interchangeably.¹¹⁴ Beginning in the 1570s, however, Schalk detects a crisis of confidence among the nobility. This crisis was manifested by the proliferation of treatises of nobility, which gave the old platitudes new relevance. Authors such as L'Alouette, using a mixture of flattery and shame, called upon the nobility to regenerate itself in the name of its traditional values.¹¹⁵ Meanwhile, criticism of the nobility by commoners was becoming harsher, and noblemen saw their order as beset on all fronts. Moreover, by the turn of the century, it had become impossible to assert blithely the nobility's monopoly over virtue. In Schalk's words, "the separation of virtue and nobility was invoked by the nobility especially in order to defend itself from verbal attack.... To talk of virtue is too dangerous now."¹¹⁶

Schalk identifies a turning point sometime during the 1590s, when the noble self-image was transformed, and birth replaced virtue as the basis of nobility. The new nobiliary ideology held that nobility was not a profession, but simply a social category, and that while military service might have been a suitable career for a *gentilhomme*, it in no way defined his

status.¹¹⁷ Similarly, virtue remained a desirable but ancillary quality; noble parentage, not virtue, was now essential, and the idea of noble virtue gradually faded away over the course of the seventeenth century, making way for a new attitude more conducive to Bourbon absolutism.¹¹⁸ This transformation of noble attitudes was accompanied by a noble "counter-offensive," by an effort to regain lost ground and distinguish the nobility better, not only by external signs, but by a greater emphasis on "bon gout," culture, and manners: marks that were harder to counterfeit.¹¹⁹ More significantly, the former consensus about the meaning of nobility was shattered, and for the first time the nobility defined itself differently than did the rest of society.¹²⁰

Schalk's work represents an important departure in the study of social attitudes, but does not resolve the problem. To describe a shift from "virtue" to "birth" is to confuse a justification of nobility with a criterion of nobility, and does not explain how gentle birth differed from base birth. In spite of the old ethic of personal virtue, noble status had always been hereditary, and pride in parentage and pedigree was a mediaeval phenomenon as well.¹²¹ Schalk characterises the mutation of noble attitudes as a transition from "moralism" to a "new realism," as a reconciliation of the "material" and "perceived" realities.¹²² Although Henry IV restored relative stability by 1598, however, the nobility was not absolved of its need to justify itself, and the strains of thought emerging in noble circles in the late sixteenth century were no more "realistic" than the obsolete virtue theory.

Two major studies published during the 1970s can be used to answer some of the questions posed by Schalk's research. One of them, Le Sang épuré: Les Préjugés de race chez les gentilshommes français de l'Ancien Régime (1560-1720), by André Devyver, contends that racism originated during the sixteenth century in France, rather than in the nineteenth as is generally supposed, or in the eighteenth as has been argued.¹²³ Devyver describes what he calls a "racisme social" on the part of French noblemen, who began to see themselves as racially distinct from the lower orders sometime in the late sixteenth century.¹²⁴ According to Devyver, *gentilshommes* attributed an innate superiority to themselves and their peers. Moral as well as physical characteristics were thought to be hereditary, and "noble" blood and semen were believed, quite literally, to carry virtue. Whence the concern with "sang pur," the medium by which the parents' virtue was bequeathed to their children, and

hence the opprobrium attached to any marriage which might adulterate the "stock de sang."¹²⁵ This "valorisation d'une qualité innée du sang" was essentially a product of the nobility's anxiety, and a response to the patent inadequacy of its traditional ideology. Devyver expressed his argument as follows:

Supplantés dans leurs fonctions et charges traditionnelles, contestés dans leur prétention à posséder une vertu spécifique - l'honneur - , les gentilshommes n'eurent plus d'autre ressource que de placer l'accent sur le caractère sélectif de la naissance.¹²⁶

The "fondement historique" for the myth of noble superiority was provided by another myth, the alleged Frankish ancestry of the French nobility. An interest in the Frankish origin of the people and institutions of France developed among the "savants" of the late sixteenth century, and was swiftly adapted by noblemen for their own purposes.¹²⁷ As heirs of the virtuous Frankish conquerors, *gentilshommes* presented themselves as natural overlords of the base-born descendants of the subjugated Gauls.¹²⁸ Combined with the veneration of "sang pur," the Frankish legend was a stout ideological bulwark, one that could "camoufler la réalité," or justify and preserve the privileges of nobility.¹²⁹ These ideas were given their definitive form in the racist theories of Boulainvilliers, much later, but the "germe" can first be isolated in the sixteenth century, according to Devyver.¹³⁰

Another historian who has grappled with the same problem is Arlette Jouanna, who like Devyver, finds a belief in the heredity of virtue emerging in the late sixteenth century, a belief she calls the "idée de race:"

Selon l'idée de race, les qualités nobles ou roturières se perpétuent héréditairement au sein des lignées: les enfants des gentilshommes ont une capacité innée à remplir des fonctions élevées, tandis que les fils des «ignobles,» doués d'aptitudes différentes mais de moindre perfection humaine, sont rejetés par leur naissance dans une position subalterne.¹³¹

Jouanna does not, however, infer any form of racism from this idea, and as she points out, "race" was synonymous with "lineage" during the sixteenth century:

Cette idée n'est pas ... celle que le langage courant d'aujourd'hui désigne sous le nom de *racisme*. Elle s'en distingue essentiellement par son objet: la race, ici, ce n'est pas l'ethnie, mais la famille au sens large du terme, et, plus généralement, l'ensemble des familles caractérisées par la même qualité sociale et constituant un Ordre au sein de la société.¹³²

This idea rested on the intuition, discussed earlier, that the human hierarchy was interwoven with the greater natural hierarchy. It took the form of a conviction that natural

and hereditary inequalities among men extended to different aptitudes for virtue, and determined each individual's social station: "l'inégalité sociale est donc une inégalité de qualités innées et héréditaires."¹³³ According to Jouanna, then, virtue remained the basis of nobility, as before, but was now believed to be hereditarily transmitted; sixteenth century authors; "ne valorisent la bonne race que pour la vertu qu'elle permet."¹³⁴

The word "aptitude" points to the most insightful aspect of Jouanna's interpretation. The writers who elaborated this idea of race - David Rivault de Fleurance, Alexandre de Pontaymery, and Noël du Fail, among others - were not blind to "le scandale du «noble vilain»."¹³⁵ In Jouanna's words, "la race n'est pas la vertu, elle n'est que l'aptitude à la vertu;" the wicked or cowardly noble was one whose aptitudes had not been properly cultivated.¹³⁶ To be "bien né" was to be born with an "instinct," "inclination," "force," or "propension" toward virtue, but these propensities would only be realised if they were reinforced by "bonne nourriture": "une mauvaise éducation anéantit les avantages de la bonne nature."¹³⁷ Good education, on the other hand, could not overcome a vile nature, and the low-born were believed to have an innate inclination for lesser things. Apart from the occasional ill-educated *gentilhomme*, the only possibility of a "discordance entre race et vertu" was the miracle of a roturier born with a noble soul, and such miracles were held to be exceedingly rare.¹³⁸

What is astonishing about Jouanna's otherwise excellent study is its explanation of the origin of the idea of race. Whereas Devyver depicts a nobility which had taken stock of its situation and "chercha alors à maintenir de façon artificielle toutes ses prérogatives," Jouanna sees only a search for understanding, and implausibly describes the theories of the time as "un authentique «sociologie»."¹³⁹ During the 1550s, according to Jouanna, the idea of race began to develop, and it continued to gain adherents over the following decades, as observers attempted to explain the advancing sclerosis of social structures in France. In Jouanna's view, the idea of race was a response to the retardation of social mobility in the late sixteenth century, and the fact that the two phenomena occurred nearly simultaneously demonstrates that the idea of race was not an instrument of defence, since the threat of assimilation was receding.¹⁴⁰ If the change in social attitudes and the hardening of social

barriers are interpreted as facets of the same nobiliar reaction, however, their coincidence becomes intelligible.

A glance at L'Alouette, Musset, and La Noue confirms that the idea that the essence of nobility might be hereditary was in the air; after all, noble status was in practice hereditary. As Bitton remarks, however, nobles wanted "to have it both ways."¹⁴¹ Even as they insisted that noble status was personal, and honoured "plus celle qui venoit de vertu q̃ de race," they would casually define *Noblesse* as "cete generosité & vertu de race."¹⁴²

The virtue that distinguished a noble line could, of course, be the fruit of family tradition, and treatises exhorted nobles to imitate their ancestors, "suyvans les traces de leurs ayeulx preux & vertueux."¹⁴³ The honours of nobility were awarded to a given noble house as an eternal monument to those "dont les vertus etoyēt dignes de quelq̃ memoire," and they would remain with a family so long as it did not "degenerer d'aucune belle action de ses plus estimez Ancestres."¹⁴⁴ The glory of a noble "race" lay in each generation's renewal of the virtuous tradition:

Quand on void des enfans vertueus & bien nourris, on demande quant-&-quant le pere, on recerche l'ayeul & leurs Ancestre, on magnifie tout la race, on repete la memoir de leurs vertues.... [Mais] si au cōtraire [un enfant] estoit vicieus & méprisoit la vertu, il efaceroit le lustre & marque de sa race, & n'auroit plus d'honneur entre les Nobles.¹⁴⁵

Indeed, among L'Alouette's marks of nobility was the procreation of virtuous children: "[c'est] une race de vraie Noblesse, qui engendre de tels enfans."¹⁴⁶ Virtue, according to L'Alouette, "decoule du pere au fils," and he seems to have postulated some mysterious agency at work in this transmission, something beyond simple tradition and proper child-rearing.¹⁴⁷ La Noue suggested that virtue was inborn:

Il semble qu'ils naissent avec des inclination plus vives & ployables que les autres, d'autant que leurs peres estans parvenus à grandeur et honneur, par les voyes de vertu ... il est à presumer qu'ils leur ont laissé des petites semences d'icelles (entant que natures les peut former) aptes à les renouvelle en eus, quand la nourriture n'y repugne.¹⁴⁸

Musset argued that vice, too, was congenital, and if an evil man claimed noble descent, "on pourroit avoir suspicion qu'il auroit esté changé en nourrice."¹⁴⁹

To be noble, for L'Alouette, was to be "de nature & origine excellente & insigne,"¹⁵⁰ but not of a different "nature" or "espèce" from the rest of humanity, as some of his contemporaries contended.¹⁵¹ Clay, L'Alouette observed, was used to make "diverses formes

& especes de pots & vaisselles," some to contain precious objects, and others to contain "viles & sales" substances, but in either case the pottery was of the "même matiere."¹⁵²

As Jouanna notes, treatises placed great weight on the need to develop virtuous aptitudes through appropriate education, for, to borrow La Noue's phrase, "la nature, sans la doctrine & nourriture, est une chose aveugle."¹⁵³ The choice of the word "nourriture," an expression often used in animal husbandry, is significant.¹⁵⁴ L'Alouette occasionally deployed the metaphor of dog or horse breeding, and while he remarked that the "bõ Veneur" values a dog for its own qualities, not for its father's, his readers were aware that good hounds tend to sire good pups.¹⁵⁵

We speak today of "good breeding," conscious that the meaning of the expression is figurative, but to the sixteenth century mind, the idea that virtue could be bred may have seemed quite credible. When L'Alouette declared that nobility was an "Eugenie & excellence de race & generation," the precise meaning of his words cannot now be gathered.¹⁵⁶ He was most certainly not advocating an active policy of selective mating, but he did maintain that marriage to commoners could hinder the hereditary transmission of virtue. *Mésalliance*, for L'Alouette, was very nearly miscegenation, to be condemned for the children it produced:

Une vile & obscure generation d'enfans Metis, inutile à la Republique: parce que bien souvent la lâcheté & pusillanimité de l'origine de leur mere se trouvera bien plutot & plus avant gravée & empreinté és cœurs de telles sortes de gēs, que la vertu & magnanimité de leur pere, comme l'experience du tems le mōstre assez.¹⁵⁷

Still more significantly, the distinction between culture and nurture, although given great play, was not clearly drawn. A confusion of innate traits and learnt behaviour is evident in L'Alouette's language: "L'efficace de cete vertu est si grande, que comme volontiers elle decoule du pere au fils, & par une acoutemée façō de vivre, elle fait *une habitude en la race*, qui fait paroître & reluire ceus qui en descendent par dessus les autres."¹⁵⁸ Although the ideas of environment, tradition, and hereditary character are hopelessly jumbled in this passage, it should be interpreted as more than a careless galimatias of concepts. On the same page, L'Alouette expounded his thoughts on ennoblement for exceptional virtue: "Tous ceus qui ... se viendront rendre au sein & giron de cete vertu heroïque, pour suivre le train & exercice des autres Nobles, ils perdront *avec le tems* la honte ignominie de leur nature Roturiere, & entreront au rang des Nobles."¹⁵⁹ L'Alouette

was suggesting, it seems, that the exercise of a particular moral faculty, virtue, could alter an individual's fundamental traits. That such acquired traits could then be hereditarily transmissible is implied by the law of *tierce fois*, whereby a family achieved nobility only after having practised virtue for three generations. In L'Alouette's words, "l'exercice de vertu" which began with the first generation could not "produire & mōtrer son efet qu'au quatriēme."¹⁶⁰ Seen in this light, an obscure family's ascension to nobility is a slow mutation, a form of evolution.¹⁶¹ Without knowing it, L'Alouette was articulating what might be termed a Social Lamarckianism.

Jean Bodin numbered among the opponents of the belief that the nobility was distinguished by an hereditary virtue, but his well-known theory of climate shows that the idea that innate mental or spiritual traits could be altered by environmental conditions was not alien to the sixteenth century. Bodin conjectured that climate, in the broad sense of "la nature du ciel, des vents, des eaux, de la terre," determined national character, particularly political temperament.¹⁶² Generally speaking, Bodin saw the peoples of southern climes as ingenious but cruel; those of northern regions as crude and strong, suited to "labeur & aux arts mechaniques;" and nations native to the middle latitudes, including the French, as possessing "naturelles inclinatiōs" to rule, judge, and trade.¹⁶³ If men are removed from their natural habitat, according to Bodin, they undergo a physical acclimatisation, but more importantly, "peu à peu,"¹⁶⁴ over the centuries, their character changes:

Si [un peuple] est trāsporté d'un pays en autre, il ne sera pas si tost changé que les plantes qui tirent le suc de la terre, mais en fin il changera: comme on peut voir... des anciens Gaulois, qui peuplerent de leur colonies le pays d'Allemagne autour de la forest noir, & de Francfort. Cesar dit, que de son temps, qui estoit environ cinq cents ans apres leur passage, ils avoyent changé leurs façons & naturel à celui du pays d'Allemagne.¹⁶⁵

Needless to say, Bodin did not argue that an aptitude for science was part of the genetic information of the Egyptians, nor did any noble author make that claim for noble virtue; such concepts were not available to them. For this reason, it may be anachronistic to speak of "racism" in the sixteenth century: to have pseudo-science one must first have science.¹⁶⁶ It would not be unwarranted, on the other hand, to see noblemen in a state of profound disquiet, groping toward a racist ideology.^{166bis}

In any case, as Jouanna points out, noblemen were not alone in maintaining the heritability of socially significant virtue. Legists such as Louis Le Caron and Louis Ernaud

asserted jurisprudence, the form of virtue peculiar to their class, as fully equal to military valour, and similarly hereditary.¹⁶⁷ To affirm the values of the magistrate against those of the warrior, was tantamount to declaring the robe as a separate but equally eminent order of nobility.

This view is in conflict with the generally held opinion among historians that the bourgeoisie, in both its commercial and bureaucratic configurations, lacked class consciousness, and that office-holding was but a way-station on the road from the shop to the château. Robert Mandrou depicts the bourgeoisie, including the *gens de robe*, as an extremely heterogeneous group, characterised principally by its desire to become something else; Braudel likewise describes the "constant defection" of the bourgeoisie.¹⁶⁸

George Huppert's treatment of the upper reaches of the Third Estate challenges the conventional assumption, and portrays this group "not merely as a herd of usurpers arrested in their migration from *roture* to *noblesse* but as a large, powerful, and vocal category of families who claim they are neither bourgeois nor *gentilshommes*, but something different and better."¹⁶⁹ While he allows for those families who indeed sought nothing more than to "arrive" and merge quietly with the old nobility, Huppert instead focusses on the segment of the intermediate stratum which pursued the prestige and power of nobility, but which nonetheless chose to keep its distance from noblemen.¹⁷⁰ Many members of this new class professed scorn for the traditional noble ethos; most prominent among them was Charles Loyseau, who derided the *gentilshommes* of his day as "traisneurs d'espée."¹⁷¹

Beyond the evidence presented by Huppert, there are abundant signs of struggle between this group and the old nobility, evidence not merely of attempts by individual *officiers* to usurp noble status, but of an effort on the part of the magistracy to supplant the nobility in its primacy. One such case was the squabble over precedence at the 1617 assembly of notables, at which the *gens de robe* claimed the right to be seated to the front of the *gentilshommes*.¹⁷² It might be objected that the particularist identity of the *officiers* was in fact an obstacle to general bourgeois class consciousness. I would contend, however, that the magistracy had ceased to be bourgeois in any meaningful sense, and its self-awareness reflected this.

If the traditional nobility wielded a complex ideological apparatus, and if the magistracy had developed a specific identity in the late sixteenth century, what was the social consciousness of the rest of French society, and particularly of those townsmen who did not hold high office? The Parisian Sixteen was largely composed of such men, and a study of its propaganda can help to answer this question. With the exception of Jouanna's work, recent scholarship on social attitudes has generally ignored the League, or worse, discussed Leaguer pamphlets without identifying them as such. Bitton, Schalk, Labatut, Methivier, and Devyver all analyze Caumont's De la Vertu de Noblesse, for example, apparently unaware that it was a Leaguer tract, or that its author was among the founders of the Sixteen.¹⁷³

This oversight testifies to a flaw in much of the new research on social attitudes. Except for Schalk, historians of the subject tend to neglect the dynamic of ideas altogether, and make no attempt to follow their evolution. Devyver, for instance, posits a radical break in noble attitudes in 1560, and then goes on to cite as evidence works written over half a century later.¹⁷⁴ Moreover, to interpret a document without reference to the author's background, and the context in which he was writing, is to risk developing a rarefied and sterile understanding of it. One might read several new studies of social ideas without learning that France underwent a prolonged political and religious upheaval during the last decades of the sixteenth century.

Working on the smaller canvas of the League has allowed me to circumvent the methodological barriers historians have faced, and to explore the interplay between perception and reality. I have chosen an identifiable group of authors, representing a specific politico-religious organisation. The evolution of their ideas can be plotted over a ten year period, as it responded to, and influenced, actual events.

The League's pamphlets, it must be remembered, were propaganda, explicitly written in the service of a cause. But the *traités de noblesse* and jurists' commentaries were not written in a vacuum, either, and they ought not to be taken at face value, as do Mousnier and his students, Jouanna and Orlea.¹⁷⁵ Nor should they be dismissed out of hand, as other historians have done.¹⁷⁶ Ideology must not be left to float "sur coussin d'air," in Michel Vovelle's words,¹⁷⁷ for it is both a product and an agent of everyday life.

Huppert characterises the society of orders described in the literature of the sixteenth century as "ornamental sociology;"¹⁷⁸ it might also be thought of as a human bestiary. The treatises and tracts of the sixteenth century are like mediæval maps in which the cartographer's imagination runs riot. Decorated with dragons and mythical kingdoms, and showing the entrance to paradise, they are meant to edify more than to inform. As aids to navigation, they are of scant use, but if we are to understand the world in which the map-maker lived, we must also understand the map-maker himself.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

¹Henri HAUSER, La Prépondérance espagnole (1559-1660), 3rd ed. (Paris P.U.F., 1948), p. 203.

²Interest in social structure tended to focus on the place of the nobility, since in an explicitly hierarchical society it is in reference to the uppermost group that concepts are defined.

³André Devyver judges the Traité "le plus important du genre au XVI^e siècle, celui dont tous les autres procèdent." See DEVYVER, Le Sang épuré: les préjugés de race chez les gentilshommes français de l'Ancien Régime (1560-1720) (Brussels, 1973), pp. 82-83. For reasons of availability, I have used the second edition of François de L'ALOUETTE's Des Affaires d'estat (Metz: J. d'Arras, 1597), in which the earlier work is reprinted as book III, (pp. 139-268) with a separate title page and imprint, under the title De la Noblesse française: Accroissement & descheance d'icelle: Et les moyens qu'il faut tenir pour la restablir en ses ordres & dignitez. Davis Bitton has examined both works and writes that the reprinted section "seems to be unchanged" from the earlier work. BITTON, The French Nobility in Crisis, 1560-1640 (Stanford, 1969), p. 139, n. 22. See also p. 145, n. 26; p. 150, n. 56; p. 160. Bitton's opinion is shared by Arlette JOUANNA, Ordre social: Mythes et hiérarchies dans la France du XVI^e siècle (Paris: Hachette, 1977), pp. 238, 202; and by J. BALTEAU, "Un publiciste du XVI^e siècle: François de Lalouette, Seigneur de Vrignicourt," Revue des questions historiques, vol. 107 (1927), p. 99. The internal evidence also suggests that the text is unaltered, as the 1597 edition does not refer to any events which occurred after 1577. It is likely that the only significant change was the deletion of the genealogy of the house of Coucy which accompanied the Traité.

⁴Nouvelle biographie générale, s.v. "L'Alouette, François de." On the office of *bailli*, see R. DOUCET, Les institutions de la France au XVI^e siècle (Paris: Picard, 1948), pp. 252-254; J.H.M. SALMON, Society in Crisis: France in the Sixteenth Century, (London: Benn, 1975), p. 72. L'Alouette went on to be *maître des requêtes* and *conseiller du roi* and on the basis of this Bitton and Jouanna assume him to be a "bourgeois lawyer," mistakenly, I believe. See BITTON, op. cit., p. 119; and JOUANNA, Ordre social, p. 158. L'Alouette was apparently Protestant, but his religion seems to have played a much less significant part in his life and work than Musset's or La Noue's did in theirs. See Dictionnaire des lettres françaises: XVI^e siècle, s.v. "L'Alouette." The one brief study of L'Alouette makes no mention of his social background, but tells us that he was a Huguenot jurist and author, the well-connected owner of a fief, and a client of the La Marck and Coucy families. See BALTEAU, op. cit., pp. 84-107. The fact that he was *seigneur* of Vrignicourt does not itself prove that he was a *gentilhomme*. No one reading L'Alouette, however, could conclude that he did not consider himself noble. The exercise of legal offices by *gentilshommes* was not altogether unusual at the time. See Henri DROUOT, Mayenne et la Bourgogne: Etude sur la Ligue (1587-1596), (Paris: Picard, 1937), vol. 1, p. 38.

⁵JOUANNA, Ordre social, p. 24. Emily SCHALK, "Changing Conceptions of Nobility in France during the Wars of Religion," (Ph.D. diss., Berkeley, 1970), p. 68.

⁶François de LA NOUE, Discours politiques et militaires [1587], ed. F.E. SUTCLIFFE (Geneva: Droz, 1967); Louys Musset, Discours sur les remontrances et reformatiions de chacun estat, & declaration de l'obeissance du peuple aux Roys & Princes: & de l'amour & dilection, charge & devoir desdicts seigneurs envers le peuple, par toutes les nations Chrestiennes (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1582). La Noue's noble Breton extraction and military career are well known. Musset has no mention

in any of the usual biographical reference works; his book tells us that its author was fiercely Catholic and pro-noble, and like L'Alouette, a *bailli*.

⁷BITTON, op. cit., p. 1; Manfred ORLEA, La Noblesse aux Etats généraux de 1576 et 1588 (Paris: P.U.F., 1980), p. 66.

⁸LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 81. L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 165.

⁹L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 165.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 218.

¹¹Ibid., p. 218. Cf. p. 165: "Il n'i a si petit mechanique, qui ne contreface le Noble. Chacun porte & usurpe les armes & titres de Noblesse: ou plutôt toute la gloire & dignité des Nobles s'aneantit, voire on commence de les dédaigner."

¹²Ibid., p. 210

¹³Ibid., pp. 210-268. As an additional justification for restricting the hunt to noblemen, L'Alouette claimed that the people were spoilt by plenty, and that if game regulations were strictly enforced, "le peuple ne se ruineroit de superfluitez & abondance de vivres.... Tant de faisneans Roturiers qui passent inutilement le tems à ... surprendre les bestes des terres où ils n'ont riè, croyent contrains de travailler de leurs mains." Ibid., pp. 266-267. This must have seemed strange reasoning to a peasant whose only source of meat was poaching.

¹⁴BITTON, op. cit., p. 149, n. 45; MUSSET, op. cit., f. 88v. See also L'ALOUETTE Affaires, p. 266.

¹⁵BITTON, op. cit., pp. 94ff. On noble resentment and its expression in satire, see J.V. ALTER, Les Origines de la satire anti-bourgeoise en France (Geneva: Droz, 1966), vol. 1, pp. 173-175, 203.

¹⁶On 16th century orders of chivalry, see ORLEA, op. cit. pp. 59-63. L'Alouette interrupts his treatise with a 20-page digression on heraldry. See Affaires, pp. 221-241.

¹⁷Edmund DICKERMAN, "Henry IV of France, the Duel and the Battle within," Societas vol. 3, no. 3 (1973), pp. 207-220. See also Ellery SCHALK, From Valor to Pedigree: Ideas of Nobility in France in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (Princeton, 1986), pp. 162ff, "Changing Conceptions" pp. 207-220; and Jacqueline BOUCHER, Société et mentalités autour de Henri III [Thèse d'état, 1977] (Lille: Atelier de reproduction des thèses, 1981), pp. 1245ff. Duels were not necessarily restricted to the nobility in the early 16th century, but by the end of the century were assumed to be exclusively noble affairs. Another historian interprets the vogue for duels, a "frénésie meurtrière," as a form of psychological resistance to absolutism on the part of the nobility. See François BILLACOIS, Le Duel dans la société française des XVIe-XVIIe siècles (Paris: EHESS, 1986), pp. 80, 390-391.

¹⁸Arlette JOUANNA, "Recherches sur la notion d'honneur au XVIème siècle," Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine vol. 15 (1968), pp. 597-623.

¹⁹LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 290. Elsewhere La Noue colourfully depicts the duel as "ce hydeux animal qu'on nomme, Querelle, lequel s'estant jetté au milieu de la noblesse, la va petit à petit devorant" (p. 283).

²⁰L'Alouette did not list the duel among his marks of nobility, and Musset alluded unfavourably to the practice. MUSSET, op. cit., ff. 163v-164r.

²¹LA NOUE, op. cit., pp. 239-240. It is useful to recall in reading passages such as this, that La Noue was a devout Calvinist, but these sentiments should not be attributed entirely to his religion. La Noue was referring particularly to the court nobility here. Cf. Pierre de VAISSIÈRE, Gentilshommes campagnards de l'ancienne France (Paris, 1904; facsimile ed., Geneva: Slatkine, 1975), pp. 261ff.

²²LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 30.

²³BITTON, op. cit., p. 72. The rule was relaxed considerably in 1629 by the Code Michaud.

²⁴L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 185.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 196-197.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 202-204.

²⁷DEVYVER, op. cit., p. 159. On the "tightening of attitudes" towards *mésalliance* after 1560, see Gayle BRUNELLE, "Dangerous Liaisons: *Mésalliance* and Early Modern French Noblewomen," French Historical Studies vol. 19, no. 1 (1995), pp. 75-103.

²⁸L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, pp. 169, 173, 197, 204-206, 245. L'Alouette argued that a sharper distinction between orders, and an end to usurpation of nobility, would benefit society at large as well as the nobility, since the usurpers would be obliged to pay the *taille*, and so reduce the tax burden on other roturiers (p. 208).

²⁹L'Alouette expressed admiration for a certain Spanish order of chivalry in which it "étoit defendu à tous Chevaliers de cet ordre de hanter gens roturiers & mechaniques, mais seulement des Gentils-hommes, & de ne mâger sans compagnie en leurs maisons." Ibid., p. 231.

³⁰See Peter BURKE, Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), p. 271; and J. DELUMEAU, "Mobilité sociale: riches et pauvres à l'époque de la Renaissance," in Ordres et classes, ed. D. Roche & C.E. Labrousse, (The Hague: Mouton, 1973), pp. 129-131. Delumeau emphasizes the divorce between the culture of rich and poor more than that between noble and commoner.

³¹L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 205.

³²Ibid., pp. 197, 201, 241-244.

³³Ibid, p. 195. See also BITTON, op. cit., pp. 45, 56; and Roland MOUSNIER, La Venalité des offices sous Henri IV et Louis XIII, 2nd ed.(Paris: P.U.F., 1971), p. 78. The clergy made similar requests at meetings of the Estates general and provincial.

³⁴L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, pp. 155-159, et seq.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 193-194. In a rare passage, L'Alouette praised the "science & sagesse,... peine & industrie" of non-noble office-holders, and even declared that they deserved their quasi-noble privileges (but emphatically not noble status) since they were performing a nobiliary rôle, "comme Lieutenans." (pp. 192-194). L'Alouette's more characteristic tone was to deplore the elevation of office-holding rabble above the nobility: "les plus infames Roturiers, voire les povres Païsans & Maires guetrez ont aujourd'huy par dessus d'eus" (p. 218).

³⁶Ibid., p. 208.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid., p. 172.

³⁹Ibid., p. 196. Earlier noble *officiers*, according to L'Alouette, were "sage & vertueus,... bien experimentez aus letres, au fait des armes, & aus affaires d'Etat" (p. 194).

⁴⁰LA NOUE, op. cit., (Discourse V), p. 133.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 153-154, 135.

⁴²SCHALK, Valor to Pedigree, pp. 174ff; "Changing Conceptions," pp. 221-230. The first such academy in France was founded in Paris in 1594. See Mark MOTLEY, Becoming a French Aristocrat: The Education of the Court Nobility, 1580-1715 (Princeton, 1990), p. 126. I believe it no coincidence that this foundation came immediately after the defeat of the League.

⁴³LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 157.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 133.

⁴⁵L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 237.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 144.

⁴⁷MUSSET, op. cit., f. 162v.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹L'ALOUETTE, Affaires pp. 213-214, 218.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 185-186. See also pp. 166, 268.

⁵¹MUSSET, op. cit., f. 136r.

⁵²Ibid., f. 166v.

⁵³Arlette JOUANNA writes that "Il y a au XVI^e siècle une tendance générale à confondre la vertu morale et la «vertu» sociale. En témoignent la persistance et la popularité de l'adage selon lequel

la noblesse, c'est la vertu." (Ordre Social, p. 22). It is misleading to speak of moral and social qualities being "confused," however, since to the 16th century mind they were inseparable.

⁵⁴L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 211.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 210.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 261. See also pp. 195-196: "Ils se rendent dignes & capables de telles charges par un continuel exercice de vertu."

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 144.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 241. The notion that the "honours & biens" of nobility were awarded "par le merite de leur vertu" is a constant refrain in L'Alouette's book. See p. 231, et passim. An anonymous nobleman wrote in 1567: "Les ornemens de la noblesse sont les marques d'honneur qu'acquirent les Gentilshommes pour leurs merites et beaux faites ... pour recompense de leurs vertus et services." See Lettre missive d'un gentilhomme à un sien compagnon. Reprinted in appendix to DEVYVER, op. cit., p. 473.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 184.

⁶⁰MUSSET, op. cit., f. 165v. Implicit here, and to a lesser extent in the passage quoted from L'Alouette on the previous page (Si lâcheté...) is the idea that the rewards of nobility are conditional upon the consent of the people.

⁶¹L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 212.

⁶²Ibid., p. 211.

⁶³Ibid., p. 177.

⁶⁴For the positions taken by several authors, and by the cahiers of all three estates in 1576, see SCHALK, "Changing Conceptions" pp. 152-153.

⁶⁵L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 190.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 195, 191, 185.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 195.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 177.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 177. This species of virtue "engendra une simple renommee & reputation de preud'homme."

⁷¹J. DELUMEAU, "Fondements idéologiques de la hiérarchie sociale: le discours sur le courage à l'époque de la Renaissance," in Théorie et pratique politiques à la Renaissance (Paris: Vrin, 1977), p. 273.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 233. On the nobiliary idea of merit as an "assemblage of moral qualities" see Jay M. SMITH, "«Our Sovereign's Gaze»: Kings, Nobles and State Formation in Seventeenth Century France," French Historical Studies vol. 18, no. 2 (1993), pp. 400-401.

⁷⁴L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 176; LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 231.

⁷⁵LA NOUE, op. cit., pp. 231, 236.

⁷⁶L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 211.

^{76bis}The nobiliary mentality was event-centred, and depended on the performance of action rather than on states of being, hence the "sustenance of honor ... had to be acted out in order to be efficacious" according to Kristen NEUSCHEL, Word of Honor: Interpreting Noble Culture in Sixteenth Century France (Ithaca: Cornell, 1989), p. 129.

⁷⁷MUSSET, op. cit., f. 163r.

⁷⁸Ibid., ff. 72v-73r. To this L'Alouette fancifully added the defence against wild beasts, which he gave as a reason for the restriction of the hunt. Affaires, p. 266

⁷⁹See chapter 2, supra.

⁸⁰L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, pp. 220, 214.

⁸¹LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 232. See also JOUANNA "Utilité" pp. 288-291; and L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 208: the spectacle of virtue in action "excitera encors les bons a mieus faire, & les méchans a cacher leur malice."

⁸²DELUMEAU, "Courage," p. 273.

⁸³L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, pp. 168, 210

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 236. See also p. 183.

⁸⁵MUSSET, op. cit., ff. 86r-86v. Musset was in this passage deploring the avarice and self-interest of merchants.

⁸⁶LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 276. Treatise writers appear to have seen no contradiction between the alleged purity of noble motivation and the honours and privileges granted noblemen in recompense for virtue.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 276. See also L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 242.

⁸⁸L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, P. 179. See also L'Alouette's epigraph, which epitomises this view: "Nobilitas ad Suos. / Me Deus & Virtus, summi genuere parentes. / Qui caret his & me, Nobilitate caret. / Nobilitas sola est, animam que moribus ornat. / Quid genus & proavos strepitis? / Si primordia vestra / Actoremque Deum spectes." (Nobility to her own. / God & Virtue, the best parents, gave birth to me. / Whoever lacks them and me, lacks nobility. / Nobility is alone, and adorns the soul in death. Why do you protest against ancestors? / If you look for your beginnings / you will find God the creator.) Translated by Blake Gopnik. I have been unable to trace this fragment.

⁸⁹MOUSNIER, "Concepts," p. 292.

⁹⁰Ibid. See also J.-P. LABATUT, Les Noblesses européennes, (Paris: P.U.F., 1978), p. 7. On the late mediaeval mentality, see J. HUIZINGA, The Waning of the Middle Ages, trans. F. Hopman, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), pp. 55-56: "If the degrees of the social edifice are conceived as the lower steps of the throne of the Eternal, the value assigned to each order will not depend on its utility, but on its sanctity - that is to say, its proximity to the highest place."

⁹¹JOUANNA, Ordre social, pp. 102-119.

⁹²Ibid., pp. 107, 105. Jouanna describes this mythification as a "passage du paraître à l'être" (p. 105). See also LABATUT, op. cit., p. 178: "La légimité de la noblesse repose sur la croyance en un ordre qui accepte l'inégalité comme une nécessité de l'organisation sociale, voulue par Dieu."

⁹³L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 145.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 266.

⁹⁵Georges DUBY, The Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined, trans. A. GOLDHAMMER (Chicago, 1980), pp. 13, 35, 63, 81, 103; MOUSNIER, "Concepts," p. 295.

⁹⁶LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 595.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸MUSSET, op. cit., ff. 166v-167r.

⁹⁹Ibid. For a discussion of the idea of "travail social" and its virtuous execution, and of the precedence granted protection over production, see MOUSNIER, "Concepts," pp. 296-297.

¹⁰⁰L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 266.

¹⁰¹Ibid., pp. 220-221, passim. This passion for order was also manifested in another genre of the period, the legalistic treatises which attempted to codify the privileges and distinguishing criteria of each order. Written by jurists, these books tended to present an abstracted account of social structures, different from that found in the treatises of nobility, but no less remote from reality. They were in agreement, however, that the basis of nobility was virtue. As J.-R. BLOCH observed, "Ils ont participé au vice commun à tant de juristes, qui est d'extraire de sa réalité, simple prétexte, une idée supérieure et absolue du droit considérée comme portant sa fin en soi." BLOCH, L'Anoblissement en France au temps de François 1er (Paris: Alcan, 1934), p. 13. Among the better

known of these works was A. TIRAQUEAU's Tractatus de Nobilitate et Jure primogenorum (1549), J. BACQUET's Quatriesme traité des droits du domaine de France (1582), and Ch. LOYSEAU's Traité des ordres et simplez dignitez (1610).

¹⁰²JOUANNA, Ordre social, pp. 111-112.

¹⁰³L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 179.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 195.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. 143.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 195.

¹⁰⁷SALMON, "French Satire in the Late 16th Century," Sixteenth Century Journal vol. 6, (1975), pp. 57-88. Salmon warns that "any historian who seeks evidence from literary satire to illustrate some political or social generalization, and lacks awareness of the extent to which his sources are based upon classical models, is headed for egregious error." (p. 61).

¹⁰⁸L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, pp. 212, 190, 146, 264.

¹⁰⁹BURCKHARDT, op. cit., pp. 218-219. See also N.Z. DAVIS, "New Monarchs and Prudent Priests," Canadian Journal of History vol. 6 (1971), pp. 72-73: Davis judges that the view that "rates noble virtue as better than noble birth" was "standard ... in all writing on the nobility until the end of the 16th century."

¹¹⁰Cited by HUIZINGA, op. cit., p. 62.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 61. Like 16th century writers, those in the 14th century based their platitudes on classical authors, through the church fathers, who were their intermediaries.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 60; LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 30. The treatises of the 16th century could not explicitly reject the doctrine of equality before God, but they chose not to discuss it. Labatut contends that the Middle Ages assumed a fundamental equality, and that the notion of veritable inequality among men was rediscovered by the humanists. LABATUT, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

¹¹³SCHALK, Valor to Pedigree, p. 65; "Changing Conceptions" p. 39. The findings in his dissertation are summarized in "The Appearance and Reality of Nobility in France during the Wars of Religion: An Example of How Collective Attitudes can Change," Journal of Modern History vol. 48, no. 1 (1976), pp. 19-31. Professor Schalk's book contains substantial revisions, but preserves the core of the argument laid out in his dissertation.

¹¹⁴SCHALK, Valor to Pedigree, pp. 27-28; "Changing Conceptions" pp. 41ff.

¹¹⁵SCHALK, Valor to Pedigree, pp. 68-78; "Changing Conceptions," pp. 63-64.

¹¹⁶SCHALK, "Changing Conceptions," pp. 100, 104.

¹¹⁷SCHALK, Valor to Pedigree, pp. 35, 202; "Changing Conceptions," pp. 163-168.

¹¹⁸SCHALK, Valor to Pedigree, p. 122; "Changing Conceptions," pp. 95-104 et seq., p. 124. Works such as Louis GUYON's Diverses Leçons (1604), and Guillaume d'ONCIEU's La Précédence de la Noblesse (1593) typified the new attitude. Jonathan DEWALD also notes an increased emphasis on lineage from 1570 onward. Aristocratic Experience and the Origins of Modern Culture (Berkeley, 1993), pp. 7, 15.

¹¹⁹SCHALK, Valor to Pedigree, p. 145; "Changing Conceptions," pp. 255, 262.

¹²⁰"Changing Conceptions," p. 99.

¹²¹Edouard PERROY, "Social mobility among the French *Noblesse* in the Later Middle Ages," Past & Present, no. 21 (1962), p. 36. It is interesting that L'Alouette dated the heredity of fief-holding from the time of the first Capetians, writing that fiefs "n'estoyent que simples charges & commissions à tems, dont [les nobles] n'estoyent que simples usufrutiers." L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, pp. 258-259.

¹²²SCHALK, "Changing Conceptions" pp. 12-14, 30. Mark Greengrass appears to follow Schalk's interpretation, writing that birth was accepted as the determiner of nobility in the early 17th century, which was marked by "a renewed realism about, and confidence in, the stratified society." GREENGRASS, France in the Age of Henri IV (London: Longman, 1984), p. 184.

¹²³Pierre H. BOULLE, "In Defense of Slavery: Eighteenth-Century Opposition to Abolition and the Origins of a Racist Ideology in France," in History from Below ed. F. Krantz (Montréal, 1985), pp. 221-241.

¹²⁴DEVYVER, op. cit., p. 23.

¹²⁵Ibid., pp. 167, 176, 184, 195, passim.

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 100. Elsewhere Devyver writes, "ce fut pour retarder l'inevitable culbute qu'elle s'accrocha à cette idée" (p. 32).

¹²⁷Ibid., pp. 109, 116-134. Among those responsible for spreading these ideas in France was the Huguenot political theorist Charles HOTMAN (himself of recent German extraction, though born in Paris), whose Franco-Gallia (1573) contrasted Germanic liberty with Roman papal and imperial tyranny. Etienne PASQUIER's Recherches de la France (1560-1621) put forward the notion that the institution of nobility, though not the nobility themselves, derived from the Frankish invasions. As Devyver put it, "ce robin leur fournissait en fait la théorie dont ils avaient besoin pour résister à la pression des bourgeois" (p. 119). The idea of Teutonic superiority was circulating in Germany at the beginning of the 16th century, and may have influenced French thinking. See LABATUT, op. cit., p. 74.

¹²⁸Devyver mistakenly attributes to L'Alouette the claim that fief holding began with the Frankish conquest. (DEVYVER, op. cit., p. 136). In at least one passage, L'Alouette rejected such an opinion: "Ce n'est ... point des Lombards, des Gots, ne autres barbares, que l'on tient la source & origine des Fiefs: mais de bien plus longue antiquité, & n'a été par leur exemple reçu & introduit en la Gaule ou France." For L'Alouette, fief holding and vassalage were established among the Gauls before the Roman conquest. L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, pp. 260, 246-249; but cf. pp. 167, 183, 254.

¹²⁹DEVYVER, op. cit., p. 110.

¹³⁰Ibid., p. 139. The second half of Devyver's book discusses Boulainvilliers and other later racial theorists. For a rival reading of Boulainvilliers which finds "genealogical consciousness" rather than incipient racism, see Harold A. ELLIS, "Genealogy, History and the Aristocratic Reaction in Early Eighteenth Century France," Journal of Modern History vol. 58, no. 2 (1986), pp. 414-451.

¹³¹JOUANNA, Ordre social, p. 10. A more exhaustive exposition of Jouanna's views is given in her 1975 thèse d'état, L'Idée de race en France au XVII^e siècle et au début du XVIII^e (revised ed., Montpellier, 1981). The original version of this dissertation was published by the Lille *atelier de reproduction des thèses* in 1975.

¹³²JOUANNA, L'Idée de race, p. 11. According to the Robert dictionary, "race" was first used in its present sense in 1684. Huguet has no entry for the word, an unusual oversight. See Edmond HUGUET, Dictionnaire de la langue française du seizième siècle, (Paris, 1925-1967)

¹³³JOUANNA, Ordre social, p. 9.

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 57.

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 55.

¹³⁶Ibid. It is surprising, however, that none of the theorists of nobility used the term. According to the Robert, the word entered the language in the fourteenth century, meaning "capacité légale," and came to mean "disposition naturelle" during the sixteenth, although the earliest citations Robert gives for the second meaning are from Buffon, in the 18th century. Huguet has no entry for "aptitude."

¹³⁷JOUANNA, Ordre social, pp. 21, 23, 25. Beyond miseducation, some writers explained the anomaly of the wicked noble by the possibility of the mother's adultery, or of dormant ignoble traits cropping up after several generations (pp. 46-47). Cf. MOTLEY, op. cit., p. 12: "children inherited «inclinations» from their parents, but most writers on nobility thought that in order to become effective, these had to be developed and nourished.

¹³⁸Ibid., p. 55.

¹³⁹Ibid., p. 100. Jouanna elsewhere specifically rejects Devyver's views. See L'Idée de race, p. 15.

¹⁴⁰JOUANNA, L'Idée de race, pp. 592, 629-637. See also Ordre Social, pp. 9, 89-93, 103-104, 204. Jouanna sees the social literature of the period as marked by a desire both to "comprendre" and "justifier" social structures, surely two highly incompatible impulses. (Ordre Social, p. 100). Towards the end of the century, however, Jouanna allows that the idea of race may have become used as a defensive mechanism, a result of the turmoil of the 1590s. (Ordre Social, pp. 192-196, 208-209).

¹⁴¹BITTON, op. cit., p. 79.

¹⁴²L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, pp. 190, 147. In the first passage L'Alouette was discussing the preference of Marcus Aurelius, citing him as a model to be emulated.

¹⁴³MUSSET, op. cit., f. 164r. Musset went on to say that in the case of two virtuous men of unequal extraction, the higher-born ought to be preferred, since he would not be motivated by ambition or desire for advancement.

¹⁴⁴L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, pp. 238, 173. See also pp. 187-188, 213, and 184: "A bon droit tous ceus-là qui procedent d'une telle source & origine, sont-ils estimez du titre de nobles. Et pour cete cause l'ordre des nobles a été si bien & si favorablement bâti, que non seulement ceus qui ont été les premiers choisis, son honorez de ce titre, mais aussi tous ceus qui procederont d'eus & de leur generation à jamais le peuvent porter & retenir, s'ils continuent le même exercice & vocation de leurs peres." L'Alouette's (quite conventional) attitude toward illegitimate children indicates, on the other hand, that an individual's own merit could be nullified by inherited sin. Bastards, he wrote, "n'ont point de coulpe," but should nevertheless be segregated, "car de vrai c'êt une infame generation ... des enseignes & témoins des ordures & infametez du pere qui les a engendrez de paillardise." Bastards had to be especially virtuous to overcome the stain of their birth. (pp. 229, 228).

¹⁴⁵Ibid., p. 215.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 214-215.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 183-184. Elsewhere L'Alouette writes of the "vertu que Dieu inspire & fait découler aus coeurs & races d'aucûs hommes" (p. 211).

¹⁴⁸LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 595.

¹⁴⁹MUSSET, op. cit., f. 166v.

¹⁵⁰L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 211. Cf. p. 180.

¹⁵¹DEVYVER, op. cit., p. 178.

¹⁵²L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, pp. 178-179. In this passage, L'Alouette was discussing the dissimilarity of noble and roturier virtue, but it indicates his reluctance to see the difference between nobleman and commoner as one of kind, rather than of degree and vocation.

¹⁵³LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 138. La Noue himself borrowed the phrase from Plutarch, as he acknowledged (p. 134).

¹⁵⁴See HUGUET, op. cit., s.v. "Nourriture." Huguet's first definition is "élevage." By extension from stock raising, the term was applied to the "education, instruction, formation" of children.

¹⁵⁵L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 215. On the influence of animal breeding on social thinking, see Nicole de BLOMAC, "Elite et généalogie au XVIIIe siècle: Cheval de course, cheval de sang, la naissance d'un nouveau concept en France," Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporain vol. 36, no. 3 (1989), pp. 497-507.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., p. 214. HUGUET, op. cit., s.v. "Eugenie", defines this term only as a "variété de vigne." Robert does not list "eugenie," but gives "eugenique" and "eugenisme" as late 19th century technical anglicisms.

¹⁵⁷L'ALOUETTE, Affaires.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 183-184. In the 16th century the word "habitude" could refer to both the "état physique" ("habitude du corps") and to the "manière d'être, disposition d'esprit, qualité morale." See HUGUET, op. cit., s.v. "Habitude. See also Randle COTGRAVE, A Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues (London, 1611; facsimile ed., Menston: Scolar, 1968). Cf. Claude DESAINLIENS, A Dictionarie of French and English (London, 1593; facsimile ed., Menston: Scolar, 1970), s.v. "Habitude": "L'habitude des choses vertueuses s'acquiert par une longue coustume de faire."

¹⁵⁹Ibid., p. 184. Emphasis mine.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., p. 189.

¹⁶¹Jouanna touches on a similar idea, but does not develop it, noting that "l'action qu'exerce à la longue la pratique de la vertu sur la complexion consolide les dons naturels et rend plus certaine leur transmission héréditaire." She also points out that 16th century beliefs did not fully separate the soul from the body, and many writers believed that labour could corrupt and deform both body and soul, rendering an individual incapable of virtue. JOUANNA, Ordre Social, p. 41.

¹⁶²Jean BODIN, Les Six livres de la Republique (Paris: Jacques du Puis, 1583; facsimile edition, Aalen, 1961), Book V, chap. 1, p. 700.

¹⁶³Ibid., pp. 675-701.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., p. 700. Among the physical changes Bodin noted was the sapping of northerners' vigour if they migrate to the south.

¹⁶⁵Ibid., p. 698.

¹⁶⁶Mousnier vastly overstates the case in his assertion that L'Alouette went "même jusqu'à une théorie complète de la race et du sang qui ferait dépasser l'ordre, pour aller presque jusqu'à la caste." MOUSNIER, "Concepts," p. 298. Nevertheless, an ideology very distinct from mediaeval anti-Judaism and approaching racial anti-semitism was developing simultaneously in Spain. See Jerome Friedman, "Jewish Conversion, the Spanish Pure Blood Laws and Reformation: A Revisionist View of Racial and Religious Antisemitism," Sixteenth Century Journal, vol. 28, no. 1 (1987), pp. 3-29.

¹⁶⁷JOUANNA, Ordre Social, pp. 149-150.

¹⁶⁸Robert MANDROU, Classes et luttes de classe en France au début du XVIIe siècle (Florence, 1965), pp. 49-62; Fernand BRAUDEL, The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, trans. S. REYNOLDS (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 704-705, 725-734. For other expressions of this view, see Lucien ROMIER, Le Royaume de Catherine de Médicis (Paris, 1925; facsimile ed., Geneva: Slatkine, 1978), vol. 2, pp. 40-45; DELUMEAU, "Mobilité," pp. 126-128; Stuart JUZDA, "The Parisian Bourgeoisie, 1400-1600: Problems and Attitudes" (M.A. thesis, Sir George Williams, 1973), pp. 128-130, passim.

¹⁶⁹George HUPPERT, Les Bourgeois Gentilshommes: An Essay on the Definition of Elites in Renaissance France (Chicago, 1977), p. 4.

¹⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 4, 24-26, 32-33, 130. Huppert's term for this group is the "gentry," which he is careful to distinguish from the English gentry (p. 19).

¹⁷¹Ibid., p. 11. Although he detected a "class solidarity" among the "gentry," Huppert does not speak of a class consciousness, and indeed, as he describes them, they appear more as a cultural group than as a social group, united by a shared education and shared values, rather than a common productive role. (pp. 108, 50, 57). For interpretations of the social attitudes of magistrates which complement Huppert's, see SCHALK, "Changing Conceptions," pp. 99, 162; Denis RICHET, "Elite et noblesse: la formation des grands serviteurs de l'état. (fin XVIe - début XVIIe siècle)," Acta Poloniae Historica, no. 36 (1977), p. 61; SALMON, Society in Crisis, pp. 110-111; DIEFENDORF, Paris City Councillors in the Sixteenth Century: The Politics of Patrimony (Princeton, 1982), pp. 298-300; MOUSNIER, Vénalité p. 84, and Les Hiérarchies sociales de 1450 à nos jours (Paris: P.U.F., 1969), pp. 73-79; DROUOT, op. cit., vol 1, p. 48; and Colin KAISER, "Les Cours souveraines au XVIe siècle: morale et Contre-Réforme," Annales, vol. 37, no. 1 (1982), pp. 15-31. But cf. Robert KALAS, "The Selve Family of Limousin: Members of a New Elite in Early Modern France," Sixteenth Century Journal vol. 18, no. 2, (1987), pp. 150-151, 164-169.

¹⁷²BITTON, op. cit., p. 116.

¹⁷³Ibid., pp. 121, 89; SCHALK, "Changing Conceptions," p. 83; LABATUT, op. cit., p. 7; Hubert METHIVIER, L'Ancien Régime en France (Paris: P.U.F., 1981), pp. 55, 58; DEVYVER, op. cit., pp. 83, 180. Bitton specifies only that Caumont was Catholic, and Schalk that he was "apparently not a noble." Schalk corrected this oversight in From Valor to Pedigree, pp. 96-97. Devyver also mistakenly attributes Rainsart's Theatre de France to Brissac, and describes it as "un point de vue spécifiquement noble." (p. 69, n. 39; p. 84).

¹⁷⁴DEVYVER, op. cit., pp. 66, 76-77.

¹⁷⁵MOUSNIER, Hiérarchies, p. 69; JOUANNA, Ordre social, p. 100; ORLEA, op. cit., pp. 50ff. As J.-R. Bloch points out, the jurists' tomes are "des guides dangereux" for the historian, and were composed by jurists "dans leur propre intérêt." BLOCH, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

¹⁷⁶James Wood, in his portrait of noble prosperity, notices traces of "status insecurity," which he sees as contradicted by reality, but he makes no attempt to explain this insecurity. WOOD, op. cit., p. 166.

¹⁷⁷Michel VOVELLE, Idéologies et mentalités (Paris: Maspero, 1982), p. 15.

¹⁷⁸HUPPERT, Les Bourgeois Gentilshommes, p. 11.

CHAPTER IV

THE LEAGUE AND ITS FAITH

Before proceeding with an exploration of Leaguer social thought, two further contextual elements must be established. First, the Parisian Leaguers themselves must be described, along with the social, economic and political forces which compelled them to rebel against royal authority and the ruling elites. Secondly, the Holy League's religious and moral preoccupations must be identified, since, as we shall see in the next chapter, these had a profound influence on the League's social ideology.

What was the League?

After centuries of neglect during which the League was treated either as a shameful coda to the Renaissance and Reformation, or as a foil to the glories of the Bourbon monarchy, the League, and particularly the Paris League, has in the last two decades attracted serious scholarly attention. It is not my intention to provide a thorough survey of recent literature, as such historiographical discussions can be found elsewhere.¹ Rather, I will apply existing scholarship as a window through which to view and understand the League's social ideas.

Until relatively recently, historians have recounted the League's rebellion as a principally, or even purely, political event. In doing so, they told an important, but incomplete part of the story. The League was indubitably a vehicle for the dynastic ambitions of the House of Lorraine in its struggle with its Valois and Bourbon rivals.² On a larger scale, it was part of a pan-European geo-political conflict involving the emerging nation states controlled by the Habsburgs, Tudors, and Stuarts, among others, as well as the Dutch Republic and the Papacy.³ It was also an opportunity for discontented, avaricious, or adventurous noblemen to assert their independence, to seek gain and glory, or to profit from ducal patronage and later from royal enticements to desist.⁴ The Parisian League, however, was a discrete, if related, phenomenon. Although nineteenth century historians characterized it as a mere urban auxiliary to the princely League, directed and exploited by the Guise family and its aristocratic followers,⁵ more recent work has demonstrated that the Parisian League was much more than a Guisard faction, and that even before the Parisians came into open conflict with Mayenne, they were in an uneasy alliance with the Leaguer nobility.⁶

Barbara Diefendorf's description of Guise-Parisian relations in the 1560s and early 1570s holds true for the 1580s and 1590s as well: "The Guise family may well have learned to profit from and to manipulate [their] popularity, but the Parisian populace was nobody's puppet."⁷

Much of the recent scholarly attention focussed on the Parisian League has taken the form of social analysis, and while the interpretation of the League as a "revolutionary" movement did not begin with J.H.M. Salmon, an article he published in 1972 has proven seminal, and helped to reawaken interest in the entire subject.⁸ Salmon interprets the Parisian League, the "Sixteen", as a radical, popular party, "truly revolutionary in the sense that it embodied conscious social antagonisms."⁹ A similar view is given its most complete and elaborate exposition in the work of Elie Barnavi, for whom the League was not only an authentic revolution (though a "révolution à rebours") but also the prototype of modern totalitarian parties.¹⁰ A divergent, but not contrary, interpretation has since been developed by Henry Heller, who situates the Paris League as part of a succession of democratic, popular movements challenging the social elite, as one of many "disguises" which revolt by the commons took during the sixteenth century.¹¹ While I do not agree on all points with Salmon, Barnavi or Heller, I believe that their overall interpretation is basically sound, and that the Paris League was the expression of profound social conflict. Such an interpretation will form the backdrop to this study of the League's social ideology.

A rival, and indeed revisionist, interpretation has been propounded by Robert Descimon, who takes as his theoretical framework Bernard Chevalier's magisterial study of urban society in fourteenth- to sixteenth-century France. Chevalier describes independence and cultural unity of the late mediaeval "bonnes villes" being eroded and destroyed by the Wars of Religion, by the defection of the upper bourgeoisie, and by expanding royal authority.¹² Descimon's other intellectual forebear was the late Denis Richet, who saw in the Parisian theatre of the Wars of Religion not a class struggle, but a struggle for cultural hegemony between two bourgeois factions.¹³ Taking up these themes, Descimon depicts the League as fundamentally defensive: a collective defence against absolutism and its agents, the *parlementaires* and royal officers, and ultimately doomed effort to save or resurrect

traditional civic liberties and bourgeois sociability, using religion as a unifying and mobilizing principle.¹⁴

Apart from his tendency to minimise or dismiss the real social hostilities and conflicts raging in late sixteenth-century Paris,¹⁵ I have little quarrel with Descimon's thesis, and believe it quite compatible with that put forward by Barnavi and others; indeed, despite their vigorous debate in the pages of the *Annales*, Descimon and Barnavi have collaborated on a study of the Sixteen's clash with *Parlement*.¹⁶ As Henry Heller has pointed out, the League was a complex affair, embracing diverse impulses, and various historical interpretations provide insights which expand our understanding of it.¹⁷ Another important recent interpretation, which I have not yet mentioned but will discuss later in this chapter, emphasises the religious side of the League.

A word must first be said on the notion that the Parisian League was a defensive movement. Certainly the Leaguers portrayed themselves, from the beginning, as acting in the defence of the true religion, of civic liberties, and even of the lives and property of the people of Paris. Richet and Descimon both maintain that the League's revolt on the Day of the Barricades was a defensive reaction,¹⁸ and indeed, Leaguer pamphlets frequently reiterated the claim that the Barricades forestalled a plot by the King and his henchmen to massacre the Catholic burghers of the capital.¹⁹ Even the "radical" pamphlet of 1593, *Dialogue d'entre le maheustre et le manant*, stated the Paris League's aims in traditionalist and essentially defensive terms: "je ne demande rien, et ne faict que deffendre ce que mes peres m'ont acquis."²⁰ We are not obliged to accept the Leaguers' self-consciousness as the objective reality, but the League was undeniably defensive insofar as it was intended as a rampart against a predatory state and social elite.

The League's implacable hostility to absolutism has often been remarked upon,²¹ and the League's political ideology and constitutional projects have been studied elsewhere, notably by Frederic Baumgartner;²² the social implications of that political ideology will be discussed in chapter 7. A central Leaguer political demand was for regular meetings of a fortified Estates-General, "les correctifs de la licence des Roys, chacun esperant tollir la tyranie: & remettre sus les anciennes franchises, & immunitiez Françoises."²³ But the Leaguers' constitutionalism, and even their rearguard protection of mediaeval urban liberties,

did not preclude a concurrent social motor driving the movement; on the contrary, the Leaguers' resistance to absolutism and their antipathy towards the social elites were clearly linked by those elites' implication in nascent absolutism. This involvement was admittedly less obvious for the nobility than for the *gens de robe*, but recent work has called into question the assumption that absolutism was imposed upon an unwilling nobility.²⁴

Despite the ostensible disagreements over the social significance of the League, there is now a broad consensus among historians on the social composition of the Sixteen, just as there was unanimity among royalist pamphleteers that the Leaguers were "peuple fiens, peuple ordure, peuple Parisien enragé, ingrate vermine," led by "une assemblée de bests à basts, de bidets retifs, & de canaille prostituée."²⁵ This legend that the Sixteen were "gens de basse condition" was repeated by royalist chroniclers,²⁶ and survived well into this century, when the League's leaders were described as "a heap of rascality ... many of them the very lowest of the people. The number of lawyers in the League was remarkable."²⁷

Quite apart from the attitude towards the legal profession revealed in the above passage, it contains a kernel of truth, which blossomed less than a decade later in Henri Drouot's great study of the League in Burgundy. Drouot demonstrated that far from being a plebian rabble, the Dijon League was dominated by the discontented "bourgeoisie seconde," a modest but respectable class of merchants and lawyers.²⁸ The *basoche*, the world of *avocats*, *procureurs*, and *notaires*, as well as minor legal and administrative functionaries, *greffiers*, *huissiers* and the like, found their social ascent blocked by the upper bourgeoisie, "la grande robe," who had begun to monopolize higher offices and pass them on to their sons, while cultivating connections with the nobility.²⁹ The Dijon League, according to Drouot, was the *bourgeoisie seconde*'s vehicle for advancing its interests, and often for gaining personal advancement for its members, a "guerre sociale brochant sur la guerre politique."³⁰ Although recent Anglo-American scholarship contends that the Dijon model does not apply to other Leaguer towns, such as Angers, Rennes, Nantes, Rouen, and Toulouse,³¹ and though Drouot himself insisted that Dijon was quite unlike Paris,³² his social analysis of the Dijon League parallels those conducted on its Parisian counterpart.

Salmon nuances Drouot's thesis, and detects a downward evolution as the Sixteen grew more radical, but he too sees the League as "widely representative of the middle

classes," with a large proportion of lawyers and minor functionaries.³³ Barnavi provides a detailed social analysis of the Parisian League's leadership, and while he does not acknowledge his debt to Drouot, finds it composed mainly of "honorable hommes," lawyers and merchants whose ambitions had been thwarted, along with a sprinkling of magistrates and clergymen.³⁴ The Sixteen, in Barnavi's words, was a "soupape social" and a means of personal advancement for its leaders, three quarters of whom gained office after the League captured the city, and some of whom enjoyed rapid promotion to prestigious and lucrative positions.³⁵ Even Descimon's meticulously annotated prosopographical inventory of two hundred twenty five leaders of the Sixteen generates results broadly consistent with the analyses of Drouot, Salmon, Barnavi and others.³⁶ Although Descimon emphasises the participation of merchants and prosperous artisans in the Sixteen, he differs from previous historians mainly in his interpretation of the data, rejecting the concept of class conflict as irrelevant: "c'était une philosophie bien pauvre qui prétendait réduire la Ligue urbaine à l'expression de l'antagonisme entre basoche et judicature."³⁷ Descimon finds no evidence of social immobility or career blockage having contributed to the League's emergence, and he sees the cleavage between the magistrature and the rest of the bourgeoisie as a cultural rupture with the *robe* betraying its origins by adopting a distinct identity and ethos incompatible with civic zeal and the mediaeval town system.³⁸

The sovereign courts in Paris employed as many as five thousand people in the late sixteenth century,³⁹ most of whom could never aspire to high office, and the courts were not immune to social and political tensions, as the *procureurs'* strike of 1586 shows.⁴⁰ Office holding, and the conduct of office holders, preoccupied the League's pamphleteers, who were sharply critical of magistrates for their corruption, their avarice, and their tolerance of heresy.⁴¹ Open conflict between the League and *Parlement* broke out in January 1589, shortly after the Blois assassinations, when armed partisans of the League invaded the court, arrested the First President and other magistrates, and took them to the Bastille; after the purge the vacant posts were filled by jurists favourable to the League, among them the pamphleteer Louis Dorléans.⁴²

That the Leaguers' were not motivated solely by the desire for career advancement is evident from one of their most frequently repeated demands, for the reduction in the number

of royal officers. The proliferation of officers, according to one pamphlet, imposed an excessive financial burden and interfered with commerce, "car la maxime c'est trescertaine que là ou est la multiplicité des Juges: là est semblablement l'abondance des proces, pernicious & perilleux."⁴³ As another put it, "pl'd'officiers, plus de ruine de peuple."⁴⁴ Yet with equal, and perhaps greater fervour, the Leaguers argued that offices should be awarded on the basis of merit (*vertu*) to known Catholics only, and that "gens de bien," by which they presumably meant themselves, should cease to be excluded.⁴⁵ At least one pamphlet called for public vetting of royal appointments, and urged the king "de changer aussi souvent de Magistrats & d'officiers qu'ils en sera besoin."⁴⁶ Promotion by merit could not coexist with the venality of office, and League pamphleteers denounced "la porte dorée" through which unworthy men attained office.⁴⁷ The suppression of venal offices had been a demand of Etienne Marcel over two centuries before,⁴⁸ and numerous unenforced royal interdictions forbade the sale of judicial offices,⁴⁹ but the practice remained sufficiently controversial that royalist propagandists felt it necessary to defend venality as a necessary expedient to offset the cost of the wars.⁵⁰

The social status of Leaguer clergymen is a topic that cries out for scholarly attention -- Descimon excludes clerics from his study altogether⁵¹ -- but it may be conjectured that the monks, priests and *Sorbonnistes* who participated in the League experienced professional and social frustrations comparable to their lay counterparts.⁵² Certainly Leaguer pamphleteers also complained of the granting of benefices, including bishoprics, to unsuitable royalist placemen while pious aspirants were passed over;⁵³ *politique* pamphlets replied by accusing League clergymen of seeking personal preferment.⁵⁴

A related cause of unrest in the League's core constituencies was the crushing tax burden they had to bear. The emergence of the League coincided with a fiscal crisis in France, and despite the central government's mounting expenditures, and increasing levies, revenue (at least from *aides* and other indirect taxes) may actually have fallen because of the collapse of the administrative system, disobedience in the provinces, and a decline in wealth and trade.⁵⁵ Although Paris was exempt from the *taille*, the royal fisc did not spare the city, and constantly devised new means of extracting money, most often in the form of subsidies or imposed "free gifts," which were raised through a *capitation* "resembling the *taille* in all

but name" according to Barbara Diefendorf.⁵⁶ When all else failed, the King forced loans from the *rentes sur l'hôtel-de-ville*, a sort of municipal bond fund, whose investors, including future Leaguers, suffered financially as a result.⁵⁷ It is not surprising then, that protest over the "tyranniques imposts" was a constant theme in Leaguer pamphlets, which habitually demanded the abolition of new taxes, "inventions," and the reduction of the *taille*.⁵⁸ Complaints about the ruin caused by royal expropriations of the *rentes* also featured prominently in League pamphlets.⁵⁹

To describe the League as being in part a tax revolt in no way contradicts either the social interpretation of the movement, or the view that the League was a defence of traditional civic liberties. In the sixteenth century, when elites were largely tax-exempt, "urban social cleavages [were] essentially fiscal," as Daniel Hickey put it.⁶⁰ At the same time, excessive taxation was a direct assault on Parisian liberties. Similarly, the League's constitutionalism was related to fiscal pressure, since a key Leaguer demand was that the Estates-General be accorded the power of the purse.⁶¹

Thus, to take a single event as an example, the Leaguers' successful effort to gain control of the *Bureau de la ville* in the aftermath of the Day of the Barricades was a fiscal counter blow, since it installed a municipal government which would be more steadfast in resisting royal financial demands.⁶² It was also a partisan coup, since the *Hôtel-de-ville* had been under the control of Royalists, *Politiques*, and fellow-travellers.⁶³ Those royalist municipal leaders were part of an increasingly hereditary and closed oligarchy. Since the mid-sixteenth century, magistrates and other royal officers had become predominant in city council, to the partial exclusion of the *basoche* and the merchants.⁶⁴ This state of affairs was doubly frustrating for members of the *bourgeoisie seconde*, who had turned to municipal functions as an alternative route of advancement as royal offices were placed beyond their reach.⁶⁵ The Sixteen's seizure of power was therefore a single battle in a class war, part of vast social upheaval going beyond the internecine rivalry between two bourgeois factions. Despite the important lingering differences between *gentilshommes* and magistrates, these social elites were coming to have more in common than either had with the *bourgeoisie seconde*, and the League's hostility was directed towards both magistrate and *gentilhomme*, sometimes in the same breath.⁶⁶ The two elite groups found themselves closing ranks when

threatened from below.⁶⁷ French society was growing increasingly polarised, though as I will attempt to show in subsequent chapters, nobody, the Leaguers included, could yet conceive society in such terms.

The institutional struggle for the command of city hall was, at the same time, an attempt to restore vanishing mediaeval traditions, since royal authority had, at least since the 1560s, been interfering in elections and imposing its own candidates in order to reduce municipal independence.⁶⁸ The old officers, "malvoullus et haÿs du peuple" were purged in May 1588, and replaced through fresh elections, "selon la liberté ancienne, par voix commune du peuple."⁶⁹ In restoring traditional practices, the Leaguers may well have been hoping to recreate an ideal mediaeval urban community, as Descimon would have it. The trauma done to the Leaguers' bourgeois sensibilities by the *robe's* disdainful drawing away surfaced occasionally in League pamphlets:

Dieu commāde au peuple d'obeir ... le Magistrat, mais il ne veut pas que les Magistrats endeviennent rogues, fiers, & inaccessibles, l'humilité est une vertu aussi bien pour les grādes que pour les petits.... la gravité n'est point fierté, arrogance, & desdain du reste du peuple, aussi ne faut pas que les Magistrats estiment estre quelque sorte d'hommes descendus du ciel.⁷⁰

The Paris League, then, wore many cloaks, and subsumed within it many impulses: political, economic, social, cultural, and, of course, religious.

Religion and Morality

The League was first and foremost a religious movement. It was founded in 1585, after the death of the Duke of Anjou, when the Huguenot Henry of Navarre became heir apparent, and it had the stated purpose of guaranteeing a Catholic succession, which it ultimately achieved. Beyond the preservation of the Catholic character of France, its other grand design was the extirpation of heresy, and in this end it was far less successful. Very ultramontane in orientation, the League also had more immediate explicit religious objectives, most notably the reception and publication of the Council of Trent.⁷¹

Despite claims by *politique* pamphleteers and chroniclers that religion was a mere pretext,⁷² Leaguers exhibited a high degree of genuine piety and religious fervour. When we speak of the League as a religious movement, the word is intended in both its sectarian and spiritual senses. The League coincided with a period of tremendous outpourings of penitential

displays of devotion, most often taking the form of bare-footed processions. League pamphleteers made much of these procession, of the mass participation which they attracted, and of the ardour which they evinced.⁷³ Although there were evidently close links between the bourgeois League and the penitential movements, it would be inaccurate to see them as nothing more than the League at prayer, or the confraternities as cells of the Sixteen.⁷⁴

Processions of flagellants originated in thirteenth-century Italy, and religious confraternities were common in French towns by the fifteenth century,⁷⁵ but the recrudescence of the phenomenon around the time of the League is nonetheless striking. Recent cultural historians have seen the processions as attempts by the church and bourgeois laity to suppress traditional popular celebrations and to replace them with a more austere form of devotion.⁷⁶ In this sense, the Leaguers were the zouaves of the counter-reformation, promoting its mentality as well as its institutions.⁷⁷ The *politique* memorialists ridiculed the processions, perhaps revealing something of the cultural gap between themselves and the Leaguers.⁷⁸ Evidence of a nagging anxiety about that gap did appear occasionally in Leaguer writings, as in one that complains that "il ne faut point en compagnie parler de pieté & religion, si on ne veut estre mocqué."⁷⁹ But evidence of intense religiosity, of a preoccupation with collective salvation, and of a spiritual siege mentality is more frequent; one pamphleteer warned that the League's enemies "s'essayent vous faire doublement mourir, vous ravir vostre manne, vostre pain quotidien, vostre salut, vostre heritage celeste, vostre vie, vostre tout."⁸⁰

Although Robert Harding concludes that the provincial Leaguers' religious inclinations led them to eschew the miraculous,⁸¹ the Parisian League pamphleteers showed no such hesitation to claim or predict divine intervention. The Day of the Barricades was often described in Leaguer pieces as a miracle, and other League successes often ascribed to divine assistance.⁸² The Leaguers' God was no remote prime mover, but rather an intimate deity, magnificent and stern, quick to anger, to punish the wicked and wayward, or to test his own by ordeals such as the sieges of Paris.⁸³

Until very recently, historians have tended to overlook the League's religiosity. Seventeenth-century historians followed the royalist chroniclers in treating religion as a pretext, a "Masque of Zeal" in Dryden's rendering of Maimbourg.⁸⁴ Enlightenment writers,

such as the juring Augustinian friar L.-P. Anquetil, skipped over the religious aspect of the League, considering it mere fanaticism, irrational and incomprehensible, and solid Third Republic historians such as J.-H. Mariéjol and Henri Hauser took the same view.⁸⁵ Restoration ultracists, however, were ambivalent, approving the League's zeal while remaining appalled by its sedition and regicide. In Châteaubriand's words, "la Ligue, quels que furent ses crimes, sauva la religion catholique en France."⁸⁶

It is only in the 1990s that we have witnessed the first real attempts to understand the later Wars of Religion in religious terms, and indeed, to consider the Leaguers' piety as a subject worthy of serious scholarly investigation.⁸⁷ The leading exponent of this new trend has been Denis Crouzet. Without pretending to do justice to his massive *thèse d'état* in a few lines,⁸⁸ I would summarize Crouzet's interpretation of the League as one which relegates the social and political aspects of the League to secondary significance, and views the League as essentially religious. For Crouzet, the social and political causes the League championed were at the surface, "avatars" of a deeper religious impulse.⁸⁹ Drawing on his analysis of the penitential processions, and of Leaguer pamphlets, Crouzet sees the League as an expression of "angoisse eschatologique," a "prise de croix collective" in anticipation of Christ's imminent return.⁹⁰ Conceiving salvation as necessarily collective, the Leaguers sought a union with the divine to prepare for the Millennium.⁹¹

Accusing social and political interpretators of the League of anachronism, Crouzet sees the conflict between the *basoche* and magistrature as essentially religious, and the bourgeoisie's exclusion as an exclusion from participation in the sacral civic functions instrumental in collective salvation.⁹² By the same token, Crouzet notes that the economic problems afflicting France were seen at the time as being, like heresy itself, a sign of divine wrath.⁹³

Such portents might well have been overlooked, however, had they not affected the daily lives of the Leaguers and the League's supporters, causing them economic and corporeal as well as spiritual distress. While reminding us of an important and neglected side of the League, Crouzet's interpretation sometimes lapses into a religious determinism as reductionist and one-dimensional as the most abstracted diplomatic history.⁹⁴ The religious themes Crouzet identifies as significant were present in Leaguer writings, but did not

predominate. Prophecies of the end of the world were circulating throughout Europe in the 1590s,⁹⁵ but one recent study of wills drafted in Leaguer Paris finds scant evidence of "eschatological anguish" where one might most expect it.⁹⁶

As Norman Cohn's study of mediaeval millenarianism shows, apocalyptic prophecy can have a social content,⁹⁷ and this is no less true of the League than of the Münster Anabaptists. The golden age the League harkened back to, however, was not one of primordial egalitarianism, but a well-ordered unified Catholic society, one that sounds distinctly feudal. Addressing the nobility, one Leaguer pamphlet described the world as it would be after the triumph of the League: "vous verrez la religion restablié en sa premiere splendeur, vostre honneur remis sus, le rustique en repos, les subsides & nouveaux impôts du tout abolis, bref vous verrez revenir l'aage doré."⁹⁸

Its religious orientation in no way impeded the League from serving as a vehicle for what we would consider extra-religious goals: for the princes, dynastic ambition; for the popular League, institutional reform and social agitation. One is struck, in examining the League's demands, how few of them are explicitly religious. For example, the Paris League submitted a list of twenty remonstrances to the King in July 1588, two months after chasing him from his capital during the Day of the Barricades. These remonstrances concerned the municipal affairs of Paris, tax reform, and civic liberties, but only the last two items treated the problem of heresy.⁹⁹ The League had in any case great initial success on the sectarian front; where the first seven Wars of Religion had ended in treaties according a greater or lesser degree of tolerance to the reformed religion, by the Treaty of Nemours (1585) the newly-formed League obliged the King to proscribe Protestantism altogether, and to return to the repressive policies of his father. That the League did not dissolve after this victory, but grew to become the centre of opposition to the King is a measure not only of royal reluctance to observe the terms of the treaty, but also of the fact that the League was more than a religious phenomenon.

This is not to imply that religiosity was not an essential facet of the League. On the contrary, it is to recognise the degree to which religion was all-pervasive in the sixteenth century. In a mental universe divided not into the religious and secular, but rather the sacred and profane, an attempt to isolate purely religious motivations would be bootless, even

meaningless.¹⁰⁰ Religious orthodoxy was an intrinsic part of the Leaguers' idea of the perfect city, or "aage doré." Similarly, historians have traditionally interpreted the Paris League's willingness to subordinate national considerations to religious ones as being anti-national,¹⁰¹ whereas for members of the Sixteen, this would have been a false distinction, Catholicity being fundamental to the identity of France as they conceived it.

Religious and political concerns were automatically coupled in League pamphlets, with no sense that the two spheres could be mutually exclusive. Tax grievances and expressions of soteriological anxiety were juxtaposed without hesitation, for "notre frâchise [est] attachee à nostre foy."¹⁰² The Leaguers were not unconscious, however, that their attitude distinguished them from their *politique* opponents, who "prefer[e]nt le temporel au spirituel, le profane au sacré, le corps à l'ame, les creature au Createur, & le service des hommes mortels à celui de Dieu immortel."¹⁰³ In the Leaguers' minds, any attempt to partition church and state would lead to godlessness, "et enfin vous placerez Dieu en un coing de l'Estat."¹⁰⁴

The religious, socio-economic, and political threads of the League, then, were inextricably interwoven,¹⁰⁵ and it is not surprising that social and political antagonisms found their expression in religious strife. To take a single example, the *cahier de doléances* submitted by Leaguer Paris to the Estates-General of 1588 contained a curious and unelaborated demand that the practice of installing private church doors by noblemen and other *grandeess* be abolished.¹⁰⁶ Was this a religious demand, dealing with a matter of church governance? Was it a political manoeuvre to discomfit Catholic Royalists? An expression of resentment against a social elite and its capacity to purchase privileges? Or an attempt to mend a rent in communal solidarity? I would submit that it was all these at once, and perhaps more.

The line along which the Leaguers did require rigid demarcation and separation was the line between virtue and vice, and hence between believer and heretic. Heresy, in a trope that appeared with notable regularity in League pamphlets, was an illness. As Louis Dorléans put it, "l'hérétique [est] un membre pourry et gasté de gangrène qui perd les membres voisins, et qui vid à la ruine de tout le corps."¹⁰⁷ A more common version of this metaphor

had it that heresy was an "infection contagieuse" such as leprosy or the plague, whose vectors must be quarantined or destroyed.¹⁰⁸

Pestilences have been believed throughout history to signal divine ire, and there is some evidence in Leaguer literature for Crouzet's contention that the Leaguers believed heresy itself to be such a sign.¹⁰⁹ Far more widespread in League writings, however, is the notion that heresy, and Catholic Frenchmen's failure to root it out, was a *cause* of God's anger. Heresy, in pamphlet after pamphlet, was described as a "pollution spiriuelle" from which all good Catholics should shrink lest they be "contaminé" and draw celestial retribution against themselves.¹¹⁰ A visceral repulsion and terror at the thought of any contact with Huguenots was apparent in League publications. Significantly, according to some League pamphlets, such contamination could come from *Politiques* as well as outright heretics, and League writers often assimilated *Politiques* with "atheistes, libertins, heretiques," and ascribed to them every imaginable vice.¹¹²

Henry III and the "vermine de court"¹¹³ were the particular targets of Leaguer invective. Although Jacqueline Boucher argues persuasively that the Valois court was not an alien entity grafted on to France, but in many ways a mirror of French society,¹¹⁴ moral revulsion over the licentiousness of Henry III's voluptuary court seems to have helped turn Catholic opinion against the King.¹¹⁵ Criticism of the frivolity and luxury of the Court dated back to the 1560s,¹¹⁶ but reached a fever pitch in 1589, when the Leaguers accused Henry III and his mignons of sodomy and sorcery as well as tyranny, concluding that he was unfit to rule.¹¹⁷

The Leaguers' moralism was not restricted to *ad hominem* attacks on their sovereign, for part of the Leaguer project was the moral regeneration of France. They meant to reverse the decay, and "remettre les choses en leur pristin estat."¹¹⁸ The Leaguers attempted, with some degree of success, to impose austerity of dress and conduct in Paris, seeking to suppress gaming, at least on Sundays, and to forbid immodest or ostentatious attire.¹¹⁹ Those who ventured out in finery in Leaguer Paris risked having their ruffles torn from their clothes.¹²⁰ The Leaguers saw theirs as a moral combat, and even quixotically tried to banish blasphemy and other iniquities from the League armies.¹²¹

The reason given by League pamphleteers for this moral crusade was that "[Dieu] veut que son peuple soit saint,"¹²² but there was also a social context to it. The social significance attributed to virtue and vice by League theorists will be discussed in the next chapter, but the League's moralism also had more immediate social implications. The Leaguers' austerity was at once an attempt to acculturate the urban masses and an assault on the mores of the elites. Furthermore, their critique of the luxury and extravagance of the nobility and the Valois court might have been less severe had they not been aware that every *sous* of royal expenditure added to their tax burden.¹²³ Likewise, the moral social and economic bases for their attacks on venality of office and the elevation of the mignons were inseparable; Leaguer pens gave the *basoche's* career frustrations the dignity of moral outrage.¹²⁴

Whether Henry III was in fact a "bourgre sodomit" as League canards claimed is of no importance,¹²⁵ but the accusation highlighted the class antagonisms dividing *manant* from *maheustre*. Homosexuality was an abominable vice in the minds of the Catholic bourgeoisie, but "pour les nobles et à la cour, la sodomie se confond avec un certain choix pratiqué par une élite."¹²⁶ For the Leaguers, sorcery, sodomy and heresy,¹²⁷ like excessive taxation, civil commotion and unwelcome innovation, represented an unnatural, indeed monstrous, distortion of the moral order of the universe. The struggles against sin and oppression were the same fight.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

¹Mark GREENGRASS, "The Sixteen: Radical Politics in Paris During the League," History vol. 69 (October 1984), pp. 432-439; Barbara DİEFENDORF, "Recent Literature on the Religious Conflicts in the Sixteenth Century," Religious Studies Review vol. 1^o no. 4 (1984), pp. 362-367, and "The Catholic League: Social Crisis or Apocalypse Now?" French Historical Studies vol. 15, no. 2 (1987), pp. 332-344; Jean-Pierre BABELON, Paris au XVI^e siècle (Paris: Hachette, 1986), 472ff; Hugues NEVEUX, "Robert Descimon, Les Seize et la Sainte Ligue," Revue de synthèse vol. 108, no. 2 (1987), pp. 269-276; Ann Woodson RAMSEY, "Piety in Paris during the League, 1585-1590: An Urban Community in Transition" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1991), pp. 15-59; Mack P. Holt, "Putting Religion Back into the Wars of Religion," French Historical Studies vol. 18, no. 2 (1993), pp. 524-551.

²That the Guises entertained designs on the crown was a common accusation in royalist pamphlets, e.g. [André MAILLARD], La Fulminante pour feu tres-grand et tres-Chrestien Prince Henry III (1590), p. 26, and was assumed by many subsequent historians, such as Augustin THIERRY, Essai sur l'histoire de la formation et des progrès du Tiers Etat (Paris: Garnier [1871], p. 150. For a recent discussion of extent of the Guises' dynastic ambitions, see Jean-Marie CONSTANT, Les Guise (Paris: Hachette, 1984), pp. 193-209.

³Joseph de CROZE, Les Guises, les Valois et Philippe II (Paris: D'Amyot, 1866), vol. 2, p. 272, passim; Edouard FREMY, Essai sur les diplomates du temps de la Ligue [Paris: Dentu, 1873], pp. 138ff, passim; Henri de L'EPINOIS, La Ligue et les papes (Paris: Librairie Catholique, 1886), passim; Michel de BOUARD, "Sixte-Quint, Henri IV et la Ligue," Revue des Questions historiques vol. 116, (1932), pp. 59-140; Jacques VIVENT, La Tragédie de Blois: le roi de France et le duc de Guise, 1585-1588 (Paris: Hachette, 1946), pp. 5-32, 238; Garrett MATTINGLY The Defeat of the Spanish Armada (London: Cape, 1959), pp. 136ff, 193ff, 350 et seq., passim; André de MOREUIL, Resistance et collaboration sous Henri IV (Paris: Pensée moderne, 1960), passim; De Lamar JENSEN, Diplomacy and Dogmatism: Bernardino de Mendoza and the French Catholic League (Harvard, 1964), pp. 137ff, passim; Marvin O'CONNELL, The Counter-Reformation (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), pp. 280ff.

⁴L. GREGOIRE, La Ligue en Bretagne (Paris: Dumoulin, 1856), pp. 123ff; Jean MARIEJOL, La Réforme et la Ligue (Paris: Hachette, [1904], pp. 391-392; Mark GREENGRASS, France in the Age of Henri IV: The Struggle for Stability (London: Longman, 1984), pp. 175-182; Sharon KETTERING, "Clientage during the French Wars of Religion," Sixteenth Century Journal vol. 20, no. 2 (1989), pp. 224-225; Arlette JOUANNA, Le Devoir de révolte ([Paris]: Fayard, 1989), pp. 180ff, passim.

⁵E.g. CHATEAUBRIAND, Etudes ou discours historiques, vol. 4, pp. 299-300; CHANOINE-DAVRANCHES, La Ligue et ses libelles (Rouen: Cagniard, 1911), p. 103.

⁶E.g. Joseph LECLER, "Aux origines de la Ligue," Etudes, vol. 227 (1930), p. 189; Elie BARNAVI, "Fidèles et partisans dans la Ligue parisienne (1585-1594)" in Hommage à Roland Mousnier: Clientèles et fidélités en Europe à l'époque moderne, ed. Y. DURAND, (Paris: P.U.F., 1981), p. 146; Henry HELLER, Iron and Blood: Civil Wars in Sixteenth-Century France (Montréal: McGill-Queen's, 1991), pp. 107 et seq.

⁷Barbara DİEFENDORF, Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth Century Paris (O.U.P., 1991), p. 180.

⁹J.H.M. SALMON, "The Paris Sixteen, 1584-1594: The Social Analysis of a Revolutionary Movement," Journal of Modern History vol. 44, no. 4 (1972), pp. 540-576; also H.G. KOENIGSBERGER, "The Organization of Revolutionary Parties in France and the Netherlands during the Sixteenth Century," Journal of Modern History vol. 27, no. 4 (1955), pp. 335-351, and AA LOZINSKI, "La Lutte pour le pouvoir dans la Municipalité parisienne, après la «Journée des Barricades» (1588-début 1589)," Srednie Veka vol. 8 (1956), pp. 257-294 (Anonymous French translation provided by Denis Richet.)

⁹SALMON. loc. cit., p. 540.

¹⁰Elie BARNAVI, Le Parti de Dieu: Etude social et politique des chefs de la Ligue parisienne, 1585-1594 (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1980), p. 262, passim; and "La Ligue Parisienne (1585-1594): Ancêtre des partis totalitaires modernes?" French Historical Studies vol. 11, no. 1 (1979), pp. 29-57.

¹¹HELLER, op. cit., p. 120.

¹²Bernard CHEVALIER, Les Bonnes villes de France du XIV au XVIe siècle (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1982), p. 17, passim.

¹³Denis RICHEL, "Aspects socio-culturels des conflits religieux à Paris dans la seconde moitié du XVIe siècle," Annales E.S.C. vol. 32, no. 4 (1977), p. 775.

¹⁴Robert DESCIMON, Qui étaient les Seize? Mythes et réalités de la Ligue parisienne (1585-1594) (Paris: Klincksieck, 1983), pp. 26, 281, passim. A similar interpretation is offered by Christopher STOCKER, "Exclusion and Union: The Associative impulse in the Catholic League," in Aequitas, Aequalitas, Auctoritas ed. D. LETOCHA, (Paris: Vrin, 1992), pp. 273-275. Another city's decision to remain royalist is explained in parallel terms by Mark KONNERT, "Urban Values Versus Religious Passion: Châlons-sur-Marne during the Wars of Religion," Sixteenth Century Journal, vol. 20, no. 3 (1989), pp. 387-405.

¹⁵Ibid, pp. 13-14, 262, passim.

¹⁶Robert DESCIMON, "La Ligue à Paris (1585-1594): une revision," and "La Ligue: des divergences fondamentales," and Elie BARNAVI, "Réponse à Robert Descimon," Annales E.S.C. vol. 37, no. 1 (1982), pp. 72-121; BARNAVI & DESCIMON, La Sainte Ligue, le juge, et la potence: L'assassinat du Président Brisson (15 novembre 1591) (Paris: Hachette, 1985).

¹⁷HELLER, op. cit., pp. 105-106.

¹⁸Denis RICHEL, "Les Barricades à Paris, le 12 mai 1588," Annales E.S.C. vol. 45, no. 2 (1990), pp. 386-387; DESCIMON, "Revision", pp. 74-75; for an interesting, if inconclusive, discussion of the myth and modern symbolic tradition of the barricades in France, see Mark TRAUGOTT, "Barricades as Repetoire: Continuities and Discontinuities in the History of French Contention," Social Science History vol. 17, no. 2 (1993), pp. 309-323.

¹⁹For example, the anonymous author of Admirable et prodigieuse mort de Henry de Valois (Lyons: L. Tantillon, 1589), had it that the King and his heretical allies had conspired to "faire mourir honteusement les principaux Catholiques de Paris, afin de diminuer & estonner la société d'icelle." (p. 7). Another insisted that Henry III, imitator of the Pharaoh, had intended to "se baigner

dans le sang des gens de bien, nommément des habitâs de la ville de Paris," (Les Propheties merveilleuses advenues à l'endroit de Henry de Valois (Paris: A. du Brueil, 1589), p. 15.) Finally, according to the League publicist Jean BOUCHER, the barricades were a response to an abortive coup by the Duke of Espernon, who had introduced mercenaries into the city, "et tenoient ja (par maniere de dire) le cousteau sur la gorge des pauvres habitâs, les menaçans de tuer, massacrer, & faire escouller le sang à grandz ruisseaux, & de faire agresser & brusler jusqu'aux femmes & enfans, de ceux qui leur feroient resistance. Ilz disoient insolément aux femmes des bourgeois qu'elles misènt des draps blâs aux lietzs, & qu'ils iroïènt coucher avecques elles. Bref, ilz ne se prometoient rien moins, qu'après avoir tué les mariz, espouser leur fêmes & jouir de leurs biens. Je laisse à penser à toutes personnes de sain jugement, si les Parisiens ont eu occasion de se barriquer & defêdre de telle violêce." (Replique à l'antigaverston, ou responce faicte à l'histoire de Gaverston, par le Duc d'Espernon, n.p.: 1588, p. 25). There are innumerable other such passages in League pamphlets, but one of the few pro-League chroniclers, noted that "chacun raconte [la journée] selon sa passion et bien souvent tout au contraire de ce qui s'est passé." Jean MOREAU, Mémoires, ed. H. WAQUET, (Quimper, 1960), p. 25.

²⁰Francois CROME, Dialogue d'entre le maheustre et le manant [Paris: R. Thierry & L. Cavellat, 1593], ed. P.M. ASCOLI (Geneva: Droz, 1977), p. 51.

²¹E.g. Arlette LEBIGRE, La Révolution des curés, Paris 1588-1594 (Paris: Albin Michel, 1980), pp. 30-36, 79, 136, 246; MARIEJOL, op. cit., p. 266; P.M. ASCOLI "French Provincial Cities and the Catholic League," Occasional Papers of the American Society for Reformation Research, vol. 1 (1977), pp. 15-40; Elie BARNAVI, "Centralisation ou fédéralisme? Les relations entre Paris et les villes à l'époque de la Ligue (1585-1594)," Revue historique vol. 259, no. 2 (1978), p. 335. Perry ANDERSON describes the League as "an arena for the coalescence of virtually every type of internal political conflict characteristic of the transition towards Absolutism" in Lineages of the Absolutist State (London: NLB Verso, 1979), p. 91.

²²Frederic J. BAUMGARTNER, Radical Reactionaries: The Political Thought of the French Catholic League (Geneva: Droz, 1975); see also Robert Pierre COLE, "The French Catholic League, 1585-94: Radical Political Ideology and its Relationship to Collective Political Consciousness during the Wars of Religion," (M.A. thesis, Saskatchewan, 1988).

²³Contre les fausses allegations que les plus qu'Achitofels, Conseillers Cabinalistes, proposent pour excuser Henry le meurtrier (n.p., 1589), p. 44b.

²⁴David PARKER, The Making of French Absolutism (London: Edward Arnold, 1983); Jay M. SMITH, "«Our Sovereign's Gaze»: Kings, Nobles and State Formation in Seventeenth Century France," French Historical Studies vol. 18, no. 2 (1993), pp. 396-415. But the nobility "had to be broken in to the harsh and awaited discipline of its own conditions of government" in ANDERSON's apt phrase (op. cit., p. 55).

²⁵MAILLARD, op. cit., pp. 43, 38.

²⁶Estienne PASQUIER, Lettres historiques pour les années 1556-1594, ed. D. THICKETT (Geneva: Droz, 1966), p. 396, cf. pp. 316, 317, 319. See also Jacque-Auguste de THOU, Histoire universelle (London, 1734) vol. 1, pp. 294, 511; and Pierre de L'ESTOILE, Mémoires-Journaux, ed. G. BRUNET (Paris: A. Lemerre, 1888-1896), vol. 3, pp. 86-87, 167, 258, vol. 5, p. 134.

²⁷Maurice WILKINSON, A History of the League or Sainte Union, 1576-1595 (Glasgow: Jackson, Wylie, 1929), pp. 51-52.

²⁸Henri DROUOT, Mayenne et la Bourgogne: Etude sur la Ligue (1587-1596) (Paris: Picard, 1937) vol. 1, p. 51, *passim*.

²⁹*Ibid*, vol. 1, pp. 49-53.

³⁰*Ibid*, vol. 1, p. 310, 412ff.

³¹Robert HARDING, "Revolution and Reform in the Holy League: Angers, Rennes, Nantes," Journal of Modern History vol. 53, no. 3 (1981), pp. 389, 393, 396; Philip BENEDICT, Rouen during the Wars of Religion (C.U.P., 1981), pp. 181-183, 245; Mark GREENGRASS, "The Sainte Union in the Provinces: The Case of Toulouse," Sixteenth Century Journal vol 14, no. 4 (1983), p. 489.

³²DROUOT, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, pp. 178-179, vol 2, pp. 477-478. Drouot apparently assumed the royalist version of events in Paris.

³³SALMON, *loc. cit.*, p. 550, *passim*.

³⁴BARNAVI, Parti de Dieu, pp. 28, 48-51, 103-108. Like Salmon, Barnavi finds evidence of an evolution in the Sixteen's social composition, slightly upward at first, and then increasingly dominated by lawyers (pp. 115, 215-220).

³⁵*Ibid*, pp. 51, 137-141.

³⁶DESCIMON, Qui étaient les Seize? p. 231. Among other historians, LOZINSKI describes the Sixteen's leadership as an "intelligenza" of *basoche* and clerics (*loc. cit.*, p. 21), while RICHET characterised the ultra-Catholic tendency in late 16th century Paris as "le monde de la basoche, ces procureurs, ces huissiers, ces notaires, ces petits avocats, ces sergents, liés à la boutique et à l'échoppe, frustrés dans leurs ambitions de promotion sociale, défenseurs jaloux d'une orthodoxie volontiers niveleuse." ("Aspects socio-culturelles des conflits," p. 775). While she does not accept the thesis of frustrated ambition, DIEFENDORF also detects a split in Parisian society as far back as the 1560s, with the "bourgeoisie seconde", which would eventually rally to the League being radicalised by participation in the militia, while the upper bourgeoisie identified itself with royal authority and toleration. (Beneath the Cross, p. 175).

³⁷DESCIMON, Qui étaient les Seize? p. 14.

³⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 274-279; 43, 264.

³⁹Orest RANUM, Paris in the Age of Absolutism (New York: John Wiley, 1968), p. 12.

⁴⁰L'ESTOILE, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 339-345; [Jehan de LA FOSSE], Journal d'un curé ligueur de Paris sous les trois derniers Valois, ed. E. de BARTHELEMY, (Paris: Didier, 1865), p. 201.

⁴¹La Vie et innocence des deux freres (Paris: A. du Brueil, 1589), pp. 20-22; Remonstrances faictes par les officiers de Henry de Valois ([Paris: G. Bichon], 1589), pp. 10-11; Response du

peuple Catholique de Paris, aux Pardons de Henry de Valois (Paris: D. Millot, 1589), pp. 5-6; Les Causes qui ont contraint les Catholiques à prendre les armes ([Paris: J. Varangles & D. Binet], 1589) in GOULART, Memoires de la Ligue (1758), vol. 3, p. 526; CROME, op. cit., pp. 84, 178; [Louis DORLEANS], Le Banquet et apresdinée du Conte d'Arete (Paris: G. Bichon, 1594), p. 167. The critique of royal officers did not originate with the League, however, and was a common theme in 16th century satire. See Jean ALTER, Les Origines de la satire anti-bourgeoise en France (Geneva: Droz, 1966), vol. 1, p. 197.

⁴²L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 235-239; de THOU, op. cit., vol. 10, pp. 512-515; R.C. GOULD, "The Life and Political Writings of Louis Dorléans," (Ph.D. diss, Bryn Mawr, 1975). As with many civil conflicts, individuals used the opportunity to extract personal revenge; François Cromé, for example, was one of the ring leaders in the assassination of the First President, Barnabé Brisson in 1591. Brisson had condemned Cromé's father for embezzlement 30 years before. Jean TOURNEMILLE, "Le Ligueur Barnabé Brisson (1531-1591), ou les dangers du double jeu," Cahiers de l'Ouest no. 16 (1957), p. 26.

⁴³Advis a Messieurs des Estats sur la reformation et retranchement des abus & criminels de l'Estat (n.p., 1588), pp. 11-12.

⁴⁴Le Dispositif, avec advertissement et advis à Messieurs les deputez des estats (n.p., 1588), p. 22. On the "officiers inutiles," see also [Nicolas ROLLAND], Remonstrances tres-humble au Roy de France ([Paris], 1588), p. 65; [Jean BOUCHER], Histoire tragique et memorable de Pierre de Gaverston (n.p., 1588), p. 31; Remonstrances faictes par les officiers de Henry de Valois, pp. 3-5; O. RAYNSSANT, Representation de la noblesse hérétique sur le théâtre de France (Paris: G. Bichon, 1591), ff. 77v-78r. Complaints about the multiplicity of officers also predated the League, and appeared in the *traités de noblesse* of previous decades. See François de L'ALOUETTE, Des Affaires d'estat (Metz: Jean d'Arras, 1597), p. 168.

⁴⁵[Jehan de CAUMONT], La Harangue et proposition faicte au Roy sur l'union de toute la noblesse Catholique de France (Paris: A. le Coq, 1588), p. 21; ROLLAND, op. cit., pp. 255ff; Michel MARCHANT, La Paralysie de la France, avec le remède d'icelle (Paris: P. Hury, 1590), pp. 23-24.

⁴⁶Advis au Roy (n.p., 1588), p. 7.

⁴⁷La Vie et innocence des deux freres, p. 18. See also Advis a Messieurs des Estats, p. 9; ROLLAND, op. cit., pp. 69-73; Du contemnement de la mort (Paris: N. Nyvelle, 1589), pp. 31-32; Declaration par laquelle Henry de Valois, confesse estre Tyran & ennemy de l'Eglise ([Paris]: G. Binet, [1589]), p. 3.

⁴⁸Paul ROBIQUET, Histoire municipale de Paris (Paris: Hachette, 1904), vol. 1, p. 73.

⁴⁹Roland MOUSNIER, La Venalité des offices sous Henri IV et Louis XIII 2nd ed., (Paris: P.U.F., 1971), p. 36.

⁵⁰[Philippe de DUPLESSIS-MORNAY], Responce au Declarations & protestatiōs de Messieurs de Guise (n.p., 1585), pp. 60-62. See also PALMA-CAYET, Chronologie Novenaire ed. MICHAUD & POUJOLAT (Paris, 1838), p. 30b.

⁵¹DESCIMON, Qui étaient les Seize?, p. 50.

⁵²This is touched on by DROUOT, op. cit., vol. 1 pp. 68, 272, and by BARNAVI, Parti de Dieu, pp. 29, 31, 89, 125. The prolific Leaguer preacher and pamphleteer Jean Boucher was among those clerics who felt their merits had been overlooked; see Jacqueline BOUCHER "Culture des notables et mentalité populaire dans la propagande qui entraîna la chute de Henri III" in Mouvements populaires et conscience sociale (Paris: Maloine, 1985), p. 343. Professional jealousies may also have motivated League printers, as Henry III made it a policy to attract humanist printers back to France. Jacqueline BOUCHER, Cour de Henri III, p. 134.

⁵³Causes qui on contraint les Catholiques à prendre les armes, p. 526; [Jean DUJON], Articles remonstrez a Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne (Paris: G. Chaudiere, 1589), pp. 8-9; RAYNSSANT, op. cit., f. 70r; "Le Cahier de doléances de la ville de Paris aux Etats généraux de 1588," ed. E. BARNAVI, Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France vol. 487 (1976-1977), p. 133.

⁵⁴Le Manifeste de la France aux Parisiens & a tout le peuple Francois ([Tours], 1590), p. 7.

⁵⁵J.-J. CLAMAGERAN, Histoire de l'impôt en France (Paris: Guillaumin, 1868) vol. 2, pp. 229-232; Martin WOLFE, The Fiscal System of Renaissance France (New Haven: Yale, 1972), pp. 185-206; MARIEJOL, op. cit., pp. 231-233.

⁵⁶Barbara B. DIFENDORF, Paris City Councillors in the Sixteenth Century: The Politics of Patrimony (Princeton, 1983), p. 24. See also Robert DESCIMON, "Paris on the Eve of Saint Bartholomew: taxation, privilege, and social geography," in Cities and Social Change in Early Modern France, ed. Ph. BENEDICT (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), pp. 71-72, 80; L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 56-57, 132; Registres des délibérations du bureau de la ville de Paris ed. F. BONNARDOT, (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1883-1910), vol. 9, pp. 5ff, 8, 16-18, 25, 51 et seq.; ROBIQUET, op. cit., vol 2, pp. 137, 182; MARIEJOL, op. cit., p. 250; Alfred FRANKLIN, Paris et les parisiens au seizième siècle (Paris: Emile-Paul Frères, 1921), pp. 98-102.

⁵⁷Peter Max ASCOLI, "«The Sixteen» and the Paris League, 1585-1591" (Ph.D diss., Berkeley, 1971), p. 30; BARNAVI, Parti de Dieu, p. 44; see also WOLFE, Fiscal System, pp. 91-92, 115; DIFENDORF, City Councillors, pp. 26-28; R. DOUCET, Les Institutions de la France au XVIe siècle (Paris: Picard, 1948), p. 389; ROBIQUET, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 183-184, 269-270; Registres des délibérations, vol 9, pp. 5, 44, 99-100, 166-169; "Cahier de doléances de la ville de Paris," p. 123; Ch. VALOIS, ed. Histoire de la Ligue: Oeuvre inédit d'un contemporain (Paris: Renouard, 1914), vol. 1, pp. 149ff.

⁵⁸La Detestation des cruautés sanguinaires et abominables de Henry Devalé ([Paris]: D. Binet, 1589), p. 3; [Claude MATTHIEU], Declaration des causes qui on meu Monseigneur le Cardinal de Bourbon, et les Princes, Pairs, Prelats, et Seigneurs, Villes et Communautés Catholiques de ce royaume, de s'opposer à ceux qui veulent subvertir la Religion et l'Estat in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol 11, p. 14. See also Harangue faite au Roy, par un député particulier de la ville de Rouen (Paris: Dalier, 1588), pp. 6-7, 9; Bon Advis et necessaire remonstrances, pour le soulagement des pauvres du tiers Estat (n.p., 1588), pp. 3-4; Advis a Messieurs des Estats (n.p., 1588), p. 5; Advis au Roy, p. 13; RAYNSSANT, op. cit., f. 5v. Among the first acts of the League national council in January 1589 was to order the reduction of the taille by 25%; see La Declaration

des Princes Catholiques unis avecques les troys Estats de France, pour la remise & decharge d'un quart des tailles & crèues (Paris: N. Nyvelle, 1589).

⁵⁹Advis a Messieurs des Estats, p. 12; [Jean BOUCHER], La Vie et faits notables de Henry de Valois (Paris: D. Millot, 1589) in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol 12, p457; Exhortation à la Sainte Union (n.p., 1589), in GOULART, Memoires de la Ligue, vol 3, p. 517; Remonstrances faictes par les officiers de Henry de Valois, p. 6. Unpaid *rentes* remained a source of discontent well after the League had seized control of Paris; see ROBIQUET, op. cit., vol. 3.

⁶⁰Daniel HICKEY, The Coming of French Absolutism: The Struggle for Tax Reform in the Province of Dauphiné, 1540-1640 (University of Toronto Press, 1986), p. 98.

⁶¹PALMA-CAYET, op. cit., p. 444; "Cahier de doléances de la ville de Paris," p. 130.

⁶²LOZINSKI makes a similar point (loc. cit., pp. 16, 18).

⁶³ROBIQUET, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 235, 327, 356.

⁶⁴DIEFENDORF, Paris City Councillors, pp. 38, 44-49, 52; RANUM, op. cit., p. 33-36; S.A. FINLEY-CROSSWHITE, "Henry IV and the Towns: Royal Authority and Municipal Autonomy, 1589-1610" (Ph.D. diss., Emory, 1991), p. 70. This tendency was not confined to Paris; see Ernest MOURIN, La Réforme et la Ligue en Anjou (Paris: Durand, 1856), pp. 175-179.

⁶⁵MOUSNIER, Venalité, p. 86; DROUOT, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 54.

⁶⁶L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 124-128.

⁶⁷Michel DE WAELE, "Les Opinions politiques d'un avocat parisien sous Henri IV: Antoine Arnauld," Renaissance and Reformation vol. 17, no. 2 (1993), p. 46; ANDERSON, op. cit., p. 93. It is interesting to note that royalist pamphleteers and chroniclers, mostly *gens de robe* themselves, assimilated the basoche with the populace: "avec quelles personnes estoient ils en association ou ligue? avec des gens la plus-part qui estoit d'entre le simple peuple, des procureurs, des commissaires, des notaires, des drapiers, des cousturiers et des artisans." PALMA-CAYET, op. cit., p. 22a. Cf. de l'HOUE, op. cit., vol. 9, p. 653 and Lettre d'un gentilhomme catholique et vrai François (1590), cited by Georges WEILL, Les Théories sur le pouvoir royal en France pendant les Guerres de Religion (Paris: Hachette, 1892), p. 298.

⁶⁸ROBIQUET, vol. i, pp. 520-522, 530-531.

⁶⁹Registres des délibérations, p. 119; PALMA-CAYET, op. cit., p. 46. See also Causes qui ont contraint, p. 526; and "Harangue au Roy en forme de Remonstrances" [Request présentée au Roy (Paris: Bichon & Nivelles, 1588)], in Registres, pp. 134-135. ROBIQUET, however, claims that the new elections violated traditional practices (op. cit., vol. 2, p. 365).

⁷⁰Advis au Roy, pp. 10-11.

⁷¹La Foy et religion des politiques de ce temps (Paris: G. Bichon, 1588), pp. 45-46. "Cahier de doléances de la ville de Paris," p. 102; Articles pour propose aux Estatz et faire passer en loy fondamentale du Royaume (n.p., 1588), p. 3. The last two contradictorally demanded that the

Tridentine reforms be instituted without prejudice to Gallican liberties. One historian studying papal relations with the League concluded that the Leaguers were in fact largely Gallican. P. RICHARD, La Papauté et la Ligue française: Pierre d'Épinac, Archevêque de Lyon (1573-1599) (Paris: Picard, 1901), p. 356-357. The Leaguers could be literally more Catholic than the Pope, and according to L'ESTOILE, when news of Sixtus V's death reached Paris in September 1590, the Leaguer curé Christoph Aubry preached that "Dieu nous avoit délivrés d'un meschant Pape et Politique" (op. cit., vol. 5, p. 54).

⁷²PALMA-CAYET, op. cit., p102b; Manifeste de la France, p. 12.

⁷³Copie des memoires secrets en forme de Missive. Envoyez par un Polytique mal-asseuré à un sien amy (Paris: J. Gregoire, 1589) in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses vol. 12, p. 275; Du Contemnement de la mort, p. 33; Trahison découverte de Henry de Valois, sur la vendition de la ville de Bologne (Paris: M. Jouin, 1589), p. 9.

⁷⁴Robert R. HARDING makes this point in "The Mobilization of Confraternities against the Reformation in France," Sixteenth Century Journal vol. 11, no. 2 (1980), p. 85.

⁷⁵Norman COHN, The Pursuit of the Millenium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists in the Middle Ages revised ed. (O.U.P, 1970), p. 129; Gabriel LE BRAS, Études de sociologie religieuse (Paris: P.U.F, 1956), pp. 433ff.

⁷⁶Robert MUCHEMBLED, Culture populaire et culture des élites dans la France moderne (Paris: Flammarion, 1978), p. 213; Robert A. SCHNEIDER, "Mortification on Parade: Penitential Processions in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France," Renaissance and Reformation vol. 10, no. 1 (1986), pp. 123-146. An example of the Leaguers' clash with popular culture occurred in May 1991 when the Walloon garrison in Paris held a mock procession to mark the feast of St-Job, as was their custom, in which a donkey's hindquarters were blessed. The Parisians were outraged, and broke up the parade. L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 5, p. 96.

⁷⁷See also RICHET, "Aspects socio-culturels des conflits religieux," passim; Andrew E. BARNES, "Religious Anxiety and Devotional Change in Sixteenth Century French Penitential Confraternities," Sixteenth Century Journal vol. 19, no. 3 (1988), pp. 389-406; BENEDICT, Rouen during the Wars of Religion, p. 191. Michel CASSAN notes the "cohérence entre militantisme ligueur et prosélytisme catholique," in "Laïcs, Ligue et Réforme catholique à Limoges," Histoire, économie et société vol. 10, no. 2 (1991), p. 160.

⁷⁸L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol 3, pp. 247-249; de THOU, op. cit., vol. 9, pp. 654-655. De Thou also recounts a procession of armed monks in May 1590, "une procession d'un goût tout nouveau" (vol. 9, p. 160). This may be the procession depicted in two paintings attributed to François II Brunelle now hanging in the Carnavalet Museum. See Paris au XVI^e siècle et sous le règne d'Henri IV (Bulletin du Musée Carnavalet) (Paris, 1979) inv. P. 622, inv. P. 262, pp. 22-25. One recent historian describes these as closer to military parades than religious processions: André COUTIN, Henri IV siècles de violence au Quartier latin (Paris: Stock, 1969), p. 131.

⁷⁹Remonstrance Tres-docte envoyée aux Catholiques François, par un Catholique Anglois (Paris: A. du Brûeil, 1589), pp. 7-8.

⁸⁰Exhortation Catholique aux trois ordres de la France (Lyons, 1589), p. 16. Cf. Advis, sur ce qui est à faire, tant contre les Catholiques simulez, que contre les ennemis ouverts de l'Eglise (Paris: Nivelles & Thierry, 1589), pp. 3-4; [Papire MASSON] Avis à l'irresolu de Limoges (Paris: R. le Fizelier, 1589), p. 53; and Jean de CAUMONT Advertissement des advertissements, Au peuple tres-chrestien (n.p., 1587), p. 23: "Satan ... travaille nuit & jour ... d'empescher de tout son pouvoir l'establissement de vostre union. Il ne craint puissance du monde qu'une sainte & forte union d'amitie juree entre les Catholiques."

⁸¹HARDING, "Revolution and Reform in the Holy League," pp. 411-412.

⁸²[Jean BOUCHER], Lettre missive de l'evesque du Mans, Avec la responce à icelle (Paris: G. Chaudiere, 1589), p. 50; Discours veritable sur ce qui est arrivé à Paris (Paris: D. Millot, 1588), p. 10; Catherine de GUISE, Requete presentee à Messieurs de la Court de Parlement de Paris ([Paris: R. Thierry], 1589), p. 7; Les Lettres royaux de Henry de Vallois, n'agueres Roy de France (Paris: D. Binet, 1589), pp. 9-10; Henri de GUISE, Coppie d'une lettre escripte au Roy (Paris: D. Millot, 1588), p. 10; CROME, op. cit., pp. 102-105. When the League experienced reverses, royalist propagandists used this disposition against them: "Dieu combat contre vous, sa faveur vous abandonne, sa vengeance vous poursuit, toutes choses vous tournent à rebours," Manifeste de la France, pp. 23-24.

⁸³La Ligue tres-sainte, tres-Chrestienne, & tres-Catholique (n.p., 1585), p. 7; Advis à Messieurs des Estats, p. 3; Effects espouvantables de l'excommunication de Henry de Valois (Paris: Nivelles & Thierry, 1589), pp. 22-23; Pierre CORNEIO, Bref discours et veritable des choses plus notables arrivees au siege memorable de la renommee ville de PARIS (Paris: D. Millot, 1590), in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol 13, p. 234.

⁸⁴MAIMBOURG, The History of the League, trans. John DRYDEN (London: J. Tonson, 1684), epistle dedicatory; cf. MEZERAY, Histoire de France sous le règne de Henri III [1643-51] (Alois: J. Martin, 1844-46), vol. 1, p. xxxv.

⁸⁵ANQUETIL, L'Esprit de la Ligue, ou histoire politique des troubles en France [1767] (Paris: Nicolle, 1808), vol. 1, p. xxiv; MARIEJOL, op. cit., passim; Henri HAUSER, La Prépondérance espagnole (1559-1660) [1934] 3rd ed. (Paris: P.U.F, 1948), pp. 156-157.

⁸⁶CHATEAUBRIAND, op.cit., vol 4, p. 300; see also BONALD, Oeuvres, (Paris: le Clerc, 1817) vol. 6, p. 18: "les ligueurs de ce temps seroient les royalistes du notre," and F. de LA MENNAIS, Des Progrès de la révolution et de la guerre contre l'Eglise 2nd ed. (Paris, 1829), p. 69: "l'une des plus belles [époques] de notre histoire." Lamennais wrote this passage before his own break with the church and the radicalisation of his thought. Cf. the Orléanist CAPEFIGUE, Histoire de la Réforme, de la Ligue, et du règne de Henri IV (Paris: Duféy, 1834-35), vol. 6, p. 411, et passim and Les Héroïnes de la Ligue (Paris: Amyot, 1864), pp. 161-162, passim. For other 19th century Catholic historians who partially rehabilitated the League, see L'EPINOIS, op. cit., pp. 657ff; V. de CHALAMBERT, Histoire de la Ligue [1898], facs. reprint (Geneva: Slatkine, 1974), pp. 496-502.

⁸⁷RAMSEY, "Piety in Paris during the League" (1991), p. 195, passim; HOLT, "Putting Religion Back into the Wars of Religion" (1993), p. 580, passim; Michael WOLFE, The Conversion of Henri IV: Politics, Power, and Religious Belief in Early Modern France (Cambridge, Mass.:

Harvard, 1993), passim; Ronald S. LOVE, "The Symbiosis of Religion and Politics: Reassessing the Final Conversion of Henri IV," Historical Reflections vol. 21, no. 1 (1995), pp. 27-56.

⁹⁸Denis CROUZET, Les Guerriers de Dieu: La violence au temps des troubles de religion, vers 1525-vers 1600 2 vols. (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1990). A synopsis of Crouzet's thesis is contained in his article, "La Violence au temps des troubles de religion (vers 1525-vers 1610)," Histoire, économie et société vol. 8, no. 4 (1989), pp. 507-525.

⁹⁹CROUZET, Guerriers de Dieu, vol. 2, pp. 433, 366, 294.

¹⁰⁰Ibid, p. 287; "Violence au temps des troubles," p. 522.

¹⁰¹CROUZET, Guerriers de Dieu, vol. 2, pp. 10., 389, 410.

¹⁰²Ibid., pp. 290-294.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 288.

¹⁰⁴This tendency is less pronounced in Crouzet's earlier work. See CROUZET, "La Représentation du temps à l'époque de la Ligue," Revue historique, vol. 270, no. 2 (1983), p. 302; and "Recherches sur la crise de l'aristocratie en France au XVI^e siècle," Histoire, économie, société, vol. 1, no. 1 (1982), pp. 9, 47.

¹⁰⁵Peter CLARK, Introduction to The European Crisis of the 1590s (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1985), p. 4.

¹⁰⁶RAMSEY, op. cit., p. 542.

¹⁰⁷COHN, op. cit., passim. It is interesting to note the parallels between the *bourgeoisie seconde* and the millenarian leaders whom Cohn studied: "the lowest strata of the intelligensia," minor clergy and literate laymen (p. 85).

¹⁰⁸[Michel MARCHANT], Exhortation dernière a la noblesse, pour la deliverance de nostre Roy Très-Chrestien (Paris: P. Hury, 1589), p. 15.

¹⁰⁹"Remonstrances des habitants de la ville de Paris," (July 1588), in Memoires de M. le Duc de Nevers (Paris: Jolly, 1665) vol. 1, pp. 733-743. Other Leaguer lists of demands were similarly temporal in contents.

¹¹⁰For a discussion of the degree to which religion saturated life in the 16th century, see Lucien FEBVRE, The Problem of Unbelief in the Sixteenth Century: The Religion of Rabelais, trans. Beatrice. GOTTLIEB (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1982), pp. 335-352.

¹¹¹For example, Myriam YARDENI, La Conscience nationale en France pendant les Guerres de Religion (1559-1598) (Paris, Louvain: Nauwlaerts, 1971).

¹¹²[MASSON], op. cit., p. 53. See also [Etienne BERNARD], Advis au Francois (Lyons, 1589), p. 26; Du Contemnement de la mort, p. 24; Responce des Catholiques zelez et unis ([Paris]: J. Parant, 1589), f. Div verso; CROME, op. cit., p. 50.

¹⁰³La Foy et religion des politiques, pp. 1-2.

¹⁰⁴CROME, op. cit., p. 50. See also Discours sur les calomnies imposees. aux Princes & Seigneurs Catholiques. par les Politiques de nostre temps (n.p., 1588), pp. 3, 1, 13, 17-18; Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique de France. qui tient le party du Roy de Navarre (Paris: Nivelles & Thierry, 1589), pp. 12-13. The royalist chronicler Estienne PASQUIER commented sourly on the mix of religious and political considerations in the League manifesto of 1585: "l'on mesle l'un & l'autre ensemble" (op. cit., p. 252). On the differences in mentality between Leaguer and *Politique*, see Ph. PAPIN, "Duplicité et trahison: L'image des «Politiques» durant la Ligue," Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine vol. 38, no.1 (1991), p. 3.

¹⁰⁵A similar point is made by Denis RICHET, "Aspects socio-culturels de conflits religieux," pp. 764-765, 775; LEBIGRE, op. cit., p. 112; HARDING, "Revolution and Reform in the Holy League," p. 382; and JOUANNA, Devoir de révolte, p. 201.

¹⁰⁶"Cahier de doléances," p. 109.

¹⁰⁷DORLEANS, Advertissement des Catholiques Anglois aux Francois Catholiques ([Paris], 1586) in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol. 11, p. 126. Dorléans concluded that the gangrened limb should be amputated.

¹⁰⁸[André de ROSSANT], Les Meurs et comportements de Henry de Valois representez au vray depuis sa Naissance (Paris: A. le Riche, 1589), p. 107. See also Sommaire response a l'examen d'un heretique. sur un discours de l'oy salique (n.p., 1587), pp. 38-39; Bref discours sur la deffaitte des Huguenots (Paris: Plumion, 1588), p. 4; Pierre POISSON, Harangue au peuple de France sur les louanges des anciens Francois (Paris: D. Cotinet, 1588), f. 4r; [Louis DORLEANS], Replique pour le Catholique anglois (n.p., 1588), f. 8v; "Cahier de doléances," p. 100; Justification de la guerre entreprise. commencee et poursuivie souz la conduite de tres-valeureux & debonnaire Prince Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne (Paris: G. Chaudiere, 1589), p. 8; BERNARD, Advis au Francois, p. 9. In the popular imagination, the connection between heresy and pestilence was more than metaphorical; see GREENGRASS, "Sainte Union in the Provinces," pp. 475-476. See also Anne-Marie BRENOT, "La Peste soit des Huguenots. Etude d'une logique d'execration au XVIe siècle," Histoire, économie et société vol. 11, no. 4 (1992), pp. 553-570.

¹⁰⁹[Nicolas LANGELIER], Remonstrance du Clergé de France (Paris: J. Richer, 1585), f. 7r-v; Remonstrance à tous bons et vrais Catholiques ([Paris]: D. Binet., 1589), p. 3.

¹¹⁰CAUMONT, Advertissement des advertissemens, p. 30; Advis. sur ce qui est a faire, pp. 8, 31; Litearchie contre les perciteux esprits. libelles. calomnies & Apologies naguieres faictes par aucuns heretiques (n.p., 1587), f. 5r; CAUMONT, Harangue, p. 9; [Jean DADRE], Remonstrance faite à Monsieur d'Espenon (Lyons: B. Rigaud, [1588]), p. 7; Exhortation à la sainte Union, p. 511; MASSON, Avis à l'irresolu de Limoges, pp. 13, 24; Le Fleau de Henry soy disant Roy de Navarre (Paris: G. Chaudiere, 1589), pp. 21-22.

¹¹¹Advis. sur ce qui est a faire, p. 8.

¹¹²Response des Catholiques zelez et unis, f. Aiv verso; Cf. Foy et religion des politiques, p. 92. The frequent accusation of atheism did not mean a systematic denial of the existence of God but rather an estrangement from God. See FEBVRE, op. cit., pp. 131-132.

¹¹³RAYNSSANT, *op. cit.*, f. 5v.

¹¹⁴Jacqueline BOUCHER, Société et mentalités autour de Henri III (Lille: Atelier de reproduction des thèses, 1981), and La Cour de Henri III (Rennes: Ouest-France, 1986), *passim*.

¹¹⁵HARDING, "Revolution and Reform in the Holy League," p. 416; Bernard FAY, Naissance d'un monstre: L'opinion publique (Paris: Perrin, 1965), p. 173.

¹¹⁶DIEFENDORF, Beneath the Cross, pp. 88-89.

¹¹⁷Allusions to Henry III's ambiguous sexuality pre-date Blois, but only became explicit after the League's final break with royal authority. See BOUCHER, Histoire tragique et memorable de Pierre de Gaverston (1588), p. pp. 6, 12, 30; Les Choses horribles, contenues en une lettre envoyee à Henry de Valois, par un enfant de Paris ([Paris]: J. Gregoire, 1589), pp. 4, 6; Contre les fausses allegations, pp. 50-51, 78; Le Faux Visage descouvert du fin Renard de la France ([Paris]: J. de Varanglès, 1589), p. 22; [Ch. PINSELET], Le Martyre des deux frères ([Paris], 1589) in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol. 12, pp. 63, 75, 84; Le Pourtraict et description du Politique de ce temps (Paris: H. le Bon & P. Chevillot, [1589]) in L'ESTOILE, *op. cit.*, vol. 4, pp. 3, 6; ROSSANT, *op. cit.*, pp. 74, 89; Vie et innocence des deux freres, pp. 13-15. For discussions of the personal attacks on Henry III contained in Leaguer pamphlets, see S.E.A. HAYNIE, "The Image of Henry III in Contemporary French Pamphlets," (Ph.D. diss., Michigan, 1971); Keith CAMERON, Henri III, A Maligned or Malignant King? (Aspects of the Satirical Iconography of Henri de Valois) (Exeter, 1978); David TEASLEY, "Legends of the Last Valois: A New Look at the Propaganda attacking the French Monarchs during the Wars of Religion, 1559-1589," (Ph.D. diss, Georgetown, 1986).

¹¹⁸PINSELET, Martyre des deux frères, p. 72.

¹¹⁹ROLLAND, *op. cit.*, pp. 179-180, 188-189, 201-202, 206-207; "Cahier de doléances," pp. 109, 134-138, 141; CORNEIO, *op. cit.*, p. 238; DORLEANS, Advertissement des Catholiques Anglois, pp. 120-121.

¹²⁰Copie des memoires secrets, p. 275: "à Paris, on voit une si grave réformation au retranchement du luxe ... quand une damoiselle porte ... un simple rabat un peu trop long, ou des marches trop découpées, ou quelques autres superfluités, les autres damoiselles se jettent sur elle et lui ... deschirent sa robe.... Vous ne voyez plus dedans Paris que du drap au lieu de la soye." See also BENEDICIT, Rouen, pp. 194-195. Such campaigns against frivolities and iniquity long predated the League, however. See J. HUIZINGA, The Waning of the Middle Ages, trans. F. HOPMAN (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1965), p. 13; Alfred FRANKLIN, ed., Journal du siège de Paris en 1590 (Paris: L. Willem, 1876; facs. reprint, Geneva: Slatkine, 1977), pp. 95, 98, 116-117.

¹²¹Advertissement envoie a Monseigneur le Duc de Maine, sur le departement de son armee (Paris: P. des-Hayes, 1589), p. 7; DUJON, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

¹²²C. IMONT, Advertissement des advertissemens, p. 6.

¹²³Responce aux calomnies proposez contre les Catholiques (n.p., [1588])pp. 46-47; Harangue au reverendissime et illustrissime legat Henry Cajetan, faicte par aucuns Bourgeois de Paris (Paris: D. Millot, 1590), p. 4; Le Karesme et mœurs du politique (Paris: P. Mercier, 1589). In fact, Henry III's

court may not have grown more costly over the course of his reign; see BOUCHER, La Cour de Henri III, p. 50.

¹²⁴ROSSANT, op. cit., p. 88: "il esleue aux estats, aux dignitez, aux benefices & offices les indignes: il advance & honnore les meschans, il recule les bons." See also ROLLAND, op. cit., pp. 181ff, 289; STOCKER, "Exclusion and Union," p. 286.

¹²⁵L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 284. Recent historians cast doubt on the legend Henry III's homosexuality; see BOUCHER, Société de mentalités, pp. 103ff; HAYNIE, op. cit., pp. 8-10.

¹²⁶Guy POIRIER, "Sodomicques et bougerons: imagologie homosexuelle à la Renaissance" (Ph.D. diss., McGill, 1990), p. 151; cf. Jonathan DEWALD, Aristocratic Experience and the Origins of Modern Culture: France, 1570-1715 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 118: "the practice overlapped with the forms of friendship that constituted the normal fabric of nobles' careers and political lives."

¹²⁷E.g., "Cahier de doléances," p. 101: "les sorciers ont grande affinité avec les heretiques." For discussions of the mental assimilation of heresy with sorcery, moral depravity, crime and disorder, see POIRIER, op.cit., p. 187; TEASLEY, op. cit., p. 9; Claire DOLAN, "L'Image du protestant et le conseil municipal d'Aix au XVIe s.," Renaissance and Reformation vol. 4, no. 2 (1980), pp. 152-164; Jonathan PEARL, "Demons and Politics in France, 1560-1630," Historical Reflections vo. 12, no. 2 (1985), pp. 241-251; G.W. SYPHER, "«Faisant ce qu'il leur vient à plaisir»: The Image of Protestantism in French Catholic Polemic on the Eve of the Religious Wars," Sixteenth Century Journal vol. 11, no. 2 (1980), pp. 59-84.

CHAPTER V

THE SOCIAL MEANING OF VIRTUE

The Leaguers' intense moralism, their calls for virtue and condemnations of vice, pertained to human society as much as to personal conduct, for the Leaguers, like all men of their time, understood the social and moral realms to be coterminous. The shared vocabulary of social and moral thought points to this overlap: *noble*, *vilain*, *gens de bien*, could have either social or moral meanings, but more likely both at once.

Hors de l'Eglise, point de Noblesse

Nowhere in Leaguer propaganda is the social significance of moral qualities, specifically virtue, made more explicit than in one of the earliest of League pamphlets, De la Vertu de Noblesse by Jehan de Caumont, published in 1585.¹ Caumont was an *avocat* at the Paris *Parlement*, and numbered among the founders of the Sixteen.² Historians of the League, aware of Caumont's political affiliation, have characterized his little book as a violent diatribe against the nobility and against the hereditary basis of the prevailing social structure. For Elie Barnavi, it was "un pamphlet très dur, où le polémiste s'élève parfois au niveau du théoricien pour saper les bases mêmes de la société de son temps."³

Caumont's argument, briefly stated, was that nobility is virtue, and virtue piety; ergo, only those who were Catholics, and zealous Catholics, could be considered noble. In his celebrated work on social hierarchies, Roland Mousnier has seized upon Caumont's assertion of virtue as the criterion of nobility, and made it the keystone of his interpretation of Leaguer social thought. Mousnier describes the League as an attempt to establish a "société d'ordre philosophique," a category in which he also includes the Jacobin phase of the Revolution, Bolshevik Russia, Fascist Italy, and Nazi Germany.⁴ In such a society, an individual's place within the hierarchy is determined by his prestige or social esteem, which in turn is a function of his devotion to the cause, his fervour and faith.⁵ According to Mousnier, the claim made by Caumont and by another League pamphleteer, François Cromé, that nobility was dependent on virtue, laid the theoretical foundation for the League's challenge to the existing social order. Since they held that the noblemen of their day were deficient in virtue, particularly those nobles who favoured the heretic party, Caumont and Cromé proposed a thorough purge of the Second Estate.

Moreover, Mousnier argues, since virtue, which they defined as zeal, was a personal quality, the hereditary principle of social organisation would also be annulled. The nobility as an order, however, would be preserved and replenished by a new nobility of truly virtuous men, whose status would depend solely on their personal merit. The Leaguers, who saw themselves as "un parti d'élus de Dieu," in Mousnier's words,⁶ would be the likely beneficiaries of such a social reorganisation:

Seuls ceux qui auraient prouvé l'intensité de leur foi catholique, seuls ceux-là auraient été gentilshommes et nobles.... La plus grande partie de la noblesse de France auraient été remplacé par une autre, issue des rangs des ligueurs.... Il y aurait toujours eu une noblesse, mais le principe de cette noblesse et le principe fondamental de l'organisation de la société auraient été complètement changés.⁷

Mousnier's interpretation of Leaguer thought has been very influential,⁸ and shows the extreme implications which the notion of "la vertu de noblesse" can be given. Yet as we have seen in chapter 3, there was nothing new, and certainly nothing revolutionary, about the equation of virtue and nobility; this equation had been a pillar of the nobility's own ideology for centuries. Indeed, viewed in the context of earlier writing on social questions, most of Caumont's ideas appear quite conventional.

Where Caumont did innovate, perhaps, was in his stress on zeal, on the religious aspects of virtue. Caumont employed the Aristotelian argument that the virtue of every species of thing resides in the achievement of its greatest perfection in the activity peculiar to that species; hence the nobility of a tree derives from its bearing fruit, the nobility of man from the worship of God.⁹ Those who are most worshipful, therefore, are most noble; in practical terms this meant that heretics could never be noble, and Caumont distinguished a "vraye" *noblesse* from a "perverse" *noblesse* which was illegitimate despite its gentle birth:

Je sçay qu'il y a une Noblesse perverse, Noblesse serpentine, Noblesse bastarde, vilaine, degenerateuse, prevaricatrice, blasphematrice, n'ayant rien du bien du noblesse que l'origine de la race, ayant tous les effets contraires aux effets de vraye noblesse.¹⁰

In Elie Barnavi's apt phrase, Caumont's theory amounted to "une application des principes catholiques en matière de vie sociale."¹¹ Proceeding from the premiss that piety was the most socially significant virtue, Caumont urged French noblemen to manifest their piety and virtuous devotion to God's cause, to show themselves worthy of their status and

privileges, implying that those nobles who did not merit their rank would forfeit it.¹²

Caumont never explicitly elaborated a project to establish a new nobility of zealots, however, and his exhortations to virtue and admonishments against vice have ample precedent in the works of noble apologists written in previous decades.

Arlette Jouanna is one of the few historians to explore this continuity between the League's propaganda and the virtue theory of the sixteenth century treatises of nobility, but Jouanna, I think, misconstrues Caumont's position. Jouanna follows Mousnier's opinion that the League promoted zeal as an entirely new criterion of social division, but she departs from Mousnier's analysis by comparing the League's virtue theory to that found in earlier literature on nobility. According to Jouanna, Caumont's pamphlet was "un traité ... destiné à servir les intérêts des Ligueurs, mais qui prend comme point de depart la definition traditionnelle de la noblesse."¹³ As Jouanna sees it, Caumont and certain other League authors accepted virtue as the definition of nobility, but proposed a new definition of virtue: Catholic piety. In other words, the League simply gave virtue a new *content*, substituting piety for military prowess.¹⁴ Similarly, according to Jouanna, in order to support their own claims to social preëminence, the jurists of the sixteenth century had also accepted virtue as the essence of nobility, but defined virtue as prudence and justice, rather than valour.¹⁵

Valour alone, however, had never been proposed as a complete definition of virtue. Sixteenth-century noble writers were insistent that courage in combat must be in the service of a just cause if it were to rank as virtue. Louys Musset wrote that the "Chrestien chevalier" must be motivated by "la cause de Dieu ... de sa verité ... [et] du salut de son peuple."¹⁶ Although valour was a central element of the traditional concept of virtue, it was normally held to be accompanied by justice, loyalty, faith, charity, disinterestedness, and other moral and religious qualities.¹⁷ Protestant writers such as La Noue shared with their Catholic counterparts a belief in the importance of piety as a noble virtue, and La Noue wrote that if too much primacy is accorded to *vaillance*, "ont est tombé en cest erreur, de faire peu de cas de l'exercice des autres vertus."¹⁸ Remember that La Noue was not one of Henry III's court dainties, but a doughty old Breton soldier who had lost an arm in battle and would later be struck down by a musket ball.

The difference between Caumont's book, and earlier texts on virtue, it seems, was mainly one of emphasis. Even here, Caumont's special stress on piety was anticipated by Josse Clichetove's De Vera nobilitate opusculum (1512),¹⁹ and his idea of the nobility of pious men occurs also in the Spanish mystic Diego de Estella's Tratado de la vanidad del mundo (1576).²⁰ Moreover, even as he "privileged" piety, Caumont returned constantly to the language of honour and courage. After making his often-quoted pronouncement, for example, that "jamais heretique fut noble," Caumont then went on to explain why: "ils sont tous menteurs, tous vilains, tous lasches, & de cœur failly. Le Catholique est vraiment noble."²¹ Although a soldier of Christ, the nobleman was nonetheless a soldier, whose duty was to defend God's church and God's people, "[de] se monstrer ennemy juré des meschans, & protecteur des gens de bien."²² The image Caumont presents of the True Nobleman is, despite his emphasis on religious qualities, no less military than that found in most treatises of nobility: "ses passetemps sont à deviser des stratagesmes militaires, des expediens de police, de la discipline publique, & de tout ce qui le dispose à bien faire aux hommes."²³ It should not surprise us, then, that not knowing that Caumont's little book was a Leaguer piece, many historians have cited it as just another treatise of nobility.²⁴

The weakness of Jouanna's interpretation of Caumont, and by extension of Leaguer thought as a whole, is that it explains virtue theory in overly modular terms, as a neutral mental apparatus into which courage or piety or any other concept of virtue could be plugged. Rather, it is more profitable to view Caumont as appropriating nobiliary discourse whole and adapting it to his own purposes. As we shall see, other League writers accepted not only the idea of virtue, but noble consciousness itself.

Even five years after Caumont, the Leaguer propagandist Launoy could echo Caumont, and sound very much like a conventional treatise-writer in his discussion of virtue. Launoy was a former Huguenot who by the 1580s had become a zealous Catholic and the canon of Soissons, a position he owed to Guise patronage. With the ardour of a convert, he figured as one of the League's most effective preachers and propagandists, and like Caumont, was a founder of the Sixteen.²⁵ In 1574 he had been involved in a fierce legal dispute with François de L'Alouette,²⁶ but despite their personal enmity, Launoy's ideas

about virtue and nobility were very close to L'Alouette's: "La vertu ... est l'Etre & l'element de la Noblesse, sans laquelle la Noblesse ne peut estre ny avoir vie."²⁷

Launoy's thinking resembled Caumont's even more strongly than it did L'Alouette's, and certain passages in his Remonstrance appear to paraphrase De la Vertu de Noblesse.²⁸ Like Caumont, Launoy emphasised the religious character of virtue, and identified piety as the "premiere pierre de touche qui faict juger si l'homme est noble."²⁹ Elaborating upon Caumont's ideas, Launoy stated the relation between piety and social status as explicitly as any League author: "Ceux-là qui honorent Dieu son nobles, & ceux qui l'honorent le plus, sont les plus nobles."³⁰

The notion that nobility is founded upon virtue can be traced throughout League thought, recurring finally in the last Leaguer pamphlets, such as François Morin de Cromé's Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant (1593). Cromé was a member of the Sixteen, and with Launoy was among the instigators of the conspiracy to arrest and assassinate Barnabé Brisson, the First President of the Paris *Parlement*, in 1591.³¹ Cromé's Dialogue could never be mistaken for a treatise of nobility, but when it touched on social questions, the theory expressed by Cromé's mouthpiece, the *Manant*, is entirely traditional: that nobility is founded upon virtue; that virtue is a personal quality; that those who are not virtuous cannot be noble.³² Certain historians maintain that the "radical" League doctrine of "la vertu de noblesse" was a minority opinion, confined to extremists such as Caumont, Launoy and Cromé.³³ Yet even such "moderate" Leaguers as Louis Dorléans did not hesitate to reproach the nobility for forgetting "la vertu qui l'a faict Noblesse."³⁴ Indeed, the equation of virtue and nobility, along with the religious tint given to virtue, were unquestioned assumptions in virtually all Leaguer tracts, just as they had been in traditional social thought. The Pope himself expressed similar beliefs in a stern bull against royalist noblemen, commanding them to "faire reluire leur pieté & obeissance, & la devotion qu'ils ont à la foy Catholique, sans lesquelles vertus ne peut subsister aucune vraie Noblesse."³⁵

The significance most often derived from the equation of virtue and nobility was negative: that "sans vertu noblesse est incogneue."³⁶ Noblemen who lacked virtue, therefore, were illegitimate, false nobles. Like Caumont, and like L'Alouette and Musset, many League pamphleteers distinguished an authentic, good nobility from a false, wicked nobility, "la

Noblesse vertueuse" from the "meschans & cazanniers qui ne merite cest honorable titre."³⁷ Where League writers departed from traditional treatments of the nobility was in identifying a particular section of the nobility as ignoble: their own political enemies, initially the Huguenots, but ultimately royalist and even neutral noblemen. An anonymous pamphlet denouncing *Politique* traitors in Paris left no doubt that virtue, and hence true nobility, was partisan: "La noblesse, non point la vraye noblesse: mais les courtisans cabinalistes ... se tournent tousjours au gré des plus grands ... & au mespris de la religion Catholique se sont abandonnez au service du Biarnoïs."³⁸

Virtue in Action

To be considered truly noble, in the eyes of League pamphleteers, a *gentilhomme* was required not only to be virtuous, but to actualise and manifest his virtue. One pamphlet argued that Catholic noblemen ought to fight for the League, "car s'ils veulent estre reputez vrayement nobles, & s'acquerir une louange & gloire perpetuelle, il leur faudra ... se mōstrer emulateurs de la loy, & prests à exposer leurs vies pour le testament de leurs peres."³⁹ As I shall explain in the next chapter, Leaguers believed that the true nobleman actualised his virtue in the fulfilment of his social function. Equally important was the expectation that he display his virtue, an expectation that derived from the League's activist concept of virtue.

The exhortation to noblemen to display their virtue was a constant theme when League pamphlets addressed the nobility: "C'est à vous Messieurs les Gentilshommes à faire paroistre & donner à connoistre ... la noblesse de vostre cœur genereux."⁴⁰ The nobility was traditionally understood to be a beacon of virtue, whose virtuous actions served a didactic as well as a direct social function. The zealous old lawyer François de Montholon, probably not a Leaguer but appointed keeper of the seals in the autumn of 1588 as a concession to the League, expressed a sentiment that no party could quarrel with, when in his opening address to the Estates-General, he informed the nobility that its first responsibility lay in "l'exēple que vous devez à vos subjects de toute pieté, bonté & justice, & autres perfections qui concernent les vertueuses actions."⁴¹ Other pamphleteers gave the nobility's didactic rôle a more partisan colour, arguing that the example of virtuous League noblemen would attract

adherents to the party of virtue: "Nous ne manquons pas, Chrestiens, de tels Princes pour nous exciter à embrasser virilement & courageusement le party de nostre Dieu."⁴²

The League's call to virtue, then, was a call to action, for as one propagandist wrote, "vertu gist en ses actiōs & fonctions vertueuses, & les œuvres font tout ainsi recognoistre l'ouvrier, comme le fruit fait recognoistre l'arbre."⁴³ Behind the exhortations to the readers to "faire paroistre leur vertu" lay the belief that God planted virtue in men's hearts as a potentiality to be actualised, a quality which must be exercised, for otherwise "elle chomeroit."⁴⁴

League pamphleteers emphasised the religious aspect of virtue, but in keeping with their understanding of virtue as something to be practised, the piety they professed was not a passive reverence, but an active zeal; noble virtue lay not merely in honouring God, but in serving Him.⁴⁵ League pamphlets therefore demanded militant devotion: "[Dieu] vomit de sa bouche les tiedes, ceux qui ne sont chauds ny froids. Il veut un cœur ardent, gaillard, & enflammé en son service."⁴⁶

The "tièdes" or "gens indifferens"⁴⁷ were after all the League's chief enemy, the *Politiques* and Catholic Royalists who subordinated religion to temporal considerations. League publicists frequently denounced the "nonchalance" of those Catholics who tolerated the heretic scourge: namely Henry III, the magistrates and clergymen, and above all the nobility.⁴⁸ These denunciations were more than a vilification of the enemy, however; they also expressed the League's deep religiosity, its rejection of pre-tridentine laxity, and its insistence upon intense public spirituality. But at least when applied to the nobility, the ideal of ardent and unswerving virtue did not originate with the League, and L'Alouette used "nonchalant" as a term of reproof very much as the Leaguers did a decade later.⁴⁹

To serve God at a time of religious civil war inevitably meant military service, and the concept of virtue presented in the bulk of League literature was, notwithstanding its religious tenor, also thoroughly martial. This is not to imply that martial and religious values were in conflict, or that the Leaguers' version of virtue was a confused jumble of incompatible notions. Far from being opposing definitions of virtue, far from being disparate qualities, piety and valour were inseparable, even confluent in the minds of the Leaguers; one implied the other. Pierre Poisson saw no contradiction in praising the "vertu

incomparable au faict des armes, la devotion à la religion, le zele" of Francis I, or the "piété & vertu militaire" of Henry II.⁵⁰ The preacher Jean Boucher lauded Edward I of England in similar terms, writing that among the virtues that made Edward "espouventable à ses ennemis" was his "grād zele à la Religiō Chrestienne."⁵¹ Like many League propagandists, Boucher cited the crusades as a splendid example of military and religious virtue in action, which he described as an "exercice de pieté."⁵² Papire Masson, a former Jesuit, urged his readers to fight valiantly for their religion, to evince "une vertu virile digne de Chrestiens."⁵³

The muscular Christianity espoused by League propagandists may explain the scorn Leaguers, and Parisians generally, heaped upon Henry III's baroque displays of devotion. Although the king's extravagant public gestures seem to have matched the League's enthusiasm for penitential processions, and may have been an attempt to cultivate popularity, his piety was dismissed by the Leaguers as not only hypocritical, but inappropriate; it was unfitting for a king to play the monk while Germans and heretics ravaged France.⁵⁴ Leaguers exalted the Cardinal of Bourbon, "Charles X" as *Rex Sacerdotalis*,⁵⁵ but they expected their kings, and their *gentilshommes*, to be holy warriors, not holy men, and Henry failed to prosecute the war against the heretics.

Courage, then, was inextricably bound up with piety as the essence of virtue, and if true piety required valorous works, true courage could spring only from piety. Neither the vicious desperation of the Huguenots, nor the wanton daring of brigands could be counted as real courage, for "le desespoir ne fut jamais vertueux, & le courage n'engendra jamais le desespoir."⁵⁶ One pamphlet enjoining noblemen to serve the League took up the reasoning of the treatises of nobility when it advised them that mere boldness was morally neutral, and that a deed could only be as praiseworthy as its purpose: "ny telle vaillance, ny telle mort, ne sont recommandables que pour la justice de la querelle."⁵⁷

The great importance the League placed upon virtue in all its forms is particularly evident in Leaguer battle accounts which vaunted League victories and extolled the virtue of League nobles, specifically the house of Guise, with their "genereuses vertus & debonnairetez", their "valeur & magnanimité", "prouesse & vaillantise", "courage & vertu."⁵⁸ In the first months of 1589, following the assassination of the Duke and Cardinal of Guise, eulogies to the martyred brothers poured from League presses, depicting them as

"marquez de l'antique vertu," and the Duke as "le plus brave chevalier qui jamais mit pied en étrier."⁵⁹ The Cardinal was no less virtuous than his brother, and the virtue Leaguer panegyrics attributed to him included the same blend of martial and religious elements, both "valeur corporelle" and "vehemence d'esprit."⁶⁰

If valiant piety and pious valour were at the centre of the League's concept of noble virtue, they did not exclude other worthy attributes. One League pamphleteer ventured that humility was the "mere & nourrice des autres vertus."⁶¹ Truthfulness and generally upright conduct were held to be basic signs of virtue,⁶² and like L'Alouette and La Noue, League pamphleteers placed great value on learning, maintaining that noblemen should be "bien instruit és bonnes lettres, tant divines qu'humaines."⁶³ These other moral qualities hinged on faith, however, and there could be no virtue without piety. As one pamphlet warned, the man who forgot God would soon forget his obligations to his country, and ultimately neglect to love and care for his children.⁶⁴

All vices are born of irreligion, then, and all virtues of zeal. In placing this moral and religious principle at the heart of their social theory, League publicists were only refining the ideas of late sixteenth century treatise writers. Jehan de Caumont's little book set the course for all subsequent League discussions of virtue and nobility, but its religiously charged social theory represented the culmination of centuries of tradition, though forged at a time of religious and social upheaval.

The old adage that the essence of nobility was virtue, wildly unrealistic as it may have been, had always functioned as more than a moral precept. Its purpose was to legitimise the position and prerogatives of the nobility. In Leaguer pamphlets, too, virtue justified noble status and its concomitant privileges. In part, these privileges were seen by the League as the equipment of virtue, the means which allowed virtue to be realised, for "faute de moyès, ne peuvent estre accomplis les effects de la vertu."⁶⁵ Caumont wrote that noblemen were accorded their privileges to enable them to champion virtue: "Pour ausquels offices vaquer plus librement & mieux, ils on esté quasi par tout le monde exemptez des œuvres serviles & exercices mechaniques, & on esté dicts Nobles."⁶⁶ In the eyes of one pamphleteer, noble privileges were as intrinsic to nobility as was virtue: "estes gentils-hommes, c'est à-dire

vrayement vertueux, gens de bien, vivant selon Dieu en son Eglise, & possédez les grands biens & honneurs."⁶⁷

Noble privileges were above all seen as the just reward of virtue, as Caumont explained in his account of the origin of the Second Estate:

Les nobles ont esté separez d'avec le rang du commun peuple, & colloquez en lieu plus eminent d'honneur comme en un estage plus hault, pour avoir ... planté les vertus, edifié l'honneur de Dieu, & causé tout bien possible en la société humaine.⁶⁸

For Launoy, the continued exercise of virtue alone justified the continued enjoyment of the fruits of virtue, and he urged the noblemen of his day to be worthy of their status:

Cela vous rendroit legitimes possesseurs des haults lieux & grandes preeminences, où vous estes eslevez, & vous feroit justement jouyr des beaux privileges & immunités que par la vertu, par bien-faits au public, & singulierement à la sainte & Chrestienne Religion, les premiers Nobles de voz races vous ont acquis.⁶⁹

The justification of privilege by virtue implies that noble privileges are contingent upon virtue, that the rewards of nobility may be lost by those who do not merit them, or conversely, may be acquired by those who, like the first nobles, distinguished themselves by their signal virtue. Were it not that this idea was utterly conventional in the sixteenth century, in theory, if not in practice, it might be interpreted as a radical challenge to the social order. Yet on the contrary, it was, in the works of L'Alouette and others, the ideological linchpin of the existing social structure. Jean Boucher was undoubtedly referring to French as well as classical precedents when he wrote the following:

Ceux qui on escrit de la noblesse, la comparent aux maladies qui sont personnelles, & comme disoit Antigonus, les loyers de vertu, appointemens qui se donnent aux hommes vaillans, ne se doivent continuer aux enfans, qui ne son qu'enfans de vaillans hommes, & au reste, couards, inutiles à tout bien, & enclins à mal faire, comme vous.⁷⁰

The theoretical possibility of ennoblement as a recognition of outstanding virtue was an aspect of traditional thought that struck a chord among the Leaguers. In the same pamphlet, Boucher recalled the intrepid men of Piedmont, and their social ascent: "De ceste escole sont sortis plusieurs personnages de bas lieu, lesquels par valleur ont merité, & sont parvenus à tres-grands biens & honneurs."⁷¹ "Parvenir" is the key word here, and the theme of personal advancement for singular virtue arose in League pamphlets much as it did in earlier literature and chivalric lore. One early pamphlet called for a crusade against both

infidels and heretics, which would provide a theatre for men to "parvenir de degré en degré avec honneur & proffit, sans blesser leur conscience, qui est la vraie vertu."⁷²

Consistent with the League's concept of virtue, Launoy emphasised the religious basis of social recompense: "[Dieu] annoblira & remplira de gloire ceux qui l'honorent, & obscurira, rendra incogneuz & vilains ceux qui le mespriseront."⁷³ Most League propagandists promised no more than a place in heaven to those who served the Party of God,⁷⁴ but at least one pamphlet held out the chance of more earthly rewards, citing the cases of Jovian and Valentinian, whose divine recompense was the imperial purple, and St Martin, who "de simple soldat merita de devenir un des principaux Capitaines de nostre Eglise militante."⁷⁵

Nevertheless, no League pamphlet went so far as to project a new nobility of faith, or to offer ennoblement to League supporters. What League pamphlets did consistently demand was that virtue not go unrewarded. Specifically, they insisted that offices and benefices be assigned on the basis of merit, but by merit they meant more than ability and technical aptitude; merit entailed *moral* aptitude, or virtue. As we have seen, the League's leadership was drawn largely from the *basoche*, the lower clergy, and the mercantile bourgeoisie, men whose social and "career" ambitions had often been thwarted. Their writings denounced the heredity and venality of charges as practices which precluded the advancement of men of "vertu & preud'hommie."⁷⁶ As Caumont put it in a posthumous pamphlet, "Les hommes de bien ne sont guerdonnez selon le respect de leurs vertus."⁷⁷

This conjunction of frustrated ambition and moral indignation was best expressed in a brief pamphlet issued in March of 1589:

Le Peuple qui constitue le tiers Etat, est composé des plus doctes & plus vertueux hommes de la France, lesquels ont consommé la meilleur partie de leur âge aux bonnes Lettres, espérant les uns d'être promus aux états & dignités Ecclésiastiques, les autres en la Judicature: mais tous les deux sont si iniquement dispensés que les uns sont vendus aux plus offrans, les autres donnés à des putains & des maquereaux en récompense de leurs bons & agréables services.... La Justice semble avoir abandonné la France, & s'en être volée au Ciel, pour ne voir avancer les doctes & gens de bien selon leur mérite, lesquels faute d'argent sont méprisés & ne tiennent point de rang en la Republique. Les ignorans tant soient-ils vicieux, moienant de l'argent tiennent leur place: n'est-ce pas voler aux doctes & vertueux hommes ce qui leur appartient?⁷⁸

The Leaguers' sense of injustice aggravated their resentment of the unworthy men who held the offices they were denied,⁷⁹ and their hostility to the *officiers* was shared by many noblemen. The League's contention that offices should be awarded for virtue was another belief that they had in common with François de L'Alouette, but L'Alouette's object had been to restore the nobility's social hegemony by filling the French judiciary with virtuous *gentilshommes*.⁸⁰ League writers accepted noble preëminence, but maintained that offices must be open to those most capable of filling them:

[Il] est tres-equitable que plus ils sont descendus de grand lieu, pl'aussi qu'en memoire de leurs ancestres, ils ayent quelques presence & prerogative. Mais les charges & commissions ne doivēt estre baillees qu'à ceux qui ont les capacitez & l'experience telles, qu'elles sont necessaires au manimēt de si grādes affaires.⁸¹

Roturiers possessed not only the skills, but the requisite moral qualities to hold office. The theory of "la vertu de noblesse" espoused by League writers may have echoed traditional justifications of noble predominance, but on the question of access to office, the League's ideas overtly challenge the nobility's claim to precedence:

Ce seroit un chose trespernicieuse & prejudiciable au public, de vouloir interdire la charge publique à une infinité d'hommes tres-dignes & vertueux pour n'avoir eu ceste faveur de nature d'estre sortiz ou de parens qualifiez de noblesse, ou recogneuz pour leurs grands moyens & facultez, & rejeter en arriere la vertu, dont ils auroient acquis une parfaite habitude.⁸²

The League's discussion of the recompense of virtue, and its more practically significant demand that offices be awarded for merit, were matched by a corresponding insistence that the wicked receive "le recompense de leur demerites."⁸³ The League's moral crusade, its loathing of Huguenots and *Politiques*, and its savage eagerness to persecute miscreants of all stripes, were at root the corollaries of its theory of virtue. Beneath the calls for condign punishment and measured reward lay a longing for retributive justice, indeed for God's justice to prevail on earth as in heaven.

The France the Leaguers knew, however, was a land where iniquity went unbridled and virtue unrequited, a pole apart from the world of immanent justice they envisioned. As one pamphlet put it, "le chatiement des vices & le recompense des bienfaicts, c'est ce qui conserve les republiques & pour ce que cela n'est point en la nostre nous voyons comme elle tombe en ruine."⁸⁴ League pamphlets contrasted their own "miserable siècle où toute

confusion a regné" with the happy age "où le bien faict & recompense marchoient d'un pied egal, où le vice & la punition estoient inseparablement conjoints."⁸⁵ In the perfect city of the Leaguers, the act would be coupled to its consequences, retribution would be direct and immediate, and the League itself, the only force that could achieve such a well-ordered society, would administer natural justice. The League's search for a Catholic king was a search for the "Prince vertueux" who would lead them to victory and chastise their wicked foes, who, "d'autant qu'il aime la vertu, autant est-il ennemy des vices."⁸⁶

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

¹Jehan de CAUMONT, De la Vertu de Noblesse auz Roys et Princes tres Chrestiens (Paris: Federic Morel, 1585).

²Robert DESCIMON, Qui étaient les Seize? (Paris: Klincksiek, 1983), p. 116.

³Elie BARNAVI, "La Ligue Parisienne (1585-94)," French Historical Studies vol. 11, no. 1 (1979), p. 36. Same passage is in Le Parti de Dieu (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1980), p. 55. J.H.M. SALMON sees this pamphlet as "a fiery tract denouncing the nobility." See "The Paris Sixteen, 1585-1594," Journal of Modern History vol. 44, no. 4 (1972) p. 567.

⁴Roland MOUSNIER, Les Hiérarchies sociales de 1450 à nos jours, (Paris: P.U.F., 1969), pp. 45, 117-151.

⁵Ibid., pp. 180-181.

⁶Ibid., p. 45.

⁷Ibid., p. 54.

⁸At least four historians, all incidentally Mousnier's former students, have followed his interpretation, or a modified form of it, in their discussion of the League. See René PILLORGET, "Le Mouvement insurrectionnel comme pratique politique dans la France du XVe siècle," in Théorie et pratique politiques à la Renaissance (Paris: Vrin, 1977), p. 117; Arlette JOUANNA, Ordre social (Paris: Hachette, 1977), p. 187ff; Elie BARNAVI, Le Parti de Dieu (1980), pp. 55-56, 145-146; Manfred ORLEA La Noblesse aux Etats généraux de 1576 et de 1599 (Paris: P.U.F, 1980), p. 154. Mousnier has himself taken up this interpretation again in "Les Structures administratives, sociales, révolutionnaires de Paris au temps de la seconde Ligue (1585-1594)," in Les Cités au temps de la Renaissance, ed. M.T. Jones-Davis (Paris, 1977), pp. 165-170.

⁹CAUMONT, Vertu de Noblesse, ff. 2v-3r.

¹⁰Ibid., f. 6r et seq.

¹¹BARNAVI, "La Ligue Parisienne," p. 36; Le Parti de Dieu, p.55

¹²CAUMONT, Vertu de Noblesse, f. 5v, passim. According to one historian, however, the Leaguers' arguments that identified religious orthodoxy as the socially significant virtue were "propos de théoriciens, car jamais ils ne seront repris par les contemporains." Henri ZUBER, "La Noblesse protestante (1584-1598)," in Henri IV: Le roi et la reconstruction du royaume (Paris: J&D, 1990), p. 88.

¹³JOUANNA, Ordre social, p. 60. See also Jacqueline BOUCHER, Société et mentalités autour de Henri III [Thèse d'état, 1977] (Lille: Atelier de reproduction des thèses, 1981), pp. 1233, 1237. See also Ellery SCHALK, From Valor to Pedigree: Ideas of Nobility in France in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (Princeton, 1986), pp. 96-97; and Denis CROUZET, Les Guerriers de Dieu: La violence au temps des troubles de religion, vers 1525 - vers 1610 (Seysell: Champ Vallon, 1990), vol. 2, p. 446.

¹⁴JOUANNA, Ordre social, pp. 186ff. One 16th century writer's comments on the disagreement over the definition of virtue are most revealing: "Combien que le consentement de tous porte généralement que Noblesse est fille de vertu. si ne sont pourtant tous d'accord, de quelle Vertu elle est extraite. Chacun en set endroit favorise son parti." Pierre de SAINT-JULIEN DE BALLEURE, De l'origine des Bourguignons (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1581), p. 127. Cited by JOUANNA, Ordre social, p. 139. According to one historian, Caumont "championed a radically different image of the ideal aristocrat." See Michael WOLFE, The Conversion of Henri IV (Cambridge: Harvard, 1993), p. 71.

¹⁵JOUANNA, Ordre social, pp. 149. See also JOUANNA, "Le Thème de l'utilité publique dans la polémique anti-nobiliaire en France dans la deuxième moitié du XVI^e siècle," in Théorie et pratique politiques à la Renaissance, p. 292.

¹⁶Louys MUSSET, Discours sur les remonstrances et reformatiions de chacun estat (Paris, N. Chesneau, 1582), ff. 163v-164r.

¹⁷See J. DELUMEAU, "Fondements idéologiques de la hiérarchie sociale: le discours sur le courage à l'époque de la Renaissance," in Théorie et pratique politiques à la Renaissance, p. 276. See also A.J. VANDERJAGT, "Qui sa vertu anoblist: The Concepts of *noblesse* and *chose publique* in Burgundian Political Thought" (D. Litt. diss, Groningen, 1981), pp. 71-72. François de L'ALOUETTE mentioned strength and courage as an element of virtue, but a "partie inferieure," requiring prudence, temperance and justice, "car sans la conjonctiō & compagnie de cet Prudence, ce [force] ne seroit que pure audace & temerité". Des Affaires d'estat (Metz: J. d'Arras, 1597) pp. 175-176. Machiavelli's notion of virtue, a quality he attributed to Cesare Borgia, among others, was not typical of his time, or at least not typical of France later in the 16th century. To 20th century readers, Machiavelli's concept appears utterly amoral, and "virtù" is variously rendered "ability", "strength", "prowess", "merit", or "talent", as a sample of translations on any library shelf will show.

¹⁸François de LA NOUE, Discours politiques et militaires [1587], ed. F.E. SUTCLIFFE (Geneva: Droz, 1967), p. 232.

¹⁹See N.Z. DAVIS, "New Monarchs and Prudent Priests," Canadian Journal of History, vol. 6 (1971), pp. 72-73.

²⁰CROUZET, Guerriers de Dieu, vol. 2, p. 447. Estella's book did not appear in French till 1587, but a Latin translation was printed at Cologne in 1585, the same year as De la Vertu de Noblesse was published, and it may have been available to Caumont. An English edition was printed at Rouen in 1584 (presumably for export to the embattled Catholics of England), which indicates that the work was known in France at that time. The publisher of the 1587 French edition was Robert Le Fizelier, a Parisian bookseller specialising in spiritual tracts, who later issued a number of League pamphlets. On Estella see Enciclopedia universal ilustrado Europeo-Americano, s.v. Estella. On Le Fizelier see Denis PALLIER, Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue (1585-1594) (Geneva:Droz, 1975), pp. 137-138, 485, 519.

²¹CAUMONT, Vertu de Noblesse, f. 5r.

²²Ibid., f. 10r-v.

²³Ibid., f. 9r-v.

²⁴Bitton, Labatut, Méthivier, Devyver and Schalk all make this oversight (see chapter 3, n. 173, supra), though Schalk corrects it in his subsequent work, From Valor to Pedigree. Gaston SAFFROY also includes Caumont's pamphlet in his inventory of treatises of nobility: "Cet auteur y traite des qualités que doit avoir la noblesse, sujet fort à la mode à la fin du XVI^e s." Bibliographie généalogique, heraldique et nobiliaire de la France (Paris, 1968), vol. 1, p. 312 (entry number 6784). Unlike most League tracts printed before the Day of the Barricades, De la Vertu de Noblesse was not a samizdat publication, but was brought out by the respectable and established Frédéric Morel, the king's printer, who, after the Sixteen came to power in Paris, turned to printing official pronouncements for the League. Its imprimatur is dated 20 July, 1585, two weeks after Henry's capitulation to the League in the Treaty of Nemours.

²⁵Also "Launay", "Launoi", "L'Aunay." See Ch. LABITTE, De la démocratie chez les prédicateurs de la Ligue, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1865), pp. 143, 152; François CROME, Dialogue d'entre le maheustre et le manant [1593], ed. P.M. ASCOLI (Geneva: Droz, 1977), p. 95.

²⁶J. BALTEAU, "Un publiciste du XVI^e siècle: François de Lalouette," Revue des questions historiques vol. 107 (1927), pp. 88-89.

²⁷Matthieu de LAUNOY, Remonstrance. Contenant une instruction Chrestienne de quatre poincts à la noblesse de France (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1590), p. 11.

²⁸E.g. Ibid., pp. 7, 18.

²⁹Ibid., p. 7.

³⁰Ibid., p. 18.

³¹DESCIMON, Qui étaient les Seize?, p. 193; Pierre de L'ESTOILE, Mémoires-Journaux, ed. G. BRUNET (Paris: 1888-1896), vol. 5, pp. 115ff.

³²CROME, op. cit., p. 189; cf. L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, pp. 211-212.

³³BARNAVI, "La Ligue Parisienne," p. 38 and Le Parti de Dieu, pp. 57, 148; JOUANNA, Ordre social, p. 188 and L'Idée de race en France au XVI^e siècle [Thèse d'état, 1975] revised ed. (Montpellier, 1981), p. 682.

³⁴Louis DORLEANS, Le Banquet et apresdinée du conte d'Arète (Paris: G. Bichon, 1594), p. 236. Barnavi groups Dorleans among the radicals, Jouanna among the socially conservative moderates. As J.H.M SALMON points out, the name of the eponymous character in this pamphlet, a paragon of virtue, distinguished in both literary and military pursuits, was a play on the Greek *αρετή* (i.e. virtue). See SALMON, "French Satire in the Late Sixteenth Century," Sixteenth Century Journal, vol. 6, no. 2 (1975), p. 78.

³⁵Bulles de N.S. Pere le Pape Gregoire XIII. L'une contre toute personnes Ecclesiastiques, suyvens le party de Henry de Bourbon, jadis Roy de Navarre. L'autre aux Princes, Seigneurs, Nobles & autres personnes laïques suyvens le mesme party (Paris: R. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1591), p. 51.

³⁶Michel MARCHANT, "Discours de la Noblesse," (verse) in Exhortation dernière a la noblesse (Paris: P. Hury, 1589), p. 19.

³⁷Advis a Messieurs des Estats sur la reformation et le retranchement des abus & criminels de l'Estat (n.p., 1588), p. 7.

³⁸Discours des trahisons, perfidies, et desloyautez des Politiques de Paris (Lyons: L. Tantillon, 1589), pp. 6-7. Cf. LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 22: "En Eglise ... sont les vrais nobles & vrais gentils-hommes."

³⁹Justification de la guerre entreprise, commencee et poursuivie souz la conduite de tres-valeureux & debonnaire Prince Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne, (Paris: G. Chaudiere, 1589), p. 54.

⁴⁰Le Fleau de Henry soy disant Roy de Navarre (Paris: G. Chaudiere, 1589), p. 30. See also Histoire au vray du meurtre & Assassinat proditoirement cōmis au cabinet d'un Roy perfide & barbare, en la personne de Monsieur le Duc de Guise, ([Paris: D. Millot], 1589), pp. 4, 6.

⁴¹[François de MONTHOLON], Remonstrance faicte par Monsieur le Garde des Seaux de France en l'assemblée des Estats (Paris: F. Morel & J. Mettayer, 1588), p. 20. Henry III appointed Montholon to his high office "pour esblouir les yeux de la Ligue," according to L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 333. At least one Leaguer verse criticised Montholon, however. See L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol 3, p. 220.

⁴²Le Faux visage decouvert du fin Renard de la France ([Paris]: J. de Varangles, 1589), p. 9. Cf. L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 208; LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 232.

⁴³Vie et innocence des deux freres (Paris: A. du Brueil, 1589), p. 11.

⁴⁴Advis aux Catholiques françois, sur l'importance de ce qui se traite aujourdhuy, sur l'irresolution de quelques scrupuleux (Paris: A. le Riche, 1589), p. 3.

⁴⁵LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 13.

⁴⁶[André de ROSSANT], Les Meurs humeurs et comportemens de Henry de Valois representez au vray depuis sa Naissance (Paris: A. le Riche, 1589), p. 123. Rossant was a Lyonnais lawyer and poet, and a zealous Leaguer. Cf. Faux visage, p. 10: "Nostre Dieu n'ayme que celuy qui est violent & hault aux armes, & zelateur de son saint nom."

⁴⁷[Louis DORLEANS], Apologie ou defence des Catholiques unis (n.p., 1586), p. 6. According to Dorléans, these "gens indifferens" argued that worldly repose was more important than salvation, that two faiths can coexist, and that "c'est folle de prendre les choses tant à cœur."

⁴⁸Harangue au reverendissime et illustrissime legat Henry Cajetan, faicte par aucuns Bourgeois de Paris (Paris: D. Millot, 1589), p. 7; Advis aux Catholiques françois, sur l'importance de ce qui se traite aujourdhuy, p. 21; Histoire admirable à la posterité des faits et gestes de Henry de Valois (Paris: P. des Hayes, 1589), p. 8; Michel MARCHANT, La Paralysie de la France, avec le remède d'icelle (Paris: P. Hury, 1590), pp. 8-9; Remonstrance et complainte de la France (Paris: G. Bichon, 1589), p. 5.

⁴⁹L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, pp. 268, 195.

⁵⁰Pierre POISSON, Harangue au peuple de France sur les louanges des anciens François (Paris: D. Cotinet, 1588), ff. 5v-6r. Poisson wrote several legal and historical works in the 1580s and 1590s, but is himself unknown, as far as I can tell. He was "Sieur de la Bodinière", and apparently of Angevin origin, but resident in Paris in 1588.

⁵¹[Jean BOUCHER], Histoire tragique et memorable de Gaverston (n.p., 1588), p. 24.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³[Papire MASSON], Avis à l'irresolu de Limoges (Paris: R. le Fizelier, 1589), p. 55. Masson later told of churchmen who "virilement & courageusement" resisted evil kings, and "par leur resolution vertueuse & vertu resolu [ont] sauvé ... leurs Eglises." (p. 55) This is a rare instance of *vertu* being applied to the clergy. For the attribution of this pamphlet to Masson, see Jacqueline BOUCHER, "Culture des notables et mentalité populaire dans la propagande qui entraîna la chute de Henri III," in Mouvements populaires et conscience sociale (Paris: Maloine, 1985), p. 341.

⁵⁴Avis aux Catholiques françois, sur l'importance de ce qui se traite aujourdhuy, p. 27a. Henry III's piety may well have been sincere, but was belied by his conduct when not at prayer. See also A.L. MARTIN, Henry III and the Jesuit Politicians (Geneva: Droz, 1973), pp. 78-90, 151, 172, 210; Paul ROBIQUET, Histoire municipale de Paris, vol. 2: Règne de Henri III (Paris: Hachette, 1904), pp. 54, 107, 150-152, 275; Pierre CHAMPION, Paris au temps de Henri III (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1942), p. 59. Denis CROUZET explains Parisian hostility to Henry III's displays of devotion as a rejection of the meridional, theatrical mode he embraced, which did not fit their notion of collective salvation. Guerriers de Dieu, vol. 2, p. 313. On the League's reaction to Henry's devotions see PALMA-CAYET, Chronologie Novenaire, in MICHAUD & POUJOULAT, Nouvelle collection des mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France (1838) vol. 12, pp. 31-32. The tone of League propaganda rose after the royal coup against the Guises at Blois in December 1588, and the king was no longer accused of negligence, but of aiding and abetting heresy, of betraying the people and church "sous l'habit de Pénitent." See Les Causes qui ont contraint les Catholiques à prendre les armes ([Paris: J. Varangles & D. Binet], 1589) in GOULART, Mémoires de la Ligue (1758), vol. 3, p. 524. Cf. Faux visage, p. 20: "Ne nous a il pas pipé quand il faisoit sa belle penitence par les rues de Paris?" and Vie et innocence, p. 37: "Tu veux cōtrefaire l'hōme saint... Tu vas aux Penitens, tu vas à la Messe. Mais, ô traistre, quelle Messe."

⁵⁵Fleau de Henry, pp. 28, 35, [45]. The same formula was invoked to support papal authority in temporal as well as spiritual matters by Jean PIGENAT in L'Aveugement et grande inconsideration des politiques, dicts Maheustres (Paris: R. Thierry, 1592), p. 59. The author was the curé of St Nicolas in Paris, and the brother of Odon Pigenat, Jesuit provincial of France.

⁵⁶Du contemnement de la mort (Paris: N. Nyvelle, 1589), pp. 6-7. On the Huguenots' recklessness versus the Catholics' genuine courage, see Bref discours sur la deffaitte des Huguenots advenue le X. Juin (Paris: F. Plumion, 1588), pp. 5-7. Cf. Coppie d'une lettre escripte à Monseigneur le Duc de Nyvernois par un sien Serviteur (Paris: J. Le Blanc, 1590), pp. 22-23; and Avis, sur ce qui est à faire (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), p. 29.

⁵⁷Avis au Catholiques françois, sur l'importance de ce qui se traicte aujourdhuy, p. 16; Cf. L'Alouette, Affaires, p. 176; LA NOUE, op. cit., pp. 231, 236.

⁵⁸Discours du progres de l'armee du Roy en Guienne, Commandee par Charles de Lorraine, Duc de Mayne (Paris: N. Nivelles, 1586), p. 66; La Deffaite de trois cornettes de reistres par commandement de Monseigneur le Duc de Guise (Lyons: J. Pillehotte, 1587), p. 8; Discours de ce qui s'est fait passé en la ville d'Orléans, par Monsieur le Chevalier d'Aumale (n.p., 1589), p. 4; Discours ample et veritable, de la defaite obtenue aux Faux-bourgs de Tours, sur les troupes de Henry de Valois (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), p. 15.

⁵⁹Contre les fausses allegations que les plus qu'Achitofels, Conseillers Cabinalistes, proposent pour excuser Henry le meurtrier (n.p., 1589), p. 24; Faux visage, p. 9. See also Discours veritable et dernier propos de Monseigneur le Duc de Guyse, Pair, & grand Maistre de France (Paris: S. Marquan, 1589), passim; Pleurs et soupirs lamentables, de Madame de Guyse (Paris: F. le Jeune, [1589]), pp. 11, 15; [Charles PINSELET], Le Martyre des deux frères ([Paris], 1589) in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses (1834), vol. 12, p. 66.

⁶⁰Contre les fausses allegations, pp. 59-60.

⁶¹Discours de deux belles deffaites des ennemis executees en Champagne & Bourgogne (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), p. 6.

⁶²LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 13; CAUMONT, Vertu de Noblesse, f. 4v.

⁶³LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 10. See also Histoire admirable, p. 5. Cf. LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 232; L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 196.

⁶⁴Exhortation Catholique aux trois ordres de la France (Lyons: [J. Pillehotte], 1589), p. 9.

⁶⁵Litearchie contre les pernietieux esprits, libelles, calomnies & Apologies naguieres faictes par aucuns heretiques (n.p., 1587), f. 12v.

⁶⁶CAUMONT, Vertu de Noblesse, f. 5v.

⁶⁷Discours d'un vertueux Catholique qui est une juste & vraye deffense de la Majesté tres-Chrestienne (n.p., 1587) f. 7r-v. Although not specifically considering noble virtue, another publicist assumed an immediate connexion between virtue and its rewards when he wrote that "l'etymologie du nom François ... a signification de franchise, & d'hommes francs affranchis de tout vice, & servitude, robustes, & non effeminés, de cœur magnanime, vertueux, & vaillants en toutes varietés de valeureux exercices, & speciallement au fait des armes." See POISSON, Harangue f. 2v.

⁶⁸CAUMONT, Vertu de Noblesse, f. 5v. Launoy expressed the same opinion in almost identical terms, but inserted the word "tirez ... du commun" to emphasise the fundamental likeness of noble and roturier, distinguished only by their degree of virtue. LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 8.

⁶⁹LAUNOY, Remonstrance, pp. 8-9. Cf. MUSSET, op. cit., f. 165v.

⁷⁰[Jean BOUCHER], Replique à l'antigaverston (n.p., 1588), p. 10. Cf. L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 184.

⁷¹BOUCHER, Replique, p. 9.

⁷²La Ligue tres-sainte, tres-Chrestienne, & tres-Catholique (n.p., [1585]), p. 24. See also pp. 26, 31. On the date of this pamphlet, see *infra*, chapter 7, n. 68.

⁷³LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 18.

⁷⁴For example, Du contemnement de la mort, p. 23: "d'autant plus courageusement nous y devons employer nos biens, & nos vies ... nous nous asseurons encores que nos travaux, nos peines & nostre mort, seront davantage recompensez de Dieu, quand il nous fera ce bien de nous recevoir avec luy."

⁷⁵Fleau de Henry, p. 32. The pacifist St Martin was a poorly chosen model for the militant Leaguers.

⁷⁶[Nicolas ROLLAND], Remonstrances tres-humbles au Roy de France et de Pologne Henry le troisieme de ce nom ([Paris], 1588), pp. 65-66. Cf. Harangue faicte au Roy par la noblesse de la France, sur les guerres & troubles de son Royaume (Paris, 1588), [p. 9].

⁷⁷[Jehan de CAUMONT], Harangue et proposition faicte au Roy sur l'union de toute la noblesse Catholique de France. Presentee au Roy par Monsieur de Mand Archevesque de Bourges (Paris: A. le Coq, 1588), p. 21. As the title shows, this pamphlet was attributed by the Leaguers to the royalist archbishop of Bourges, Renaud de Beaune. Beaune, however, disavowed it in two pamphlets of his own: Remerciement faict au Roy par Monsieur l'Archevesque de Bourges and Briefve exhortation faicte aux Estats de ce Royaume, both 1588. Pallier identifies it as Caumont's address to the Estates-General of 1577, in which case it would have to have been considerably revised. See PALLIER, *op. cit.*, items 185-186, 203.

⁷⁸Causes plus particulieres qui obligent chaque état, surtout la Noblesse de prendre les armes ([Paris], 1589) in GOULART, Mémoires de la Ligue (1758), vol. 3, pp. 531-532.

⁷⁹See CAUMONT, Harangue, p. 21; Advis a Messieurs des Estats, pp. 12-13; Advis au Roy (n.p., 1588), pp. 6, 8.

⁸⁰L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, pp. 195, 208. The demand that offices be reserved for virtuous men, meaning noblemen, was widespread in 16th century noble writings and remonstrances. See Davis BITTON, The French Nobility in Crisis, 1560-1640 (Stanford, 1969), pp. 45, 56.

⁸¹Advis au Roy, p. 12.

⁸²MARCHANT, Paralysie, pp. 25-26. But cf. another pamphlet which proposed, like L'Alouette, that "sages Gêtilshommes" should again be magistrates, as they were formerly. ROLLAND, Remonstrances, p. 227.

⁸³Discours de deux belles deffaites, p. 13.

⁸⁴Coppie d'une lettre escripte à Monseigneur le Duc de Nyvernois, p. 18.

⁸⁵Advis a Messieurs des Estats, pp. 7-8.

⁸⁶Deffaite des troupes Huguenottes qui estoient en Champaigne (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), pp. 12-13.

CHAPTER VI

THE HIERARCHIC SOCIETY

One of the main purposes of League propaganda was to attract the support of Catholic noblemen. The Leaguers recognised that they could not hope to keep Navarre off the throne, much less vanquish heresy, without the active assistance of a substantial proportion of the Second Estate. Leaguer pamphlets addressed noblemen directly, and appealed variously to nobles' pride, prejudices and self-interest in order to entice them into the *Sainte Union*.

The Appeal to the Nobility

Particularly in their early works, League publicists were eager to persuade noblemen that the League's cause was their own, and that the interests of the Second Estate could best be served by rallying to the Catholic side. The League's open letter of 1587 presented the League as a movement dedicated to preserving the nobility in its privileges:

On ait pourveu ... que ce digne corps de noblesse, appuy principal de ce royaume après Dieu, soit remis et restably en son ancienne splendeur, et maintenu en ses merites, libertez, honneurs, prerogatives et franchises honnestes et vertueuses.¹

As discussed in chapter 2, the French nobility of the time was fearful for its status and privileges, and often in financial distress. League propagandists played on these fears skilfully, and sometimes expressed sympathy at the predicament in which *gentilshommes* found themselves. The League's manifesto of March 1585 protested the erosion of nobiliary tax exemptions: "la noblesse [est] avilie, asservie, villenée, et tous les jours foulée miserablement de daces et indeues exactions qu'elle paye malgré elle."² League writers assigned the blame for the nobility's problems to the royal government and attempted to portray the King as the enemy of French noblemen: "Estes vous si aveuglez que ne voyez que peu à peu il vous met au rang de roturiers, & qu'en ceste qualité il vous a rendu cottizables aux charges & impositions du Royaume?"³

Henry III, League pamphlets informed noblemen, did not reward them as they deserved, and as they traditionally had been: "anciennement les Gentilshommes d'honneur étaient recompensés au merite de leur vertu."⁴ Pamphlets contrasted the treatment noblemen received at the hands of the King with that they promised to Catholic noblemen who united with the League under Mayenne: "il ne desire que vous caresser, embrasser & honorer, selon voz qualitez & merites."⁵ We may question the sincerity of League pamphleteers' sympathy

for the difficulties faced by *gentilshommes*, but as we have seen in chapter 5, the Leaguers believed fervently that virtue, "la vertu de noblesse", should be amply and justly rewarded.

In their attempts to recruit from the Second Estate, League pamphleteers most often appealed to noblemen in the name of nobiliary values, virtue being primary. Pamphlets exhorted noblemen to display their virtue in combat for the Catholic cause: "plus belle occasiō ne se pouvoit offrir pour faire preuve de leur vertue, que celle qui se presente, à savoir, la defense de la vraye Religion."⁶

The Leaguers' understanding of virtue as zeal, as the confluence of valour and piety, was as we have seen, very close to the traditional noble concept, but League writers were apt to present it in a form calculated to appeal to contemporary noblemen more receptive to martial than religious exhortations: "ne perdez point vostre courage masle & viril: mais changez le: soyez les chevaliers de Dieu, non pas du diable."⁷ Publicists often invoked martial values in verse: "Vous, ô nobles lanciers, l'honneur de nostre France, / Monstrez or'vostre cœur, monstrez vostre vaillance."⁸ Similarly, urging Catholic *gentilshommes* to abide by the Oath of Union, one writer appealed to their sense of honour, to the gentlemanly ethic of keeping one's word: "vous estes si scrupuleux en vos promesses, si constants en vos parolles, & à la foy que vous donnés aux hommes, que quād vous jurés foy de Gentilhomme, vous voulés qu'un chacun vous croye."⁹ *A fortiori*, he argued, noblemen must keep their promise to God.

Along with nobiliary values, League pamphleteers appropriated the language of chivalry itself, and presented the civil war as "la querelle de Dieu."¹⁰ This notion, a strange marriage of martial and religious concepts, reveals much about the pamphleteers' vision of a Catholic Holy War. League publicists frequently invoked the glorious memory of the Crusades, but the idea of the Crusade was far from being the Christian equivalent of the *jihad*. The place of the Crusade in Catholic theology was in fact extremely marginal and the mediaeval Crusades were a phenomenon peculiar to feudalism, in both the economic and cultural senses of the term. In chivalric lore, the Crusades were the greatest deeds in the annals of gentlemanly heroism: the Crusader served his ultimate liege, God himself, and displayed his virtue in the defence of the faith.

By the late sixteenth century, the age of the Crusades was long past, but the idea of the Crusade still had resonance for the men of the time. League pamphleteers frequently cited the sterling example of the "grands Capitaines, qui ont planté presque en tous les coings du monde, les Trophées de leurs victoires acquises pour la querelle de Dieu."¹¹ League pamphlets exhorted noblemen to launch a new Crusade to rid Europe of heresy, and then to turn their attack upon the Turks, with whom the kings of France had entered a monstrous alliance; one pamphlet did not hesitate to remind noblemen of the profits to be gained from such an enterprise.¹² Generally, League writers attempted to imbue the Civil Wars with the glamour and sanctity of the Crusades. The Albigensian Crusade was shown in the same light as the expeditions to the Levant, and noblemen were reminded of their ancestors' crusading exploits:

Vos illustres devanciers, & tant de braves & valeureux Seigneurs ont esté si Religieux, qu'avec le peril mesmes de leurs propres vies ... ils ont ... vertueusement chassé & exterminé l'heresie, & les Heretiques de la terre François: & non contens de ceste tant louable vertu, qui les rendra eternellement recommandables, ils ont faict paroistre & sentir jusques aux natiõs estrangeres, la force vigoureuse de leur bras guerriers.¹³

In the next chapter, I will discuss the Leaguers' insistent belief that "la vertu de noblesse" was personal rather than hereditary, as well as their connected rejection of the emerging theory that noblemen were in some way a species apart from the rest of mankind. Even as they refused to accept lineage as the principal criterion of nobility, however, League writers showed no reluctance to appeal to their readers' pride in family and pedigree. Among the rhetorical devices most often employed by League publicists in their addresses to the nobility was the invocation of the virtuous founders of noble houses. Like the authors of the treatises of nobility, one apparently (or ostensibly) noble League propagandist exhorted *gentilshommes* to equal the "louables, & insignes vertus de noz devanciers."¹⁴ League pamphleteers reminded noblemen that their ancestors had been elevated in recognition of their virtue, "vous laissans successeurs de leurs prerogatives"; noblemen, they maintained, should imitate their ancestors' virtue.¹⁵

Behind this rhetorical device lay an implicit acceptance on the Leaguers' part of the principle of hereditary prerogatives, so long as the heirs proved themselves worthy. Matthieu de Launoy provided what was perhaps the League's most strongly argued rebuttal of the

concept of hereditary virtue, and of the belief that birth should determine status; he described the inheritance of nobiliary privileges by unworthy children as "[une] chose hideuse a voir."¹⁶ Yet even he accepted the heredity of noble status and privileges, where warranted, as laudable and proper: "c'est aussi chose juste & desirable à voir, que les biens, les honneurs & grades soient possédez par les enfants imitateurs de belles vertuz de leurs peres."¹⁷

A value related to the *gentilshommes'* pride in ancestry was their concern about its corollary: posterity. League writers skilfully marshalled posterity into their rhetorical battalion, urging noblemen forward in the interest of posterity: "ne dōnons cause à la posterité de detester nostre memoire."¹⁸ With startling regularity, League pamphleteers described Catholicism as "la religion de noz peres" or "[les] loix de nos maieurs," in effect as an intangible heirloom.¹⁹ Pamphleteers admonished their readers, particularly their noble readers, to remember their duty to pass on to posterity the religion they had inherited from their ancestors: "ils sont morts pour ... vous laisser [la religion Catholique] telle qu'ils l'avoient receuë de leurs ayeulx, c'est à savoir hereditaire en leur maison, pour y estre conservee par vous & non pour y estre perdue, bannie & dechassee."²⁰ Jean de Caumont was among the most vivid in his description of the religion as patrimony, warning his readers that they could jeopardize the salvation of their descendants: "c'est le meilleur heritage, c'est la plus haute noblesse, c'est le plus grand bien que vous nous sçauriez procurer par tout vostre soin paternal."²¹

As a cultural value, posterity was by no means confined to the nobility. League writers shared noblemen's concern over posterity and their belief in the importance of transmitting an "heritage" to one's descendants; what every member of the "bourgeoisie seconde" desired, after all, was to found a dynasty, or at least to provide for his sons' and grandsons' continued social ascension, prosperity and propriety. Sixteenth century man lived and understood himself a part of a continuum; his identity was inseparable from his family. For League publicists, then, it was more than a metaphor to conceive the true religion as an heirloom.

Recollections of the virtuous exploits of earlier generations could reflect poorly on the comportment of the contemporary nobility, and League writers were often given to lamenting, in terms very similar to the *traités de noblesse*, the Second Estate's decline.

These laments were in part a propaganda technique: where exhortation failed, shame might succeed. But they also indicate a genuine concern over the state of the nobility, indicative of the Leaguers' ambivalence towards that class.

Such an approach inevitably gave rise to invidious comparisons between the virtuous noblemen of yesteryears and their much-diminished progeny. Taking up the crusading theme, one pamphlet noted, "Voz predecesseurs combattoient pour l'accroissement de la religion aux Provinces estrangeres, vous ne cōbattez pas en vostre païs pour la deffense d'icelle."²² Plainly intending to strike a chord among noblemen by plucking at once their pride in ancestry and in valour, another pamphlet reproached them for failing to liberate the Cardinal of Bourbon, "Charles X" from captivity: "He? que diroient vos ancestres si on leur pouvoit racompter que faute de courage ... vous eussiez delaissé vostre Roy soubz la rigueur d'une insupportable prison?"²³

The subject of contemporary noblemen's courage, or lack thereof, arose frequently in Leaguer tracts. One pamphlet urged the French nobility to learn from the example across the channel, where "en recompense de leur indeuë obeissance," English noblemen had seen their independence eroded by the Tudor monarchy, because through their "coüardise, nonchalance & pusilanimité" they had allowed heresy to triumph.²⁴ Implicit in this passage is an assumption that the nobility should be Catholic, martial, and enjoy a healthy autonomy vis-à-vis royal authority.

If the noblemen of the day did not match the valorous exploits of their forbears, this was a symptom of a sad decline: "O temps! ô mœurs! ô estrange mutation!"²⁵ Offering noblemen the chance to redeem themselves by equalling the virtuous achievements of noblemen of past times, a 1588 pamphlet exhorted them to defend Catholicism: "Qu'ils ne leur soit reproché, d'avoir degeneré de telle vertu: Qu'ils pensent que l'ombre de la gloire du noble, consiste aux richesses & grandeurs de ce monde, la vraye gloire aux actes genereuses & magnanimes."²⁶ Over five years later, Louis Dorléans was still lamenting the nobility's decline: "Que j'ay dans le cœur de tristesse, / De voir la Françoisse Noblesse, / Perdre l'honneur et le renom, / Et du blasme de perfidie, / Souiller le bouton de sa vie, / Et l'immortelle fleur de son nom..."²⁷

Another theme taken up by Dorléans was the metaphorical labelling of the contemporary nobility, or at least the royalist nobility, as a bastard class. Thus he described the noblemen in Henry IV's camp as "la noblesse bastarde, corrompue des vices de la vieille court, et du siècle present."²⁸ Oudart Raynssant taunted royalist noblemen with another unflattering comparison:

Penses, pensez un petit a vous, & faites une recollection de vos beaux faits, metez les en comparaison avec ceux de vos majeurs, vous trouverez le tout se differend, que vous confesserez vous mesme que jamais tels aigles n'ont engendrez si noirs corbeaux.²⁹

In this harsh tract, whose first edition was evidently sufficiently successful for it to be reissued with minor revisions in 1591, two years after it had originally appeared, Raynssant depicted the nobility as "perdue & desbauchee."³⁰ Again addressing the royalist nobility directly, he fulminated: "la modestie, la douceur, la clemence & la vertu qui regnoient en vous, ont tout esteints, & en leur lieu, est succedé l'audace, la cruauté, l'avarice & generalement tous vices... qu'ils vous ont reduits a l'esclavage & servitude du diable."³¹ Such an image of a degenerate and wanton royalist nobility was repeated in many League pamphlets, but a primary object of the League's propaganda was to win over neutral or wavering Catholic *gentilshommes*, and pamphleteers sometimes addressed them almost as sternly: "A cheval, messieurs de la noblesse, à cheval: il n'y a plus lieu d'excuse... La posterité d'une brave race est d'autât plus roturiere, qu'elle foligne, & degene de ses ancestres, en prosituât sa noblesse."³¹

Another common thread running through Leaguer literature was a critique of noblemen's abuses of the *menu peuple*, of their cruelty and exactions, often irrespective of party or religion. Jehan de Caumont, writing in 1585, attacked the "perverse noblesse" who "f[ont] cruellement mourir les presbtres, piller & ravager les pauvres gens."³³ In one of the last League pamphlets, nine years later, Louis Dorléans denounced the *gentilshommes* "qui bat[tent], qui frappe[nt], qui tue[nt], qui rançonne[nt], qui cour[en]t noz pauvres habitans, voyre les paysants & leurs Vaches, & qui font des Pisistrates en noz Athenes, & des Denis en nostre Sicile, qui font de noz villes des niches de tyrans, & mangent jusque aux os les subjects du Roy..."³⁴

In between, one finds a constant refrain among League polemicists deploring the gentlemen brigands, "volleurs", who preyed on members of the Third Estate: "je compte

quelque quantité de Gentils-hommes, qui ne font la guerre, & ne montent à cheval, que pour detrousser les marchans, les messagers, & autres passans, sans sortir de leur voisinage, pour avoir leur retraite ordinaire, au giron de leur femme."³⁵ In their efforts to persuade noblemen to halt their often non-partisan depredations, however, Leaguer pamphleteers again appealed to the same panoply of nobiliary values, to virtue, honour, glory and posterity. Misdeeds, one pamphlet argued, were "suivy d'une honteuse memoire au lieu de la gloire, seule recompense de la vertu."³⁶

Despite the "class war from above"³⁷ being waged against them, then, the Leaguers were criticizing noblemen from within a consensus that took for granted the nobility's place in society. Concern and dissatisfaction about noblemen's conduct were not limited to Leaguer writers. Noblemen were hated "pour les pillages cruautez & tiranniques deportemens & depravations de vie qui leur oste & suffoque la lumiere & splendeur" wrote one late sixteenth century author, not an ink-stained Leaguer pamphleteer nor a frustrated member of the *basoche* venting his resentment, but none other than François de L'Alouette.³⁸ L'Alouette, and other writers of *traités de noblesse*, were as scornful of noblemen's vice and misconduct as were the League polemicists who followed them. As seen in chapter 3, L'Alouette and his ilk were motivated by what they perceived as the moral and material decadence of the nobility to enjoin *gentilshommes* to reverse the decline by following the path of virtue. They drew upon the same armoury of rhetorical weapons as did the Leaguers: evocations of past glory, of ancestry and posterity, severe reprimands, and shame. Harsh as Raynssant's Leaguer pamphlet was in its treatment of the nobility, today's reader could easily mistake it for the product of a nobleman's pen, as has one historian familiar with the nobiliary literature of the time.^{38bis}

Indeed, these ideas were sufficiently conventional that royalist pamphleteers employed them in their own exhortations to *politique* noblemen. One anonymous royalist tract summoned noblemen to combat the League, exhorting them to courage and reminding them of their privileges and glorious traditions; it then warned that those who failed to do their duty would be "indignes du titre de Noblesse & plus avilainez que les plus vilains crocheteurs & faquins du monde."³⁹ The prolific royalist pamphleteer André Maillard appealed at once to the nobility's patriotism and social pride, asking noblemen if they wished

to pay court to a Spanish viceroy, and adding "la vraye Noblesse se gardera bien de ceste honte."⁴⁰ A royalist piece written in the dying days of the *Sainte Union*, returned the League's insults, asserting that but a few of the League's few remaining noblemen retained "encors quelque estincelle de ses anciens François," and asking "estes vous bastards, ou degenez de ceste genereuse nation Française."⁴¹

Another technique deployed by royalist propagandists was to paint the League as a democratic movement threatening nobiliary primacy. Where League pamphlets urged noblemen to fulfil their duty to the true religion, Royalists urged them to do their duty to preserve the social order, to put down the "serfs qui vendent leurs Maistres."⁴² League propagandists were at pains to refute these accusations; on the contrary, they maintained, the Catholic side was devoted to the Second Estate's well-being, whereas the Huguenots planned to destroy the nobility's prerogatives.⁴³ Even the papal nuncio was enlisted in the effort to persuade the nobility of the League's loyalty, and he authored a short pamphlet addressed to the nobility: "Pour vous esclarir de tous les scruples ausquels vostre esprit se pourroit attacher, je vous assure que qu'il ne nous est jamais tombé au cœur la moindre pensee de preferer le peuple à la Noblesse."⁴⁴ This effort to reassure the nobility about the League's intentions began soon after the League's foundation, as the Leaguers discovered that royalist propaganda was exciting *gentilshommes'* worst suspicions:

aucuns faisans courir le bruit que l'on vouloit faire une saint Barthelemy des politiques & des plus gros de la ville, où on n'avoit jamais pensé, comme l'evenement l'a démontré: car combien que les Catholiques ayent delibéré de mettre leurs biens & leurs vies pour la conservation de leur religion, toutefois jusques icy ils n'ont fait aucun meurdre, aucune sedition, ny aucune force.⁴⁵

After the Day of the Barricades it became harder to peddle this picture of a docile Sixteen, but Leaguer pamphlets continued to insist that the *Sainte Union* posed no threat to the nobility: "pensez vous que le peuple François voulut, ny mesme peust vivre, ny subsister sans Roy & sans Noblesse? Ne croyez aux suggestions diaboliques de cest heretique ennemy capital de la Chrestienne Noblesse. Je vous diray, vous le cognoistrez par effect, que nous tenons & estimans la vraye Noblesse, la fleur & beauté de tout genre humain."⁴⁶

Furthermore, Leaguer pamphlets avowed that the political theories they put forward of elective kingship and the right of resistance in no way implied popular rule: "quand nous

parlons du peuple, nous n'entendons par parler d'une simple & menue populasse.... Mais nous entendons parler principalement de Messieurs les Prelats: & de toute la Noblesse, & autres personnages de dignité, gens de vertu, d'honneur..."⁴⁷ As early as 1586, Leaguer pamphlets specifically rebutted their enemies' claims that the League wished to introduce an "estat populaire" or "democratie,"⁴⁸ and as late as the 1590s, Matthieu de Launoy, a member of the Paris Sixteen, could ask "de qui requerons & implorons nous ayde & secours,... sinon des Princes & de tous les Seigneurs & Gentilshommes Catholiques, lesquels sont vrayment les fleurs de toute la Noblesse du monde..."⁴⁹ Launoy went on to insist that the League was eager to accept noble command: "Avons nous autres gouverneurs en noz villes, autres Capitaines de noz bandes que Gentilshommes? Nous desirerions n'avoir autres Juges, ny autres conducteurs de noz police que la vraye Noblesse."⁵⁰ Far from contemplating the overthrow of the nobility, League pamphleteers protested that they wanted nothing more to submit to the nobility's leadership:

ne dites pas que cela soit pour faire un estat populaire, ny pour émouvoir les villes contre la noblesse. Car les Gentils-hommes y ont autant, voire plus d'interest, que le rest du peuple. Quand nous nous mettons en leurs protection, quand nous frayons aux armes, desquelles nous leur laissons la conduite, quand nous leur deferons les hōneurs & prerogatives qui leur sont deuës, quand nous les exhortons de valleurusement combattre, & leur commettons les gouvernemens de noz villes, ce n'est par pour eslever le peuple contr'eux.⁵¹

Boasts of the number and prowess of *gentilshommes* in their respective camps were common in the pamphlets issued by both sides, though the Leaguers' claims grew increasingly desperate and far-fetched as time went on. Leaguers also trumpeted the rewards and honours accorded to noblemen who rallied to the *Sainte Union*:

Graces à Dieu la plus grande & saine partie de la Noblesse est de ceste sainte & loüable union: Elle sçait quel rang on luy baille, & qu'aux Villes & Chasteaux, le commandement est deferé aux gentils-hommes, la conduite des armes & armees, & comme mesme le Clergé & le tiers estat, fraye aux despences qu'il convient à la Noblesse de faire: cela n'est pas introduire un Estat populaire.⁵²

The above passage implies that noblemen were automatically put in command of League forces, and indeed, autonomous as the Sixteen were, they actively sought the patronage of Catholic noblemen. This recourse to the Second Estate did not entirely derive from a purely practical calculation of military exigencies, or from a recognition of the power of clientage networks. It was rooted in the assumption that noble leadership was natural, reflecting the

nobility's place in society. Leaguers, despite their objective opposition to the domination of the nobility, shared the nobility's mentality; hence their espousal of the complete repertoire of nobiliary values. A League piece probably issued in December 1589 is revealing. After regretting any insolence shown by the people towards the nobility, it promises due deference in the future, and presents the Leaguers' vision of an harmonious society: "[Que l]e peuple d'oresnavant respecte la Noblesse, le Magistrat soit obey, le Clergé prie Dieu devotemēt esloigné de tout luxe, avarice & ambition, & la Noblesse deffende tous ces autres estats jouyssant de ses privileges, droicts & prerogatives."⁵³

Noblesse oblige

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the Leaguers were unanimous in their belief that virtue was the essence of nobility, and that virtue must be actualised for it to merit noble status. The actualisation of virtue, according to this view, was accomplished through the discharge of noblemen's duty in the exercise of their traditional military vocation. In the context of religious civil war, that duty lay with the armies of orthodoxy, protecting the Church and its people. Though this line of reasoning was not expounded overtly in every Leaguer tracts, it was assumed by all; the identification of the Second Estate with the profession of arms was immediate and direct in the minds of the Leaguers, for whom a *gentilhomme* must be, *ipso facto*, a warrior.

Leaguer battle accounts which mention noblemen only incidentally can sometimes reveal more of their authors' underlying social assumptions than do those pamphlets which set out to discuss the status of the Second Estate. A bulletin relating the defeat inflicted on royalist forces near Tours uses "gentilshommes" as a quasi-military term, a category of fighting man distinct from "soldats."⁵⁴ Describing troop movements and the position of various units, the same pamphlet notes the location of "la plus part des gens de qualité & bōs Capitaines" and then goes on to report, "Noz ennemis y ont perdu plus de cinquante gentils-hōmes, & gens de commandement."⁵⁵

The more discursive Leaguer pamphlets went beyond the simple equation of officers and gentlemen, arguing that noblemen's profession was to fight on behalf of those who could not:

N'es ce pas l'office de celui qui se dit noble, d'employer sa valeur a la suite des armes, Principalement lors qu'il recognoit son païs estre affligé faulte de secours sans faire la guerre a ceux qui pour n'avoir l'usage des armes acommandement pour leur rusticité & peu d'adresse, n'ont pas moyens de resister.⁵⁶

Louis Dorléans added the armed defence of the faith: "c'est le devoir de la Noblesse chrestienne de porter les armes contre les infidelles & tous ennemis de la foy."⁵⁷

In a later, and more cutting pamphlet, Dorléans addressed the nobility's neglect of its military duty, and sarcastically asked the purpose of noblemen's swords: "pour qui combatre la reservent-ils? est-ce pour combatre Karesme prenant, je le dis vous qui vous dictes estre homme d'espee, vous estes volontiers de longue robe pendant la guerre, & d'espee lors que nous sommes en paix."⁵⁸ The sword, after all, was the symbol of the traditional nobility, and by their frequent references to it the Leaguers implicitly emphasised the rapport between *gentilshommes'* social function and their social dominance. Noblemen, a League pamphleteer wrote, "aïant seuls l'épée en main pour défendre l'honneur de Dieu, & le bien public," must therefore put their sword to use.⁵⁹ Dorléans, again, asked "que leur sert de porter une espee à leur costé, si ce n'est pour deffendre leur patrie..?"⁶⁰

Others were more explicit in linking nobiliary status with military service, and concluded that those who neglected it, or worse, sided with the *Politiques*, were "oblieux de leur rang & devoir."⁶¹ Michel Marchant spelt out this belief in the nobility's special obligation:

Aussi ne scauroit on trouver bon ou raisonnable ce que pratiquent ordinairement ceux qui sous colour de ne vouloir faire la guerre pendant ce regne calamiteux, s'amusent a garder leurs maisons, estans aussi eslongnez du devoir qu'ils doibvent a Dieu, a leur prince, & a l'effect de ceste sainte cause en ce qu'ils commettent, *comme leur qualité les y oblige*.⁶²

The idea that noble rank conferred military duty did not, of course, begin with the League. As discussed in chapter 3, it was common coin in the *traités de noblesse*, and indeed dates from the nobility's pre-mediaeval origins. Nor was it mere myth; although noblemen no longer exercised a monopoly over the means of destruction, their class remained martial in outlook and orientation. In fact, despite the continuous erosion of the nobility's importance in modern warfare, the notion persisted long after the League that the nobility was inherently military. Discussing the creation by edict of a *Noblesse militaire* in 1750, the historian André Corvisier argues that only then had nobility become dissociated from military service in the

collective imagination; previously, such an expression would have been a pleonasm.⁶³ On the nobility's martial vocation, and its relation to socially significant virtue, royalists could be indistinguishable from Leaguers:

ceux qui se dient [sic] vertueux, & font profession des armes, doibvent rendre graces à Dieu & employer ceste vertu & force, dont nostre Seigneur les a douez, au service & à la protection du Roy & de sa couronne. Mais d'abuser de ceste puissance jusques à porter les armes, & offenser son Roy: ce ne sont les moyès ny degrez, par lesquelz l'on pervient à la vertu.⁶⁴

Related to, and in a sense derivative of, the nobility's military role was its subsidiary didactic function. By discharging their martial duty, and demonstrating their courage, noblemen actualised their virtue and earned their status. Their display of virtue also guided the lower orders on the path of righteousness. In purely practical terms, *gentilshommes* could teach militiamen the techniques of warfare, and the Sixteen requested Mayenne provide Paris with "de bōs Gētils-hommes expérimentez au fait de la guerre, pour instruire les habitās & Bourgeois."⁶⁵ But the Second Estate's didactic function was conceived as primarily moral. Noblemen were, or were meant to be, exemplars of virtue, models of good conduct. The League manifesto of 1587 connected the nobility's rank with its didactic function: "comme ils sont eslevez d'un degré plus haut, ils nous monstrent aussi le chemin, et nous servent de guide, chefs et conducteurs pour conserver la religion catholique."⁶⁶ The idea of the nobility as teachers of virtue was another replicated by both the Leaguers and Royalists from the *traités de noblesse*.⁶⁷ This secondary function is a key to understanding why the nobility's vocation brought with it the exalted status which League publicists acknowledged as the Second Estate's due. Moral leadership implied social and political leadership, and noblemen could lead by command as well as by example.

The Leaguers, naturally, put special stress on religious aspects of the nobility's social function and consequent preeminence. Jean de Caumont explained that whereas merchants, artisans and peasants were too absorbed in their work to exercise adequate vigilance against the satanic ruses of heresy, it was incumbent upon noblemen to keep watch and take action:

Cela appartient aux Rois, aux princes, aux nobles, à ceux qui sont exempts des œuvres serviles, de veiller pour tous, d'avoir tousjours l'oreille au vent, l'œil en campagne, & un pied en l'air, pour courir aux perturbateurs du peuple, & les exterminer.⁶⁸

Even six years later, in 1593, Cromé's *Manant* still underlined his reproach to those Catholic noblemen who trusted Henry IV's promise to convert by arguing that a *gentilhomme* "devez avoir un jugement plus meur qu'un simple homme."⁶⁹ Another pamphlet insisted that high-ranking French noblemen had a "speciale obligation outre la commune, d'obeir à Dieu eternel."⁷⁰

The nobiliary vocation, then, was more than a mere employment; it was an special obligation concomitant with special privileges. It followed that noble status and privileges were contingent upon the fulfilment of this obligation, and that noblemen who were deficient in virtue and hence remiss in their duty, should be stripped of their rank. A Leaguer sonnet exhorting noblemen to embrace the Leaguer cause hinted that noblemen risked forfeiting their social position: "ô Chevaliers trompeurs/... O Noblesse faillie, ô fureur trop poussee, / Vous portez le brandon pour perdre voz grandeurs, / Vous attirez le feu pour brusler voz honneurs."⁷¹ Leaguer pieces were more explicit in asserting the illegitimacy of Huguenot noblemen, who were not merely derelict in their duty, but in open rebellion against the object of their principal duty, God himself. Citing Thomist precepts on the punishment of heretics, the Leaguer jurist Claude de Rubys declared, "ils sont degradez de tous honneurs, grades, dignitez, qualitez & offices qu'ils avoyent auparavant... Ils sont privez de toute seigneurie, & leurs sujets, si aucuns en ont, dispensez & absouz du serment de fidelité, & de tout droict & devoir."⁷² Launoy extended the threat of degradation to Catholic noblemen allied with heretics, drawing on the nobiliary trope of divine homage: "Est-ce pas fouïller l'honneur de vostre Noblesse, quand vous commettez la felonie contre celui, lequel vous a donné ceste belle marque, & ornez ceste triomphante couronne?"⁷³ In any case, such noble felons were, according to Launoy, clearly degenerate, unworthy of their ancestors and hereditary status: "Luy donc qui deshonne Dieu en degenerant de la bonté & pieté de ses vieux ancestres, est-il pas aussi décheu de la Noblesse d'iceux?"⁷⁴ Royalist noblemen, then, were "desvoyez de leur devoir,"⁷⁵ but so were *gentilshommes* who opted for neutrality, or simply failed to rally to the League, "au prejudice de leur honneur & à l'aneantissement de leur propre nom & tiltre."⁷⁶ Mayenne himself issued a proclamation requiring that Catholic *gentilshommes* swear the Oath of Union, on pain of degradation:

pour ne paroistre moins affectionnez à l'honneur de Dieu, & de son service, que leurs predecesseurs, qui... ont si liberalement exposé leurs biens & moyens pour combattre les

infidels... Et ce faisant sera ladite Noblesse maintenue & gardee és honneurs, preeminences & prerogatives qui luy sont deües & dont elle a de tout temps accoustumé jouir.⁷⁷

Even while it threatened noblemen with degradation, the above passage accepted that noblemen's privileges were their due. Mayenne, after all, was no social revolutionary; a Leaguer yes, but a prince all the same. Throughout Leaguer writings, however, the invocation of the threat of degradation was reserved for *gentilshommes* who were neglecting, or flouting, their duty, meaning that virtuous dutiful noblemen were assumed, indeed expected, to enjoy the customary honours and prerogatives of their rank. The notion of degradation, then, did not challenge the social structure, but upheld it.

Small wonder, since the concept of degradation, like so much else in the Leaguer lexicon, had ample precedent in the *traités de noblesse*. As shown in chapter 3, L'Alouette and Musset argued that unworthy *gentilshommes* should forfeit their status, the better to distinguish, and preserve from contamination, those virtuous noblemen who merited their social preëminence.⁷⁸ Nor did the authors of the *traités de noblesse* innovate; they merely elaborated conventional ideas dating from the fifteenth century, and earlier.⁷⁹ Scathing critiques of nobiliary negligence did not begin with the Wars of Religion, though they appear to have become increasingly frequent in the late sixteenth century. Many unenforced royal ordinances required noblemen to do military service or lose their status, and it was a common demand in provincial Estates that *gentilshommes* be deprived of their rank for non-compliance; even the *cahier* submitted by the Second Estate of Beauvais in 1588 demanded that "inutile" noblemen pay the *taille*.⁸⁰ The consensus surrounding this idea was such that royalist pamphleteers, too, maintained that noblemen must do their duty by fighting for Henry IV, or suffer degradation: "vous ... serez deschuez du degré, auquel par la vertu de voz peres vous aviez esté eslevez par dessus le reste du peuple."⁸¹

If the Leaguers predicated the existence of the nobility as distinct group on its social function, this was because their understanding of social organisation demanded that the nobility fight, and fight for Catholicism. Conversely, the Leaguers' belief that the nobility's privileges were contingent upon the performance of its nobiliary function was an element in their total social vision. The lower orders had their own less august functions and concomitant privileges: "Chacun estat a certain privilege, lequel estant conservé, il est impossible que l'un puisse renverser l'autre."⁸²

Leaguer writers assumed, apparently unquestioningly, the traditional hierarchical image of social organisation, with its hoary structural functionalist division of all mankind into three great orders. This tripartite concept of society, wherein the status of each group corresponded to its function, did not originate with the Leaguers, or indeed with the writers of treatises of nobility, but several centuries earlier, as the ideological apparatus of feudalism.⁸³ Its roots may indeed be pre-historic, and have been traced back to proto-Indo-European myth.⁸⁴

The Leaguers explicitly endorsed this tripartite concept, swearing to "Maintenir les Privileges & libertez des trois Ordres & Etats de ce Royaume."⁸⁵ But the presumption that human society was divided into three broad functional strata containing a multiplicity of sub-categories influenced all Leaguer writings. In another oath, the Paris League swore to "apporter tous noz moyens, *chacun selon sa qualité et condition*,... pour la legitime deffense de nostredict religion, pour le salut commun du pays."⁸⁶

Just as the profession of arms was the "exercice propre aux ... chevaliers valeureux,"⁸⁷ the lower orders had their own socially necessary function, in which their status made them specialists. During the summer of 1590 the *Bureau de la Ville* resolved to ensure that the crops from the suburbs of Paris could be harvested, under armed escort, before they were destroyed by the enemy; it therefore decided to "amasser ... bon nombre de paysans et laboureurs experts en telle affaire."⁸⁸ The rural refugees whom the Parisians inscribed on rolls listing available agrarian labour were assumed to be skilled in the vocation befitting their status.

The nobility's exalted defensive specialisation was needful so that the lower orders, devoted to lower concerns, and incapable of protecting themselves, could perform their roles in peace:

Car cōment l'artisan courbé sur son ouvrage, le marchand attentif à sa negotiation, le rustic à son labourage, & tout ceux qui ont les sens attachez aux provisions du corps, commēt pourront-ils perser & profiler les creux des conspiratiōs occultes que les meschans trament contre eux par dessous terre?⁸⁹

By the same token, commoners laboured on *gentilshommes* behalf, that the latter might be free to fight. A Leaguer tract recounted the legendary origins of the nobility, saying that God chose kings, who in turn selected the nobility, "ceux qu'ils estimoyent les plus genereux, ne

les voulans asservir ny assubjettir es arts questuaires & mecaniques."⁹⁰ It is noteworthy that the Leaguers, many of whom were members of the *basoche*, instinctively included lower judicial and financial functions among those assigned to the Third Estate. Leaguer views on office-holding are discussed in chapters 4 and 7.⁹¹

Each order, according to this hierarchical social schema, had its duty; it was no less the duty of the common man to toil than that of the nobleman to fight and the clergyman to pray. Defending the Catholic clergy from Protestant criticism, an early League pamphlet asserted that some individuals in every order could be reproached for failing in their social function: "Y a il aujourd'huy estat au monde, soit de gens de justice, de Gentils-hommes, de marchans, d'artisans, de laboureux, & tous autres generallement, qui facent tellemēt leur devoir qu'en eux on ne trouve que reprendre?"⁹² In a characteristic turn of phrase that became almost a literary tic among League pamphleteers, Louis Dorléans listed the levels of society which would be injured by the ascendancy of the heretics, asking "Quel repos recevra l'Ecclesiastique, le Noble, le Juge, le Marchant, l'Artisan, & le Laboureur?"⁹³ In these social inventories rank was seen in vocational terms; the nobility was one of several occupational categories and the Third Estate was represented by several sub-divisions.⁹⁴ Citing Aristotle, Michel Marchant asserted that every man's purpose was to serve the "bien commun" or "le souverain bien," by performing his designated function.⁹⁵ Another pamphleteer resolved to follow the example of the fallen Guises, and to "employer [ma vie] à ce que selon ma qualité elle pourra estre utile, & au public, & à la posterité."⁹⁶

Notwithstanding their wholesale appropriation of the traditional understanding of the nobility's place in the overall social structure, and their firm belief that noblemen should be degraded from misconduct or dereliction of duty, Leaguer writers were strangely silent on the rule of *dérogeance*. This rule, whereby noblemen could lose their privileges for practising activities incompatible with their status, such as commerce, was the logical outcome of the tripartite theory of society: each order had its designated function, and could not legitimately perform another's; although the rule had a long pedigree, it was reiterated forcefully in the *traités de noblesse*.⁹⁷ For a bourgeois movement with an important mercantile constituency, the League's silence on this issue is puzzling. This silence may be indicative of the contradictions inherent in the League's embrace of traditional social ideas;

Leaguer thinking on commerce is discussed in chapter 7. It would be misleading, however, to read too much into this omission, and while some late sixteenth century noblemen sought the relaxation of the rule of *dérogeance*, the Third Estate at the 1560 Estates General opposed any change, and article 59 of that year's Ordinance of Orléans forbade *gentilshommes* "tout fait et trafic de marchandise."⁹⁸ Perhaps the "bourgeoisie commerçante" as the historian Gaston Zeller describes the faction opposed to change,⁹⁹ feared competition from noblemen. Perhaps they were more wedded to traditional beliefs than were noblemen, or perhaps in this instance the idea of the tripartite society, though less than ever an accurate description of the actual social structure, served bourgeois interests.

In his study of the crisis besetting the French nobility of the day, the historian Davis Bitton finds in the critique of idle and parasitical noblemen enunciated by some members of the Third Estate evidence of their assertion of the "bourgeois virtues of hard work and productive activities."¹⁰⁰ I would argue, on the contrary, that it is further evidence of the Third Estate's global acceptance of nobiliary values, and their traditionalist belief that *gentilshommes* must be actively engaged in the gentlemanly calling. League writers joined the chorus, and tellingly paired idleness with cowardice as vices unworthy of a nobleman. Their denunciations of "l'asche [sic] oysiveté" and "molle oisiveté" were presaged by François de L'Alouette, for whom "l'oisiveté" was "mere du vice."¹⁰¹

Roturiers could demand that noblemen busy themselves in the performance of their social function, just as commoners necessarily performed theirs, because nobleman and commoner were bound by mutual obligation. The Leaguers simply insisted that the upper orders observe the terms of the agreement, as in the League's 1587 manifesto, which promised support for nobiliary privileges "A condition aussi que messieurs les ecclesiastiques et nobles nous promettent pareillement de ne nous abandonner."¹⁰² Despite the general estrangement of the Sixteen from the nobility by 1593, Cromé's *Manant* still understood the nobility and people to have reciprocal duties, and could still offer to pay the respect and obedience the people owed to *gentilshommes* should the latter deign to make good on their side of the bargain:

tant que la noblesse suyvre le party de l'heretique, ou qu'il [sic] voudra tyranniser, le peuple ne la pourra favoriser ny obeir; mais si au contraire elle se veut bander contre l'heretique, pour l'exterminer et le jetter hors du royaume, y eslire un Roy catholique,... et de ne plus

faire la guerre au peuple,... lors vous verrez tout le peuple les honorer, gratifier et se soumettre à leur devotion, et non plustost.¹⁰³

The social contract implied by the two passages just quoted could be interpreted as revolutionary, because they baldly affirmed the contingency of the Second Estate's social preëminence, but L'Alouette, among others, had been there first, and as shown in chapter 3, L'Alouette saw society as governed by a tetrahedral covenant between the people, the nobility, the king, and God.¹⁰⁴

God, for the Leaguers no less than for the writers of *traités de noblesse*, was the creator of the nobility, the "souverain auteur des Nobles," as L'Alouette put it.¹⁰⁵ Sounding little different from the treatise-writers, Matthieu de Launoy asked "est-ce pas Dieu qui est la source & le vray donateur de la noblesse?"¹⁰⁶ Both nobiliary and Leaguer writers saw the nobility and its social vocation as divinely ordained; in Jehan de Caumont's words, "Les nobles ont esté ordōnez de Dieu, pour la fidelité & obeissance de leurs rois, & la defence de leurs subjects."¹⁰⁷ This divine sanction, the Leaguers allowed, conferred on the nobility a quasi-sacred character, for Launoy argued that "le nom de noblesse est si saint & sacré qu'il n'es communicable ... aux mespriseurs de la Diēté."¹⁰⁸

Divine sanction justified the nobility, but also the form of the entire social structure, since according to the Leaguers, as well as their contemporaries and intellectual forebears, the earthly structure was modelled upon the celestial one. An early Leaguer piece maintained that God created the king as His temporal lieutenant, and that the nobles were to the king as the saints and angels were to God Himself:

Ains pour luy transferer cy bas les mesmes rangs, exercices, & preeminences, que son infinie beatitude tiēt la sus en son Olympique trosne, ou il est assisté de toutes dominations, & ordures [sic] solemnellemēt arrangees & ou luist une tant belle glorieuse armee d'Ange, Archanges, Patriarches, Prophetes, Apostres, Saintz, Martirs, & Ames sanctifiees: Ainsi voyons nous en ce monde, par une mesme speculation grand nombre de genereux Princes, Ducz, Contes, Seigneurs, Chevalliers chefz darmes illustres, & spectacles personnes, chacun selon son grade, & ordre jetter une estincellante lueur au tour de ce diademe.¹⁰⁹

This assumption that the social structure was divinely ordained and immutable was so deeply enracinated in the sixteenth century mind that even Michel Marchant, who advocated the opening of offices to men of merit, also argued that men should not challenge the social hierarchy, or question their God-given station in it. Citing Aesop's fable of the tortoise who tried to fly, Marchant concluded,

Cela donne a cognoistre aux hommes qu'il vault mieux pour leur honneur & commodité se tenir enserrez és limites de leur vocation, & se contanter d'une fortune mediocre conservée & maintenue par la grace de Dieu, que de vouloir prandre une charge a l'exercice de laquelle ils se sentent inexperts & inhabiles.¹¹⁰

Just as a flying tortoise would be an aberration, a perversion of the natural order of God's creation, then, any fundamental shift in the social hierarchy would be unnatural. The universe was conceived as being organised according to an hierarchic principle, which required the nobility to stand at its summit. Launoy claimed that nobility existed among all creatures,¹¹¹ while Caumont placed the nobility at the centre of his cosmology: "La beauté de l'univers est la conservation de Noblesse, & le monde sans Noblesse ne peut estre hereusement habité."¹¹² The historian Arlette Jouanna put it aptly in her study of sixteenth-century social attitudes when she wrote, "personne n'est alors capable d'imaginer une société autrement que hiérarchisée."¹¹³

Leaguers were no more able to transcend these mental constraints than were their contemporaries, and looking back we see the strange spectacle of the spokesman for a movement that would chase the King from his capital and later justify regicide, a movement determined to overthrow noblemen, if not the nobility, and which observers from that day to this have interpreted as revolutionary, expressing bewilderment and dismay at the social upheaval he witnessed. Writing in 1586, Louis Dorléans deplored the confusion he found about him: "Le marchand faisoit le gentilhomme, le gentilhomme le seigneur, le seigneur le prince, le prince le Roy."¹¹⁴ Eight years later, he was no more content: "Tout [est] au rebours du droict chemin."¹¹⁵ When Mayenne sought to introduce deputies from the sovereign courts to the Leaguer Estates-General of 1593, attached to none of the three orders, the delegates doubtless had good tactical reasons for resisting such an innovation, given their suspicion of the *politique* leanings of many *parlementaires*, but the wording of their objection is significant. Mayenne's proposal, they said, would in effect mean the establishment of a fourth estate, contrary to the natural division of society in three; it would therefore be to "difformer ce corps, et former un monstre en nostre estat."¹¹⁶

As in the treatises of nobility, the metaphor most often used in League tracts for a well-ordered society was the human body, in which each organ must perform its allotted

natural function for the whole to live. Citing ancient case history, one pamphlet attributed the distemper then afflicting France to an imbalance in the body politic:

nous lisons avoir esté veu à Rome le peuple s'etre mutiné contre les nobles, Patriciens, ores par jalousie, ores pour leurs grandeurs & maintenir leurs anciens droits franchises & libertez. Et tout ainsi qu'un chacun membre du corps doit tendre à l'entretènement de ce qu'il luy est propre & necessaire, ausi doit il tēdre, & dejecter fuir tout ce qu'il cognoist luy estre ou engendrer diminution ou mutation de son naturel.¹¹⁷

A compatible metaphor, also used by earlier non-Leaguer social theorists, was the musical instrument, whose distinct strings, plucked together, produced harmonious sound:

un prudent magistrat, qui par raison civile, / Scavoit bien policer les membres d'une ville, / Et qui sage, & accord par accordants discorts / De Citoyens divers tiroit de bons accords: / Comme on voit maistre Albert quant son luth il manie, / Qui de tons differens fait naistre une harmonie¹¹⁸

The putative revolutionaries of the Paris League, then, were proponents of social harmony, a harmony to be achieved and preserved by the division of society into discrete units. In the articulated society which the Leaguers envisaged, however, distinctions of rank did not obscure the overarching unity of all God's people.

The historian Robert Descimon interprets the Parisian League, in part, as an attempt to restore religion as a unifying principle, thereby overcoming social divisions, dissolving social hostilities and restoring a vanishing sense of civic solidarity.¹¹⁹ Descimon's point is well taken, and as will be seen in the next chapter, the Leaguers unanimously rejected the new but increasingly prevalent claim that noblemen possessed hereditary traits separating them from the rest of humanity. Nevertheless, the Leaguers' belief in the unity of mankind should not be exaggerated. For its members, the *Sainte Union* was a common front composed of people of diverse but distinct social categories, united in a shared sacred purpose. After exhorting each order individually, one League piece proclaimed: "Avancez vous donc tous ensemble, & de rang en rang, messieurs des trois ordres, de tout sexe, de tout eage [sic], & de toutes qualitez, gens de bien, contre ceux qui veulent abattre vos temples."¹²⁰ All who rallied to the League standard, for the author of this pamphlet, were "gens de bien."

Leaguers recognized, however, that the unity of varied and mutually suspicious orders was fragile and easily wrecked. League propagandists accused rumour-mongers and wicked, self-serving courtiers of sowing divisions within the *Sainte Union* and driving wedges into its

social fault-lines. One pamphlet offered an inventory of the latent social antagonisms which their enemies were seeking to aggravate:

ils sement des dissensions entre le peuple: ils entretiennent les Princes en querelles, & jectent des propositions entre eux, d'ambition, & de differends particuliers: vont disans par tout à la Noblesse que nous ne demandons qu'un estat populaire, & que les villes se bandent contre les gentils-hommes des champs: veulent persuader au Clergé qu'ils seront desormais plus payez de leurs dismes, & que mesme la Noblesse se veut emparer des benefices: font courir dans les villes que la Noblesse les veut piller ... ils calumnient les marchans, qu'ils accusent d'en vouloir aux gens de Justice, gens de robbe longue, & officiers de la Couronne: mettent la crainte entre les marchans, adioustant qu'on les mesprise, & que l'on empeschera leur trafic: Aux moindres artisans ils disent, que l'on leur veut oster le moyen de gagner leur vie, & que ce sont Seigneurs qui pour querelles particulieres, se veulent jouër du reste du peuple: mesme s'efforcement de soustraire les Laboureurs & vigneron de l'amitié des ville...¹²¹

The mention of "ambition" in the above passage is significant, for *ambition* was one of the Leaguers' most frequent complaints about *gentilshommes*. In the functionalist hierarchy which the Leaguers imagined society to be, each order contributed to a higher good, "l'utilité publique,"¹²² by performing its allotted task, the peasantry by tilling the soil, the bourgeoisie by commerce, the nobility by combat, the clergy by prayer. The upper orders' social contribution, however, was more direct and immediate, and thus more exalted, being both unmotivated and untarnished by pecuniary considerations. Whereas the merchant profited by the discharge of his social duty, the *gentilhomme* and churchman could not, and were consequently compensated by the feudal income, tax exemptions and other privileges befitting their august rank.¹²³ To accuse a nobleman of "ambition," meaning that he schemed to subordinate the public good to his own welfare, was more than to impugn his personal character, it was to strike at his social standing.

The ideal of public spiritedness expounded by Leaguer publicists recalled the chivalric ethos of knightly orders, sometimes explicitly. Referring to the Templars and other martial regular orders, one pamphlet uncontroversially asserted that a Christian knight's duty was to serve God and the king: "Cecy est le devoir d'un vray Chevalier, comme il appert en la ceremonie dont use l'Eglise en le benissant, & en tant d'ordres religieux ... lesquels soldats font tous particuliere profession de porter les armes, & employer leurs vies contre les ennemis de l'Eglise."¹²⁴ The contrast between the public good and private profit appears repeatedly in Leaguer tracts, usually combined with an injunction to the "vray Gentil'homme" to sacrifice the latter to the former.¹²⁵ The fifth article in the demands

presented to Mayenne by the Rector of the University of Paris in November 1589 was for a governor "qui prefere la Religiō & le bien public à son particulier, en qui le peuple ayt creance."¹²⁶ This ideal of nobiliary disinterestedness was not an invention of the Leaguers, but was presaged in the *traités de noblesse*.^{126bis}

Monarchs, too, for Leaguer theorists, were duty-bound to put the well-being of their kingdoms before themselves, "Comme ... le pere de famille ne doivent point rendre & referer leurs actions à leur profit particulier, mais à l'utilité & commodité de ceux qui leurs sont baillez en charge."¹²⁷ In most unabsolutist fashion, Henry III accepted such a distinction between his personal good and the common weal, and in his speech to the 1588 Estates General insisted that he was raising royal authority not for his "bien particulier" but for the benefit of his subjects.¹²⁸ These ideas, then, were commonplace, and royalist publications enunciated a critique of "ambition" along similar lines to the Leaguers'.¹²⁹

In a pamphlet war where many arguments could be employed with equal effectiveness by either side, Leaguer propagandists were aware that their princely patrons were vulnerable to accusations of personal and dynastic ambition.¹³⁰ They therefore rushed to the defence of the Guises and other League noblemen. One piece typically portrayed Mayenne as a model of chivalric virtue and public spiritedness, "postposant toutes ses commoditez particulières voire sa propre vie a la poursuite & soutien d'une si juste cause, pour oster ce pesant fardeau de tant de malheurs, de dessus des espauls du pauvre peuple."¹³¹ League pamphleteers also occasionally defended the Sixteen from accusations that they sought personal advantage, thereby gracing the bourgeois conspirators with the lofty -- indeed noble -- lustre of pure public spiritedness. One piece, for example, claimed that provincial observers in Paris "ne pouv[er]nt au surplus remarquer en ceste compagnie aucun traicte d'ambition n'y d'utilité, ou commodité particuliere."¹³²

By contrast, League pamphleteers painted Royalists as motivated by the crass desire for personal gain. One pamphlet typically described Henry IV as "un homme ambitieux / Qui n'a ne foy, ne loy, ne Dieu devant les yeux," acting "en extreme ambition, en un bruslant desir de vengeance, en heresie."¹³³ Similar charges were levelled not only against outright Huguenots, Royalists and *Politiques*, but also against neutral Catholics, and the traitors whom League writers knew to be in their midst:

Nostre sainte Union a eu de puissans ennemis, & composez des trois estats de ce Royaume. Et tous ceux qui nous ont fait la guerre ouvertement ou à couvert, n'ont eu autre but de leurs desseins que l'ambition ... & ont remply leurs bourses parmy noz plus grands malheurs.¹³⁴

Throughout the Leaguer corpus, supporters of the other side were consistently ascribed base motives, and said to be fighting only out of "avarice & ambition insatiable," with an eye to their "profit particulier."¹³⁵ Such an accusation is perennial in the political rivalries of any age, but for the Leaguers, as for their adversaries, it carried a social subtext. This social current surfaces visibly only occasionally, as when Cromé's *Manant*, speaking of the nobility, mentioned the "ambition qui les a attirez à une mesconnaissance de leur origine."¹³⁶ Self-seeking ambition, for Cromé, was plainly incompatible with noble status. Again, denouncing the cruelties and excesses of *gentilshommes*, Marchant listed among their vices "l'avarice & ingratitude envers les pauvres," a curious turn of phrase recalling the bonds of reciprocal obligation with which feudal society was theoretically constructed.¹³⁷

The League's critique of ambition -- always a pejorative -- and of ambitious noblemen, reflected its adoption of the nobiliary ideal of disinterested service, a component of the traditional social ideology. Along with this ideal, the Leaguers assumed, in spite of themselves, a set of nobiliary values and attitudes. Addressing noblemen who preferred their private interest to their duty, one bourgeois pamphleteer wrote "[vous] avez le cœur si bas & roturier."¹³⁸ Michel Marchant, for whom ambition was a principal theme, posited ambition as the vice of the upper orders, but in doing so implicitly accepted the gulf in status and *quality* between them and himself:

Voyons je vous supplie d'ou l'ambition prend son origine, à qui elle s'attache. Est-ce a l'exercise & occupation des arts mecaniques? Est-ce au traffic & commerce de la marchandise? bref es choses viles & abjectes? Non non c'est aux plus dignes parties...¹³⁹

Spokesman of the bourgeoisie though he was, Marchant could not escape the prevailing social outlook in which the bourgeoisie own activities were vile and abject.

The Leaguers' self-denying snobbery is evident in a surprising number of their pamphlets. Occasional unflattering comments about the *basoche* and lower clergy, the Sixteen's two core constituencies, betrayed the Leaguers' uncomfortable consciousness of their own social inferiority. An early League pamphlet, for example, deplored the low standards prevailing in the administration of justice, and opined that far too many people were making their living by "chicanerie, ... y compris les Huissiers & Sergents."¹⁴⁰ Another

recalled a mediaeval "aage doré," the time of Philippe le Bel, "qui quãd le Palais de Paris l'ut basti se logeoit léans ne craignant d'estre importuné, par les solliciteurs de proces."¹⁴¹ A piece written by the prolific League preacher and pamphleteer Jean Boucher, addressed to the royalist Bishop of Le Mans, apologized for "mon style rude & scholastique & indigne de vous."¹⁴²

Leaguers did not shrink from casting aspersions on the social rank of their enemies. One battle account claimed that so many enemy *gentilshommes* had fallen that the Huguenots were reduced to sending out "tous ceux qui pouvoïent porter armes, gēs de toutes sortes jusques aux plus vils & crocheteurs."¹⁴³ Even Cromé's proud and steadfast *Manant* found it natural to malign *Politiques*, moderate Leaguers and those who turned against the Sixteen by ridiculing their social origins. Thus he described one erstwhile comrade as "perfide ... venu d'un petit tainturier" whose family had been enriched by "usures et rapines," and another as "fils d'un sergent."¹⁴⁴

This was a risky business, however, for royalist writers could, and did, more easily besmirch the Leaguers' social backgrounds. One of the strongest royalist pamphlets, Le Manifeste de la France, turned the table by appealing to the pride of the Parisian bourgeoisie and defaming the Sixteen as tramps and thieves:

N'avez-vous point de honte, vous autres bourgeois anciens & bons marchans, qui possédez des biens de juste acquest, qui composez la partie la plus saine & la plus entiere de la cité, qui ne pouvez conserver vos familles que par un ordre & par une police, de souffrir parmy vous ces poudreux matthois, & ces loups ravissans, & que vous ne convenez tous pour repugner vostre ville de ces mauvais garnemens et de vendiquer la seureté publique? ... Ne vous prend-il point envie de vomir quand vous voyez devant vos yeux ces harpies publiques, un Cōmissaire Louchard, un la Rue, le Clerc, Olivier, Senault, & leurs compagnons nagueres batteurs de pavé & povres belistres, se promener maintenant parmy vous accompagnez d'une grande suite, & enrichis du sac des meilleures maisons?¹⁴⁵

The Leaguers, and particularly the Paris Sixteen, were vulnerable to such royalist polemic, for as Robert Descimon points out, they and their supporters shared many of the prejudices of their social superiors.¹⁴⁶ They were therefore at pains to emphasize their respectability, and to counter royalist denigration of themselves and their cause: "il ne faut penser, qu'il n'y ait que gens de basse qualité, qui entreprennent ceste reformation."¹⁴⁷ They and their supporters were no rabble, the Leaguers insisted, not mere "saffraniers, petits compagnons & tabliers retroussez;" these "simple gens hors d'ābition & avarice" were led by

their social betters, and the League spoke for a "tiers estat entremeslé de si grand nombre de gens de vertu."¹⁴⁸ Leaguers also made much of the *gentilshommes*, upper clergy and local notables in their party, rebutting royalist claims that the 1588 Estates-General was composed of Guisard placemen by asserting that the deputies at Blois were "les plus éminents des Provinces, les Ecclesiastiques de la plus sainte vie & plus insigne eruditō, les Nobles des plus illustres races, & les habitans des villes des plus apparens d'icelles."¹⁴⁹

League writers similarly defended the Guises' pedigree and marriage alliances from the scorn shown by *politique* propagandists, and listed the Guise family's royal connexions: "voila ce me semble des alliance, pour n'estre rabaissés par la main d'un argoteur mercenaire, qui les veut rāger au rang de simple gentil-homme, si ne leur peut on oster, qu'ils ne soient descendus du Roy Saint Louys."¹⁵⁰ The same pamphlet mentioned with approbation the genealogy drawn up for Epinac, the Archbishop of Lyons "afin de le prouver extraict de bonne, & ancienne Noblesse, comme de faict il est."¹⁵¹ Leaguer publicists also attempted to show the King's assassination of the Guises, and his arrest of other League noblemen, to be a slight to the honour of all *gentilshommes*, since it constituted a violation of their place in the social hierarchy: "une grand partie de la Noblesse [est] en ... prison, forcee de faire chose contre leur conscience. Temoins ... Brissac ... & infinis autres gentilshommes de valleur & de vertu & de l'injure desquel il est raisonnable que toute la Noblesse se resente pour son honneur."¹⁵²

Nor could League writers disguise the awe with which they regarded *gentilshommes*, and especially great noblemen, even those in the royalist camp. The author of a pamphlet addressed to the Duke of Nevers, who had deserted the League, adopted the cringing persona of a rustic servant: "Je suis un petit compagnon, qui escripts à un grand Prince, un ignorant qui parle à un homme de jugement & expérimenté, un vitieux qui excite un tres-homme de bien: mais il se trouve quelquefois de belles fleurs, & des herbes fort salutaires crues dans du fiant & entre les ronces."¹⁵³ Another pamphlet, highly critical of the *politique* nobility, nonetheless regretted any affront or insubordination shown by Leaguers towards the nobility: "Je sçay que quelques uns de vous se pleignent de quelques insolences du peuple qui n'a point respecté en quelques endroits la Noblesse ny les Magistrats, prenant des passedroits qu'il ne luy estoit loisible de prendre."¹⁵⁴

Yet even in the years leading up to the open break with royal authority after Blois, the Leaguers went far beyond mere insolence in their treatment of the nobility in Henry III's entourage. Henry's court, and particularly his *mignons*, were among the most frequent targets of Leaguer invective. From their opening salvo in the Rheims manifesto of 1585, Leaguer propagandists complained that men close to the King were abusing their authority, oppressing the people and implementing imprudent policies.¹⁵⁵ Jean Boucher's Histoire tragique et memorable de Pierre de Gaverston, published in 1588, was a thinly veiled allegorical satire aimed at Henry III's particular favourite, the Duke of Epernon. Such pieces followed a long tradition of indirect criticism, attacking the king's evil advisors rather than the king himself. As discussed in chapter 4, the perceived moral decay of the time was a central theme in Leaguer literature, and pamphlets deplored the luxury, immoderation and vice which they imagined enveloped Henry III's court, and in which his courtiers indulged at the expense of the people.¹⁵⁶ Among the redresses sought by the Parisian delegates at the 1588 Estates General was a demand that the size and cost of the royal court be reduced.¹⁵⁷ Although the League's critique of the court grew increasingly vituperative, especially after Blois, many of the same points were common in the voluminous anti-courtier literature of the day, including that composed by Protestants and mid-century humanists.¹⁵⁸ Even the Leaguers' attack on the Italian courtiers and financiers whom Catherine de Medicis brought to the Valois court was anticipated in the literature of previous decades.¹⁵⁹

Jean Boucher attempted to incite noblemen's indignation against the court by complaining of the elaborate Spanish etiquette, the protocol of absolutism, which Henry III had introduced. In deference to the League's Spanish alliance, however, Boucher attributed the provenance of the new ceremonial to the Sublime Porte rather than the Escorial:

meprisant la noblesse de France, il faisoit mettre des barrières allentours de luy, lequel, assis en tribunal, vouloit, à la mode des Turcs qu'il avoit apprinse en peu de temps, se rendre un demy-dieu, et sembler que les princes et seigneurs du royaume ne fussent dignes de l'approcher.¹⁶⁰

A more frequently used tactic in League pamphlets involved playing upon *gentilshommes'* resentment of Henry III's *mignons*, portraying them as bounders and upstarts whom the King had advanced rapidly while he passed over men of greater rank and merit:

La Noblesse [est] si méprisée qu'on n'a pas vu un Seigneur de valeur récompensé: les Gouvernemens & Etats Militaires donnés à d'Epernon seul, ou aux siens; tellement que les

Princes mêmes étoient contraints de faire la cour à ce Cadet, second Gentilhomme de sa race, s'ils vouloient impétrer quelque chose du Roi.¹⁶¹

Another pamphlet aimed specifically at Epernon used the same device, and again betrayed the Leaguers' ambivalence about their own status. Addressing the Duke as "gentil perroquet mignon," the author went on, "Je ne dy pas gentil-homme, car on sçait assez que vostre grand-pere estoit notaire."¹⁶² Later in the same pamphlet, the presumption that noblemen would resent the parvenus was stated openly: "Par la jalousie qu'avez causé aux grands: on peut cognoistre, de combien il est pernicieux au Roys de se laisser gouverner par gens de basse condition, & ne faire conte des Princes, Seigneurs, ny de la noblesse."¹⁶³ One particularly vivid passage in another pamphlet encapsulated all the League's complaints about the royal favourites:

Ils s'efforcent de se mescognoistre eux mesme, & cherchent moyen d'oublier leur origine, & par une luxe prodigeux, imitent les plus grands Princes, en somptuositez de banquets, en superbes edifices, effroyable suite de serviteurs domestiques, & bombance d'habits, Leurs femmes en chariots magnifiques, & toutes sortes de grandeurs, outrepassent en orgueil le train des plus anciennes maisons. Et ce sont eux qui les premiers s'opposent à la reformation... Ils estoupent leurs oreilles contre les remonstrances des Predicateurs, & appellent sedicieux tous ceux qui n'approuvent pas le desordre universel.¹⁶⁴

The Leaguers' fundamental reproach against the *mignons*, then, was not their ostentation, which might be forgivable or even fitting in a great prince, but the rupture in the natural order which their ascent represented. Leaguer propagandists hoped to harness noblemen's resentment of the *mignons*, but were also expressing their own outrage at the *mignons'* violation on the hierarchic principle of social organisation.

In this context the League's support for sumptuary laws becomes immediately comprehensible, for a well-ordered, harmonious society required defined and visible boundaries between its component parts. The Parisian *cahier de doléances* of 1588 called for the interdiction of the wearing of silk by commoners at the university, and for police surveillance to ensure that "chacun se comporte en sa vacation et de ses moyens" and that nobody wore "habillemens excellans leur qualité."¹⁶⁵ A pamphlet published the same year granted that luxury was expected among princes, but insisted, "elle est intollerable en des maisons de Presidens, maistre des Requestes, Conseillers de vostre Parlement & autres vos Officiers des premiers & plus riches: Car ce n'est pas leur estat de vivre ainsi: ils doibvent vivre autrement & par l'exemple de leur modestie, servir de lumiere aux plus petits."¹⁶⁶

Although the League's direct political opposition to Henry III and his court sharpened Leaguer criticism of the *mignons*, this criticism grew out of the League's condemnation of unwarranted ennoblement, and thence out of its general social outlook. League pamphleteers, like the authors of *traités de noblesse* before them, deplored the usurpation of noble status through excessive ennoblements. A Leaguer list of grievances published at the time of the Blois Estates-General proposed that "les Duchez, Comtez & Marquizats erigés depuis tel ou tel temps [soient] supprimées & le nombre réduit à l'ancien, pour les incōmoditez que cela apporte, que les Deputez sçauront bien deduire & remonstrer."¹⁶⁷ The traditional nobility, then, was to be spared such levelling, and was implicitly separated from the horde of usurpers. Although their vantage differed, Leaguer and *gentilhomme* shared a hostile view of the parvenu:

N'avez vous pas veu qu'a la derision & mocquerie de la noblesse, on a crée un noble de faux coing, en chacune paroisse du royaume? N'avez vous pas ouy que par Edict il est permis au plus vil roturier de France, d'acquérir tiltre de noblesse...? Combien voyez vous de ceux qui vous ont servi de laquais, & en autre plus vil mestier,... estre plus eslevez, plus caressez, & mieux receuz que vous n'estes?... Tousjours les gens de vertu ont porté impatiemment qu'on esgalle à eux gens de petite estoffe & faquins, investiz des premiers estats, possesseurs de Duchez, Comtez, Baronnies, comme vous avez veu en France.¹⁶⁸

As discussed in chapter 5, however, Leaguers were not opposed in principle to all ennoblement, for the traditional theory of nobiliary virtue, which they espoused, depended on the possibility of ennoblement for genuine merit. Leaguers reserved their scorn for those who achieved noble status by stealth or wealth or royal caprice rather than through virtuous conduct. Boucher allowed that Epèrnon had a "pere vaillant & vertueux," who had justly gained rank for his family, but noted that the unworthy son, though a great magnate, lacked socially significant virtue, and "par sa mauvaise vie, obscurit la gloire de son pere."¹⁶⁹

A subsequent pamphlet by Boucher used the rise and fall of Epèrnon's maternal uncle as a parable illustrating the social effect of virtue in action. The pamphleteer again allowed that this uncle was among the new men who gained honour and noble status through genuine merit:

il fust le premier Gentilhomme de sa race, merita d'estre Mareschal de France, & fust parvenu à plus haut degré, s'il n'eust perdu sa reputation, au passage de la riviere, pres Gravelines: où il ayma mieux perdre les forces & noblesse de France, que de quitter & abandonner le pillage & butin, qu'il avoit faict mal à propos à Dunquerque.¹⁷⁰

Epernon's uncle rose because his virtue was recognised and rightly rewarded, but his virtue proved deficient, and Boucher showed in this passage that the man's crass concern for the protection of his loot, in other words his ignoble *ambition*, led to his undoing.

Henry III's inner circle was an easy target for the League's barbs, and royalist propagandists could not easily repel them without abandoning the theory of "la vertu de noblesse." At least one royalist pamphlet rejected the suggestion that noblemen resented the *mignons'* advancement, and argued lamely that the King's favourites were duly receiving the fruits of their virtue,

car tout homme qui est dedié & voué au service du Roy & de sa couronne, le plus-grand fruit de son labeur & solide gloire qu'il demande, c'est d'estre honoré par son Roy, pour ses actes vertueux, & recogneu pour bon serviteur & subject. Il n'y a rien mesle d'ambition n'y d'avarice: car son œil ne regarde q̄ l'honneur de Dieu & de son Prince.¹⁷¹

Given their revulsion at the morally, and hence socially, reprobate characters haunting Henry III's court, Leaguers exulted that with the flight of the court after the May 1588 uprising, Paris was cleansed of vice: "l'heureuse journee des barricades ... comme un torrent rapide a n'estoyé [sic] les plus grandes ordures de ceste ville là & a donné la chasse aux voleurs de court, & a la vermine des courtisans qui gastēt tout les villes."¹⁷² Moreover, the Day of the Barricades itself, Leaguers insisted, was a purely defensive measure touched off by a plot on the part of the King and his *mignons* to massacre prominent Parisians and sack the city.¹⁷³

In fact, according to the intelligence report of a royal agent who infiltrated the League and the time of its foundation, the Sixteen and Guises planned to overwhelm strategic sites throughout the capital, namely the Bastille, Arsenal, Châtelet, Temple and *Hôtel-de-Ville*, and then to besiege the Louvre, capture the King and impose a new council.¹⁷⁴ The Sixteen worried, however, that their insurrection could degenerate into a mere riot by the "grande quantité de voleurs et gens mécaniques;" they therefore invented the barricades, not as a bulwark against the forces of order, but as a means of preserving order, a crowd-control device.¹⁷⁵ A Leaguer pamphlet even claimed that Guise had protected the King from popular wrath: "[il] retint la violence du peuple justement irrité contre vous."¹⁷⁶ After the Sixteen's seizure of power in Paris, containing the popular fury their rebellion had unleashed remained a preoccupation. The new city government was obliged to issue repeated orders forbidding

unauthorized searches, arrests, and seizures of property by League sympathizers and simple opportunists; it also had to call upon the civic militia to control the armed bands of students roaming the streets.¹⁷⁷ When the Sixteen purged the Paris *Parlement* in January 1589, incarcerating the suspect judges in the Bastille, the royalist chronicler de Thou recorded the ruses to which the League had to resort in protecting the arrested *parlementaires* from the mob:

le bruit s'étant répandu qu'on menoit les prisonniers à l'Hôtel-de-ville, une multitude infinie de bateliers, de portefaix, de fainéans, & de gens de cette espèce, s'attroupa dans la Grève, disposés, à ce qu'on croyait, à les mettre en pièces, afin de servir de cette occasion pour piller les meilleurs maisons de la ville, mais on leur fit prendre une autre route; & ils échapèrent ainsi aux mains sanguinaires de ces furieux.¹⁷⁸

In other cities as well, Leaguer authorities were anxious to calm popular emotions. In Toulouse, for instance, the Leaguer bishop, after staging a putsch against royal authority, immediately took steps to prevent further tumult, and "appaïsa beaucoup de gens esmeuz, mesmes ceux qui pensoient ne trouver autre remède sinon que tuer les plus riches et les plus grands et piller leurs maisons."¹⁷⁹ Even before the League took power in Paris, the municipal government had been concerned about the menace posed by the city's floating population, and had taken steps to feed and employ the indigent, and to expel vagabonds.¹⁸⁰ Among the first decisions taken by local authorities after Blois was the establishment of "astelliers public qu'il convient ouvrir pour travailler aux fortifications," the purpose being more to occupy and feed the city's underclass, the danger within, than to strengthen the defences against the enemy without.¹⁸¹ As the level of privation in Paris worsened as a result of the war and repeated sieges, and as their popular support began to wither, the Leaguers' fear of the mob grew apace. Impounded property was used for poor relief, while the town council asked the Spanish Ambassador to extend his distribution of alms.¹⁸² The destitute were again the object of the bourgeoisie's fascinated terror, and "on ordonna que les paysans, bouches inutiles et medians, qui estoient bien trente mil, et que l'ennemy avoit fait entrer dans la ville, en fussent mis hors."¹⁸³ Still, disaffection grew, culminating in the August 1590 riot, when an armed crowd demanding "la paix ou du pain" gathered at the *palais* and was brutally put down by Aumale and Leaguer *gentilshommes*.¹⁸⁴

The Russian historian A. A. Lozinski notes that while the Parisian "bourgeoisie aisée" who led the Sixteen encouraged popular excitement in order to wrest control of the city from the *parlementaires*, they feared the consequences of an unrestrained popular movement. He argues, nevertheless, that the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and labouring masses was less stark than the opposition between the bourgeoisie and the *robe*.¹⁸⁵ Yet at least on the face of it, the "bourgeoisie seconde" who led the Sixteen were united with the *parlementaires* and *gentilshommes* in their fear of, and disdain for, the *menu peuple*. The Leaguers were not unique in their attitude towards their social inferiors, and historians studying the decades before and after the League period detect a similar alarm among bourgeois leaders, even those challenging central authority, at any sign of mass unrest.¹⁸⁶ The lack of deference they encountered from the Parisian populace must also have grated a status-conscious League leadership: "jamais ne fut un si arrogant & meschant peuple qu'est le menu peuple des villes de France, principalement de Paris, lequel mastine tout le monde ... ce menu peuple [est] si superbe en habits & plus pompeux qui n'estoient anciennement les grands marchans."¹⁸⁷ Royalist propagandists recognised and played upon the Parisian bourgeoisie's anxieties, sometimes as skilfully as their Leaguer counterparts did the nobility's:

voyez vostre ruine presente ... tous les ordres sont pervertis, le temple de Justice pollué, les crimes impunis, l'innocence opprimée, & la violence regne ... les Magistrats sont sans commandement, le peuple sans obéissance, les loix sans autorité, les gens de bien sans suffrages, & ... les plus vils & les plus meschans commandent.¹⁸⁸

Less subtle, the royalist ecclesiastic Arnauld d'Ossat enunciated the standard royalist view of the Paris League, one replicated by the chroniclers of the time, and so by historians almost till this day:

La Ligue a donné pour alliés aux hérétiques la plus grande partie des Catholiques et presque toute la noblesse ... Le peuple ne veut ni souverain ni gentilhomme.... Les fureurs de la Ligue ont établi, dans toutes les villes, la démocratie la plus effrénée ... Il n'y a donc plus d'Etats, en France; la Ligue les a tous confondus.¹⁸⁹

As I have attempted to demonstrate in this chapter, however, the bourgeois Leaguers' distaste for unbridled democracy, for social levelling, was as pronounced as the royalist jurists' and gentlemen's. Far from advocating a social revolution, Leaguer writings reproduced, almost in their entirety, the traditional nobiliary attitudes and assumptions about

social organisation. The Leaguers' mental universe was no less hierarchical than their enemies', and they nursed a profound dislike, indeed a horror, of confusion.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

¹Cited by PALMA-CAYET, Chronologie Novenaire, in MICHAUD & POUJOULAT, Nouvelle collection des mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France (Paris, 1838), vol. 12, p. 38. This letter, however, made the protection of nobiliary privileges contingent upon the nobility's support for the League.

²[Claude MATTHIEU], Declaration des causes qui on meu Monseigneur le Cardinal de Bourbon, et les Princes, Pairs, Prelats et Seigneurs, Villes et Communautés Catholiques de ce royaume, de s'opposer à ceux qui veulent subvertir la Religion et l'Estat ([Rheims], 1585) in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses 1^{re} series, vol. 11, p.14. The Rheims manifesto was, of course, a publication written in the name of the Cardinal de Bourbon, and represented the *Sainte Union* generally, not just the Paris Sixteen. Other pamphlets, however, adopted a similar line. A piece addressed to deputies at the 1588 Estates-General lamented the condition of "la Noblesse deterrée toute vive, la proie des usuriers & financiers." See Advis a Messieurs des Estats sur la reformation et le retranchement des abus & criminels de l'Estat (n.p., 1588), p. 7. This was one of the few League pamphlets to decry usury (see the discussion of usury in chapter 7). Interestingly, its author presented himself as a merchant, using the first person while discussing merchants (pp. 11-12).

³O. RAYNSSANT, Représentation de la noblesse hérétique sur le théâtre de France (Paris: G. Bichon, 1591), f. 75v. Cf. Advertissement des nouvelles cruautés & inhumanitez désseignées par le Tyran de la France (Paris: R. Thierry, 1589), p. 4: "Il a rendu la noblesse tributaire, faisant payer la taille, et autres excessives charges aux gentil-hommes." This same pamphlet also sought to direct noble resentment against another of the League's targets, the *robe*, arguing that noblemen bore a greater burden from the office-holders' extortions, and were more severely affected by the price rise, than were roturiers (pp. 19-20). Another pamphlet accused Henry III of deliberately wasting the blood of French *gentilshommes* at the battle of Coutras "sans faire plus d'estat de la Noblesse, & des biens affectionnez François que de mouches." See Contre les fausses allegations que les plus qu'Achitofels, Conseillers Cabinalistes, proposent pour excuser Henry le meurtrier (n.p., 1589), p. 47b.

⁴Exhortation à la sainte Union des Catholiques de France (n.p., 1589) in GOULART, Memoires de la Ligue (1758), vol. 3, p. 514.

⁵Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique de France, qui tient le party du Roy de Navarre (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), p. 30.

⁶Discours sur les calomnies imposees, aux Princes & Seigneurs Catholiques, par les Politiques de nostre temps (n.p., 1588), p. 104.

⁷Advis aux Catholiques françois, sur l'importance de ce qui se traicte aujourd'huy, sur l'irresolution de quelques scrupuleux (Paris: A. le Riche, 1589), p. 17.

⁸Exhortation aux Catholiques, pour attaquer promptement Henry de Valois, avant qu'il puisse avoir secours d'aucuns estrangers Heretiques ([Paris]: D. Millot, [1589]), p. 3. This pamphlet addressed similar exhortations to the "braves harquebusiers" and "robustes piquiers" as well. Cf. the "Sonnet à la Noblesse unie" in Discours veritable de la deffaitte obtreue sur les troupes politiques & heretiques du pays & Duché de Berry (Troyes: J. Moreau, 1589), p. 12.

⁹[Etienne BERNARD], Advis aux François de la resolution prise aux Estats de Bloys, contre Henry de Bourbon (Lyons, 1589), p. 28. Bernard also reminded noblemen of the obligations of the

Second Estate enumerated by the Count of Brissac in his speech to the Estates General. See Charels de Cossé, comte de BRISSAC, Harangue prononcee devant le Roy, seant en ses Estats generaux (Blois: J. Mettayer, P. l'Huillier, 1589), pp. 12-13.

¹⁰Le Fleau de Henry soy disant Roy de Navarre (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1589), p. 30.

¹¹Discours sur les calomnies imposées, p. 103. Another pamphlet presented participation in the Crusades as something which had been expected of all noblemen, and contains an interesting assumption about travel, or perhaps military service, in Italy; "Comme l'on estime maintenant deshonneste à un gentil-homme de maison, de n'avoir fait un voyage en Italie pour y apprendre plusieurs hōnestes exercices: aussi l'estoit-ce lors de n'avoir fait un voyage en la terre Sainte, et là cōbattu genereusement contre les ennemis de Dieu." Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique, p. 4.

¹²La Ligue tres-sainte, tres-Chrestienne & tres-Catholique (n.p., [1585]), p. 3.

¹³Lettre ou advertissement à un Seigneur François, Catholique pour le destourner & toute la Noblesse, d'aller au camp du Roy de Navarre (Paris: D. Millot, 1589), pp. 20-21.

¹⁴Pierre POISSON, Harangue au peuple de France sur les louanges des anciens François (Paris: D. Cotinet, 1588), f. 2v. The author of this pamphlet is identified on the title page as "sieur de la Bodiniere, Angevin," but is otherwise unknown. Without attributing any inherent superiority to Frankish (or noble) blood, as some contemporary writers were beginning to do (see chapter 3), Poisson recalled the triumphs of the early Franks, and their victories over the Arian heretics (passim). Cf. Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique de France, p. 4. It is worth noting that League writers shared the nobiliary fascination with the early Franks, even while rejecting the conclusions some drew from Frankish history.

¹⁵Matthieu de LAUNOY, Remonstrance. Contenant une instruction de quatre poincts à la Noblesse de France (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1590), p. 8.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁷*Ibid.* See also Lettre ou advertissement à un Seigneur François, pp. 21-22: "puis que ce n'est Moindre vertu de conserver l'acquis que d'en acquerir de nouveau, rendons toute peine à garder & deffendre soigneusement ce qu'ils nous ont laissé de plus exquis."

¹⁸Jean de CAUMONT, Advertissement des adverstissements, Au peuple tres-chrestien (n.p., 1587), p. 20. Cf. Bref discours sur la deffaite des Huguenots (Paris: F. Plummion, 1588), p. 10: "on peut dire ... que la force d'une ville ... ne consiste en grād nombre de soldats ... ains en la seul force, generosité & magnanimité des combatans: de laquelle vertu les habitans de ladite ville estans douez, se peuvent vanter de ce, qu'ils laisseront & transmettront à leur posterité, la memoire d'un acte si genereux & insigne."

¹⁹Lettre ou advertissement à un Seigneur François, pp. 8, 22; Justification de la guerre entreprise, commencee et poursuivie souz la conduite de tres-valeureux & debonnaire Prince Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1589), pp. 50-51; see also Du Contemnement de la mort (Paris: N. Nivelles, 1589), pp. 13-14.

²⁰Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique, pp. 27-28. In an open letter to the nobility, the papal legate cautioned his readers that if they allowed France to fall into the hands of the heretics, "[il] demeura gravé dans la memoire de la posterité que vous avec les autres Seigneurs François, pour suivre l'impetuosité de quelque affection particuliere plustost que le bien du Royaume, aurez occasionné tout de malheurs lesquels ils estoit en vostre puissance de destourner." Lettres de Monseigneur le Cardinal Cajetan ... Envoyees à la Noblesse de France (Lyons: J. Pillehotte, 1590), p. 7.

²¹CAUMONT, Advertissement, pp. 21-22. Cf. Michel MARCHANT, La Paralyse de la France, avec le remède d'icelle (Paris: P. Hury, 1590), p. 8: "Nous avons presentement ... tant de loix ordonnances & statuz & constitutions très-juste & equitables lesquelles depuis un si reculé espace de temps delaissees par nos devanciers sont parvenus a nous, comme de main en main ... pour nous conduire & maintenir en la droicte voye de la vertu."

²²Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique, pp. 5-6. Cf. [BERNARD], op. cit., p. 27: "Ils ont monsté jusques à la Palestine qu'ils ne portoyent l'espee pour autre usage, que pour l'avancement & deffence de la foy, & vous courez fortune pour la ruiner. Plusieurs d'entre vous ont leurs armoires semees de croix, tesmoignage certain de la pieté & devotion de vos ancestres, & vous suyvés celui qui les fait abbatre."

²³[Michel MARCHANT], Exhortation derniere a la noblesse, pour la delivrance de nostre Roy Très-Chretien (Paris: P. Hury, 1589), p. 11.

²⁴Justification de la guerre entreprise, p. 43. Such an evocation of nobiliary independence comes at a time when the nobility was, in spite of itself, moving to embrace absolutism. Appeals to courage, however, were not addressed exclusively to the nobility, as shown by Papire Masson's rhetorical question, addressed apparently to a fellow jurist, "aurons nous le cœur si failly & effeminé de nous tenir [hors de combat]?" [MASSON] Avis à l'irresolu de Limoges (Paris: R. le Fizelier, 1589), pp. 59-60.

²⁵Lettre ou advissement à un Seigneur François, p. 21.

²⁶Discours sur les calomnies imposees, p. 104. It is noteworthy that League pamphlets also deplored the decline of the quality of Frenchmen generally, and in very similar terms, indicating the degree to which noblemen's preoccupation with ancestry was shared. By rhetorically sharing in the nobility's decline, moreover, Leaguer polemicists implicitly minimised the distinction between *gentilhomme* and *roturier*. Apparently referring to French people as a whole, Papire Masson recalled the ancient glory of France, and its right to the epithet *très chrétien*: "nous avons tant adjousté de couârdise de poltronnerie de faineâtise, & de meschâceté, q̄ nous nous sômes rēdus indignes de ces insignes & glorieux tiltres." [MASSON], op. cit., p. 25. Another anonymous pamphleteer argued that "la vertu des vrays fidelles françois" formerly surpassed that of the Greeks and Romans, but that "nous nous sommes tāt esloignez de la perfectiō de noz devanciers." Remonstrance et complainte de la France (Paris: G. Bichon, 1589), p. 9.

²⁷[Louis DORLEANS], Le Banquet et apresdinée du Conte d'Arete, où il se traicte de la dissimulation du Roy de Navarre, & des mœurs de ses partisans (Paris: G. Bichon, 1594), p. 184.

²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 58. Masson, again, applied the same language to Frenchmen generally, rhetorically asking whether his contemporaries were "enfants illegitimes & bastards ou plustost engeance de

Canibales?" [MASSON], op. cit., p. 40. Another pamphlet by a Parisian captain and member of the Sixteen asked "Voulons nous estre declarez enfans bastards des anciens François, qui ont si courageusement soustenu leur religion, tant contre les Infidelles que contre les Albigeois heretiques?" Loys de SAINCTION, Remonstrance faicte en l'assemblée generale des Colonnels, Cappitaines, Lieutenans, & Enseignes de la Ville de Paris (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1590), p.9. On Sainction, see Robert DESCIMON, Qui étaient les Seize? (Paris: Klincksieck, 1983), N° 205. Cf. Advis, sur ce qui est a faire, tant contre les Catholiques simulez, que les ennemis ouverts de l'Eglise (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), pp. 29-30: "serons nous enfans legitimes ou bastards infames de ces François anciens qui ont outre passé les mers pour faire la guerre cōtre les Turcs?"

²⁹RAYNSSANT, op. cit., f. 4r.; see also f. 50v. This and other purely rhetorical turns of phrase should not be interpreted as implying an acceptance by the League writers of the hereditary transmission of socially significant moral qualities.

³⁰Ibid., f. 1r.

³¹Ibid., f. 2r.

³²Exhortation Catholique aux trois ordres de la France (Lyons: [J. Pillehotte], 1589), pp. 14-15.

³³Jehan de CAUMONT, De la Vertu de Noblesse auz Roys et Princes tres Chrestiens (Paris: F. Morel, 1585) f. 10r.

³⁴[DORLEANS], Banquet, p. 60. Dorléans's comments were directed specifically at *politique* noblemen, but dealt here with their general brutality towards their social inferiors, not their political posture. His references are to the Greek tyrants Pisistratus of Athens (d. 527 BC) and Dionysius of Syracuse (430-367 BC). He later notes that "Pisistrate fut la cigue qui empoisonna la plus noble partie de la Grece" (p. 67).

³⁵Advertissement des nouvelles cruauz, pp. 21-22. Cf. "Arraisonnement du sieur de Vicques avec un bourgeois de Paris," [1592] ed. Ch. VALOIS as "Un Dialogue historique du temps de la Ligue," Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de la France, vol. 55 (1908), p. 220: "vous ne faict[es] la guerre qu'aux manans, aux vaches et aux pauvres laboureurs." Michel Marchant denounced the practice of armies living off the land, "tout se tourne aux despens, oppression & ruine totale du pauvre peuple," and bewailed the lot of "les pauvres qui sont vagabonds,... absens de leur pays, maisons & demeures ruinees, fuyans la cruauté inexorable des soldats enragez." MARCHANT, Paralysie, pp. 39, 42. See also [BERNARD], Advis aux François, p. 32: "Quel regret auroient ces preux Chevaliers vos Peres, vrais pilliers de la foy, si par les loix de nature il estoit permis de revivre, de voir vos ravages, d'ouyr les plaintes & gemissemēts du pauvre peuple, & de le veoir tant souffrir soubz l'oppressiō de vos courses?" Even Mayenne's announcement forbidding the seizure or sacking of royalist noblemen's property had to admit that châteaux served as bolt-holes for gentlemen brigands: "Chacun sçait que l'occupatiō des Chasteaux, maisons, & places fortes ... qui servent de retraicte aux gens de guerre, & tiennent en continuelle subjection le plat pays, ouvert le chemin à tant d'exactions, pilleries, volleries & rançonnemens qui se commettent journellement sur les pauvres subjects." Declaration du Roy. Par laquelle il veut que les maisons des Catholiques qui assistent le Roy de Navarre, esquelles il ne se commet aucun acte d'hostilité soient conservees (Paris: N. Nivelles, & R. Thierry, 1589), p. 4.

³⁶Discours ample et veritable, de la defaite obtenuë aux Faux-bourgs de Tours, sur les troupes de Henry de Valois (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), p. 3.

³⁷Henry HELLER, Iron and Blood: Civil Wars in Sixteenth-Century France (Montréal: McGill-Queen's, 1991), p. 136.

³⁸[François] de L'ALOUETTE, Des Affaires d'estat. Des finances: du prince et de sa noblesse 2nd ed. Metz: J. d'Arras, 1597, p. 165. Cf. Louys MUSSET, Discours sur les remonstrances et reformatiōns de chacun estat (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1582), f. 162v.: "la noblesse qui nous blesse." Cited chapter 3 supra, n. 48. André Devyver points out that the critique of noblemen's brutality dated from the Middle Ages, but that it not call into question the nobility's social standing. See DEVYVER, Le Sang épuré: Les préjugés de race chez les gentilshommes français de l'Ancien Régime (1560-1720) (Brussels, 1973), p. 217

^{38bis}DEVYVER, Le Sang épuré, p. 69 n. 39, p. 84, p. 139: Devyver attributed Raynssant's work to Brissac and characterised it as "un point de vue specifiquement noble." Raynssant was a member of the Sixteen, and though he held a seigneurie and was a successful jurist and *conseiller au Présidial*, he was by no means a *gentilhomme*. See DESCIMON, Qui étaient les Seize? N° 195.

³⁹Devis familier d'un Gentil-homme Catholique Francois avec un Laboureur n.p., 1590, p. 100. The same pamphlet puts into the *laboureur's* mouth the charge that nobles who shrank from fighting the League had "le cœur failly." (p. 87) Cf. CAUMONT, Vertu de Noblesse, f. 5r.: "jamais heretique fut noble ... ils sont ... tous lasches, & de cœur failly." Cited chapter 5 supra, n. 21.

⁴⁰[André MAILLARD] La Fulminante pour feu tres-grand et tres-Chrestien Prince Henry III n.p., 1590, p. 50-51.

⁴¹Advertissement à la Noblesse & villes de Bourgogne, tenans party de la feinte Union n.p., [1594], pp. 10-12.

⁴²[MAILLARD], op. cit., p. 47.

⁴³Seconde Remonstrance a la Noblesse Catholique qui tient le party du Roy de Navarre (Lyons: J. Pillehotte, 1590), passim. Leaguers also reminded the nobility of its stake in the *status quo*, and argued that the elites had the most to lose from the social disruption which a change in the established religion implied: "cest advissement n'est pas fait à la simple populasce seulement, comme quelques uns nous accusent injustement, mais principalement aux Princes, au Clergé & à la Noblesse, car à ceux-là, touche de plus pres la conservation de l'Estat de France, & doivent se proposer en combien d'inconveniens ils tomberont, si une fois les estrangers & heretiques, prennent pied en France ... c'est à la Noblesse principalement à qui ce fait touche le plus, car de tous les trois Estats, il n'y en a point qui ayent plus d'interest qu'elle, à la conservation du bel ordre & establissement de ce Royaume." Advertissement des nouvelles cruautez, pp. 9, 14.

⁴⁴Lettres de Monseigneur le Cardinal Cajetan ... Envoyees à la Noblesse de France pp. 5-6.

⁴⁵[Louis DORLEANS], Replique pour le Catholique anglois, contre le Catholique associé des huguenots (n.p., 1588), f. 17r.

⁴⁶LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 145.

⁴⁷Advertissement des nouvelles cruauitez, p. 19. Cf. Advis au Roy (n.p., 1588), [pp. 12-13]: "quand on vous parle du peuple, ce n'est pas vo'parler simplement de petits artisans, ou marchâs.... quand je dis que vous devez accommoder vostre auctorité à l'obeissance du peuple, c'est pour vous accōmoder au clergé, à la Noblesse & au tiers estat de vostre royaume." The actual social implications of Leaguer political theory are discussed in chapter 7, *infra*.

⁴⁸[Louis DORLEANS], Apologie ou defence des Catholique unis les uns avec les autres, contre les impostures des Catholiques associez à ceux de la pretenduë Religion (n.p., 1586), p. 28. See also Advertissement des nouvelles cruauitez, p. 15: "nous Catholiques unis à la conservation de l'ancienne discipline & religion de la France, nous ne devons pas estre soupçonnez, de vouloir introduire un estat populaire, comme calomnieusement les huguenots nous en accusent, c'estoient eux qui avoient ceste volonté." Cf. Advis au Roy p. 10; LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 47.

⁴⁹LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 144.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁵¹Le Remercement des Catholiques unis. Faicts à la Declaration & Protestation de Henry de Bourbon (Lyons: [J. Pillehotte], 1589, p. 21.

⁵²Advertissement des nouvelles cruauitez, pp. 15-16.

⁵³Remonstrance à la noblesse, pp. 26-27.

⁵⁴La Nouvelle defaite obtenue sur les Loques de Henry de Valois, dans les Fauxbourgs de Tours, le huictiesme May 1589. Par Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), p. 6. Another Leaguer piece distinguishes between the performances of the "Noblesse" and "gens de pied" in Catholic armies: Discours du progres de l'armee du Roy en Guienne, commandee par Charles de Lorraine, Duc de Mayne (Paris: N. Nivelles, 1586), pp. 21, 28, 53.

⁵⁵La Nouvelle defaite obtenue, pp. 5, 7.

⁵⁶MARCHANT, Paralysie, p. 41.

⁵⁷[Louis DORLEANS], Remonstrances aux Catholiques de tous les Estats de France, pour entrer en l'association de la Ligue (n.p., 1586), f. 7. Dorelans cited the example of the Knights of Malta. Cf. Lettre ou advissement à un Seigneur François, p. 24: "c'est la religion ... que toutes gens de bien & par dessus tous, la Noblesse Françoisse, doivēt avec la perte de tout ce qu'ils ont de plus cher courageusement soustenir & deffendre."

⁵⁸[DORLEANS], Replique pour le Catholique anglois, f. 10v.

⁵⁹Causes plus particulieres qui obligent chaque état, surtout la Noblesse, de prendre les armes ([Paris], 1589) in GOULART, Memoires III, p. 530.

⁶⁰[DORLEANS], Replique pour le Catholique anglois, f. 10r.-v.

⁶¹[BERNARD], Advis aux François, pp. 26-27.

⁶²MARCHANT, Paralysie, p. 41. Emphasis mine.

⁶³André CORVISIER, "La Noblesse militaire. Aspects militaires de la noblesse française du XVe et XVIIIe siècles," Histoire sociale vol. 11 (Nov. 1978), p. 336. According to Corvisier, in the traditional view "la noblesse apparaissait comme d'essence militaire."

⁶⁴Advertissement à tous bons et loyaux subjectz du Roy, Ecclesiastiques, Nobles, & du Tiers estat (Paris: M. de Roigny, 1587), p.C. Two historians identify this as a Leaguer text, wrongly, I believe. See Denis PALLIER, Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue (Geneva: Droz, 1975), N° 50; and Pierre MESNARD, L'Essor de la philosophie politique au XVIe siècle (Paris: Boivin, 1936), pp. 375-376. It was written in 1587 (judging from internal evidence between April and October), at a time when the Royal army was locked in battle with Navarre's Huguenots, and the Leaguers still loudly proclaimed their loyalty to Henry III, even as they continued their subversion. Catholic opinion was not yet deeply polarised between Leaguer and *politique* tendencies, but this pamphlet appears to be the work of a Catholic Royalist meaning to counter League efforts to undermine royal authority. It alludes disparagingly to the Guises, and to the "conspirateurs [qui] continuënt leur entreprise" despite Henry III's demonstrations of piety and zeal. (p. Ciii). The pamphlet was issued "Avec Privilege du Roy," and its publisher, Michel de Roigny, put out nothing after 1588. He is described elsewhere by Pallier as "peu ligueur" (p. 488).

⁶⁵[Jean DUJON], Articles remonstrez a Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne (Paris: G. Chaudiere, 1589), p. 6.

⁶⁶Cited by PALMA-CAYET, op. cit., in MICHAUD & POUJOULAT, Mémoires, vol. 12, p. 38a.

⁶⁷E.g., Litearchie contre les perciteux esprits, libelles, calomnies & Apologies naguieres faictes par aucuns heretiques (n.p., 1587), f. 6r. Cf. the royalist piece Devis familier d'un Gentil-homme, p. 98. For François de La Noue, noblemen were "professeurs de vertu," LA NOUE, Discours politiques et militaires, ed. F.E. Sutcliffe (Geneva: Droz, 1967), p. 232, cited supra, chapter 3, n. 81.

⁶⁸CAUMONT, Advertissement des advertissemens, p. 25.

⁶⁹François de CROME, Dialogue d'entre le maheustre et le manant [1593], ed. P.M. ASCOLI, (Geneva: Droz, 1977), p. 59.

⁷⁰Lettre ou advertissement à un Seigneur François, p. 6.

⁷¹Le Fleau de Henry soy disant Roy de Navarre, [p. 2].

⁷²[Claude de RUBYS], Responce à L'Anti-Espagnol, (Lyons: J. Pillehotte, 1590), pp. 46-47.

⁷³LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 17.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 20: "Celuy donc qui degenere de ces belles & celestes vertuz, desquelles estoient ornez ses ancestres, ne peut & ne doit estre receu pour heritier de la Noblesse d'iceux."

⁷⁵La Deffaite des troupes huguenottes et politiques, en Champagne: par le Sieur de Saint-Paul (Paris: D. Millot, 1589), p. 4.

⁷⁶Remonstrance et complainte de la France (Paris: G. Bichon, 1589), pp. 5-6.

⁷⁷Reglement faict par Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne...pour pourveoir & remedier aux desordres (Paris: F. Morel, 1589), p. 7.

⁷⁸See chapter 3, *supra*, nn. 49-53, 80.

⁷⁹Stuart JUZDA, "The Parisian Bourgeoisie, 1400-1600: Problems and Attitudes," M.A. thesis, Sir George Williams, 1973, pp. 47-48, 63; Arlette JOUANNA, "La Thème de l'utilité publique dans la polémique anti-nobiliaire en France dans la deuxième moitié du XVI^e siècle," in Théorie et pratique politique à la Renaissance (Paris: Vrin, 1977), p. 289; J. HUIZINGA, The Waning of the Middle Ages, trans. F. HOPMAN (Penguin, 1965), p. 56: "To the catholic sould the unworthiness of the persons never compromised the sacred character of the institution... The decadence of chivalrous virtues might be stigmatized without deviating for a moment from the respect due to... the nobility as such. The estates of society cannot but be venerable and lasting, because they have all been ordained by God."

⁸⁰Davis BITTON, The French Nobility in Crisis, 1560-1640 (Stanford, 1969), pp. 34-35; Manfred ORLEA, La Noblesse aux Estats généraux de 1576 et de 1588 (Paris: P.U.F., 1980), p. 161.

⁸¹Devis familier d'un Gentil-homme, p. 101.

⁸²RAYNSSANT, *op. cit.*, f. 58v.

⁸³For a study of the tripartite concept of society, see Georges DUBY, The Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined, trans. A. GOLDHAMMER (Chicago, 1980), *passim*.

⁸⁴J.P. MALLORY, In Search of the Indo-Europeans (London: Thames & Hudson, 1989), pp. 130-135, 139, 270-272. It is interesting to speculate that the social hierarchy of feudalism and the Hindu caste system, which was introduced into the sub-continent by the Aryan invasions, may have had a common origin.

⁸⁵Le Serment de la sainte Union (Paris: R. Thierry, 1589), p.6.

⁸⁶"Acte de la Ligue" (Paris, 15 June 1589), in LOUCHITZKY, Documents inédits (1875), p. 228. Emphasis mine. Cf. Lettres de Monseigneur le Cardinal Cajetan, p. 6: "Ains le but qu'on a devant les yeux est de guarentir & conserver en son entier la Religion Catholique, & que selon la distinction des degrez & estats un chacun soit maintenu en son droict."

⁸⁷POISSON, Harangue au peuple de France, f. 6r. This passage recalled that Henry II, who was mortally wounded jousting, died "en acte genereux." While Leaguers could accept chivalrous tournaments as needful preparation for a just war, Leaguers joined the general condemnation of the epidemic of dueling; Nicolas Rolland Du Plessis, for example, denounced the practice of building sepulchres for those killed in duels. ROLLAND Remonstrances tres-humbles au Roy de France et de Pologne Henry troisieme ([Paris], 1588), pp. 195-196.

⁸⁸"De par les Prevost des Marchans et Eschevins de cette ville de Paris," in L'ESTOILE, Belles figures, pp. 204-205.

⁸⁹CAUMONT, Advertissement des advertissemens, p. 25.

⁹⁰Remonstrance et complainte de la France, p. 10.

⁹¹The Parisian *cahier* presented to the Estates General of 1588 demanded that *viguiers* be excluded from any role in criminal cases beyond the exercise of their police function and the enforcement of decisions, "bien qu'ils soyent gens de robbe court et non lettrez." See "Le Cahier de doléances de la ville de Paris aux États généraux de 1588," ed. E. BARNAVI, in Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France, vol. 487 (1976-77), p. 147.

⁹²Discours au peuple de Paris et autres Catholiques de France, sur les nouvelles entreprises des rebelles, & seditieux (Paris: M. de Roigny, 1585), p. 23.

⁹³DORLEANS, Remonstrances aux Catholiques de tous les Estats, f. 3.

⁹⁴Cf. Exhortation Catholique aux trois ordres, pp. 13ff; DORLEANS, Banquet, p. 178; CAUMONT, Advertissement des advertissemens, p. 13.

⁹⁵MARCHANT, Paralysie, pp. 5-6.

⁹⁶Du Contemnement de la mort, p. 20. Another pamphlet maintained that in pursuing its godly mission, the League would employ "grands et petits ... selon leur capacité." See La Ligue tres-sainte, p. 26.

⁹⁷Discussed in chapter 3, *supra*.

⁹⁸Gaston ZELLER, Les Institutions de la France au XVIe siècle (Paris: P.U.F., 1948), p. 16. See also BITTON, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-68, 71.

⁹⁹ZELLER, Institutions, p. 16.

¹⁰⁰BITTON, *op.cit.*, p. 68.

¹⁰¹Advis au Catholiques françois, sur l'importance de ce qui se traite aujourd'huy, pp. 3, 8; L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 261.

¹⁰²Cited by PALMA-CAYET, *op. cit.*, in MICHAUD & POUJOULAT, Mémoires, vol. 12, p. 38a.

¹⁰³CROME, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

¹⁰⁴See chapter 3, *supra*, nn. 93-94.

¹⁰⁵L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 179. Cited chapter 3, *supra*, n. 88.

¹⁰⁶LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 18.

¹⁰⁷Jehan de CAUMONT, La Harangue et proposition faicte au Roy sur l'union de toute la noblesse Catholique de France (Paris: A. le Coqu, 1588), p. 5.

¹⁰⁸LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 5. Another pamphlet attacked Henry III for taking the "vies sacrées des Prelats & personnes privilégiées de dignités." See [Pierre SENAULT], Advis de Messieurs du Conseil General (Paris: F. Morel, 1589), p. 4. The exalted status of the nobleman is later stressed by Launoy, who argued "d'autant qu'on estimoit que la parolle d'un Gentilhomme devoit estre comme la parole de Dieu, veu que les Nobles sont tenuz entre les autres hommes comme petits Dieux en hautesse." (p. 17).

¹⁰⁹Litearchie contre les perciteux esprits, ff. 5v-6r.

¹¹⁰MARCHANT, Paralysie, p. 30.

¹¹¹LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 6.

¹¹²CAUMONT, Vertu de Noblesse, f. 2r. Cf. LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 6: "la conservation de la noblesse est la beauté de l'univers." Denis Richet notes that in early modern France the principle that the "sanior pars," the healthiest segment of society, should dominate, was never contested except in rare moments of social inversion. RICHET, La France Moderne: l'esprit des institutions (Paris: Flammarion, 1973), pp. 100-101.

¹¹³Arlette JOUANNA, Ordre social: Mythes et hiérarchies dans la France du XVI^e siècle (Paris: Hachette, 1977), p. 180.

¹¹⁴[Louis DORLEANS], Advertissement des Catholiques Anglois aux François Catholiques, du danger où ils sont ([Paris], 1586), in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol 11, p. 121.

¹¹⁵DORLEANS, Banquet, p. 185.

¹¹⁶A. BERNARD, ed., Procès-verbaux des États généraux de 1593 (Paris, 1842), p. 215.

¹¹⁷Remonstrance et complainte de la France, p. 6. See also MARCHANT, Paralysie, pp. 20, 41, *passim*. Other pamphlets identified the king and nobility, respectively, as the head and heart of the social body; see La Harangue faicte au Roy par la noblesse de la France, sur les guerres & troubles de son Royaume (Paris, 1588), [p. 6], and CAUMONT, Harangue, p. 5; both passages also use astronomic metaphors to describe social relations.

¹¹⁸DORLEANS, Banquet, p. 27; cf. chapter 3, *supra*, n. 102.

¹¹⁹DESCIMON, "La Ligue à Paris (1585-1594): une revision," Annales vol. 37, no. 1 (Jan.-Feb. 1982), pp. 89-94; Qui étaient les Seize, pp. 89, 294; and with E. BARNAVI, La Sainte Ligue, le juge, et la potence (Paris: Hachette, 1985), p. 35.

¹²⁰Exhortation Catholique aux trois ordres, p. 15. Louis Dorléans urged "l'ecclesiastique, le noble, le justicier, le marchand et l'artisan" to band together against heresy. [DORLEANS], Advertissement des Catholiques Anglois, p. 138. A Leaguer battle account told how the "noblesse & commune du pays tant de ladite ville" united to defeat a Huguenot force. See Bref discours sur la deffaitte des Huguenots, p. 11. See also Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique, p. 26: "unissons

nous pour la cōservation de nostre religion." On the idea of the *Sainte Union* embracing discrete social elements, see Christopher STOCKER, "Exclusion and Union: The Associative Impulse in the Catholic League," in *Aequitas, Aequalitas, Auctoritas*, ed. D. LETOCHA (Paris: Vrin, 1992), p. 277, *passim*.

¹²¹Advertissement des nouvelles cruautez, pp. 23-24. Cf. RAYNSSANT, *Théâtre*, f. 5v: "l'on seme des divisions ... entre les princes & seigneurs, afin que la guerre en emportant tousjours quelqu'un, nommement des plus valeureux ... le nombre diminue petit à petit, & y restans peu ou point de ces vrayemens François, & de ceste genereuse noblesse, plus aisement on puisse ranger le peuple à la servitude, luy faire porter le joug, & luy desraciner ceste liberté & vraye zele de religion nee avec eux, & planter en la France toute sorte d'impiété."

¹²²Declaration de Monsieur de La Chastre aux habitans de Bourges (Paris: D. Millot, 1589), p. 1. Cf. *supra*, n. 95.

¹²³As noted, *supra*, n. 12, however, Leaguers admitted that noblemen were entitled to the booty and trophies won in a just war. Moreover, they were not to be denied the intangible benefit of glory and applause, "la renommee publie par tout l'univers ce qu'ils ont vertueusement executé." Discours ample et veritable, de la defaite obtenue aux Faux-bourgs de Tours, pp. 4-5. On the other hand, Louis Dorléans put things in perspective by arguing that "une si legere consideration d'une gloire mondaine, ne doit pas departir l'honneste & genereux Gentilhomme du soustien de la gloire de Dieu." DORLEANS, *Remonstrances*, f. 11.

¹²⁴Le Fleau de Henry soy disant Roy de Navarre, p.31. Curiously for a piece written after Henry III's assassination (it mentions his death on p. 37), this pamphlet numbered the order of St-Esprit among those it lists. Founded by Henry III in 1578, St-Esprit remained closely identified with the King, and quite exclusive. See ORLEA, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

¹²⁵Lettre ou advisement à un Seigneur François, p. 20.

¹²⁶DUJON, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

^{126bis}See chapter 3, *supra*, nn. 84-86. On the concept of the "bien public" in nobiliary thinking, see Arlette JOUANNA, Le Devoir de révolte (Paris: Fayard, 1989), pp. 192, 283, *passim*. It is noteworthy, however, that noblemen themselves were beginning to incorporate personal ambition into their ethical system; this tendency became more pronounced in the following century. See Jonathan DEWALD, Aristocratic Experience and the Origins of Modern Culture, France, 1570-1715 (Berkeley, 1993), pp. 15-20.

¹²⁷RAYNSSANT, *op. cit.*, f. 31r.

¹²⁸HENRY III, La Harangue faite par le Roy Henry Troiesme de France & de Pologne, à l'ouverture de l'assemblee des Trois Estats generaux de son Royaume, en sa ville de Bloys le seizième jour d'Octobre, 1588 (Paris: F. Morel, J. Mettayer, 1588), f. 5r.

¹²⁹E.g. Conference chrestienne, de quatre docteurs theologiens, & de trois fameux Advocats, sur le fait de la Ligue, & levee des armes, faite depuis quelque temps en France (1586), f. 6r.

¹³⁰One Leaguer dialogue, for instance, has the royalist captain asserting, "en ces guerres cy, il n'y va pas de la religion [mais] de l'Estat seulement et de l'ambition des grands." See "Arraignment du sieur de Vicques avec un bourgeois de Paris", p. 211.

¹³¹MARCHANT, Exhortation dernière à la noblesse, p. 7. See also DORLEANS, Apologie ou defence des Catholiques unis, pp. 20, 23; Discours sur les calomnies imposees, pp. 43ff; Du Contemnement de la mort, pp. 16, 18, 20; Justification de la guerre entreprise, p. 53; Remonstrance d'un Gentilshomme de Dauphiné, à Henry de Valois, pour le soulagement du pauvre peuple dudict Païs (n.p., 1589), p. 5; CAJETAN, op. cit., p. 6; L'Histoire des deportements d'Henry de Valois (1589), quoted by Jean GAILLARD, "Essai sur quelques pamphlets ligueurs," Revue des questions historiques vol. 95 (Jan. 1914), p. 110-111.

¹³²Harangue au reverendissime et illustrissime legat Henry Cajetan, faite par aucuns Bourgeois de Paris (Paris: D. Millot, 1590), p. 10. Cf. CROME, op. cit., pp. 92, 121ff.

¹³³[MARCHANT], Exhortation dernière, pp. 18, 12.

¹³⁴Discours des trahisons, perfidies, et desloyautez des Politiques de Paris (Lyons: Loys Tantillon, 1589), p. 7. Cf. p. 16: "l'ambition leur avait tellement bandé les yeux, que veulent miner ceste ville."

¹³⁵[Jean BOUCHER], Histoire tragique et memorable de Pierre de Gaverston (n.p.: 1588), ff. Aiiir, Aiiiv. See also Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique de France, pp. 26, 31; Le Fleau de Henry, pp. 36, 40; Contre les fausses allegations, p. 13; Discours veritable de la deffaite obtenue sur les troupes des politiques & heretiques du pays & Duché de Berry, p. 7; Seconde Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique, pp. 3-4; SAINCTION, Remonstrance, p. 3; MARCHANT, Paralysie, p. 20; RAYNSANT, op. cit., f. 5r; [DORLEANS], Banquet, p. 11.

¹³⁶CROME, op. cit., p. 84.

¹³⁷MARCHANT, Paralysie, p. 44.

¹³⁸Seconde Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique, p. 5.

¹³⁹MARCHANT, Paralysie, pp. 20-21.

¹⁴⁰La Ligue tres-sainte, p. 31. This pamphlet also called for the reform of regular religious orders, particularly the Benedictines. Its author, admittedly, did present himself as an old soldier.

¹⁴¹La Harangue faite au Roy par la noblesse de la France [p. 14]. Although purporting to represent a nobiliary point of view, this is clearly a Leaguer piece.

¹⁴²[Jean BOUCHER], Lettre missive de l'evesque du Mans. Avec la responce à icelle, faite au mois de Septembre dernier passé, par un Docteur en Theologie de la faculté de Paris (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1589), p. 7. Cf. BERNARD, op. cit., p. 28: "un point trop vulgaire, & propre d'une escolle."

¹⁴³Deffaite des troupes Huguenottes qui estoient en Champagne (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), p. 9.

¹⁴⁴CROME, op. cit., p. 171. This passage contains one of the few disapproving references to usury in Leaguer literature. The League's attitude towards moneylending is discussed in chapter 7, *infra*.

¹⁴⁵Le Manifeste de la France aux Parisiens & a tout le peuple François ([Tours]: 1590), p. 13.

¹⁴⁶DESCIMON, "La Ligue à Paris (1585-1594): une revision," p. 88.

¹⁴⁷Advertissement des nouvelles cruantez, p. 19.

¹⁴⁸Advis au Roy, pp. 12-13.

¹⁴⁹Responce des Catholiques zelez et unis ([Paris]: J. Parent, 1589), f. Ciiir. François de Montholon, a zealot who owed his promotion from simple *avocat* to *Garde des Seaux* to the League's growing power, implicitly restricted the Third Estate to office holders: "Quant à ceux du tiers Estat, ils se peuvêt représenter que leur maniement principal est, de la Justice & de la police qui doit estre establee sur le peuple.... L'assemblee du peuple, & des citoyens, doit estre non en multitude seulement, mais en multitude deuëment establee, & avec les respects de l'utilité & la commune société. Les Juges en cest Estat tiennēt le premier rang." [François de MONTHOLON], Remonstrance faicte par Monsieur le Garde des Seaux de France (Paris: F. Morel & J. Mettayer, 1588), p. 25. Despite their reflexive tendency to bow to their social superiors, Leaguers were not always prepared to cede precedence, as witnessed by the dispute which arose between Jean Compans, a member of the Sixteen, *échevin* and "simple marchand drapier" and another Parisian deputy at Blois, Marchepeau, a *parlementaire*, city councillor and *conseiller d'Etat*. See Paul ROBIQUET, Histoire municipale de Paris, vol. II, Règne de Henri III (Paris: Hachette, 1904), p. 443.

¹⁵⁰Contre les fausses allegations, p. 24.

¹⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹⁵²Du contemnement de la mort, p. 28. On the next page this pamphlet also mentioned the "grandes personages" of the Third Estate whom the King incarcerated, and praised their zeal. See also Justification de la guerre entreprise, p. 18: "Au lieu de favorizer, respecter & avancer des plus habiles & valeureux Gentilshommes & Seigneurs Catholiques du Royaume, pour en la force de leurs brans combattre, vaincre & chasser l'heretique, d'une cruauté inouye & plus que barbare il a massacré les plus valeureux, debonnaire, sage & expérimenté Capitaine de son temps."

¹⁵³Coppie d'une lettre escripte à Monseigneur le Duc de Nyvernois par un sien Serviteur (Paris: J. Le Blanc, 1589), p. 20.

¹⁵⁴Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique, p. 26. The pamphlet went on to assert that generally "personne de vostre ordre n'a esté publiquemēt offensé, la où le Roy de Navarre n'a non plus espargné la teste des gentils-hommes que des autres."

¹⁵⁵[MATTHIEU], op. cit., pp. 11-13.

¹⁵⁶E.g. [André de ROSSANT], Les Meurs humeurs et comportemens de Henry de Valois representez au vray depuis sa Naissance (Paris: A. le Riche, 1589), p. 21, *passim*.

¹⁵⁷"Le Cahier de doléances de la ville de Paris aux Etats généraux de 1588," p. 111.

¹⁵⁸See Pauline M. SMITH, The Anti-Courtier Trend in Sixteenth Century French Literature (Geneva: Droz, 1966), pp. 161-198. Courtiers were also lampooned by Erasmus: "they're quite happy to go around displaying the gold, jewels, purple and all the other emblems of virtue and wisdom on their person while leaving any interest in what these symbolize to others." Desiderius ERASMUS, Praise of Folly [1511], trans. B. RADICE (Penguin, 1971), p. 176 (chapter 56). Cf. Contre les fausses allegations, p. 4: "revestus & de dignitez, & d'appareances exterieurs, par lesquelles il leur est facile de contrefaire probité, & emprunter le masque de gens de bien."

¹⁵⁹Discours de la fuyte des impositeurs Italiens (Paris: J. Gregoire, 1589), passim. Cf. SMITH, Anti-Courtier Trend, pp. 203, 206.

¹⁶⁰[Jean BOUCHER], La Vie et faits notables de Henry de Valois, 2nd ed. ([Paris]: D. Millot, 1589), in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, p. 431. On noblemen's attitudes to Henry III's court and absolutist style, see J.-M. CONSTANT, Les Guise (Paris: Hachette, 1984), pp. 118-123.

¹⁶¹Les Causes qui ont contrainst les Catholiques à prendre les armes ([Paris: J. Varangles & D. Binet], 1589) in GOULART, Memoires, p. 526.

¹⁶²[Jean BOUCHER], Replique à l'antigaverston n.p., 1588, pp. 7-8. Boucher was a Sorbonne theologian from a bourgeois Paris family. Royalist bishops received treatment similar to the *mignons* at the hands of one Leaguer pamphleteer, who described them as a "fausse, & adulterine generation de Prelats, creiez au Cabinet," and complained that high church positions had been granted to "des Veneurs, à des hommes layc, à des Nains, à des Massons, à des Maquereaux, à des Sodomites, & à des Putains." Contre les fausses allegations, pp. 26, 66.

¹⁶³[BOUCHER], Replique, pp. 20-21. Cf. pp.23-24: "un si petit galant que vous, inutile & pernicieux & sans merite, est eslevé au plus haut degré d'honneur, & veult gouverner tout l'estat de la France." For other critiques of the social climbers in Henry III's court, see also [BOUCHER], Histoire tragique de Gaverston, p. 9, passim; "Le Cahier de doléances de la ville de Paris," p. 118; [ROSSANT], Meurs, p. 21; Advertissement des nouvelles cruauitez, p. 4; Responce des Catholiques zelez. f. Biv v^o - f. Cr; Contre les fausses allegations, pp. 4, 45b, 46b; Justification de la guerre entreprise, p. 42; Advis aux Catholiques françois, p. 15; RAYNSSANT, op. cit., f. 70r; and Les Lettres royaux de Henry de Vallois, n'agueres Roy de France (Paris: D. Binet, 1589), p. 3..

¹⁶⁴Advertissement des nouvelles cruauitez, p. 21.

¹⁶⁵"Le Cahier de doléances de la ville de Paris," pp. 134, 138, 137. STOCKER makes a similar point, loc. cit., p. 280.

¹⁶⁶ROLLAND, op. cit., pp. 201-202. The nobility, and authors of the treatises of nobility, had long insisted on outward signs distinguishing *gentilshommes* from commoners. See chapter 3, n. 12-14.

¹⁶⁷Articles pour proposer aux Estatz et faire passer en loy fondamentale du Royaume n.p., 1588, pp. 9-10. The Parisian *cahier* similarly demanded that purchased ennoblements be revoked and "les impetrans declarez roturiers comme auparavant" and made to pay the *taille*. "Les Cahiers de doléance de la ville de Paris," p. 114.

¹⁶⁸RAYNSSANT, op. cit., ff. 76r-77v.

¹⁶⁹[BOUCHER], Gaverston, f. Aiiir.

¹⁷⁰[BOUCHER] Replique, p. 9.

¹⁷¹Advertissement à tous bons et loyaux subjectz du Roy, p. Biiiii.

¹⁷²Lettre d'un lieutenant general de province, à un des premiers magistrats de France (Paris: M. Jouin, 1589), p.6.

¹⁷³[BOUCHER], Replique, p. 24; Histoire au vray du meurtre & Assassinat proditoirement cõmis au cabinet d'un Roy perfide & barbare, en la personne de Monsieur le Duc de Guise ([Paris: D. Millot], 1589), p. 40; Lettres royaux, pp. 8-14.

¹⁷⁴Nicolas POULAIN, "Le Procez-verbal d'un nommé Nicolas Poulain, Lieutenant de la prévosté de l'Isle-de-France, qui contient l'histoire de la Ligue," in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, 1^{re} series, vol. 11, pp. 299-300.

¹⁷⁵Ibid.

¹⁷⁶Responce des Catholiques zelez, f. Civ r^o.

¹⁷⁷Registres des délibérations du bureau de la ville de Paris, ed. F. BONNARDOT (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1883-1910), vol. 9, pp. 129-130, 252, 309, 510; 204, 266, 275.

¹⁷⁸Jacque-Auguste de THOU, Histoire universelle (London: 1734), vol. 10, p. 515.

¹⁷⁹[Urbain de SAINT-GELAIS LANSAC], Advertissement particulier et veritable. De tout ce qui s'est passé en la ville de Tholose, depuis le massacre et assassinat commis en la personne des Princes Catholiques, touchant l'emprisonnement et mort du premier President et Advocat du Roy d'icelle (Paris: R. le Fizelier, 1589) in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol. 12, p. 292. According to his own account, Saint-Gelais was able to placate the "peuple bien zélé" with "douces parolles," and intervened to prevent the royalist First President, Durati, from being "harché plus menu qu chair de pasté." Durati was eventually killed by a mob of 4000, however, "il n'a pas esté possible d'arrester la fureur du peuple." pp. 292-300. See also Lettre d'un lieutenant general de province, p. 3. The second item in the 14-point Leaguer oath sworn on 5 April 1589 at Dijon was to "maintenir ceste ville en repos et tranquillité." See "Union juree entre tous les habitans de Dijon," in LOUTCHITZKY, Documents inédits, p. 229. On the Dijon bourgeoisie's fear of the urban masses, see Henri DROUOT, Mayenne et la Bourgogne: Etude sur la Ligue (1587-1596) (Paris: Picard, 1937), vol 1, pp. 149-150.

¹⁸⁰Registres, vol. 9, pp. 10, 11, 23, 25, 47, 75, 109.

¹⁸¹Extraict des registres de l'hostel de la ville (Paris: N. Nyvelle, 1589), reprinted as "Assemblée pour aviser à la seureté de la Ville," in Registres, vol. 9, p. 219.

¹⁸²Registres, vol. 9, pp. 353, 228, 371, 387; Pierre CORNEIO, Bref discours et veritable des choses plus notables arrivees au siege memorable de la renomee ville de PARIS (Paris: D. Millot, 1590), p. 251.

¹⁸³CORNEIO, op. cit., p. 246. Corneio disapprovingly reported that this order was not put into effect.

¹⁸⁴Alfred FRANKLIN, ed., Journal du siège de Paris en 1590 (Paris: 1876; facsimile reprint, Geneva, 1977), pp. 134, 171, 196; CORNEIO, op. cit., p. 256.

¹⁸⁵A.A. LOZINSKI, "La Lutte pour le pouvoir dans la Municipalité parisienne, après la «Journée des Barricades,»" Srednie Veka vol. 8 (1956); unpublished French translation pp. 20, 23, 25. I am indebted to the late Denis Richet for this translation.

¹⁸⁶Boris PORCHNEV, Les Soulèvements populaires en France au XVIIe siècle (Paris: Flammarion, 1972), pp. 299-303; Robert HARDING, "Mobilization of Confraternities against the Reformation in France," Sixteenth Century Journal, vol. 11, no. 2 (Summer 1980), p. 91: "municipal elites were always wary of arming and mobilizing the masses."

¹⁸⁷ROLLAND, op. cit., pp. 190-191. The same pamphlet deplored the *menu peuple*'s evil habit of playing dice, cards, and bowls on the sabbath, corrupted by the bad example of the court and higher orders, pp. 179-180. The pro-League Spaniard Pedro Corenio obviously had no sympathy for the insubordination he found in Paris, "où il y a un peuple indomptable, confus, superbe, riche et rebelle." CORNEIO, op. cit., p. 235.

¹⁸⁸Manifeste de la France, p. 14.

¹⁸⁹Arnauld D'OSSAT, Discours sur les effets de la Ligue en France, cited by Edouard FREMY in Essai sur les diplomates du temps de la Ligue ([Paris: Dentu, 1873], facsimile reprint, Geneva: Slatkine, 1971), pp. 134-135. Frémy accepted his sources' view of the League as revolutionary.

CHAPTER VII

THE IMPLICATIONS OF LEAGUER SOCIAL THEORY

Must we conclude that the legend of the revolutionary, democratic League is entirely fanciful? Did the League simply endorse the prevailing social order and intone the formula that legitimised noble predominance? Robert Descimon dismisses Leaguer social ideas, in effect, as sterile and insignificant, arguing that "la relation de la vertu et de la noblesse peut passer pour un lieu commun sans portée concrète."¹ Yet commonplace as the League's ideas were, its espousal of them had profound implications. Towards the end of his debate with the *Maheustre*, the *Manant*, representative of the Paris Sixteen, declared:

L'espece generale de la noblesse est fondee sur le seul subject de la vertu que l'on acquiert, et non sur celle acquise d'autrui; et le titre de noblesse doit estre personnel, et non hereditaire, tellement que qui n'est vertueux ne peut estre noble.²

In making this pronouncement, the *Manant* was enunciating the traditional social theory, but simultaneously articulating its hitherto latent significance. He was also championing a nobiliary credo in which noblemen had ceased to believe wholeheartedly.

The Question of Noble Birth

The pen behind the *Manant*, François Cromé, along with other League propagandists who asserted "la vertu de Noblesse," may indeed have maintained that noble credo with more doggedness than did the nobility itself, for if recent historians are correct, it was at this very time that *gentilshommes* were forsaking their former ethic. Arlette Jouanna has noted the emergence in the late sixteenth century of a belief among noblemen that virtue was an hereditary quality, and André Devyver goes further, attributing to them the conviction that *gentilshommes* were "racially" distinct from commoners.³ Ellery Schalk has located a watershed in the 1590s when the nobility abandoned its traditional self-image as a profession of virtue, and began to present itself as a social group whose membership was determined by birth.⁴ As we have seen in chapter 3, even as they reiterated the traditional belief in personal virtue as the essence of nobility, late sixteenth-century *traités de noblesse* emitted the first stammerings of the doctrine that virtue was inborn.

A cursory reading of League pamphlets might leave one with the impression that here too League ideas mirrored the evolution of nobiliary thinking. Several League pamphlets, in fact, described certain social qualities as hereditary, but most often these qualities were

negative ones imputed to their enemies. When League pamphlets claimed that the *senechal* of Toulouse was "effeminé et couard de race," or that Navarre "a ce naturel hereditaire de se baigner au sang des Catholiques," they were hurling abuse, not positing a theory of hereditary transmission.⁵ Jean Boucher, for instance, parroted the new ideas about inherited qualities when he compared the depraved Espernon (Jean Louis de Nogaret de La Valette) to his virtuous father:

Je ne puis penser que [vous] soyez son fils, & qu'un si homme de bien ayt engendré un enfant si funeste & pernicieux à la France, mais plustost, quelque gros villain de vallet, avecques lequel vostre mere auroit prins plaisir, dont portez fatallement le surnom Vallette, & non pas la seigneurie de la Vallette, ou bien que eussiez changé en nourrice.... Il se pourroit bien faire que la mauvaise nourriture eust corrompu vostre bon naturel.⁶

Boucher's comments should not be read literally. When Musset and La Noue suggested that wicked noblemen could have been switched in the cradle, or been corrupted by improper upbringing, they were attributing innate virtue to genuine *gentilshommes* and attempting to explain the anomaly of the occasional evil nobleman.⁷ Boucher, on the other hand, was merely engaging in invective, drawing upon ideas that were in the air to vilify Espernon, and call him, in effect, an ill-bred bastard; on the same page Boucher asserted that nobility is personal, not hereditary.

Again, League pamphlets sometimes invoked the sublime qualities of noble "sang" or "semence," but in a highly rhetorical, even metaphorical sense, usually when lamenting the moral degeneration of the nobility, or of Frenchmen in general. The purely rhetorical character of these references is underscored by a passage where Papire Masson, imploring churchmen to support the League, recalled past martyrs and clerical heroes, and then posed the question: "La semence de ces bons Peres est-elle du tout esteinte & ensevelie?"⁸ Elsewhere, mention of "ce cueur genereux qui vous est transmis de race en race par voz encestres" seems to indicate a tradition of virtue and service handed down from generation to generation within a family, not a putative racial trait.¹⁰ Like the treatises of nobility, League pamphlets stressed the importance of moral eduction, and pieces praising the illustrious house of Guise best demonstrated in what way they considered virtue hereditary, that is by imitation, not transmission: "les enfans ont suivi du Père la vertu."¹¹ Noble blood, then, was not a medium of virtue according to the Leaguers, but an emblem of virtue, a glorious memorial, something for its bearer to live up to. One anonymous publicist wrote that

Navarre "n'a rien digne de ce sang genereux de S. Loys, duquel il se vante aussi vainement estre yssu, que jadis les Juifs de celuy d'Abraham."¹²

League pamphleteers unequivocally denied that "la vertu de noblesse" was conveyed in the blood or semen, and so they regarded the "noble vilain" not as an embarrassing aberration but an inevitable, if unfortunate phenomenon:

Il ne se faict pas en la generation transfusion des mœurs comme du sang: d'où l'on voit advenir biē souvēt que les Princes genereux, humains, & gardans leur foy engendrent des enfans lasches, sanguinaires desloyaux.¹³

Matthieu de Launoy expounded similar beliefs as baldly as they could be phrased:

Les vertus des peres ne sont hereditaires a leurs enfans, comme leur sont les noms de leurs familles, & les heritages qui leur sont de propre, mais dons de Dieu & qualitez spirituelles. desquelles ceux-là seuls meritent d'estre ornez, qui les recherchent, qui les attendent, & requièrent du ciel.¹⁴

Since the socio-moral quality of virtue was idiosyncratic, not inheritable, in the Leaguers' estimation, the man of noble blood had no inherent superiority over the commoner. Furthermore, though the nobility remained defined by virtue, *gentilshommes* possessed no exclusive pool of virtue to distinguish them from the low-born. League writers vigorously rejected any suggestion that the nobility was racially distinct, or fashioned from finer stuff than the rest of humanity:

Comment la Noblesse (sauf le respect que les subjects luy doivent avec la raison) est elle d'autre estoffe que ceuz des autres estants du peuple Chrestien, qu'elle se doive descognoistre? a elle un autre Dieu à servir qu'eus? la nature & droict des gens est-il autre pour elle seulle que pour les autres?¹⁵

Without denying the nobility its social preëminence, the League insisted upon the underlying natural parity of *gentilhomme* and *roturier*. Jehan de Caumont saw nobility as a difference of degree, not kind:

Le nom de Noblesse ne signifie pas une différence essentielle, qui constitue diverse nature: tellement que ce qui est noble, soit une autre espèce de nature que ce qui n'est pas noble: Mais Noblesse se dit en une mesme espèce de nature: & est une excellence de qualité, ou une faculté eminente, ayant en plusgrande perfection ce qui est naturel & propre à son espèce, que les autres choses de mesme espèce.¹⁶

For Caumont, remember, the perfection of the human species lay in honouring and serving God, and an individual's social station corresponded, at least in theory, to his degree of perfection. Behind the varying degrees of virtue and rank, the League postulated the

fundamental equality of all men, from peasant to monarch. One pamphlet reminded the king that despite his exalted position, "vous estes homme comme les autres."¹⁷ Another asserted that a Prince of the Blood had no particular intrinsic virtue:

Qu'est-ce que vous pensez dire, quand vous dites Prince du sang de France, pësez vous dire plein d'integrité, fidelité & loyauté, ces qualitez ne sont point d'avâtage en un Prince du sang de France qu'en un autre.¹⁸

Men were, after all, assumed to be equal before God. Boucher preached that "il n'y a rien de moins en l'âme du moindre de tout ce peuple qu'en celle du plus grand monarque."¹⁹ This theoretical equality should not be taken to imply egalitarianism, however, for it in no way clashed with the social hierarchy built upon it. Yet the social hierarchy was organised according to the principle of personal virtue, and if a nobleman's sons succeeded to their father's virtue, and hence his rank, it was "par la grace de Dieu," not because of an innate superiority.²⁰ It is unsurprising, given the Leaguers' emphasis of the religious aspects of virtue, that they denied that virtue could be a racial or hereditary quality, for such a claim would be theologically unthinkable. Just as faith was the gift of God, and piety an individual achievement, the faults that rendered a man ignoble were his own. As the *Manant* put it, "l'heresie est un peché personnel qui n'a cause qu'en la depravation de la volonté de celuy qui est heretique."²¹

Referring to Caumont's assertion that nobility did not signify difference of essence or nature, Robert Descimon asks "comprenait-il qu'il heurtait de front le préjugé fondateur de la noblesse dite immémoriale?"²² In all probability Caumont understood himself to be defending traditional social assumptions against certain noble writers' attempts to arrogate for the nobility an innate superiority and distinctness. Noble theorists, not League publicists, were the innovators in this matter. The belief that nobleman and commoner were extracted from the same tissue did not originate with Caumont, but can be found, among other places, in L'Alouette's treatise.²³ Even one royalist pamphlet, appealing for unity, invoked this shared assumption:

Peuple François, composé tant de personnes, de tous degrez & qualitez, de divers sexes, aages & conditions, tous neantmoins d'une mesme nature & espece, de mesme sang, de mesme source & lignee de nos premiers peres: Descillez vos yeux....²⁴

In 1593 the *Manant* observed that noblemen were not only conducting themselves unvirtuously, but actually abandoning the ethic of virtue itself, and putting greater value on birth and pedigree: "voz enfans se contentent de leur race, et ne cherchent le chemin de vertu."²⁵ Nobiliary thinking in the late sixteenth century was evolving away from its traditional suppositions, and this innovation signals an ideological dysfunction. The old justifications of nobility had ceased to be adequate, and in fact were now employed in critiques of the nobility by a movement which the nobility perceived as a threat to its existence. The emerging ideas of the innate superiority of gentle birth were, according to historians who have studied them, part of a noble response to the challenge from below.²⁶ The nobility was attempting to shore up its ideological ramparts. When League writers espoused traditional social beliefs, or even appealed to noblemen in the name of those beliefs, they were, ironically, contributing to the nobility's repudiation of them, and to its alienation from the League.

Virtue and Commerce

If noble and Leaguer social thought diverged, it was principally because noblemen had reexamined their assumptions. The Leaguers' attitude towards merchants and merchandise, however, indicates that they may, at least in one instance, have adopted traditional beliefs selectively. Some League pamphlets showed a certain disdain for commerce, and League writing generally viewed it as a less exalted vocation than "la profession de noblesse." Nevertheless, despite the importance League propagandists ascribed to public spiritedness, and despite their insistence that virtuous service must be disinterested, not motivated by private gain, League social theorists never condemned trade, or the principle of profit on which it was predicated. Many League publicists were clerics, some even *Sorbonnistes*, trained in scholastic philosophy, and their writings, especially on constitutional matters, were rife with Thomist concepts,²⁷ but mediaeval ideas on the Just Price never found their way into Leaguer propaganda. Their reticence is understandable if one considers that merchants, along with the *basoche* and lower clergy, formed the backbone of the Paris Sixteen.

In contrast with the League's silence, critiques of those who buy cheap and sell dear were widespread at the time. The greedy or dishonest merchant was a standard object of

ridicule in mediaeval and Renaissance satire, and the evil speculator emerged as a theme in the sixteenth century.²⁸ Louys Musset, writing in 1582, allowed that merchants deserved "un mediocre gain pour leurs peines & diligences," but condemned the self-interest and "inhumaine avarice" of merchants who "prisent plus le gaing d'un denier, que le profit et bien public."²⁹ Musset's special scorn was reserved for speculators and he reviled merchants who amassed grain and wine in a good year, and hoarded it till the price had quadrupled. Besides being unethical, Musset warned, speculation was socially dangerous, and could provoke insurrection.³⁰

The lack of comment from the League on the subject of speculation, and on mercantile vice generally, was particularly conspicuous in the context of the economic conditions of the age.^{30bis} As mentioned in chapter 2, prices rose dramatically throughout the sixteenth century, but inflation was cataclysmic in the last two decades of the century, and it affected urban labourers and artisans even more severely than it did the nobility. Food prices rose more quickly than the prices of industrial products, and after 1560 in Paris, salary increases were overtaken by prices and never caught up; the gap between wages and prices widened further in the 1590s.³¹ The poor were especially vulnerable to fluctuations in grain prices since in the form of bread and gruel, grain accounted for over half their calory intake, and at the best of times its purchase required about the same proportion of their income.³² The terrible conjunction of war, disease and famine racked Northern France in the 1580s and 1590s, swelling the cities with rural refugees, and provoking a slump in industrial production which worsened unemployment.³³ A series of bad harvests led to the average wheat price for the year reaching 26.56 *livres* per *setier* in 1587, the year before the Barricades, up from 7.5 in 1580.³⁴

These conditions contributed to the unrest and political volatility of Paris in the mid-1580s, but I believe it would be exaggerated to describe the situation as "menaçante pour la classe dominante," as one historian has.³⁵ In July 1587, when prices reached 39 *livres* per *setier*, a bread riot broke out in the Halles. Several bakers were killed, and their stalls burnt; more significantly, the houses of certain bourgeois were sacked, because the crowd believed them to be hiding grain. Contemporaries blamed the shortages and high prices on speculators, on the "malice de ceulx qui avoient des grains," but hoarded it to drive up

prices.³⁶ Yet the insurrection of the League was emphatically not an explosion fomented by misery. The average wheat price in 1588 was 9.78 *livres*, the lowest it had been in six years, and the relative abundance of 1588 was greeted as a miracle.³⁷ The Sixteen, as we have seen, feared the mob no less than the royalist nobility and magistrates did, and though the League's various statements of programme and lists of demands addressed many economic concerns, above all taxation, hunger rarely figured in them, and League pamphleteers left no hint of the great want that afflicted so many Parisians.

The siege of Paris by Henry IV during the summer of 1590 turned dearth into famine. L'Estoile recorded the price for a *setier* of wheat soaring to 100 *écus* (300 *livres*) in August 1590, and the besieged were reduced to eating candle wax, leather, dogs, rats, rubbish, grass, and bread made from the ground bones of disinterred skeletons.³⁸ Two contemporary paintings now in the Carnavalet museum depict street scenes during the siege, with two men quarrelling over a bowl of gruel from a public kitchen, and gloves hanging for sale in a butcher's shop.³⁹ By the time the siege was lifted by the arrival from Flanders of the Duke of Parma's army at the beginning of September, people were dying in the streets, and one Spanish observer estimated that 13,000 had succumbed to starvation.⁴⁰ Popular support for the League, meanwhile, diminished with the food supply, and at the height of the siege a tumultuous crowd led by royalist notables gathered outside the *Palais de Justice* to demand bread or peace; League authorities brutally suppressed this agitation.⁴¹ Even after the siege, royalist forces maintained a partial blockade of Paris, and chronic shortages continued. The average annual price per *setier* of wheat peaked at 40.06 *livres* in 1591, a level not exceeded till 1709.⁴²

Throughout the siege, however, food was available in Paris; even butter and eggs were to be had, at a price.⁴³ Even early in the siege, while quantities remained sufficient, prices were unaffordable for most Parisians, and when food became truly scarce Navarre allowed supplies through to Leaguer Princes.⁴⁴ L'Estoile remained in Paris for the duration of the siege, and while he tasted horse, he thanked God in his journal that he and his family did not go hungry.⁴⁵

The city of Paris took no action to correct such inequities, however, or to insure adequate rations. League authorities did order a census and inventory of provisions in

anticipation of the siege, and one baker in each quarter was supplied with subsidised grain on condition that he sell bread at a set price.⁴⁶ The Papal legate and Spanish ambassador distributed victuals to the destitute of Paris, while the institutionalised poor relief already in place continued its work, and thousands of paupers were expelled from the city.⁴⁷ As Natalie Davis has shown, part of the impulse behind early modern poor relief was the mounting fear élites felt towards vagabonds and marginal classes.⁴⁸ When the municipality of Paris established *ateliers publics*, or when the rector of the University petitioned Mayenne to appoint a commission of bourgeois to oversee the allocation of grain, it was "pour eviter l'esmotion populaire."⁴⁹

In the spring of 1589, the *Hôtel-de-Ville* forbade the export of grain from Paris, or its sale except at the official markets, and ordered that in view of the shortages bakers should be permitted to bake any day, instead of the usual baking days.⁵⁰ Yet in the face of extraordinary conditions a year later, no extraordinary measures were decreed, no maxima were set, no steps were taken to curb speculation.⁵¹

The League's inaction was reflected in its propaganda, which barely acknowledged that the shortages existed. The few pamphlets that touched on the problem used it as a pretext to praise the Parisians' zeal and fortitude in adversity.⁵² Others minimised hardships on the home front, claiming that "à Paris il y faict aussi bon marché vivre qu'à Saint-Denys, excepté le pain," and adding that there were spiritual consolations for the lack of bread.⁵³ A song sheet that was posted in 1590 sought to deflect popular resentment against the enemy, who impeded the provisioning of Paris, and an earlier pamphlet deplored Henry III's ostentatious waste at a time of dearth.⁵⁴ Louis Dorléans's famous *Catholique Anglois*, published in 1586, responded to the libel spread by the Huguenots "pendant la cherté du bled" that "la Ligue estoit cause de la disette."⁵⁵ Apart from these scattered references, however, the League guarded its silence, even in the midst of catastrophe, and singularly failed to inveigh against profiteers.⁵⁶ Royalist pamphlets, by contrast, revelled in Paris's sufferings, and one accused the Jesuits and League clergy of hoarding food, and even of cornering the market in cats and dogs to profit from the people's desperation.⁵⁷

On the question of usury, League writers were little more communicative, making only the occasional passing reference.⁵⁸ The voluble Jean Boucher, theologian though he

was, remained notably taciturn on the subject, and political expedience must have suppressed any qualms he felt, although decades later, still an unreconciled exile in the Spanish Netherlands, he authored a book against usury.⁵⁹

In itself, the absence of evidence proves nothing, but League pamphleteers did show themselves to be aware of, and favourably disposed towards, mercantile concerns. The League remonstrated on behalf of the merchants, insisting on their need for free passage on well-maintained roads, bridges, and inland waterways, unimpeded by excessive tolls and imposts.⁶⁰ Above all, commerce could thrive, and Leaguer cities be fed, only if merchants travelled unmolested. Several pamphlets urged action against brigands and royalist strongholds, and the League-dominated Paris *Parlement* issued an *arrêt* in October 1589 forbidding anyone to "empescher le commerce & passage des vivres, & marchandises entre les villes de l'Union." At the Estates General of 1593 the Paris delegates complained that Leaguer nobles were interfering in trade, and asked Mayenne to punish "plusieurs exactions, volleries, et pilleries par les gens de guerre tenans nostre party."⁶²

It would be a mistake, however, to reduce the League to a vehicle for the economic interests of Parisian merchants, or for that matter, a vehicle for the ambitions of the *basoche*. The League was a complex of convergent religious, economic, social and political impulses, and no simple formula is sufficient to explain it. On the other hand, where the movement did not serve the interests of its natural clientele, its support might wither. Descimon emphasises the role of merchants in the League, but points out the noteworthy exception of the silk dealers, whose industry depended on the court and nobility, and who favoured the royalist party.⁶³ By 1593 Jean Boucher had come into conflict with the powerful butcher's guild, formerly one of the mainstays of the Sixteen, which accused him of prolonging the troubles and impeding business.⁶⁴ The war which the Leaguers so ferociously proclaimed they would fight to the last breath was itself the greatest obstacle to trade, and as early as 1589 one pamphlet expressed concern that merchants could be persuaded by *politique* arguments for peace.⁶⁵ Still, class and party lines did often run parallel, with the "bourgeoisie seconde" supplying the cadres of the Sixteen, while most noblemen and magistrates supported the king's party. It would be difficult to imagine a more complete ideological embodiment of mercantile interests, as they opposed the nobility, than the Request to the Paris *Parlement*

made by the *échevins* of Paris in February of 1589, only weeks after the Sixteen's purge of the lawcourt. Like many such documents, it was subsequently printed as a pamphlet. The Parisians complained that certain towns had been "tellement pratiquees ou intimidees par quelques Officiers & Gentils-hommes" that they had withdrawn from the League, and from trade with Paris.⁶⁶ In a marriage of the traditional ethos of noble duty with their own commercial and logistical concerns, the *ech.vins* raised the spectre of *dérogeance*:

Tous Seigneurs, Gentils-hommes, Officiers ou autres quels qu'ils soient, qui s'oublions de leur devoir envers DIEU & leur patrie, seront si hardis d'empescher ledict commerce & passage de vivres venans en ladicte Ville ... [seront] par consequent declarez ennemis du public & de la patrie, deschez de tous droicts & privileges.⁶⁷

The social vision of the Leaguers, while retaining the belief in nobiliary duty, also amounted to a defence of the commercial class and its function. One early League pamphlet, whose author described himself as an old soldier, urged a pan-European crusade against heresy, one which would result in a Christian peace and allow "la liberté du trafic, qui est le vray moyen d'enricher les Peuples... & alors seroit renouvelé le Siecle d'or en toute la Chrestienté."⁶⁸ Such a distinctly mercantile version of paradise was basic to the League's dream of a well-ordered society and a unified Christendom. The *Sainte Union* was also a commercial union, and several historians have interpreted the League's abortive federation of towns as an attempt to create a trading bloc, a secure market for Paris.⁶⁹

Anti-Nobiliary Sentiment

Notwithstanding the modifications Leaguers brought to the received opinion about the morality of commerce, League writers expressed an essentially nobiliary vision of social organisation. The League's understanding of the nobility, as we have seen, was more traditional than the conception canvassed by some contemporary noble writers. Yet the Leaguers' attitude towards noblemen, as distinct from the nobility, went against the grain of any nobleman's self-image.

In much League propaganda, especially in the early days, there was a note of respect, even reverence towards noblemen; one of the primary purposes of the League's pamphlet campaign had been to win the support of Catholic *gentilshommes*. Appeals to the nobility often leavened their flattery with admonishment, but the stern reprimands sometimes

contained in Leaguer exhortations to noblemen were a refrain lifted from *L'Alouette* and the authors of *traités de noblesse*, who did not hesitate to scold their readers. In the last years of the League, however, the pamphleteers' criticism of the nobility escalated beyond mere reproach, and their fulmination may be seen as expressions of a deep-seated class hatred. Especially after Henry IV's victories at Arques and Ivry, noblemen deserted the Catholic side and rallied to the royal banner; at the same time the Paris Sixteen came into conflict with Mayenne and the other League princes. The invective directed against the nobility became increasingly harsh, and where the League's propaganda had previously boasted of the *gentilshommes* in its ranks, it was now resigned to the hostility of the bulk of the nobility. The recruitment drive had failed, and the best the Leaguers could now hope for was to neutralise some nobles by fear and to harness the anti-noble sentiment of its plebeian supporters.

Among the first bitterly anti-noble pamphlet was a "Harangue" addressed to the Papal legate, Cardinal Cajetan, by a group of Parisian bourgeois in February 1590. The Parisians denounced French noblemen as utterly depraved, steeped in vice and heresy, as impious monsters pitted against the humble but virtuous Leaguers.⁷⁰ Myriam Yardeni describes this pamphlet, perhaps somewhat anachronistically, as "un véritable schéma de lutte des classes dans la meilleure tradition marxiste."⁷¹ Small wonder that the nuncio issued a pamphlet of his own the following month, assuring the nobility that the Catholic side represented no threat.⁷²

Another pamphlet published the same year sought to refute royalist accusations that the League was anti-noble, yet its tone was far from conciliatory, and it asserted that noblemen were unworthy of the deference with which it was customary to address them:

Ayés patience si je ne vous traicte cōme gentilhommes, mais au contraire si je vous couvre ceste presente Remonstrance de viandes & mets plus propres, & advenants à gens de basse qualité & condition.⁷³

The following year Oudart Raynssant Deviezmaison, a member of the Sixteen and *avocat* at the Paris *Parlement*, addressed noblemen with unconcealed hostility in a pamphlet ostensibly intended to attract noble support. Raynssant excoriated the noblemen of his day, saying that the title of nobleman had itself become "contemptible & méprisé de tous" and shunned by *gens de bien*.⁷⁴ Unusually, Raynssant did not limit his criticism to the decadent nobility of

the 1590s. Where most League pamphlets, and most *traités de noblesse*, had contrasted the virtuous *gentilshommes* of old with the diminished contemporary nobility, and had called upon noblemen to imitate their ancestors, Raynssant depicted both the original noblemen and their successors as usurpers and robbers who had imposed their privileges on an unwilling population, and extracted its wealth by force:

C'est ainsi que vos ancestres on vescu, par tels actes ils vous ont acquis & conservé le tiltre tant excellent de Nobles: par tant de brigandaiges, ils vous ont accumulé tant de biens & si amples possessions.⁷⁵

By 1593 Cromé's *Manant* looked upon the Second Estate as irredeemably alienated, and he made no effort to win his interlocutor to the League cause. Referring to nineteenth-century pamphlets, one historian has noted the diverse levels of argument characteristic of pamphlet literature: "A la limite, au travail de persuasion se substitue le *terrorisme discursif*, c'est-à-dire l'ensemble de moyens visant à intimider l'auditeur."⁷⁶ The *Manant* approached "terrorisme discursif" in his comments on the nobility, for he maintained not only that noblemen "ne ressentent rien de la vertu de leurs predecesseurs," but that "il y a plus de cinquante ans de ma cognoissance que la noblesse n'a cogneu ny apprehendé l'honneur de Dieu," and finally, "que la noblesse n'est à present qu'une espece imaginaire, sans aucune effect."⁷⁷ Far from pleading for noble succour, the *Manant* was defiant; the League, he said, would elect a Catholic king and cleanse France of heresy "malgré toute la noblesse."⁷⁸ If the *Manant*'s remarks were laden with menace, they were nonetheless phrased in terms of traditional social assumptions. When he ominously pronounced the nobility an "espece imaginaire," he was taking the theory of noble virtue to its logical conclusions.

Historians generally agree that Leaguer criticism of the nobility became increasingly vehement during the 1590s, but they differ over the interpretation of this vehemence. Some see late League pamphlets, particularly Cromé's *Dialogue*, as expressing pure class hatred, even as proposing the elimination of the nobility. Frederic Baumgartner, for example, describes it as a "savage attack ... directed against the very concept of nobility as it then existed in France."⁷⁹ Others, such as Robert Harding, view Leaguer agitation as more restricted in scope, "against aristocrats, but not against aristocracy."⁸⁰ Descimon sides with those historians who see the League's anti-noble proclamations as manifesting mounting party antagonism, not class conflict, and who argue that such invective was directed mainly at

royalist noblemen.⁸¹ Likewise, Peter Ascoli, the editor of a reprint edition of Cromé's *Dialogue*, judges the *Manant*'s diatribes against noblemen to have been politically, rather than socially propelled. According to Ascoli, the *Manant*'s criticism was aimed against those *gentilshommes* who had opposed or betrayed the League, against the "bad" nobility, not the "good" nobility whom the *Manant* revered.⁸²

The *Manant* did indeed distinguish "la bonne noblesse" from "la mauvaise," and he exempted the former from censure.⁸³ A similar distinction was made in other League pamphlets and, of course, in the sections of earlier *traités de noblesse* that criticised noble abuses.⁸⁴ Remember, though, that according to the theory of nobiliary virtue, the wicked *gentilhomme* was socially as well as morally reprobate, ignoble in both senses. For "bonne" and "mauvaise", read "vraye" and "perverse"; the *Manant*'s distinction reproduced Caumont's.⁸⁵ In the 1590s, however, the category of "bad" noblemen was increasingly inclusive; the Parisians' *Harangue* to Cajetan charged that "la plus part de la noblesse" now supported the royalist side, and wallowed in heresy and vice.⁸⁶

The Sixteen versus the Nobility

Historians who believe the League to have embodied class antagonisms tend also to find a radicalisation in the League's thinking as its condemnations of noblemen became increasingly shrill.⁸⁷ This evolution corresponded to changes in the League's social base, for two social analyses of the Paris Sixteen show a gradual downward shift in the movement's class balance: over time the few *gentilshommes* and magistrates in the Sixteen became estranged from their erstwhile comrades, and by 1593 the Sixteen was overwhelmingly dominated by the poorer and more humble members of the *bourgeoisie seconde*.⁸⁸

As Catholic noblemen drifted away from the League, however, relations between the remaining Leaguer noblemen and the Parisian roturiers in the Sixteen also deteriorated, and the *Sainte Union* was plagued with disunion. Even at Paris, *Ligue* and *Seize* had never been synonymous. The national League was in fact little more than a current of opinion, a religious faction united by an oath, but no real organisation. Its initial manifesto presented the movement as an alliance of like-minded princes, lords, and communities, not individual citizens.⁸⁹ With the Cardinal of Bourbon, putative first prince of the blood, as its titular

head, the League in many ways resembled the noble factions known to previous centuries, and if it did develop a degree of military and financial coördination under the leadership of Guise and later Mayenne, local chiefs, such as Mercoeur in Brittany, could function as independent warlords.

In Paris, by contrast, a highly structured secret society was born in 1585: the Sixteen, whose name referred to the sixteen *quartiers* of Paris. Elie Barnavi describes the Sixteen, with its internal discipline and complete organisational pyramid ranging from central committee to local cell, as the ancestor of the modern totalitarian party.⁹⁰ Even if one does not agree with the filiation Barnavi suggests, he is indubitably correct in claiming that the Sixteen was more than a traditional faction surrounding a great lord. Personal loyalty and clientage were elements in the Sixteen's group cohesion, but despite the movement's admiration for the Duke of Guise, it cannot be regarded as merely the Paris branch of the Guisard party.⁹¹ One League pamphlet, written shortly after Guise's death, praised the Duke as a virtuous man, but rejected the label "Guisars", describing the party as "Catholiques unis & zélés," adding that they had no particular affection for Guise except inasmuch as he was a good Catholic and French subject.⁹²

From its inception, the Paris Sixteen was an autonomous body within the Holy League. Those primary sources with some inside knowledge of the Sixteen recounted the Paris organisation having been founded independently, and only then having sought the patronage and approval of the Catholic princes.⁹³ The Parisians acted in response to indigenous conditions, and one pamphlet, addressed to the King, insisted that the League's agitation was spontaneous, not a product of Guisard machinations:

Estimez que le Duc de Guise ne les a pas suscitez, mais l'affection que vostre peuple porte à la cōservatiō de la Religiō Catholique, vostre mauvais gouvernement par cy devant, & l'extreme necessité en laquelle vostre peuple est reduit par les injustes opressions de vous de vos officiers, les ont induits à vous presēter des requestes, qui vous ont esté desplaisantes.⁹⁴

The Sixteen originated as an independent force, but its members' social presuppositions, together with the reality of noble power, impelled the movement to put itself under noble protection. A circular letter sent by the Sixteen to other French towns in 1587 proposed that the towns should take the initiative to raise an army against the heretics, and entrust it to the command of "gentils-hommes et capitaines Catholiques affides aux provinces

et villes."⁹⁵ Here was the contradiction at the heart of the Paris League: it wanted noble leadership, but noble leadership that would do its bidding.

The Duke of Guise himself received tremendous adulation in Paris, but not always obedience. The Sixteen were far more eager than their princely patron to launch an insurrection, and it is likely that the Barricades took Guise by surprise, though his personal authority was sufficient to restrain the Parisian crowd and prevent it storming the Louvre or massacring the King's Swiss troops.⁹⁶ Later, the Sixteen were far more adamant than Guise in their dealings with royal authority; Guise lobbied the delegates of the *Tiers* at the Estates General of 1588 to vote the King a new subsidy, but La Chapelle-Marteau, *Prévôt des marchands* of Paris and president of the Third Estate, refused all compromise.⁹⁷ Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador, reported in 1588 that "Les catholiques de cette ville sont entièrement dévoués à Mucius [i.e. Guise]." He added, however, that they would side with Spain in the event of a breach between Philip II and Guise, and further, "Ils m'ont ... recommand[é] de garder le plus profond silence sur les sommes d'argent qu'ils reçoivent, parce que si Mucius et les autres chefs de la Ligue le savaient, ils les leur enlèveraient à l'instant même."⁹⁸

Guise's successor as chief of the League was his younger brother Mayenne, who arrived in Paris in February 1589, and shortly thereafter came into conflict with the Sixteen. Among Mayenne's first acts as Lieutenant-General was to add fifteen "supernuméraires" to the Council of Forty, naming it the General Council of Union. Historians have interpreted Mayenne's manoeuvre as an attempt to alter the social composition of the Council and to dilute the Sixteen's influence by stacking it with his own creatures, or by appointing establishment figures hostile to the Sixteen.⁹⁹ Certainly, Cromé's *Manant* resented the expansion of the Council, as he did Mayenne's decision to release the noblemen and magistrates whom the Sixteen had imprisoned after Blois.¹⁰⁰

The widening rift between Mayenne and the Sixteen contributed to the general fracturing of the Union, and from 1589 onwards, *gentilshommes* and *parlementaires* who had earlier sympathised, or at least collaborated with the Sixteen, clashed with the Parisian zealots. The Sixteen repeatedly petitioned Mayenne to support them against the enemies in their midst, and to dismiss his self-seeking counsellors. In January 1591, according to Palma-

Cayet, they complained of the "tyrannie de la noblesse et l'injustice des chefs de la justice," and claimed that the magistrates installed by the League had proved no better than the old; Cromé's *Maheustre* informed the *Manant* that Mayenne had only mocked the Sixteen's demands.¹⁰¹ The conflict between the Sixteen and the Leaguer *parlementaires* came to a head in November 1591, when they arrested and hanged the First President and two other judges. Mayenne returned to Paris two weeks later and launched what has been called a "Thermidor mayenniste"¹⁰² against the leadership of the Sixteen, executing several ringleaders, driving others from the city, and purging the militia. The Sixteen were weakened by Mayenne's coup, but not destroyed; they remained a force in Paris until Henry IV entered the capital, but henceforth directed their fury as much against Mayenne and the moderate Leaguers as against the King and the Royalists.

The Sixteen's disaffection with Leaguer *parlementaires* paralleled their acrimonious relationship with their noble allies. The League army's inglorious record of defeat, and its ill conduct off the battlefield did nothing to inspire the Parisians' admiration for Leaguer noblemen. L'Estoile reported that when Mayenne's army arrived near Paris in July 1589, its behaviour was "pire ... qu'en pays d'ennemis et de conquest."¹⁰³ Four months later the rector of the university complained that the League's forces were so given to blasphemy and theft as to be indistinguishable from the enemy.¹⁰⁴ In short, the army of the League was not the Host of Virtue League pamphleteers envisioned, and League nobles were little closer than their royalist counterparts to the ideal of St Louis.

In fact, Leaguer nobles had more in common with noblemen in the enemy camp than with the bourgeois of the Sixteen. In his study of the League in Burgundy, Henri Drouot finds evidence of a class solidarity among the nobility which crossed party lines. At an individual level, cousins and friends spared each others' houses and lands, but more significantly, there operated an "entente des deux noblesses contre les villes," an entente which benefited the royalist side.¹⁰⁵ Back in Paris, Mayenne issued a declaration in the name of the Leaguer King "Charles X" to protect the houses and châteaux of Navarrists from looting by impetuous Leaguers.¹⁰⁶

Conflict between townsmen and Leaguer noblemen was, perhaps, inevitable, for their interests were distinct or even opposed. The *Sainte Union* began as a temporary coincidence

of purpose, a "marriage of convenience"¹⁰⁷ which collapsed when its unity was put to the test. Beyond a shared opposition to a heretical succession, no principle of common interest bound the League's various tendencies together; each pursued its own ends. At the Estates-General of 1588, the nominally Leaguer nobility would agree to entrench the Edict of Union as a fundamental law only if it were understood to be without prejudice to nobiliary privileges, and the Second Estate's obstinance provoked much resentment among the other delegations.¹⁰⁸

The Edict of Union, however, was not a radical document, for while it represented the political defeat of Henry III, and conceded most of the League's immediate religious goals, it responded to few of the material grievances of the Catholic townsmen. L'Estoile recounted that the edict disappointed the Parisians, and was greeted with "peu ou point de resjouissance du peuple, qui murmuroit sourdement que les princes s'estoient bien accordés avec le Roy, mais qu'ils avoient laissé le peuple en croupe."¹⁰⁹ The Leaguer Princes, on the other hand, had every reason to rejoice over the edict, for its secret articles had accorded them the control of strategic towns and forts, as well as generous subsidies and similar rewards for their rebellion.¹¹⁰ The nobles' League has been described, not inaccurately, as essentially a "vehicle for princely greed tempered with genuine religious conviction."¹¹¹ As such, it fit a long-established pattern of aristocratic revolt against the crown to secure greater independence and privileges.¹¹² As we have seen in chapter 2, economic pressures on the nobility introduced a new dimension to traditional ducal obstreperousness. Denis Crouzet interprets nobiliary involvement in the League as a flight from debt, while Robert Harding shows how late sixteenth-century provincial magnates sought to reconsolidate their power bases in the form of religious parties when their patronage networks broke down.¹¹³ Harding points out the inherent instability of the new organisation, which lacked the cement of shared social interests.¹¹⁴ In the end, the aristocratic leaders of the League, and presumably their noble entourages, prospered in defeat, for the King purchased their submission with *gouvernements* and pensions.¹¹⁵ Sully estimated that it cost Henry IV 32 million *livres* to ransom his kingdom.¹¹⁶

The House of Guise, of course, had dynastic ambitions of its own. The Duke of Guise may have dreamt of usurping the throne, but more realistically he probably aspired to

capture and control the King, to become, in effect, Mayor of the Palace, and perhaps to leave his son well placed as a pretender should the Valois line become extinct.¹¹⁷ Whether Mayenne seriously entertained designs on the throne cannot be determined; more likely he too harboured less expansive plans, wishing to carve out an hereditary appanage in Burgundy, or at least to obtain an advantageous settlement.¹¹⁸ Princely ambition did not necessarily conflict with the Sixteen's concerns. One pamphlet published in early 1589 expressed the hope that the Cardinal of Bourbon would renounce his rights in favour of Mayenne, "qui a mieux merit  la couronne de France que nul que tous les Valesiens."¹¹⁹ Another pamphlet, published in 1592, pleaded the case of the Lorraines generally, based on their spurious claim to be the heirs of Charlemagne.¹²⁰ As Mayenne repeatedly delayed convening the Estates-General and then endeavoured to sabotage any other candidatures, popular elements within the League, who desperately wanted to elect a Catholic king, came to believe that he had systematically subordinated the League's good to his own.

During the early 1590s, recognizing that Mayenne and Leaguer noblemen served only their personal and family interests, and at best the interests of their order, the League's propaganda machine began to subject League nobles to the same withering critique it had applied to Royalists and neutrals. Eventually it progressed towards a sweeping condemnation of the Second Estate as a whole.

As early as 1586 a Leaguer pamphlet reported that, contrary to the Edict of Nemours, Catholic *gentilshommes* on campaign in Guyenne were protecting the ch teaux of their Protestant kinsmen.¹²¹ After another five years of civil war, pamphleteers were more bitterly aware of the collusion between Leaguer and royalist noblemen. In a 1592 dialogue which prefigured Crom 's, another *manant* cursed the nobility of both camps:

Aussy peu vous asard s-vous [sic] contre la noblesse qui est contre vostre parti. Mais vous vous support s les uns les autres, vous vous conservez les maisons des uns des autres; tant il y a que la feste n'est que pour le tiers-estat, qui en souffre toute la perte.¹²²

The same author contrasted the people's pure motives in the war with the crass concerns of noblemen: "le commun peuple n'a rien au c ur [que] la religion qui le meine, non l'ambition," while "[les grands] n'ont rien   la teste que grandeur et ambition."¹²³

The conduct of League armies elicited the pamphleteers' sharpest rebukes, as when Michel Marchant denounced "ceux qui suivent noz armees & se disent Catholiques," but

nonetheless pillaged, raped and committed sacrileges, "contrefaisant les gentilshommes."¹²⁴ Given the unanimous assumption in League pamphlets that a wicked nobleman was, *ipso facto*, a false nobleman, Marchant's comments should not be taken to imply that certain common soldiers were impersonating *gentilshommes*, but rather that certain League nobles were themselves ignoble, morally and hence socially.

By 1591 League preachers were specifically criticising Mayenne in their sermons, and by 1593 they assailed him as a tyrant.¹²⁵ Pamphleteers were necessarily more circumspect, until Cromé boldly railed against Mayenne in his *Dialogue*, and brought down the Duke's wrath upon his presumed publishers.¹²⁶ Cromé put the most telling criticisms of Mayenne into the mouth of the *Maheustre*, who portrayed the League's chief as a scheming and self-serving tyrant, living in luxury by oppressing the people.¹²⁷ The *Maheustre* broadened his attack to include the nobility and magistrates of the League:

Une grande partie de voz princes sont ambitieux et divisez, voz gouverneurs font leurs affaires particulieres à voz despens. Vostre noblesse, si peu qu'il y a, vous pille et se moque de vous. Une grande partie de voz ecclesiastiques vous delaissent et nous suyvent. Voz magistrats et grandes familles sont des nostres et haissent les Seize et le peuple catholique.¹²⁸

Cromé gave his *Manant* no adequate response to the *Maheustre*'s indictment against League noblemen; the loyal *Manant* feebly denied such accusations, but was forced to admit that "vostre noblesse suit l'heresie, et la nostre l'argent."¹²⁹ The *Manant*'s disappointment with his noble allies was sharpened by his realisation that even those noblemen who did not defect to Henry IV fought only for their own gain; "la guerre present ... n'est faite qu'aux bourgeois des villes et peuple de Dieu, que vous appelez manans. Les nobles et soldats se font bonne guerre, et les manans payent tout."¹³⁰

League pamphleteers, then, inveighed against League noblemen and royalist noblemen with equal vigour, but did their anti-noble utterances attack the nobility as such? Ascoli argues that Cromé's *Dialogue* was atypical, and shaped by circumstances; he describes it as a "cry of anguish" from a defeated party, a bitter rumination on the nobility's betrayal of the League.¹³¹ To rephrase the question, did League propaganda decry the nobility because noblemen had opposed and betrayed the League, or did noblemen oppose the League for its anti-noble spirit?¹³² Perhaps the correct answer would be a double affirmative, for such an either/or formulation is misleading. Cromé's *Manant* gave half the answer: "Jamais le peuple

n'a plus souhaité d'embrasser la noblesse qu'en ceste guerre civile; mais l'ambition, l'envie et mauvaise volonté de la noblesse a delaisé ce party pour suyvre et adherer à l'heretique et ruiner le peuple."¹³³ The *Maheustre* supplied the rest of the answer: "Si [vous] aviez bonne volonté avec respect à la noblesse, elle ne vous feroit la guerre."¹³⁴ League criticism of the nobility was couched always in terms of traditional social assumptions, and if noblemen found the Leaguers' ideas threatening, they were in effect afraid of their own shadow. I do not wish to suggest, like Robert Descimon, that the animosity between *gentilshommes* and members of the Paris Sixteen amounted to nothing more than mutual miscomprehension.¹³⁵ Life exists off the printed page, and it is real life that gives ideas their meaning. The Cardinal Cajetan's assessment of the situation in November 1589 illustrates how the League must have appeared even to noblemen who sympathised with the movement:

Dans les villes soumises à la Ligue, c'est le peuple qui gouverne. A Lyon, par exemple, le marquis de Saint-Sorlin a le titre de gouverneur, titre purement fictif puisque les échevins ont tout le pouvoir. Ainsi, le peuple se trouve armé, il a le pouvoir et se montre insolent envers la noblesse; celles-ci, se voyant dépouillée de l'autorité, se réfugie dans le parti de Navarre.... La noblesse ne peut endurer le nom même de la Ligue.¹³⁶

To maintain that the League was not anti-noble, but merely against the cause most noblemen had embraced, is to beg the question, for one is left asking why noblemen and townsmen found themselves on opposite sides. Surely it was not accidental that France, and ultimately the League itself, was riven along social fault-lines, with, in the *Maheustre's* words, "les princes, magistrats, Cours souveraines, officiers royaux et les grandes familles d'une part, contre les docteurs, curez, predicateurs, les Seize et le peuple d'autre."¹³⁷

Social strife in Paris never approached the extreme pitch it reached in Brittany, where peasants and noblemen slaughtered each other without regard to party or religious affiliation.¹³⁸ Nevertheless, by 1593 it was obvious that the civil wars in France were as much social as religious or dynastic, and this awareness was reflected in the increasingly hostile tone of League propaganda. The "radicalisation" of Leaguer thinking, however, was only the unearthing of subterranean conflicts. The League's most trenchant pamphlets recognized that townsmen and *gentilshommes* were divided not merely by divergent material interests, but by fundamentally incompatible ones.

Social Conflict and the State

As noted in chapter 4, the question of taxation was crucial for the Leaguers. Henry III's crushing fiscal exactions were a principal cause of unrest in the 1580s, and tax reform was a central Leaguer demand. François Furet has written that rebellions in the early modern period tended to be limited in scope, non-ideological and non-revolutionary: "ce sont des émeutes de taxation et non pas du bouleversement social."¹³⁹ If the League's insurrection was in many ways a tax revolt, does it follow that it was not also a social upheaval?

Just as the fiscal system of *Ancien Régime* France was enmeshed in the social structure, so fiscal disputes had inevitable social ramifications. Roturiers were well aware that nobiliary exemptions increased their own tax burden. In Dauphiné in the 1580s, for example, tax differentials were a source of conflict between noblemen and commoners.¹⁴⁰ Elsewhere in France the unequitable fiscal system was under attack, and the idea of a universal *taille* was in circulation as early as the 1560s.¹⁴¹ League pamphleteers' interest in tax questions peaked with the Estates-General of 1588, when they saw the promise of a redressment of the disproportionate share of the tax burden borne by the Third Estate. Tax reform, then, pitted the Leaguer not only against the rapacious royal fisc, but against privileged individuals and communities who enjoyed exemptions under the status quo.¹⁴² One pamphlet, printed the following year, lamented the unseemly squabble that broke out between the various orders at Blois, each trying to divert taxation onto the next. The author expressed the futile hope that Catholic Frenchmen could find a unity transcending pecuniary considerations:

Les Estats entrèrent en cōtroverse sur qui tomberoit la levee des deniers importunement demãdez.... Toutefois n'estant raisonnable, que gens assemblez à mesmes fins, sçavoir est pour r'entrer en union, se mordent, & mangent les uns les autres.¹⁴³

Such unity was not forthcoming, however, on the matter of taxation, and the Parisian *Cahier de doléances* directly addressed the problem of exemptions: "parce que le grand nombre des exempts et privilegez redonde a la foule et charge du pauvre peuple, et par consequent a vos finances, qu'il plaise a V.M. limiter le nombre effrené des privilegez."¹⁴⁴ The draughters of the *cahier*, and the publicist responsible for a pamphlet written about the same time, particularly resented new exemptions, and the exemptions granted to non-noble

privilegiés, mainly office-holders; the *cahier* asked that exemptions awarded since 1585 be revoked, for "ce sont tous les plus riches et aizés des villes et paroisses qui sont entrez ausdicts offices et acquis lesdites exemptions. Qui faict qu'il n'y a plus que le commun peuple qui portent a present les tailles."¹⁴⁵ The Leaguers, then, accepted the principle of noble tax exemption, but their concept of nobility as virtue in action demanded that exemption be contingent upon service. The *cahier* requested that those exempt from taxation "ne jouyront des privileges s'il[s] ne font service actuel," and that "celuy qui derogera a son privilege sera déclaré du tout taillable."¹⁴⁶

Another element in the fiscal reform sought by the *cahier* was that roturiers should be permitted to own fiefs without paying the *franc-fief*.¹⁴⁷ Fief-holding was an essential step in a family's social ascent, and the *franc-fief* remained a significant demarcation between noble and commoner. It should be mentioned that several members of the Sixteen owned seigneuries, including the pamphleteers Cromé, Raynssant, and Rolland.¹⁴⁸

Rolland's voluminous Remonstrances of 1588 broadened the critique of fiscal inequality to touch upon the distribution of wealth itself. Never, Rolland wrote, had there been so many rich in France, but never so many miserably poor, "jamais les richesses & l'argent ne furent si mal departis."¹⁴⁹ Rolland, along with a few other contemporaries, had an intuition that the social significance of royal finances extended beyond the matter of tax exemptions. Put simply, they noticed that apart from impoverishing the poor, the royal fisc enriched the affluent elite. After expressing his moral repugnance at the great inequality he witnessed, Rolland bewailed the lot of the social groups that made up the Sixteen's constituency: "Les pauvres marchans & mediocres Officiers sont destruits par aydes, daces, emprunts, ravissements de rentes, & recullements de gaiges, & les autres son riches à milliers."¹⁵⁰ Leaguer propaganda commonly censured the lavishness of Henry III's court and the opulence of his parasitic *mignons*, protesting that "ses voluptueux Ministres se son enrichiz de nos cōmoditez ... qu'ils n'ont jamais procuré qu'a se fouller de nostre sang."¹⁵¹ In similar terms several pamphlets deplored the profits reaped by tax farmers.¹⁵²

Not all League propaganda stopped at complaining that the downtrodden taxpayers were oppressed to enrich individual *élus*, and to pay for the prodigality of the King and his entourage. Rolland's more penetrating critique stepped past sterile resentment to recognize

that taxation represented the systematic transfer of wealth from "un petit nombre de pauvres bourgeois" to the "grands Officiers & pensionnaires."¹⁵³ According to Boris Porchnev, royal tax collection in the seventeenth century was in effect "une variante de l'exploitation féodale," or "une rente féodale centralisée," since it expropriated the surplus production of peasants and townsmen and bestowed it upon the dominant classes in the form of pensions, grants, wages, and the like.¹⁵⁴ In Rolland's *Remonstrances*, one may detect a glimmer of awareness that France's fiscal apparatus was becoming integrated into the socio-economic structure. The most explicit exposition of this awareness was, as usual, given by Cromé's *Manant*, in his caustic response to the *Maheustre*'s assertion that excessive taxation was not a legitimate cause for rebellion:

Vous avez raison de ne trouver estrange la multiplicité d'edicts et de subsidies, pour qu'il ne vous en couste rien, et au contraire y participer pour le payement de voz entretenemens;... mais nous autres qui les payons, le trouvons très-estrange et fascheux, et suffisant pour revolter un peuple.¹⁵⁵

The *Manant* went on to indicate further material sources of social conflict, even within the League, claiming that noblemen had profited from the League's various levies, and from the confiscation of Huguenots' and Royalists' property, while the people received nothing: the nobles enjoy "tous les avantages" and the people "endure toutes les pertes."¹⁵⁶ The *Manant* even contended that indebted *gentilshommes* supported Henry IV as a means of attacking their Parisian creditors: "ils ne veulent payer leurs debts et voudroient que tous les Parisiens fussent abismés avec leurs cédulés."¹⁵⁷ For the *Manant*, the civil war was unequivocally a social war, a conflict whose stakes were as much economic as religious. Noblemen fought, according to the *Manant*, "pour soutenir un heretique, et maintenir [leur] ambition et domination sur le pauvre peuple."¹⁵⁸ Ideas of social deference crumbled under the onslaught of experience: "la noblesse, qui a tout englouty et dévoré le bien du peuple, ils accusent le peuple d'ingratitude."¹⁵⁹

The League's tax revolt, its rebellion against the absolutist state, may then be seen as a rebellion against the nobility, for the state was, in Porchnev's words, an "instrument de la classe économique dirigeante pour contenir les classes exploitées."¹⁶⁰ Porchnev's analysis deals with the rebellions of the following century, not with the League directly, but his interpretation of the Fronde and the various provincial peasants' revolts may help to

understand the League; certainly it sheds light on the *Manant*'s remarks. Needless to say, Porchnev's views have not gone unchallenged, and are contested most notably by Roland Mousnier. Mousnier points out that the centralising power of absolutism was obnoxious to noblemen, who longed for the lost independence of mediaeval feudalism, and often sided with their peasants in uprisings against royal agents.¹⁶¹ At the time of the League, however, most noblemen found themselves on the side of the King, and ultimately on the side of Bourbon state building. As Manfred Orleas's examination of the role of the nobility at Blois concludes, "l'idéal politique de la noblesse n'était donc plus la monarchie tempérée mais la monarchie absolue."¹⁶²

Noblemen also found themselves on the side of the men of the *robe longue*, who were overwhelmingly royalist, and who were as much a target of Leaguer hostility as was the traditional nobility. Both groups were implicated in the absolutist state, the magistrates perhaps more directly than the *gentilshommes*, and both tended towards *politique* currents of opinion. Both, moreover, rallied to the banner of royal authority.¹⁶³ In Burgundy, despite the ancient and mutual animosity between *officier* and *gentilhomme*, it became apparent in the 1580s that their conflicts with the groups below them both were sharper and more essential.¹⁶⁴ At Toulouse, *parlementaires* and noblemen made common cause in an attempt to quell the League's insurrection.¹⁶⁵ In Paris a natural alliance of elites coalesced, perhaps resembling the "front de classe" which Porchnev describes in the seventeenth century.¹⁶⁶ Palma-Cayet reported that elements opposed to the Sixteen, including former Leaguers, began to organise in 1592, resolving,

qu'il falloit d'oresnavant que les bonnes familles et gens d'honneur se recogneussent pour estre les plus forts, et resister à certaines personnes qui se disoient catholiques zelez et se faisoient appeler les Seize, que l'on cognoissoit assez estre gens de neant, personnes abjectes, de basse condition, qui vouloient tout entreprendre et manier les affaires de la ville.¹⁶⁷

Beyond a shared participation in state power, and hence a shared fear of the League, individual *officiers* and *gentilshommes* were often linked by financial and social bonds, by networks of loyalty and patronage, a "système des dépendances réciproques qui reliaient les classes dominantes de la ville et des champs."¹⁶⁸ To describe the magistrature and nobility as branches of a single elite, as Jonathan Dewald has done, would be to overstate the case, but structurally speaking, they may well have functioned as such.¹⁶⁹

Viewed from below, as it were, the silhouettes of the knight and the judge were identical, and League pamphlets often considered them together as a single enemy, as accomplices in the King's crimes: "les grands, tât de l'Eglise, que de la Noblesse, & justice du royaume de France l'ôt tousjours supporté, d'autant qu'ils participoient aux rapines & exactions d'iceluy."¹⁷⁰

Referring to the League's later propaganda, specifically Cromé's Dialogue, one historian writes:

The civil war had been fought for so long that the complex corporate structure of society was being replaced in the minds of the defeated and destitute with a society polarized between the oppressors and the oppressed.¹⁷¹

Certainly the personas of the two characters in Cromé's pamphlet, and even the dialogue form itself, do suggest such a bifurcated social vision. The *Manant* was an urban everyman, a Parisian of indeterminate social status, perhaps a "respectable artisan," but probably closer to his creator, the lawyer Cromé: he was well-informed and quick-witted, and far from the rustic depicted of the frontispiece of the royalist version of the dialogue.¹⁷² The *Maheustre*, on the other hand, was undoubtedly a *gentilhomme* but he may be regarded as a symbol of the royalist privileged classes generally. The term "Maheustre" was originally a sartorial expression, referring to the padded shoulders worn by courtiers, but like the term "sans culottes," it became, by extension, a social and political label.¹⁷³ Eventually, it became synonymous with "Politique" or "Royalist," as in Jean Pigenat's pamphlet L'Aveuglement & grande inconsideration des politiques, dictés Maheustres (1592).¹⁷⁴ Another pamphlet, published in 1589, savagely urged that "quelques politiques cachez, & quelques Catholiques à gros grain" be "tous brusler dans un mesme feu."¹⁷⁵ "Gros grain" refers not to the *Politiques'* pantries, but to their wardrobes; it is another sartorial label, meaning a fabric of silk and mohair.¹⁷⁶

Yet the Leaguers' social vision was not of the type which the sociologist Stanislaw Ossowski calls "dichotomic," a vision of society polarised between rich and poor, oppressor and oppressed.¹⁷⁷ Rather, as was noted in chapter 6, League pamphleteers accepted the tripartite society and its richly textured hierarchy of functional categories.¹⁷⁸ According to Ossowski, the dichotomic conception is a mental image characteristic of periods of social conflict, when lines of social division are sharpened; two examples of this conception

Ossowski cites are the writings of Boulainvilliers and Sieyès.¹⁷⁹ In the 1580s and 1590s it was noblemen, not bourgeois Leaguers, who embraced a dichotomic schema by dividing humanity into the well-born and base-born, and the ideas emerging among noblemen in the late sixteenth century have been seen as anticipating Boulainvilliers's.¹⁸⁰ In the Leaguers' espousal of the traditional conception of a hierarchical society, and their acceptance of virtue as the definition of nobility, on the other hand, we are confronted with the phenomenon of an ostensibly nobiliary ideology proclaimed by a movement which was, objectively speaking, in conflict with the nobility.¹⁸¹

Theory and Practice

The League, however, took traditional social beliefs seriously, and intended to put the traditional virtue theory into practice. It is one thing for a treatise of nobility to goad *gentilshommes* into better conduct with the vague threat of degradation; it is quite another for a movement locked in struggle with a large section of the nobility to propose a wholesale purge of its enemies. Unlike the authors of *traités de noblesse*, who both decried the general decline of the Second Estate, and argued that individual -- but unspecified -- noblemen should lose their status, League pamphleteers had an identifiable portion of the nobility in mind when they lambasted nobiliary vice. When they insisted that noblemen who neglected their duty be punished, the pamphleteers were referring particularly to the duty noblemen could fulfil only by serving the party of God, the League. As we have seen in chapter 5, the Leaguers maintained that heresy was incompatible with virtue, and hence with nobility. In effect, this meant that Protestant *gentilshommes* were automatically degraded: "Tous heretiques sont menteurs & vilains, degradez de toute vraye noblesse, indignes d'avoir grade d'honneur ny aucune preeminence entre les Chrestiens."¹⁸²

More radical was the suggestion that royalist noblemen should suffer degradation. Matthieu de Launoy reasoned that since no heretic could be noble, any Catholic *gentilhomme* putting himself under Navarre's command was subordinating himself to his inferior, and in so doing annulling his own nobility:

Vous vous demettez souz vostre inferieur, & foulez par ce moyen aux pieds vostre degré de Noblesse, vous mesmes vous vous en degradez.... Vous estes, je ne peux dire soldats, car ce nom seroit trop honorable, & à celuy que vous servez: mais vous estes vallet d'un vilain,

lequel n'a plus aucune marque de Noblesse.... La marque qu'il porte, est d'un brigand & d'un boucher.¹⁸³

While threatening royalist noblemen with the loss of their status, the above passage implicitly accepts the social structure as a power hierarchy. Launoy also invoked the chivalric concept of felony, contending that royalist noblemen were guilty of lese-majesty, against both "Charles X" and God, and were thus felons "consequemment indignes du degré, preeminence & dignitez de Noblesse."¹⁸⁴ Another pamphlet argued that Catholic Royalists were accomplices in heretical vice: "qui parle & qui combat pour [les méchants], il participe à leur offence & au mal qui leur en advient."¹⁸⁵ Further, as Claude de Rubys declared, Navarrists would forfeit the economic basis of nobility along with their noble status, being dispossessed "de tous droicts & debvoirs seigneuriaux qui leur peuvent impunemēt estre desniez par leurs sujets."¹⁸⁶ Finally, the Royalists' disgrace would extend to their families: "Vous vous rendez indignes du tiltre de noblesse, & le souillez d'une tache que vos enfans ne pourront oncques laver."¹⁸⁷

The threat of degradation applied to neutral *gentilshommes* as well as Protestants and *Politiques*, for noblemen who were not actively engaged in the crusade against heresy were judged to be derelict in their duty: "selon le dire de la sainte Esriture, ceux qui ne tiennent conte & font peu de cas de Dieu & de son service deviendront ignobles & villains."¹⁸⁸

Unlike the treatises of nobility, moreover, the League proposed a mechanism to enforce virtue. Pamphlets demanded that the terms of the Treaty of Nemours and the Edict of Union be put into effect, and that heretics' belongings be promptly confiscated and sold.¹⁸⁹ They further demanded that lists be drawn up of the property, offices and benefices belonging to Catholic Navarrists, with the intention that their goods and lands be seized, their châteaux razed, and their posts awarded to others.¹⁹⁰ Doubtless many Leaguers hoped to benefit from the sale of *politique* property and from the vacancies created by their removal from office. More significantly, the Leaguers issued concrete proposals, and even legislation, which attacked their enemies' nobiliary status. League-dominated courts published orders declaring *gentilshommes* and *officiers* serving the *politique* side guilty of lese-majesty and "privez de tous privileges de noblesse."¹⁹¹ Noble duty, however, required more than simple abstinence from vice; the true nobleman actualised his virtue in the service of a just cause, for nobility was a vocation, and real only if exercised. The *Parlement* of Rouen ordered that

"tous Gentils-hommes & autres personnes, faisan profession des armes, seront tenus ... prendre les armes pour la manutention de l'honneur de Dieu ... sur peine d'estre declarez ignobles, eux & leur posterité." ¹⁹²

Few noblemen heeded the League's call, and the Holy War was failing for want of warriors. Nevertheless, the potent myth of the feudal host endured in the Parisians' minds. In June 1591 the *Hôtel-de-Ville* passed a resolution draughted by Boucher and Launoy on behalf of the Sixteen, which would require all *gentilshommes* to serve the new king elected by the Estates-General for six months, at their own expense, "et à ceste condition jouyroient de leurs privileges de noblesse, et non autrement." ¹⁹³

Among the Sixteen's most persistent demands was the establishment of a special court, "une chambre composee de personnes capables zelez & irreprochables & non suspects ... pour la punition des traitres, heretiques & autres faisans actes prejudiciables à la sainte Union." ¹⁹⁴ This extraordinary body would be empowered to root out vice wherever it sprouted, and would not be swayed by the intercession of influential friends and family of the accused, even by princes and "Senateurs." ¹⁹⁵ It would be assisted by another tribunal, elected by the Estates General to execute the assembly's decisions and to hear "les plaintes du peuple." ¹⁹⁶ The Sixteen's plans were nearly achieved after their assassination of Brisson, when a cowed *Conseil d'État* agreed to establish a *chambre ardente*, composed of men nominated by the Sixteen and "notoirement de la S-te Ligue." ¹⁹⁷ The court would be authorised to prosecute a wide range of suspects: not only heretics, but "thraistres, leurs fauteurs et adherans" as well. ¹⁹⁸ By supplementing the regular courts, which were reluctant to pursue *Politiques*, the *chambre ardente* would provide positions for members of the Sixteen. Above all, though, it would be an effective instrument for the Sixteen to strike at their enemies, and impose their moral and social vision.

By targeting royalist and neutral noblemen, the League threatened all nobles, far more than an abstract rebuke to the nobility as a whole would have done. While the League's theory of social organisation admitted gradation and manifold orders, that theory's moral foundation was utterly manichaeian. It operated, moreover, in the polarised environment of implacable civil war. *Religious* civil war, that is, a war which allowed no place for neutrality; the individual had to choose between the party of God and the party of Satan. ¹⁹⁹

The Edict of Union ordained that anyone who did not swear the Oath of Union, and in effect become a member of the League, would be considered a rebel and enemy, and treated as such.²⁰⁰ What is more, according to the League's rigorous definition of orthodoxy, those Catholics who accommodated the relapsed heretic Henry de Bourbon were flouting canon law, and so were themselves heretics, or at least schismatics, and subject to the same penalties.²⁰¹ The theologian and Leaguer publicist Jean Pigenat maintained that those who defied the excommunication of Navarre, or who simply failed to rally to the League, had broken with the church itself:

ceux qui ne sont pas unis en l'observance de tout ce que commande l'Eglise sous l'obeissance de son Chef, ne sont pas Catholiques, mais schismatiques.... C'est pour quoy ceux que nous apellons Mahetres à Paris, & auparavant Politiques, ou Frelus, & Mettins en Champagne, ou Guilbedoins en la basse Normandie & en Poictou, bigarez en Provêce; sont vrais schismatiques.²⁰²

The Parisian *cahier* of 1588 even proposed that all those who contested the Council of Trent should be declared heretics, and vehemently insisted that all heretics, "de quelque estat, qualité, ou condition qu'ils soyent, seront pris au corps et punis de mort et bruslez vifs."²⁰³ In the Leaguers' minds, Catholic Navarrists, Politiques, indifferent neutrals, even sceptical Gallicans, were assimilated with heretics, and threatened with divine retribution if they should, perchance, escape the stake: "Dieu les trouvera, ils auront beau se cacher."²⁰⁴

The threat was heightened by the climate of suspicion that prevailed in Paris in the 1590s, in which all magistrates and noblemen were under surveillance, and League preachers and pamphleteers decried the traitors who lurked in the city, or warned ominously that not all who attended mass were necessarily Catholic. Historians have written of a "reign of terror" or "dictature de conscience" in the League's Paris.²⁰⁵ Terror involves more than physical violence; it requires what Denis Richet calls a "reseau d'intimidation constante,"²⁰⁶ a system of psychological violence. League propagandists cultivated an atmosphere of fear and suspicion with their tales of "faux-freres, qui feign[ent] d'estre bōs Catholiques."²⁰⁷ Pamphlets exhorted vigilance against "leurs machinations couvertes & secrettes," and intimated that dissemblers and traitors could be detected by their lack of zeal: "ils n'ont pas les marques de ceux qui desirent servir à Dieu."²⁰⁸ One pamphlet, which purported to be the intercepted correspondence of two *Politiques*, fed the Parisians' paranoia, and perhaps their

need for ever more intense displays of fervour, with the insinuation that there were secret Royalists even among the zealots:

Savez-vous le brave moyen dont je me suis servy pour me conserver, et lequel je pratique encor tous les jours? c'est que, si tost que nous sommes deux ou trois ensemble, j'entame le propos de monsieur de Guise ... puis je commence à mesdire à bouche ouverte du Roy ... accompagnant le tout de la plus triste et funeste contenance que je puis feindre, et y entrelaçant quelques juremens, pour mieux contrefaire le passioné. Après cela, je suis réputé le plus homme de bien du monde, bon catholique bien affectionné, bien zélé.²⁰⁹

L'Estoile reported that after the League army's defeat at Senlis in May 1589,

il faisoit lors dangereux à Paris de rire, pour quelque occasion que ce fust, car ceux qui portoient seulement le visage un peu guay estoient tenus pour Politiques et Roiaux, et comme tels courroient fortune, pource que les curés et prédicateurs advertissoient d'y prendre garde et crioient qu'il faloit saisir de tous ceux qu'on verroit rire et se resjouir.²¹⁰

The pamphlets made it clear that appropriate punishment would be meted out to any secret Royalists or fifth columnists: "quand il aura pleu à Dieu nous faire descouvrir ceux du party cōtraire qui sont encores parmy nous ... nous en poursuivōs la vengeance par les voyes de Justice."²¹¹

League pamphlets also promised vengeance by extra-legal means, and their protestations of respect for the nobility were often followed by invocation of the popular menace, and the warning that the people's wrath could become uncontainable if abuses were not corrected: "autrement ne pouvons nous appaiser le peuple justement irrité."²¹²

References to "la furie populaire"²¹³ cannot have allayed the fears of noblemen and magistrates, regardless of their religious or political sympathies, and such references likely played into the hands of royalist propagandists who portrayed the League as a cabal of demagogues inciting the masses to exterminate the social elites. Complaining of the Valois' Italian financiers and courtiers, Caumont proclaimed: "Il sera chassé par fureur & sedition populaire, avec grādisime danger de tous ceux qui le favorisent. La voix du peuple ... crie par tout cōtre luy."²¹⁴ Another pamphlet even announced that the zealots were willing to massacre as they had in the past, "[de] courir parmy les rues, & tuer tout ce qu'ils rencontreroient sans acceptiō [sic] de pere & de mere ... pour venger l'idolatrie."²¹⁵

The Sixteen's practice of intimidation was not confined to their pamphlets and sermons. The preacher Jean Guincestre ended his New Year's Day service in 1589 by requiring the congregation to swear an oath to avenge the Duke and Cardinal of Guise. The

First President Achille de Harlay was among the worshippers that day, and was forced by the priest to swear the same oath: "Levez la main, Monsieur le Président, levez-la bien haut, encore plus haut, s'il vous plaist, afin que le peuple le voie."²¹⁶ Senault, the clerk of the General Council of Union, had sway on the council disproportionate to his rank, and according to L'Estoile, could block resolutions he disliked simply by announcing, "Messieurs, je l'empesche et m'y oppose pour quarante mil hommes."²¹⁷ The mob violence Senault hinted at was not an idle threat, and Royalists or those of doubtful loyalty were often set upon. The Spaniard Pedro Corneio reported with approval that during the siege of Paris, if anyone were so bold as to advocate surrender, "il estoit mis à mort sans forme ne figure de procès, ou jetté en l'eau ce qu'ils ont faict a plus de vingt, et à aucuns pour avoir seulement dict qu' il estoit bon et nécessaire de faire la paix avec l'ennemy."²¹⁸ Members of the Sixteen acted as a law unto themselves in 1589 and 1590, extorting money and even assaulting their enemies with impunity; if ever they were charged with a crime the organisation could force an acquittal from the captive law courts.²¹⁹

Officially sponsored violence occurred as well, initially against property, as when Aumale, the governor elected in the aftermath of Blois, began "la guerre par les bourses, evoiant fouiller les maisons des Roiaux et Politiques, par les Seize."²²⁰ It swiftly escalated, however, with the brief imprisonment of the entire Paris *Parlement* in January 1589, with the arrest of three hundred notables in July, who were held hostage when royalist forces approached the city, and with the execution of suspected conspirators after a failed plot to open the gates to Henry IV's soldiers on All Saint's Day the same year.²²¹ These acts of violence must be seen as encoded deeds, as gestures, having significance beyond their immediate consequences. As Barnavi points out, they were an aspect of the League's propaganda, and had an edifying and explicative value, separating the good from the wicked.²²² The Sixteen's terror culminated in their murder of Brisson on 15 November 1591, which they hoped would begin the final purge of their enemies. Ten days later a list came into L'Estoile's hands, which enumerated the prominent *Politiques* in the city, with a letter under each name indicating the sentence the Sixteen had determined for each: P for *pendu*, D for *dagué*, C for *chassé*.²²³ The mock trial and execution of Brisson was more than a simple political assassination, it was, as Barnavi and Descimon put it in their

collaborative book, "un mystère qui théâtralisait une expérience mystique. Ses acteurs purifiaient symboliquement la cité des miasmes."²²⁴

The Context Transforms the Text

Seen in the context of the League's action, the Leaguers' statements on virtue acquired a larger significance. Conventionalities, such as the trite ideas about degradation uttered by Montholon at the Estates General became charged with meaning: "si vous delaissez & abandonnez la vertu, vous perdez le degré de la Noblesse."²²⁵ The Leaguer publicists' insistence on "la vertu de noblesse," and their repudiation of new ideas about the superior value of gentle birth, echoed the two basic tenets of chivalry, which according to Johan Huizinga dated back to the fifteenth century and beyond: "that true nobility is based on virtue, and that all men are equal."²²⁶ In chivalric literature these ideas had been empty banalities, lacking any "actual social purport."²²⁷ In the late sixteenth century, however, in the writings of the Leaguer insurgents, these sterile ideas were pregnant with meaning, for the ideology of feudalism, if put into effect, would have dismantled feudalism. The prestige and power of the nobility were justified by its virtue, which was actualised in the fulfilment of its duty, its social function. But if the nobility was manifestly not virtuous, and if it neglected its duty, its very existence would be in jeopardy. Launoy issued the challenge by posing what in another time, from another source, might have been an innocuous, theoretical question:

N'est-ce pas le faict de Noblesse, que de delivrer le pays de male beste & male gent?... Dieu permet que les ennemys viennent souvent courre sur nous, si donc il faut les endurer, *dequoy servira la Noblesse?*²²⁸

Launoy, however, was a representative of an organisation that had assassinated the King, incarcerated *gentilshommes* and *parlementaires*, quarrelled with its own noble allies, and taken legal steps to deprive idle noblemen of their status and privileges. In other words, it was the authorship of League pamphlets which gave the nobiliary ideas they reproduced their anti-nobiliary import.

League pamphlets had harsh words for wicked or negligent noblemen, but the *traités de noblesse* had been no kinder. The *traités*, however, were written from a nobiliary standpoint, and their authors appeared as stern but benevolent preceptors, hectoring the

nobility to save itself, fighting to reverse the order's decline. As one historian put it, L'Alouette "est pour les nobles très dur à la fois et très plein de sollicitude; il les châtie parce qu'il les aime."²²⁹ One salient difference between Caumont and the writers of *traités* with whom he is often mistakenly grouped, is that he did not represent himself as a nobleman, and moreover, dispensed with the usual epistle dedicatory. League pamphlets were understood to represent a non-noble position, and their rebukes to the nobility were often explicitly addressed from below: from the "menu peuple", from "aucuns bourgeois de Paris", or from a servant or vassal of particular lord.²³⁰

The League did not merely graft anti-noble sentiment onto a nobiliary system of ideas, or substitute a bourgeois content for a noble one. Rather, the message itself was reversed by the messenger, in this case the League's non-noble propagandists; the Leaguer reflected the nobleman's image, but distorted it like a circus looking-glass. This is as true of the early League writings as it is of the later "radical" ones; what was a platitude in the mouth of a *maheustre* became a revolutionary slogan in the mouth of a *manant*.²³¹ George Rudé has pointed out that in their transmission, ideas are transformed; they suffer a "sea-change." Enlightenment ideas, for example, took on new significance when popularised.²³² The ideas of *traités de noblesse* underwent a similar metamorphosis through their appropriation by the Leaguers.

Then again, the context could not fail to transform the text. The religious element of virtue had been uncontentious in a world where everyone was orthodox, if not always observant. In the context of religious schism and civil war, however, it became laden with meaning. By the same token, the beleaguered nobility of the late sixteenth century, surrounded by real or imagined foes, was on the defensive. Though still the dominant class in France, it perceived itself to be weak and impoverished, its social supremacy and identity threatened from below. Now it discovered that the system of ideas which had long buttressed its hegemony could be used against it by a gaggle of notaries. In the final analysis, the social ideology of the Paris League, that movement of the "bourgeoisie seconde" led by merchants, lawyers, friars and minor officials, was a slightly adapted version of the traditional feudal ideology. Such a transfer of mental equipment has ample precedent. Indeed, as Georges Duby has shown, the idea of the tripartite society did not originate as a justification of noble

dominance, but as an attempt to restrict noble abuses.²³³ The tripartite society idea eventually became a dominant ideology, a mental image of the feudal structure which palliated the injustice of the feudal system. As such, it functioned because it was accepted, even assumed, by all levels of society. In Duby's words, "every ideological model that is put together to serve the needs of the dominant class aims to induce the oppressed to venerate the ways of life from which they are excluded and to despise those that are imposed on them."²³⁴

By the late sixteenth century, the feudal ideology could no longer legitimise nobiliary dominance, and it was in the name of noble virtue and the tripartite society that Leaguers attacked the Second Estate.²³⁵ Yet Leaguers continued to venerate the nobiliary ideal, even while they disparaged noblemen. The Leaguers' desire for personal social advancement, their ambivalent attitude towards commerce, and their inability to criticise the nobility except in terms of the nobiliary ideal, show the abiding power of that dominant ideology. The "bourgeoisie seconde" failed to develop a new social vision that could properly serve their own needs and could respond to the profound social changes of the time; one might conclude that they were mired in false consciousness.²³⁶ Noblemen, on the other hand, were fostering new ideas of innate superiority. It may be, as well, that given the social significance of the emerging state, the political theory of absolutism should be seen as an element in a reconstituted dominant ideology.

The Implications of Political Thought

It has often been noted that the political theory of League pamphleteers owed much to the writings of the Huguenot *monarchomachs*.²³⁷ The Huguenots, for their part, undertook a volte-face in 1584 when the Duke of Anjou's death made Navarre heir apparent, and Protestant writers became the staunch defenders of hereditary monarchy.²³⁸ Several League pamphlets cited *monarchomach* ideas, on the right of resistance for example, but it is open to question whether this represented an adoption of Huguenot political theory, or simply a rhetorical device, spitting back their enemies' ideas, as in Louis Dorléans's Catholique Anglois:

En leur Françoise Gaule, qui est l'un des plus détestables livres qui ait veu le jour,... ils chantent qu'il est loisible de choisir un Roy à son appétit; dites doncques aux hérétiques que le Roy de Navarre n'est à vostre appétit.²³⁹

Robert Harding has convincingly argued that for the Leaguers, resistance was not a "political right," but a "religious duty," and that the ideas of League preachers should not be seen as political theory, but "prophetic denunciation."²⁴⁰ Unlike Knox and other Protestant thinkers, Hotman, Beza and Mornay had not justified resistance as the rebellion of the godly against a wicked government, but in terms of natural law and popular sovereignty.²⁴¹ League propagandists, however, seemed much more comfortable with a fundamentally religious and moral justification for revolt, at least in their vernacular pamphlets.²⁴² One pamphlet asserted that a "loi naturelle" permits men to defend themselves and their property, but then added: "je trouverois encores de la difficulté en ceste liberté de prendre les armes, si elle venoit du seul desir de conserver nos biens, & qu'elle ne se trouvast forcee ... par une obligation que nous avons à Dieu de conserver la religion."²⁴³ Another pamphlet used the duties defined by the relation of homage as a model for legitimate resistance:

Le vassal n'est pas tenu d'aider son Prince & Seigneur quand il sçait bien que la guerre par luy entreprise est injuste. Et sera un peuple Catholique tenu d'obeir, suivre & ayder celui qui s'est allié avec les heretiques?²⁴⁴

In any case, ideas of popular sovereignty and the right of resistance were not born in the 1570s in the minds of the *monarchomach* theorists. League publicists, especially the scholastically trained preachers among them, cannot have failed to be acquainted with Aquinas's political doctrine, which stipulated that sovereignty is delegated to the ruler by the people, the whole community, who in turn derive it from God, and who may resist tyrannical government.²⁴⁵ Whether in fact the Leaguers adopted *monarchomach* theories, or whether they merely employed their enemies' arguments as a polemical technique, we can see that an idea is a double-edged sword.

The constitutional and political theories of the League have been studied elsewhere, and are outside the scope of this thesis, but mention must be made of their social implications. Historians have generally viewed League ideas as more radical and far-reaching than *monarchomach* theory, for while the Huguenot writers vested the right of resistance in "magistrates", meaning nobles and civic officers, the League permitted rebellion and even tyrannicide on individual initiative. Huguenot theory, according to this view, was "aristocratic," while League theory was "democratic."²⁴⁶ League theorists, however, were not prepared to hand over political power to the rabble. When they wrote that the "people"

had the right to depose kings, they did not mean the "disorderly confused crowd," but what Boucher called the "prudent multitude," "men of distinguished virtue, probity, judgement and dignity."²⁴⁷ In their own minds, of course, these were the very qualities that typified the Leaguers. An anonymous pamphlet, published the same year as Boucher's comments, concentrated popular sovereignty in the Estates-General:

Je ne laisse ... pas la puissance de châtier les Rois quand ils abusent de leur dignité au populace indiscret [sic]; mais à l'assemblée des plus vertueux personnages de tout le Roïaume, aux Deputés des trois Etats de chaque Province, après avoir essayé les plus doux remedes.²⁴⁸

The League's doctrine of tyrannicide was also highly legalistic, as in Raynssant's restrictive formulation:

Je ne doute qu'il soit defendu à un ou plusieurs particuliers, sans autorité au magistrat, ou és principaux officiers de la couronne & de la justice, attenter à la vie du Prince, quand il seroit mesmement déclaré tyran.²⁴⁹

Moreover, as Frederic Baumgartner points out in his study of League political thought, pamphleteers hesitated to call for Henry III's assassination, and it was only after Jacques Clement's act that they elaborated a justification of tyrannicide.²⁵⁰ Thenceforth, League pamphleteers acclaimed Clement, and thunderously demanded that another volunteer similarly dispose of Navarre, asserting that any individual may justly slay the tyrant, and promising immortal glory to the assassin.²⁵¹ Regicide, although the ultimate rebellion, was less an assault on royal authority than a violation of the sacred quality of kingship. Yet it was the religious basis of the monarchy, and the religious bond between king and people, which lent Leaguer ideas their weight.

The League, in effect, inverted the theory of divine right: "la puissance & autorité des Roys vient de Dieu, pour estre seulement ministres de son regne, & exercer sa justice en terre."²⁵² Kings were ordained by God as His creatures and lieutenants, subordinate to God's law and religion.²⁵³ The people, too, owed their first obedience to God, and just as they obeyed the king before his governors, so must they obey God before the king, as the king was but God's governor on earth.²⁵⁴ This argument must be understood to be more than metaphorical. To the Leaguers, the provincial governor was to the king quite literally as the king was to God: they were part of the same chain of command, for the divine and human

hierarchies existed on the same continuum. As we have seen in chapters 3 and 6, the social hierarchy was also integrated into this continuum.

The creator's role in the political sphere was as more than an abstract first cause or titular king of kings: He was the guarantor of, but also a party to, the contract, or perhaps the covenant, which intrusted sovereignty to the prince. Following Aquinas, the Leaguers believed that God, as author of kings, acted through the people: "Je ne me puis persuader que les Royaumes tiennent immediatement de Dieu, puis que Dieu a donné permission aux peuples de se constituer & elire des Rois."²⁵⁵ The people, then, could make and unmake kings in the name of God. Kings who breached the covenant would have their authority revoked by the people's decree, for "vox populi, vox Dei."²⁵⁶

If the people deposed a king, it was to replace him with another. Leaguers wished to fetter royal power, but did not imagine an end to the monarchy itself. Pronouncements which appear to indicate republican leanings should be regarded as statements of the principle of popular sovereignty: "Le peuple fait les Roys, & non les Roys le peuple: Le peuple peut vivre soubz un autre gouvernemēt que d'un Roy, & non pas un Roy, estre tel sans subjects."²⁵⁷ The king ruled by popular consent, and that consent might be withdrawn. As the Leaguers reminded noblemen, the status and privileges of the Second Estate were similarly accorded by the people, and as the *traités de noblesse* had maintained, the reciprocal obligations of nobleman and roturier were similarly governed by a celestial compact.²⁵⁸ Raynssant's pamphlet spelt out for royalist nobles the social implications of religiously charged popular sovereignty:

Vos fiefs, vos seigneuries tiennent de la couronne qui ne meurt jamais, non d'un particulier Roy quel qu'il soit: car puis qu'il est ainsi, que luy mesme tient son estat du peuple: à plus forte raison vous qui tenez de l'estat, tenez vous directement du mesme peuple. Et s'il est sujet à desposition, comme nous avons verifié cy dessus en certains cas, vous à plus forte raison pouvez estre deposez par le mesme peuple, pour cas de felonnie que vous commettez en associant celuy qui luy prepare des embusches, & qui luy est ennemy mortel.²⁵⁹

Royalist pamphlets described League political thinking as far more radical than it actually was, and attributed to the Leaguers the desire to overthrow the monarchy and establish an "Estat confus democratic & populaire."²⁶⁰ To a degree, these accusations were scare-mongering, the sixteenth-century equivalent of red-baiting. Royalist authors also depicted the Sixteen as more plebeian than they really were -- a natural propaganda technique

-- and called upon their readers to crush "ces serfs detestables", "ceste canaille meurtriere de vostre Roy."²⁶¹ In part, however, such accusations reflected the opinion held by royalist noblemen that the League constituted a fundamental challenge to the existing order.

Gentilshommes perceived the League as a whole as a threat, and projected this threatening presence onto its political ideas. Nobles were also uncomfortably conscious that any mutiny against royal authority, especially from below, menaced their own position, and *politique* pamphleteers played on noble fears:

Pensez, Messieurs, qu'en la perte de vos Rois naturels legitimes se trouve aussi enveloppée la ruine de vos maisons & familles, l'aneantissement de vostre Noblesse & la confusion de vostre ordre avec le populaire. Les fondemens en sont ja biē advācez, la Democratie vous menace, les villes font la loy au Chef de vos armees: les gueux commandent & ne sont les Gentils hommes respectez sinon en tant qu'ils obeissent aux Commandemens.²⁶²

Derivative as Leaguer political thought was, conventional as League political theories were, they alarmed a nobility already obsessed with the threat from below. Like the treatises of nobility, royalist pamphlets adduced disturbing precedents in Switzerland and elsewhere, and expressed the fear that the lower orders might abolish or even eradicate the nobility.²⁶³ Among the most vehement royalist pieces was the Manifeste de la France, addressed to the people of Paris; for its author, the civil war was plainly a social war:

[Mayenne] est le Tribun du peuple, & sa guerre & la vostre est la guerre du peuple, contre les Estats Royals & Aristocratic, & toute la Noblesse de la France. Car sans doute, & tout le monde y void clair, vos vrais desseins sont de vous affranchir en Democratie, estre regis par Tribuns & Magistrats populaires, usurper une puissance sur toutes les autres villes de la France, exterminer toute la Noblesse, vous emparer de tous leurs biens.²⁶⁴

The same pamphlet then turned to the League's propagandists, and indicated how their formulation of the theory of virtue must have appeared from a noble vantage point: "Sont-ce pas les ordinaires discours de vos seditieux prescheurs, que toute la Noblesse est heretique, qu'elle est ennemie de l'Estat populaire, qu'elle s'oppose à vos desseins, & qu'il la faut exterminer."²⁶⁵

An Aristocracy of the Spirit

Understandably, the Leaguers bristled at royalist slurs against their morality and social standing. The *Manant's* response was defiant: "je juge un grand honneur pour les Seize de ce qu'ils sont blasmez, injuriez et scandalisez de telles manieres de gens qui suyvent

... vostre party."²⁶⁶ But Leaguers recognized that the establishment's contempt was a screen erected between them and the positions and power they so abundantly deserved:

Ces grands & sçavans heretiques, Atheistes & Politiques, qui pensent estre les Phœnix du monde, qui pensent avoir la parfaite science de toutes choses, pour tenir l'immerite & indigne reng de Chanceliers, Conseillers & Secrettaires d'Estat, Presidens & Conseillers dans des Cours sourveraines,... disente que nous autres liguez (car d'unis, ils ne nous veulent appeller ainsi) nous ne sommes que racaille & populace.²⁶⁷

The *Manant's* defiance was exceptional, therefore, and most pamphlets cultivated an image of the Sixteen and the adherents of the Parisian League as respectable burghers, "gens de bien."²⁶⁸ Even the *Manant* elsewhere described Charles Hotman, the younger brother of the *monarchomach* François Hotman, and the first leader of the Sixteen, as "l'un des bourgeois d'icelle ville, homme très-vertueux, de noble, bonne, ancienne et honneste famille."²⁶⁹ In other pieces the Sixteen represented "les plus zelés & notables bourgeois de ceste ville", or "des plus honorables et vertueux bourgeois de toute la ville."²⁷⁰

Virtue and respectability, zeal and notability, were inseparable in the minds of the Leaguers. "Gens de bien" was both a social and moral category, and according to one pamphlet, applicable to anyone who stood firm in the defence of the true faith.²⁷¹ The party of God was necessarily the party of the godly, and League writers insisted on the virtue of their members: "nous ne recognoissons aucuns vices damnables en ceux qui nous fortifient en la sainte Union, de la probité desquels nous sommes tant assurez."²⁷² According to the *Manant*, the Sixteen recruited only men who had been vetted for their "mœurs, et bonne renommée."²⁷³

Now if, as the Leaguers believed, virtue was the essence of nobility, and the absence of virtue entailed the loss of nobility, did it follow that the inverse proposition was true, and that virtuous men were automatically ennobled? The Leaguers never claimed noble status, but we have seen that they were adamant that virtue must not go unrewarded, and specifically, that offices and benefices should be assigned to men of suitable merit. Roland Mousnier extrapolates beyond the evidence in arguing that the Leaguers intended to establish a new nobility of virtuous men, meaning themselves, but Mousnier's views should not be dismissed outright.²⁷⁴

The Leaguers' attitude to Jacques Clement is a case in point. Pamphlets eulogised Clement as a martyr, a liberating angel, a "devot et saint personnage," distinguished by his

great piety.²⁷⁵ But the Leaguers' conception of virtue demanded more than contemplative piety, and they also considered the Dominican a "vertueux et généreux personnage."²⁷⁶ Clement, as they imagined him, was more than pious, he was virtuous: both devout and valiant, and League publicists praised Clement's valour as effusively as his piety: "Quel cœur généreux", "quel invincible courage!"²⁷⁷ Above all, Clement had died in combat, smiting the tyrant for God and God's people: "il a hardiment & plus que heroïquement exposé sa vie pour la nostre."²⁷⁸ The pamphlets described the murder of Henry III in language normally reserved for sterling deeds of chivalry: "un acte si genereux ... un faict si magnanime."²⁷⁹ Predictably, the Leaguer clergy made Clement an object of veneration, transported his ashes to Paris as a relic, and proposed that he be beatified and that his statue be raised in Nôtre-Dame.²⁸⁰ More significantly, days before Henry IV entered Paris, the *cordelier* Jean Garin demanded from the pulpit that Clement should be posthumously ennobled, "avec toute sa race," and urged his listeners to imitate Clement, and strike down the Béarnais.²⁸¹

Clement's regicide was not the only heroic act to inspire League publicists to such lofty praise. Pamphlets frequently took the form of news bulletins and battle accounts, which applauded the martial virtue of Catholic armies and their commanders, at least until relations between Mayenne and the Sixteen deteriorated. Pamphlets also lauded the valour of Catholic townsmen, in very similar terms. One piece reported the inhabitants of Ahun fighting "virilement" alongside noblemen and conspicuously manifesting their virtue: not just their piety and probity, but their "force, générosité & magnanimité" as well.²⁸² According to this pamphlet, the men of Ahun showed themselves to possess greater courage even than those Huguenot soldiers particularly reputed for their bravery, and so they roundly defeated their opponents: "[ils] se defendirent si vaillamment qu'ils r'emporterent l'honneur, & triompherent de leurs ennemys."²⁸³ The Parisians, in Charles Pinselet's opinion, were no less valiant: "Les vertueux citoyens sont assiégés et dedans et dehors; mais ils ne perdent pourtant le courage, ains brusquement et virilement ils résistent à l'ennemy que les presse de tous costez."²⁸⁴ Whereas noblemen had degenerated from the virtuous *gentilshommes* of old, the Leaguers, another pamphlet asserted, "marchent sur les pas de ceste vieille Noblesse Françoisé."²⁸⁵ None of these pamphlets directly claimed that the roturiers of Paris or Ahun, or members of the League generally, were noble, or should be ennobled, but they did use a

nobiliary vocabulary to describe Catholic townsmen, and the importance of martial virtue as the basis of nobility was unmistakably familiar to their readers. While the Leaguers did not usurp noble status, they did usurp the nobility's language, and perhaps the nobility's function.

In a world where social strata were seen as functional categories, vocations, the significance of Catholic townsmen's military exploits lay less in the virtue it revealed in them than the social role it accorded them. One pamphlet, praising the Parisian' zeal, chronicled the dedication of the city's inhabitants to the war effort, and not just on the home front: "le bourgeois neglige sa famille et le marchand quitte son traffic pour faire nombre en ceste guerre."²⁸⁶

League writers were ill at ease with what seemed to them an anomaly, a rupture in the natural order of things. One pamphlet considered that the people had been obliged to perform the nobility's duty, albeit reluctantly, by the nobility's own inaction:

Le moyen de ne se point plaindre de l'entremise des simples gens, est que les grands s'en meslent & apportent la fidelité, le soin, & le zeile qu'il appartient. Car si une fois le simple peuple se voit soulagé de ceste façon, il ne demandera pas autre chose qu'a se mesler de sa vacation ordinaire, de laquelle il s'est à regret diverty, pour suppleer à la negligence des grands, lesquels soit par crainte, soit par ambition, laissoient tout perdre.²⁸⁷

Other pamphlets were more comfortable with this transposition of functions, and declared that the people had been charged with the task of delivering France from tyranny, in view of the ruling classes' complicity:

C'est au petit peuple à se ressentir du bien qui luy est présenté, & de se delivrer de ceux, qui ou pour estre accoustumez à mal faire, ou pour avoir des Estats & offices, maintiennent la tyrannie, n'espargnant vie ne moyen aucun à ce faire, par ainsi Dieu luy sera favorable & l'affranchira des malheurs qui le menacent.²⁸⁸

André de Rossant concluded that the commons had inherited the nobility's divinely-ordained duty:

Il semble que Dieu ait mis le glaive tranchant de la justice, au defect de la subalterne, en la main du commun peuple, assisté de l'aide de peu de gens de bien, d'autre calibre, pour en faire l'exploit l'entière execution.²⁸⁹

In Rossant's view, God had conferred upon the people a new and exalted social function, and he urged them to perform it with vigour: "ne defaille à ta vacation."²⁹⁰ Rossant recalled the fifteenth-century mystic Dennis the Carthusian, to whom God had revealed "que par le

peuple & vulgaire il reformera son Eglise."²⁹¹ For Rossant, the hour of God's triumph was near, and the people had been assigned the mission of driving out heresy and vice, of reëstablishing a purified church and kingdom. Have courage, Rossant exhorted his readers, and "l'erreur cessera, l'abus s'en ira, la tyrannie finira, & le fleuron de la France reverdira."²⁹²

The Holy League itself, for these pamphleteers, was the union of all zealous Frenchmen, and the instrument by which the people would accomplish their mission and carry out God's will. Like Clement, the men of the League were appointed by God as his agents. Narrating the foundation of the Sixteen, one pamphlet proclaimed that God had "esleu & choisi" the organisation's five original members.²⁹³ The Leaguers saw themselves as the Elect, "la troupe saint des esleuz de Dieu,"²⁹⁴ chosen to fulfil an earthly mission, but also to enjoy celestial glory:

De quelle louange meritent estre celebrez ceux qui ... se sont bandez, liez, & unis pour redresser, relever, soustenir la gloire de Dieu, l'honneur de la France, & le bien public? qui est-ce qui dira ces vertueux citoyens & les genereux Princes & valeureux gentilshommes ... [ne sont] pas seulement dignes d'un laurier caduque & perissable, mais d'une couronne de gloire eternelle?²⁹⁵

God's service brought both material and celestial laurels, and noblemen had no monopoly over those laurels. Along with the earthly rewards came earthly tests, for as Caumont pointed out, God did not spare his own, but afflicted them as He had afflicted Israel, and France during the 1580s endured all forms of torment.²⁹⁶ One pamphlet cited St Gregory's assertion that the French surpassed all other nations in faith and fervour, and were honoured by God above all others.²⁹⁷ If the Catholics of France were the Chosen People, then Paris was a holy city, and the ardent Parisians the "mignons de Dieu."²⁹⁸ Among the Chosen People, however, there were many reprobate: heretics and malefactors, unclean elements which the League proposed to purge. There was also a group of men distinguished by their especial virtue, who were charged with the task of cleansing France. One pamphlet recalled the Maccabees as righteous models for the Leaguers, "gens valeureux & vrays serviteurs de Dieu."²⁹⁹ This pamphlet did not fail to mention the power and prestige the Maccabee zealots earned.

In his study of the penitential companies of the time, Robert Schneider describes the flagellants as a "spiritual elite," withdrawing from the masses, but simultaneously proselytizing them and mobilising them for the Counter-Reformation.³⁰⁰ Schneider points out that the hoods worn by the penitents disguised social divisions within the procession, while visibly distinguishing the participants from spectators.³⁰¹ Unlike mediaeval flagellants, however, Renaissance penitents did not drop out of society and regroup on the margins, but remained active citizens, *bons bourgeois*, and only occasionally took up the whip.³⁰²

Perhaps the Leaguers, many of whom took part in the penitential theatre, should also be seen as a spiritual elite. Unlike the millenarian movements of earlier centuries "self-deifying elites" or "amoral supermen" in Norman Cohn's words,³⁰³ the Leaguers remained rooted in religious orthodoxy, urban sociability, and civic morality. They were bourgeois heroes, exemplars of virtue who, guided by God, were capable of outdisputing a *maheustre*, and maybe of filling a *maheustre*'s shoes.³⁰⁴

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII

¹Robert DESCIMON, "La Ligue à Paris (1585-1594): une révision," Annales vol. 37, no. 1 (1982), p. 97.

²François CROMÉ, Dialogue d'entre le maheustre et le manant [1593], ed. P.M. ASCOLI (Geneva: Droz, 1977), p. 189.

³Arlette JOUANNA, Ordre social: Mythes et hiérarchies dans la France du XVI^e siècle (Paris: Hachette, 1977); André DEVYVER, Le Sang épuré: Les préjugés de race chez les gentilshommes de l'Ancien Régime (1560-1720) (Brussels, 1973).

⁴Ellery SCHALK, "Changing Conceptions of Nobility in France during the Wars of Religion," (Ph.D. diss., Berkeley, 1970). Schalk sees the beginnings of the nobility's "prise de conscience" in the 1570s and 1580s; From Valor to Pedigree: Ideas of Nobility in France during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (Princeton, 1986), p. 65.

⁵[Urbain de SAINT-GELAIS], Advertissement particulier et veritable. De tout ce qui s'est passé en la ville de Tholose (Paris: R. le Fizelier, 1589), in M.L. CIMBER & F. DANJOU, eds., Archives curieuses de l'histoire de France (1834-1840), vol. 12, p. 296; Cruautez commises contre les Catholiques de la ville de Vandosme, par le Roy de Navarre (Paris: R. Thierry, 1589), p. 5.

⁶[Jean BOUCHER], Replique à l'antigaverston (n.p., 1588), p. 10; Cf. Histoire admirable à la posterité des faits et gestes de Henry de Valois (Paris: P. des Hayes, 1589), p. 7: "plusieurs voyâs que [Henry III] deflechissoit totalement de la vertu dudict Henry second, ont doubté s'il estoit legitime."

⁷Louys MUSSET, Discours sur les remonstrances et reformatiions de chacun estat (Paris: N. Chesneau, 1582), f. 166v; François de LA NOUE, Discours politiques et militaires [1587], ed. F.E. SUTCLIFFE (Geneva: Droz, 1967), P. 138.

⁸E.g. Lettre ou advissement à un Seigneur Francois Catholique pour le destourner & toute la Noblesse, d'aller au camp du Roy de Navarre (Paris: D. Millot, 1589), pp. 21-22: "S'il ne nous est doné d'enhaut que nous puissions esgaller ceux, qui nous ont tracé ce beau chemin de la vertu: au moins pour nous monstrier vraiment extraicts de leur noble sang, taschons ne degenerans, de les ensuyvre selon nostre pouvoir."

⁹[Papire MASSON], Avis à l'irresolu de Limoges (Paris: R. le Fizelier, 1589), p. 67. Elsewhere Masson implied that any innate virtues were the shared qualities of *all* men, and the "premieres impressions engravees en nos ames avec le sens commun" (p. 51).

¹⁰Remonstrance et complainte de la France (Paris: G. Bichon, 1589), p. 21. Cf. Response du menu peuple à la declaration de Henry par la grace de Dieu autant Roy de France que de Pologne ([Paris: D. Binet], 1589), p. 2: "Nous sommes resolu selon nostre naturelle & hereditaire affection de maintenir la Religion de nos ancestres jusques au dernier point de nostre vie." This "hereditary" zeal was the property of the "menu peuple."

¹¹Tumbeau sur le trespas et assassinat commis aux personnes de Messeigneurs de Guyse (Paris: J. Guérin, [1589]) in Les Belles figures et drolleries de la Ligue, vol. 4 of Pierre de L'ESTOILE, Mémoires-Journaux, ed. G. BRUNET (Paris: 1888-1896), p. 49. Cf. Catherine de GUISE, Requete presentee à Messieurs de la Court de Parlement de Paris. Pour informer du

massacre & assassinat commis en la personne du feu Monseigneur de Guyse ([Paris: R. Thierry], 1589), pp. 3-4. See also Les Propheties merueilleuses advenues à l'endroit de Henry de Valois (Paris: A. du Brueil, 1589), p. 5: "les mœurs des peres [sont] exprimees és enfans par imitatiō." Finally, for an appeal to noble education see [Etienne BERNARD], Advis aux François de la resolution prise aux Estats de Bloys, contre Henry de Bourbon (Lyons, 1589), p.27: "Est-ce ainsi, Messieurs que vous suyvez la vertu de vos Peres?... Avez vous esté par eux nourris & eslevez pour obscurir la lumiere de leur pieuse memoire, & effacer l'hōneur de leurs monumēts?"

¹²Seconde remonstrance a la Noblesse Catholique qui tient le party du Roy de Navarre (Lyons: J. Pillehotte, 1590), p. 4. Only one League pamphlet expressly agreed that socially significant traits may be hereditarily transmitted, and it discussed only those attributes that qualify men for kingship, saying that the crown was awarded for individual merit in ancient times, but that succession eventually became hereditary, "les bons estans coustumierement engendrez de bons." Nevertheless, if kingly qualities were congenital, according to this pamphlet, kingship was contingent, and such traits were not automatically passed on. The crown was acquired only where "les fils ne degenereront point de la vertu de leurs peres, c'est à dire au cas qu'ils seront capables." Discours sur les calomnies imposees, aux Princes & Seigneurs Catholiques, par les Politiques de nostre temps (n.p., 1588), p. 73.

¹³Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique de France, qui tient le party du Roy de Navarre (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), pp. 22-23. See also [Jean BOUCHER], Histoire tragique et memorable de Pierre de Gaverston (n.p., 1588), p. 25: "Edouard son fils ne luy ressemble en rien qu'au seul nom, ains degenera du tout de sa race & vertu."

¹⁴Matthieu de LAUNOY, Remonstrance. Contenant une instruction Chrestienne de quatre poincts à la Noblesse de France (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1590), p. 20.

¹⁵Lettre ou adverstissement à un Seigneur François, p. 8.

¹⁶Jehan de CAUMONT, De la Vertu de Noblesse (Paris: F. Morel). f. 2r. Launoy expressed the same opinion in almost identical terms, adding that "tous hommes en general sont tirez & extraicts d'une mesme masse." Cf. LAUNOY, Remonstrance, p. 6.

¹⁷Advis au Roy (n.p., 1588), p. 4.

¹⁸Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique de France, pp. 22-23. Cf. [Michel MARCHANT], Exhortation derniere a la noblesse (Paris: P. Hury, 1589), p. 5: "Car n'ayant rien de plus semblable à l'homme que l'homme (bien que la fortune ou dignité de l'origine nous rende aucunement differens les uns des autres, les premieres impressions de vice ou de vertu nous sont à tous esgallement communes." Cited by Arlette JOUANNA, L'Idée de race en France au XVIe siècle et au début du XVIIe [1975] (Montpellier, 1981), p. 695, n. 27.

¹⁹[Jean BOUCHER], Sermons de la simulée conversion et nullité de la prétendu absolution de Henry de Bourbon (Paris: G. Chaudiere, R. Nivelles & R. Thierry: [1594]), p. 205. Cited by Ch. LABITTE, De la démocratie chez les prédicateurs de la Ligue, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1865), p. 276.

²⁰La Vie et innocence des deux freres (Paris: A. du Brueil, 1589), p. 33.

²¹CROMÉ, op. cit., p. 54. Several pages later, the *Manant* stated that Navarre was of a "race inveterée herétique," but this meant that he was "nourry" in heresy from infancy (p. 59).

²²Robert DESCIMON, Qui étaient les Seize? Mythes et réalités de la Ligue parisienne (1585-1594) (Paris: Klincksieck, 1983), pp. 54-55.

²³François de L'ALOUETTE, Des Affaires d'estat, 2nd ed., (Metz: J. d'Arras, 1597), pp. 178-179.

²⁴Exhortation pour la paix et re-union des Catholiques François (Paris: N. Roffet, 1588), pp. 3-4, 29. Pallier includes this pamphlet in his inventory of League publications, describing it as a "pièce ligueuse, très modérée," but admitting the possibility of it being "d'inspiration royaliste." Denis PALLIER, Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue (1585-1594) (Geneva: Droz, 1975), item N° 177. Lelong notes it as being "d'un Auteur bien intentionné pour la Religion, pour le Roi & pour le bien de sa Patrie." Jacques LELONG, Bibliothèque historique de la France, revised ed. (Paris: J.-T. Herissaut, 1768-78), vol. 2, item N° 18696. While perhaps royalist, this pamphlet was by no means *politique*, but rather intensely Catholic and fiercely anti-Protestant. It praised the king and royal policy effusively, and alluded disapprovingly to Leaguer disobedience (pp. 9ff, 20). In short, it represented the principle of religious unity under the king, a current of opinion which events were rapidly rendering obsolete, as the monarchy's interests came into conflict with those of the Catholic party. The pamphlet ended with a prayer, beseeching God to "reunir tout ton peuple souz ta Loy, souz ta protection, souz une foy, souz un Roy" (p. 39). It was apparently addressed to Frenchmen generally, and implied no Frankish exclusivity by the words "Peuple François."

²⁵CROMÉ, op. cit., p. 189.

²⁶SCHALK, Valor to Pedigree, p. 109, passim; "Changing Conceptions of Nobility," pp. 100, 104, passim; DEVYVER, op. cit., pp. 32, 100-110. Arlette JOUANNA, however, argues that the nobiliary "idée de race" did not begin as a defence mechanism, but may have become one by the last decade of the century, after the Leaguers questioned noble superiority "au nom même de l'identification entre la noblesse et la vertu." JOUANNA, Ordre social, pp. 168, 192ff, 208f.

²⁷E.g. [Claude de RUBYS], Responce à l'Anti-Espagnol, semé ces jours passez par les ruës & carrefours de la ville de Lyon (Lyons: J. Pillehotte, 1590), p. 45; [Jean PIGENAT], L'Aveuglement et grande inconsideration des politiques, dictz Maheustres (Paris: R. Thierry, 1592), p. 12; CAUMONT, Vertu de Noblesse, passim.

²⁸J.V. ALTER, Les Origines de la satire anti-bourgeoise en France (Geneva: Droz, 1966), vol. 1, pp. 157, 159-160.

²⁹MUSSET, op. cit., ff. 84r-85r.

³⁰Ibid.

^{30bis}Christopher STOCKER makes a similar point in "Exclusion and Union: The Associative Impulse in the Catholic League," in Aequitas, Aequalitas, Auctoritas, ed. D. LETOCHA (Paris: Vrin, 1992), p. 282.

³¹Micheline BAULANT, "Prix et salaires à Paris au XVI^e siècle," Annales, vol. 31, no. 5 (1976), pp. 967f, 987.

³²Fernand BRAUDEL, Civilization and Capitalism, vol 1: The Structures of Everyday Life, trans. S. REYNOLDS (New York: Harper & Row, 1981), pp. 129-145.

³³Philip BENEDICT, "Civil War and Natural Disaster in Northern France," in Peter Clark, ed., The European Crisis of the 1590s (London: Unwin, 1985), pp. 84-89.

³⁴Henri HAUSER, Recherches et documents sur l'histoire des prix en France de 1500 à 1800 (Paris: Presses modernes, 1936), p. 108.

³⁵A.A. LOZINSKI, "L'Accroissement de la population de Paris au XVI^e siècle," Srednie Veka, vol. 37 (1973), p. 173. Cf. Arlette LEBIGRE, La Révolution des curés (Paris: Albin Michel, 1980), p. 93.

³⁶[Jehan de LA FOSSE], Journal d'un curé ligueur de Paris sous les trois derniers Valois, ed. Edouard de BARTHELEMY (Paris: Didier, 1865); L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 58.

³⁷HAUSER, Recherches et documents sur l'histoire des prix, p. 108; "Histoire de la Journée des Barricades de Paris. Mai 1588," in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol. 11, p. 385.

³⁸L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 5, pp. 51a, 52a; Alfred FRANKLIN, ed., Journal du siège de Paris en 1590 rédigé par un des assiégés (Paris, 1876), pp. 182ff, 238; Pierre CORNEIO, Bref discours et veritable des choses plus notables arrivees au siege memorable de la renommee ville de Paris (Paris: D. Millot, 1590), in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol. 13, pp. 255, 261. To convert *écus* into *livres tournois*, see Gaston ZELLER, Les Institutions de la France au XVI^e siècle (Paris: P.U.F., 1948), p. 240.

³⁹See Paris au XVI^e siècle et sous le règne d'Henri IV (Paris: Musée Carnavalet, 1979), pp. 22-25 (inv. P. 262-622).

⁴⁰CORNEIO, op. cit., p. 261.

⁴¹L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 5, pp. 43ff; CORNEIO, op. cit., p.256.

⁴²HAUSER, Recherches et documents sur l'histoire des prix, p. 108.

⁴³L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 5, p. 51a; CORNEIO, op. cit., p. 262.

⁴⁴FRANKLIN, Journal du siège de Paris, p. 173; L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 5, pp. 50a-51a.

⁴⁵L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 5, p. 47. The Leaguers were not all spared the rigours of the siege, however. L'Estoile reports that many zealots, weakened by hunger, succumbed to fever, and 62 *procureurs* died between Easter and Christmas of 1590, (vol. 5, pp. 64-65); Cf. CORNEIO, op. cit., pp. 244, 249.

⁴⁶L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 5, p. 24; Registres des délibérations du bureau de la ville de Paris (Paris: 1888-1910), vol. 9, pp. 410-411, 422, 541; CORNEIO, op. cit., pp. 243; Cf. Jacques-Auguste DE THOU, Histoire universelle (London, 1734), vol. 11, p. 162.

⁴⁷L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 336, vol. 3, p. 1, vol. 5, p. 26; CORNEIO, op. cit., pp. 246, 247, 251; LA FOSSE, op. cit., pp. 200, 205, Registres de délibérations, vol. 9, pp. 10-11, 25, 26, 47, 75, 109, 219-220, 228, 371, 387, vol. 10, p. 19, etc. According to Corneio, the expulsion order was not enforced.

⁴⁸N.Z. DAVIS, "Poor Relief, Humanism, and Heresy," in Society and Culture in Early Modern France (Stanford, 1975), pp. 17-64.

⁴⁹On New Year's Eve, 1589, an assembly of notable bourgeois decided, on the motion of Nicolas Rolland, to establish *ateliers publics* "pour eviter que tumultes qui pourroient advenir en ladite ville par le menu peuple, lequel, demeurant oyseux et en nécessité, pourroit s'esmouvoir et se mutiner." See "Assemblée pour aviser à la seureté de la Ville, après la mort et emprisonnement de plusieurs Princes et Seigneurs," in Registres des délibérations, vol. 9, p. 219. See also CORNEIO, op. cit., p. 251; and [Jean DUJON], Articles remonstrez a Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne (Paris: G. Chaudiere, 1589), p. 5. The commission was to take over the responsibilities of the *Lieutenant civil*.

⁵⁰Registres de délibérations, vol. 9, pp. 349, 363, 386, vol. 10, p. 8.

⁵¹The closest the League came even to proposing restrictions on speculation was in the exhaustive Paris *Cahier de doléances* of 1588, which, along with suggesting that statutes of *métiers* be enforced, and weights and measures standardised, requested that local monopolies be prohibited. See "Le Cahier de doléances de la ville de Paris aux Etats généraux de 1588," ed. Elie BARNAVI, in Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France, vol. 487 (1976-1977), pp. 136-137. In 1587 the *Hôtel-de-Ville*, still dominated by the League's enemies, established a price for firewood, and the Paris *Parlement* ordered residential rent reductions in 1589 and 1592. See Registres des délibérations, vol. 9, p. 44; DE THOU, op. cit., vol. 10, p. 598, vol. 11, pp. 511-512. The Paris experience was in marked contrast to that of Marseilles, where Casaulx's Leaguer dictatorship introduced price controls, and undertook to redistribute wealth. See Robert HARDING, "The Mobilization of Confraternities against the Reformation in France," Sixteenth Century Journal, vol. 11, no. 2 (1980), p. 97. On Casaulx, see also Fernand BRAUDEL, The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II, trans. S. REYNOLDS (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), vol. 2, p. 1212ff.

⁵²E.g. CORNEIO, op. cit., p. 261.

⁵³"Arraignment du sieur de Vicques avec un bourgeois de Paris, par forme de dialogue," [Autumn 1592], ed. Ch. VALOIS as "Un dialogue historique du temps de la Ligue," Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France, vol. 55 (1908), p. 218. One pamphlet played down the unemployment caused by the war and the exile of *politique* employers, saying that alternative jobs could be provided working on fortifications, supplying the war effort, or in the army. In any case, it continued, the loss of employment is a lesser concern than the loss of a Christian republic. See Advis sur ce qui est à faire, tant contre les Catholiques simulez, que les ennemis ouverts de l'Eglise (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), pp. 12-13. Another pamphlet conceded, on behalf of the "menu peuple," that "bien est il vray que plusieurs d'entre nous patissent aucunement pour n'estre employez comme en bon temps," but added that God, who sends affliction, also gives strength, and that as the

poverty of the destitute grew, so did the charity of "ceux ausquels Dieu a donné plus de moïens qu'a nous." Response du menu peuple, p. 2.

⁵⁴Complainte des pauvres Catholiques de la France et principalement de la ville de Paris (n.p., 1590), in Belles figures, L'ESTOILE, op.cit., vol. 4, pp. 262-263; [Charles PINSELET], Le Martyr des deux frères ([Paris], 1589), in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol. 12, p. 95.

⁵⁵[Louis DORLEANS], Advertissement de Catholiques Anglois aux Francois Catholiques, du danger où ils sont de perdre leur Religion ([Paris], 1586), in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol. 11, p. 141.

⁵⁶One pamphlet by Jehan de Caumont impugned those who "n'ont autre ... souci que de s'enrichir, de thesaurizer & magaziner en terre & de volupter," but in the context of a general indictment of the "torrent de corruption [qui] a renversé presque tout le monde." This passage seems to be a moral condemnation of wordliness rather than a specific critique of hoarding. CAUMONT, Advertissement des advertissemens, au peuple tres-chrestien (n.p., 1587), p. 6. The League preacher Christopher Aubry is said to have assailed *Politiques* for hoarding in 1593 (see LABITTE, op. cit., p. 259), and Drouot reports popular agitation against profiteers in Dijon the same year. Henri DROUOT, Moyenne et la Bourgogne: Etude de la Ligue (Paris: Picard, 1937), vol. 2, p. 284. Pallier cites a pamphlet which blamed the Huguenots for high bread prices: Advertissement à tous fidelles catholiques de batailler vertueusement pour la defense de la foy et religion catholique (Paris: N. Le Roy, 1588). See PALLIER, op. cit., p. 168, item N° 260.

⁵⁷"Bref traité des misères de la ville de Paris," (1590), in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol 13, pp. 276, 278-279.

⁵⁸The Parisian *Cahier* of 1588 demanded that churchmen practising usury be punished. "Cahier de doléances," ed. BARNAVI, p. 109. For League pamphlets which mention usury disapprovingly, see CAUMONT, Advertissement des advertissemens, p. 6; CROME, op. cit., p. 171; Advis a Messieurs des Estats sur la reformation et le retranchement des abus (n.p., 1588), p.7; Lettre d'un lieutenant general de province, à un des premiers magistrats de France (Paris: M. Jouin, 1589), p. 5; [François de MONTHOLON], Remonstrance faite par Monsieur le Garde des Seaux de France en l'assemblée des Estats (Paris: F. Morel & J. Mettayer, 1588), p. 29. This last denounced "jureurs & blasphemateurs, des joueurs & personnes debauchez, des usuriers & injustes acquerieurs, des negociateurs & trafiqueurs de mauvais foy, des mal-vivâs," and called for the moral regeneration of all three orders.

⁵⁹Jean BOUCHER, L'Usure ensevelie ou défense des monts de piété de nouveau erigez aux Pais-Bas, pour exterminer l'usure (Tournay, 1628). Mediaeval distaste for usury lingered into the sixteenth century, and although satire against usury was in decline by this time, edicts were proclaimed against the practice as late as 1576. See ALTER, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 62; Martin WOLFE, The Fiscal System in Renaissance France (New Haven: Yale, 1972), p. 91, n. 55.

⁶⁰"Cahier de doléances," ed BARNAVI, pp. 114, 137; Advis à Messieurs des Estats, pp. 11-12.

⁶¹Arrest de la Cour de Parlement de Paris. Contre ceux qui tiennent le party de Henry de Bourbon (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), p. 7; see also Declaration de Messieurs les habitants

de la ville de Thoulouse (Paris: M. Jouin, 1589), pp. 1-2; and VARAINE, Harangue, ou remontrance faite a Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne (Paris: P. Mercier, 1589), pp. 4, 11.

⁶²Auguste BERNARD, ed., Procès-verbaux des Etats généraux de 1593, (Paris: 1842), p. 652.

⁶³DESCIMON, "La Ligue à Paris," p. 89. Descimon notes that the same split occurred during the Fronde, and distinguishes a "capitalisme commercial" from a "capitalisme commensal." The silk merchants were not unanimous in their royalism, however. Antoine Lamy was a silk mercer and zealous member of the Sixteen. In border areas such as the Saône, merchants tended to remain neutral and concern themselves only with business. See DROUOT, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 165-167, 277ff.

⁶⁴LABITTE, op. cit., pp. 261-262.

⁶⁵Justification de la guerre entreprise, commencee et poursuivie souz la conduit de tres-valeureux & debonnaire Prince Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne (Paris: G. Chaudiere, 1589), p. 5. In the areas they dominated, the Royalists were no less interested than the Leaguers in keeping trade routes open. See Maurice WILKINSON, "A Provincial Assembly during the League," Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 3rd series, vol 9 (1915), p. 72.

⁶⁶Requete presentee à Messieurs de la Court, par les Eschevins & corps de la ville de Paris. Pour faire declarer tous Gentils-hommes & autres, qui empeschent la sainte Union parjures & infideles, & dechuez de tous droicts & privileges (Paris: R. Thierry, 1589), pp. 3-4. This situation was considered particularly grave if the towns were on navigable rivers, and remedial action was recommended, including the despatch of "quelque bonnes & notables personages" to attend provincial council meetings (pp. 5-6).

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 6-7. Cf. DUJON, op. cit., p. 9, which petitioned Mayenne to "faire raser les Chasteaux & maisons fortes des Gentils hommes, & autres du party contraire, lesquelles ne servêt que de retraites aux voleurs" and which were used to "empescher la liberté du cōmerce."

⁶⁸La Ligue tres-sainte, tres-Chrestienne, & tres-Catholique (n.p., [1585]), pp. 17-18. There is some controversy over this pamphlet's date of publication. Three bibliographies date it in 1589. See Catalogue de l'histoire de France, vol. 1, p. 322, item N° 616; D.V. WELSH, A Second Checklist of French Political Pamphlets, 1560-1653, in the Newberry Library (Chicago, 1955), item N° *153; Robert LINDSAY & John NEU, French Political Pamphlets, 1547-1648 (Madison, 1969), item N° 1556. One historian, however, gives its date as 1585. See Georges WEILL, Les Théories sur le pouvoir royal en France pendant les Guerres de Religion (Paris, 1892), p. 206. Henri Hauser gives "1595", but this is indubitably a typographical error, and should read "1585", since it is included among documents on 1585 in a volume that ends with 1589. HAUSER, Les Sources de l'histoire de France, XVIe siècle (1492-1610), vol. 3: Les Guerres de Religion (1559-1589) (Paris: Picard, 1912), p. 294, item N° 2371. The content and tone of the pamphlet point to the earlier date, before the Barricades and before Blois. It is interesting that one of the incentives the Spanish Ambassador offered when seeking to have Philip II declared Protector of France was access to the Spanish dominions for French traders. See J.H. MARIEJOL, La Réforme et la Ligue, (vol. 6, part 1 of Histoire de France, ed. E. LAVISSE) (Paris: Hachette, [1904]), p. 329.

⁶⁹A.A. LOZINSKI, "La Lutte pour le pouvoir dans la Municipalité parisienne, après la «Journée des Barricades» (1588-début 1589)," [Srednie Veka, vol. 8 (1956)] unpublished French

translation, p. 36; and Paul ROBIQUET, Histoire municipale de Paris, 2nd ed., vol. 2: Règne de Henri III (Paris: Hachette, 1904), p. 374.

⁷⁰Harangue au reverendissime et illustrissime legat Henry Cajetan, faicte par aucuns Bourgeois de Paris (Paris: D. Millot, 1590), pp. 3-4.

⁷¹Myriam YARDENI, La Conscience nationale en France pendant les Guerres de Religion (1559-1598) (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1971), p. 251.

⁷²Henry Cardinal CAJETAN, Lettres de Monseigneur le Cardinal Cajetan, Legat Collateral de nostre saint Pere le Pape, au Royaume de France. Envoyees à la Noblesse de France (Lyons: J. Pillehotte, 1590), pp. 5-6. [Signed and dated at Paris, 10 March 1590.

⁷³Seconde Remonstrance a la Noblesse Catholique, pp. 5-6.

⁷⁴Oudart RAYNSSANT, Représentation de la noblesse hérétique sur le théâtre de France (Paris: G. Bichon, 1591), f. 77r-v. This pamphlet is apparently a slightly revised version of a 1589 piece entitled Le Théâtre de France. See PALLIER, op. cit., item N° 542., 563.

⁷⁵RAYNSSANT, op. cit., f. 3v.

⁷⁶Marc ANGENOT, La Parole pamphlétaire (Paris: Payot, 1982), p. 150.

⁷⁷CROME, op. cit., pp. 84, 189.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 78.

⁷⁹Frederic BAUMGARTNER, Radical Reactionaries: The Political Thought of the French Catholic League (Geneva: Droz, 1975), pp. 212, 216. Historians who interpret late League pamphlets as expressing deep-rooted anti-noble sentiments include YARDENI, Conscience, pp. 250ff; SCHALK, "Changing Conceptions," pp. 91-93; Elie BARNAVI, Le Parti de Dieu: Etude sociale et politique des chefs de la Ligue parisienne (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1980), p. 232; J.H.M. SALMON, "The Paris Sixteen, 1584-1594: The Social Analysis of a Revolutionary Movement," Journal of Modern History, vol. 44, no. 4 (1972), p. 541; SALMON, "French Satire in the Late Sixteenth Century," Sixteenth Century Journal, vol. 6, no. 2 (1975), pp. 83-84; R.C. GOULD, "The Life and Political Writings of Louis Dorleans, Publicist of the French Catholic League," (Ph.D. diss., Bryn Mawr, 1975), p. 212; MARIEJOL, op.cit., pp. 381-382; HAUSER, Sources, vol. 4: Henri IV, item N° 3078; Ch. LENIENT, La Satire en France ou la littérature militante du XVIe siècle (Paris: Hachette, 1866), pp. 400-407.

⁸⁰Robert HARDING, "Revolution and Reform in the Holy League," Journal of Modern History, vol. 53, no. 3 (1981), p. 414.

⁸¹DESCIMON, Qui étaient les Seize?, p. 10, n. 8.

⁸²P.M. ASCOLI, introduction to CROME, op. cit., pp. 35-39; ASCOLI, "A Radical Pamphlet of Late Sixteenth Century France: Le Dialogue D'Entre Le Maheutre Et Le Manant," Sixteenth Century Journal, vol. 5, no. 2 (1974), pp. 5-6; 17-19.

⁸³CROME, op. cit., p. 187.

⁸⁴E.g. [Louis DORLEANS], Le Banquet et apresdinée du conte d'Arète (Paris: G. Bichon, 1594), pp. 58, 60; BERNARD, Advis au François, p. 26-27; Lettre ou advertissement à un Seigneur François, p. 20; MUSSET, op. cit., f. 136r.

⁸⁵Cf. CAUMONT, Vertu de Noblesse, f. 6r.

⁸⁶Harangue au reverendissime et illustrissime legat Henry Cajetan, pp. 3-4.

⁸⁷GOULD, op. cit., pp. 184-187; BARNAVI, Parti de Dieu, pp. 56-58, passim; YARDENI, Conscience, p. 253; LABITTE, op. cit., passim; LOZINSKI, "La Lutte pour le pouvoir," passim; F.C. SPROULE, "An Analysis of the Duc de Mayenne as Leader of the French Catholic League, 1589-1593" (M.A. thesis, Alberta, 1976), pp. 23, 49.

⁸⁸SALMON, "The Paris Sixteen," passim; BARNAVI, Parti de Dieu, passim.

⁸⁹[Claude MATTHIEU], Declaration des causes qui on meu Monseigneur le Cardinal de Bourbon, et les Princes, Pairs, Prelats, et Seigneurs, Villes et Communautés Catholiques de ce royaume, de s'opposer à ceux qui veulent subvertir la Religion et l'Estat ([Rheims], 1585) in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol. 11, pp. 7-19.

⁹⁰Elie BAR-NAVI, "La Ligue Parisienne (1585-94): Ancêtre des partis totalitaires modernes?", French Historical Studies, vol. 11, no. 1 (1979), pp. 29-57.

⁹¹Elie BARNAVI, "Fidèles et partisans dans la Ligue parisienne (1585-1594)," in Hommage à Roland Mousnier: Clientèles et fidélités en Europe à l'Époque moderne, ed. Y. DURAND (Paris: P.U.F., 1981), pp. 139-152.

⁹²Réponse aux justifications prétendues par Henry de Valois, sur les meurtres & assassinats de feu Messeigneurs Cardinal & Duc de Guise, in [Simon GOULART], Mémoires de la Ligue (Amsterdam, 1758), vol. 3, p. 499.

⁹³CROME, op. cit., p. 98; [Jean] de LEZEAU, "De la religion catholique en France: 1560-1604," in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol. 14, pp. 40-41; Nicolas POULAIN, "Le Procez-verbal d'un nommé Nicolas Poulain, Lieutenant de la prévosté de l'Isle-de-France, qui contient l'histoire de la Ligue," in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol. 11, pp. 289ff. See also Harangue au reverendissime et illustrissime legat Henry Cajetan, which reported the Paris organisation forming after the example of the princes and nobility (p. 6).

⁹⁴Responce des Catholiques zelez et unis, pour la conservation de la Religion Catholique Apostolique & Romaine ([Paris]: J. Paraut, 1589), f. ciii verso.

⁹⁵Entire letter quoted by PALMA-CAYET, Chronologie Novenaire, in MICHAUD & POUJOLAT, Nouvelle collection des mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France (Paris, 1838), vol. 12, p. 35.

⁹⁶ROBIQUET, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 255, 283, 580; POULAIN, op. cit., p. 307; "Histoire de la Journée des Barricades," in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol. 11, p. 385; L'ESTOILE,

op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 141-142; Ch. VALOIS, ed., Histoire de la Ligue: Oeuvre inédit d'un contemporain (Paris: Renouard, 1914), vol. 1, pp. 203-204.

⁹⁷ROBIQUET, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 464; MARIEJOL, op. cit., p. 284.

⁹⁸"Paris - Don Bernardino de Mendoza au roi d'Espagne," (13 Oct. 1588), (Arch. de l'Emp., Fonds esp., B. 60, N° 206), appendix 51, Joseph de CROZE, Les Guises, les Valois et Philippe II (Paris: D'Amyot, 1866), vol. 2, p. 368.

⁹⁹MARIEJOL, op. cit., p. 295; ROBIQUET, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 527, 530; LOZINSKI, "La Lutte pour le pouvoir," p. 80; P.M. ASCOLI, "«The Sixteen» and the Paris League, 1585-1591," (Ph.D. diss., Berkeley, 1971), pp. 333ff.

¹⁰⁰CROME, op. cit., pp. 112, 126.

¹⁰¹PALMA-CAYET, op. cit., pp. 248-249, 264b; CROME, op. cit., p. 145.

¹⁰²BARNAVI, Parti de Dieu, p. 214.

¹⁰³L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 298, see also pp. 175, 275, 288.

¹⁰⁴DUJON, op. cit., p. 10.

¹⁰⁵DROUOT, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 308, 310, 316; vol. 2, p. 316.

¹⁰⁶Declaration du Roy. Par laquelle il veut que les maisons des Catholiques qui assistent le Roy de Navarre, esuelles il ne se commet aucun acte d'hostilité soient conservees (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589).

¹⁰⁷SALMON, "The Paris Sixteen," p. 551.

¹⁰⁸LALOURCE & DUVAL, Recueil de pièces originales et authentiques concernant la tenue des Etats-généraux (Paris: Barrois, 1789), vol. 4: "Pièces justificatives," pp. 109-155; "Procez-verbal du Tiers-Etat," p. 160. Manfred Orlea interprets the nobility's resistance as evidence of its royalism. See ORLEA, La Noblesse aux Etats généraux de 1576 et de 1588 (Paris: P.U.F., 1980), p. 159.

¹⁰⁹L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 172. L'Estoile cynically added, "ce qui estoit vrai et nouveau seulement à des badeaux et ignorans, comme est un peuple, veu que les grands n'ont jamais accoustumé faire autrement."

¹¹⁰THOU, op. cit., vo. 10, pp. 325-326.

¹¹¹S.J. INGRAM, "Henry III and the League, 1585-1589" (M.A. thesis, Alberta, 1976), p. 66.

¹¹²SPROULE, op. cit., pp. 170-171; L. GREGOIRE, La Ligue en Bretagne (Paris, 1856), pp. 123ff; LOZINSKI, "La Lutte pour le pouvoir," p. 88.

¹¹³Denis CROUZET, "Recherches sur la crise de l'aristocratie en France au XVI^e siècle," Histoire, économie et société, vol. 1, no. 1 (1982), pp. 7-50; Robert HARDING, Anatomy of a Power Elite: The Provincial Governors of Renaissance France (New Haven: Yale, 1978), passim.

¹¹⁴HARDING, Anatomy, p. 107.

¹¹⁵Mark GREENGRASS, France in the Age of Henri IV: The Struggle for Stability (London: Longman, 1984), pp. 175-182.

¹¹⁶MARIEJOL, op. cit., p. 392, n. 1.

¹¹⁷For a recent discussion of Guise's ambitions, see J.-M. CONSTANT, Les Guise (Paris: Hachette, 1984), pp. 193-209; for an opposing view, see LEBIGRE, op. cit., p. 116, passim.

¹¹⁸See DROUOT, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 137, vol. 2, pp. 25, 198, 359ff.

¹¹⁹Trahison découverte de Henry de Valois, sur la vendition de la ville de Bologne à Jezebel Royne d'Angleterre (Paris: M. Jouin, 1589), pp. 7-8.

¹²⁰PIGENAT, op. cit., pp. 9-10, 13, 52, 117-118. Such arguments had been advanced as far back as the 1560s. See J.-N. BEAUPRE, Pamphlets pour et contre les Guise, 1565 (Nancy: Nivelle, 1586), p. 24.

¹²¹Discours du progres de l'armee du Roy en Guienne, commandee par Charles de Lorraine, Duc de Mayne (Paris: N. Nivelle, 1586), p. 24.

¹²²"Arraignment du sieur de Vicques avec un bourgeois de Paris," p. 220.

¹²³Ibid., pp. 211, 217.

¹²⁴Michel MARCHANT, La Paralysie de la France, avec le remède d'icelle (Paris: P. Hury, 1590), p. 42.

¹²⁵LABITTE, op. cit., pp. 208, 235; PALMA-CAYET, op. cit., p. 494.

¹²⁶Mayenne burnt all copies he could obtain, imprisoned the printers, and issued a reply. Cromé, who was already in hiding, fled the city. See ASCOLI, introduction to CROME, op. cit., pp. 27-29; and PALMA-CAYET, op. cit., p. 532.

¹²⁷CROME, op. cit., pp. 135ff, 177, 202-203.

¹²⁸Ibid., p. 148.

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 84.

¹³⁰Ibid., p. 75.

¹³¹ASCOLI, "Radical Pamphlet," pp. 5-6, 18-19; see also his introduction to CROME, op. cit., pp. 36-39.

¹³²Pallier agrees with Ascoli that the Sixteen turned to a denunciation of the nobility only in the face of noble hostility. See PALLIER, op. cit., p. 182. Barnavi and Orlea, on the other hand, argue that noblemen were driven away by the League's radical ideas. See ORLEA, op. cit., p. 153; BARNAVI, Parti de Dieu, p. 169.

¹³³CROME, op. cit., p. 186.

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 75.

¹³⁵DESCIMON, "La Ligue à Paris," p. 97, and Qui étaient les Seize?, p. 53.

¹³⁶Letter to Cardinal Montalto, 16 Nov. 1589, (Arch. Vat., Nunz. di Francia, reg. XXVII, fol. 439), cited by Michel de BOUARD, "Sixte-Quint, Henry IV et la Ligue -- la légation du Cardinal Caetani en France (1589-1590)," Revue des Questions historiques, vol. 116 (1932), p. 73.

¹³⁷CROME, op. cit., p. 155.

¹³⁸Jean MOREAU, Mémoires sur les Guerres de la Ligue en Bretagne, ed. H. WAQUET (Quimper, 1960), pp. 66-69ff, 75-76, 81-84; GREGOIRE, op. cit., pp. 149-151ff.

¹³⁹François FURET, "Pour une définition des classes inférieures à l'époque moderne," Annales, vol. 18, no. 3 (1963), p. 463.

¹⁴⁰L.S. VAN DOREN, "Revolt and Reaction in the City of Romans, Dauphiné, 1579-1580," Sixteenth Century Journal, vol. 5, no. 1 (1974), pp. 71-100; Emmanuel LE ROY LADURIE, Carnival in Romans, trans. M. FEENEY (New York: Braziller, 1979), pp. 35-39.

¹⁴¹Davis BITTON, The French Nobility in Crisis, 1560-1640 (Stanford, 1969), pp. 14-17; ROBIQUET, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 91.

¹⁴²Surprisingly, Parisian League pamphlets made no suggestion that the *taille personnelle* be replaced by a more equitable system of *taille réelle*, as existed in Provence and southern Dauphiné and as demanded by the Romans insurgents. See VAN DOREN, loc. cit., p. 76; LE ROY LADURIE, op. cit., pp. 46-47. No less a figure than Jean Bodin, absolutist though he was, also proposed the institution of a *taille réelle*. See BODIN, Les Six livres de la République (Paris: J. du Puis, 1583; facsimile ed., Aalen: Scientia, 1969), p. 887. The Parisians' silence can be explained by the form of taxation that afflicted their city: mainly sales and poll taxes, Paris being exempt from the *taille*.

¹⁴³Contre les fausses allegations que plus qu'Achitofels, Conseillers Cabinalistes, proposent pour excuser Henry le meurtrier (n.p., 1589), pp. 47b-48b. The clergy, as well as the Second and Third Estates, were involved in this dispute.

¹⁴⁴"Cahier de doléances," p. 120. George HUPPERT aptly describes noble status in 16th century France as a "tax haven" in "Lucullus, Crassus and Cato in Grenoble," Historical Reflections vol. 15, no. 1 (1988), p. 277.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 125-126. See also Bon avis et necessaire remonstrances, pour le soulagement des pauvres du tiers Estat (n.p., 1588), pp. 15-16: "Les exemptions & affranchissemens des tailles & aydes, à cause de plusieurs nouvelles offices & privileges particuliers, qui ne sont verifiez en la Court

des aydes, sont occasion manifeste de ce que les pauvres gens seuls payent toutes lesdictes Tailles & Aydes."

¹⁴⁶"Cahier de doléances," p. 126.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 121.

¹⁴⁸DESCIMON, Qui étaient les Seize? pp. 193, 209, 212.

¹⁴⁹[Nicolas ROLLAND DU PLESSIS], Remonstrances tres-humbles au Roy de France et de Pologne Henry troisieme ([Paris], 1588), p. 198. Rolland added: "Quand un Royaume est bien pollicé, & que la Justice y est exercee l'on ne voit point ces grands excez d'opulence & de misere: ains chacun y vit doucement, & se ressent par quelque proportion du bien & de la bonne police du païs."

¹⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 199-200.

¹⁵¹Responce du peuple Catholique de Paris, aux Pardons de Henry de Valois, semez par ses Ministres (Paris: D. Millot, 1589), p. 7. Other pamphlets called Henry's favourites "sang-sues" and "mange-peuples." See Admirable et prodigieuse mort de Henry de Valois (Lyons: L. Tantillon, 1589), p. 6; and Discours des trahisons, perfides, et desloyautez des Politiques de Paris (Lyons: L. Tantillon, 1589), p. 8. Boucher's pamphlet comparing Espernon to Gaverston, the favourite of Edward II of England, complained "quelle cruauté, d'apauvrir tout un Royaume, de faire mourir de faim tant de gens pour enrichir je ne sçay quels coquins qui ne servêt de rien au public." See BOUCHER, Histoire tragique de Gaverston, p. 26. See also PINSELET, Le Martyre des deux frères, pp. 64, 95; Les Causes qui ont contraint les Catholiques à prendre les armes ([Paris: J. Varangles & D. Binet], 1589), in GOULART, Mémoires de la Ligue, vol. 3, p. 524; [Jean BOUCHER], Lettre missive d l'evesque du Mans. Avec la responce d'icelle (Paris: G. Chaudiere, 1589), p. 53; and Articles pour proposer aux Estatz et faire passer en loy fondamentale du Royaume (n.p., 1588), pp. 11-12. A royalist pamphlet countered that although Henry III's spending may have been extravagant, the Parisians' grumbling was groundless, since the court enriched Paris: "Il est certain que si toutes les autres Provinces avoyent, pour ses immoderees libertez, quelque probable sujet de se douloir de luy, leurs dommages ont accru vos familles, & vostre ville a esté l'esponge qui s'est grossie des ruines publiques, & sa presence, & la frequence de sa Court chez vous, avoit en dix ans triplé toutes vos richesses. Qui vos sollicitoit donc à une si infame rebellion?" Le Manifeste de la France aux Parisiens & a tout le peuple François ([Tours], 1590), p. 11.

¹⁵²E.g. Bon advis et necessaire remonstrance, pp. 6-7; and Advertissement de nouvelles cruantez & inhumanitez desseignées par le Tyran de la France (Paris: R. Thierry, 1589), p. 21: "les partisans, au nombre desquels se comprend la plus part des Courtisans & Financiers,... engloutissent les thresors & richesses de la France, & partie desquels en compagnies privees rougissent mesmes de leur soudaine splendeur, & ne peuvent deguiser qu'elle procede d'une profusion & universel debordement des Finances."

¹⁵³ROLLAND, Remonstrances, p. 205. Cf. Harangue au reverendissime et illustrissime legat Henry Cajetan, p. 4.

¹⁵⁴Boris PORCHNEV, Les Soulèvements populaires en France au XVIIe siècle (Paris: Flammarion, 1972), pp. 44, 296, passim.

¹⁵⁵CROME, op. cit., pp. 76-77.

¹⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 184-185.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p. 187. Cf. RAYNSSANT, op. cit., f. 4r: "Ô traitres & desloyaux a dieu, banqueroutiers de la vertu, la journee des baricades, tant remercable, n'estoit-ce pas le terme que vous aviez donné à vos creanciers pour acquitter vos debtes? N'estoit-ce pas l'heure que vous deviez rayer des ephemerides & papier journaux des bons marchans tant de velours, de draps de soye, d'or & d'argent que vous aviez pris à credit." See also "Cahier de doléances," p. 96.

¹⁵⁸CROME, op. cit., p. 74. One historian writes of "class war," but nonetheless puzzlingly sees this conflict as entirely religious, and in no way economically based. See GOULD, op. cit., p. 213.

¹⁵⁹CROME, op. cit., p. 186.

¹⁶⁰PORCHNEV, op. cit., p. 311.

¹⁶¹Roland MOUSNIER, "Recherches sur les soulèvements populaires en France avant la Fronde," Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine, vol. 5 (1958), pp. 91, 98, 109, passim.

¹⁶²ORLEA, op. cit., p. 165. See also YARDENI, Conscience, pp. 198-199, 244-245. Cf. Pierre MESNARD, L'Essor de la philosophie politique au XVIe siècle (Paris: Boivin, 1936), p. 384: "Le mouvement démocratique de la Ligue, plus tourné contre la noblesse que contre l'autorité royale, facilita beaucoup le regroupement de l'aristocratie autour de la couronne, et la disparition rapide sous les Bourbons de la féodalité provinciale." See WEILL, op. cit., p. 291. The attachment of the nobility to royal authority was assumed but misunderstood by the Leaguers, who according to the *Manant*, had hoped that the nomination of "Charles X" would attract noble support, CROME, op. cit., p. 112.

¹⁶³The magistrates' state function did not necessarily preclude opposition, as was seen in the seventeenth century. At Rouen during the League period, the *parlementaires* were at the centre of League resistance to royal authority. See Jonathan DEWALD, "Magistracy and Political Opposition at Rouen," Sixteenth Century Journal, vol. 5, no. 2 (1974), pp. 66-78.

¹⁶⁴DROUOT, op. cit., vol. 1, pp. 71-72.

¹⁶⁵SAINT-GELAIS, op. cit., p. 286.

¹⁶⁶PORCHNEV, op. cit., p. 309.

¹⁶⁷PALMA-CAYET, op. cit., p. 394b. See also MARIEJOL, op. cit., p. 359. According to Lozinski, the "hautes couches bourgeoises" betrayed their plebeian allies and joined forces with the *robe* in 1589. LOZINSKI, op. cit., pp. 27, 71.

¹⁶⁸Elie BARNAVI and Robert DESCIMON, La Sainte Ligue, le juge et la potence (Paris: Hachette, 1985), p. 154. Robert Harding likewise points to the "remarkably close business relations" between robe and sword. See HARDING, Anatomy, pp. 215-216. Finally, whereas the *Manant* identified noble debt as a source of conflict (supra, n. 157), Denis Crouzet argues that the debts of

noble houses may have cemented their alliances with the men of the sovereign courts, and guaranteed "la moderation du Parlement dans le Paris ligueur." CROUZET, "Recherches sur la crise de l'aristocratie," p. 48. See also DROUOT, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 52.

¹⁶⁹Jonathan DEWALD, The Formation of a Provincial Nobility: The Magistrates of the Parlement of Rouen, 1499-1610 (Princeton, 1980), p. 309, *passim*. Dewald's views are discussed at length in chapter 4, *supra*.

¹⁷⁰Histoire admirable à la posterité, p. 17. Another pamphlet contended that Henry III accorded offices to Huguenots and *Politiques* "pensant par ce moyē petit à petit practiquer à ses vœux, la Justice, pour commander puis apres plus librement au tiers Etat, ce qu'il se promettoit. Car ja il s'asseuroit de la pluspart de la Noblesse, qui varie au vent de son Roy." [André de ROSSANT], Les Meurs humeurs et comportements de Henry de Valois representez au vray depuis sa Naissance (Paris: A. le Riche, 1589), pp. 13-14.

¹⁷¹SALMON, "The Paris Sixteen," p. 573. Cf. BARNAVI, "La Ligue parisienne," pp. 40-41.

¹⁷²SALMON, "The Paris Sixteen," p. 573. The term *Manant*, contrary to what one might expect, had nothing to do with working with the hands. Huguet defines it as "celui qui séjourne; résidant, habitant," and provides several examples of its usage, mostly in the standard phrase "bourgeois, manans et habitans" of a given town or *pays*. Edmond HUGUET, Dictionnaire de la langue française du seizième siècle (Paris, 1925-1967), s.v. "Manant." The word is derived etymologically from the Latin "manere," according to the Robert. It implies an attachment to a particular location of community. In another Leaguer dialogue, the mouthpiece of the Sixteen was named "le Manent," but described as "un bourgeois de Paris": "Arraisionnement du sieur de Vicques avec un bourgeois de Paris." A royalist dialogue, by contrast, made a very gullible peasant the spokesman of the League. See Devis familier d'un Gentil-homme Catholique François avec un Laboureur (n.p., 1590).

¹⁷³The large Robert defines *Maheutre* first as a "Bourrelet d'étoffe adapté à l'épaule; manche munie d'un tel bourrelet," and secondly as a "soldat, aventurier qui portait des maheutres." An early bilingual dictionary is more helpful on the word's connotations: "A swaggerer, swash-buckler, desperate or careless yonker" [i.e. junker]. See Randle COTGRAVE, Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues (London, 1611), s.v. "Maheustre."

¹⁷⁴Cited above, note 27. Presumably the expression referred here to Navarrists of all social ranks, just as royalist cobblers would be called "aristocrats" during the Revolution. Huguet defines "Maheustre" only as a "soldat ou partisan d'Henri IV au temps de la Ligue," and gives a feminine variant, "Maheutresse." See HUGUET, *op. cit.*, s.v. "Maheustre."

¹⁷⁵Trahison découverte de Henry de Valois, p. 8.

¹⁷⁶In English, "grogram."

¹⁷⁷Stanislaw OSSOWSKI, Class Structure in the Social Consciousness, trans. S. PATTERSON (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 20. *passim*.

¹⁷⁸See chapter 6, *supra*. For a discussion of the functional concept of society see OSSOWSKI, *op. cit.*, pp. 58ff.

¹⁷⁹OSSOWSKI, op. cit., pp. 35-37.

¹⁸⁰DEVYVER, op. cit. Devyver's work is discussed in chapter 3, supra.

¹⁸¹The mediaeval and early modern bourgeoisie has been described as "implicitly antagonistic to [feudal] society in productive terms, yet at the same time generally accept[ing] its framework and wish[ing] to assume the mode of existence of the dominant feudal class." Stuart JUZDA, "The Parisian Bourgeoisie, 1400-1600: Problems and Attitudes" (M.A. thesis, Sir George Williams, 1973), p. 11.

¹⁸²LAUNOY, Remonstrances, p. 18. See also pp. 5, 20. Cf. RUBYS, op. cit., pp. 46-47.

¹⁸³LAUNOY, Remonstrances, pp. 17-18. Cf., p. 21: "si vous ne vous en retirez, & ne vous opposez à sa tyrannie, vous decheez de vostre Noblesse, vous n'estes plus gentils-hommes; veu que vous quittez les vertus qui donnent Etre & vie à la Noblesse."

¹⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 143-144, 17.

¹⁸⁵Coppie d'une lettre escripte à Monseigneur le Duc de Nyvernois, par un sien Serviteur (Paris: J. le Blanc, 1589), p. 18.

¹⁸⁶RUBYS, op. cit., p. 58. Similarly, churchmen would lose their benefices and *officiers* their charges.

¹⁸⁷Seconde remontrance a la Noblesse Catholique, p. 5. Similarly, the descendents of heretics were to be deprived of all honours and privileges till the second generation. See RUBYS, op. cit., p. 46. This should not be interpreted to indicate a belief that vice was inherited; rather it points to a mentality which could not separate an individual from his family. Individuals were virtuous, but families were noble. In this context, a fitting punishment for heresy would extend to the criminal's posterity.

¹⁸⁸Le Fleau de Henry soy disant Roy de Navarre (Paris: G. Chaudiere, 1589), p. 30. See also p. 42: "ceux qui ne se voudront pas joindre, seront le rebut de Gedeon, degradez de Noblesse devant Dieu, estimez indignes d'estre employez à la defense d'une cause si honorable." Cf. Judges 6-8.

¹⁸⁹La Suite des remonstrances et articles presentez au Roy depuis la derniere Requeste de Messieurs les Cardinaux & Princes Catholiques (Rouen, 1588), p. 13; "Cahier de doléances," p. 100; Arrest de la cour de Parlement, pour faire vendre les biens des Huguenots. Faict en Parlement le 16. Fevrier, 1589 (Paris: R. Thierry, 1589), p. 7, passim. This ruling was issued in reponse to a request from the Paris *échevins* (p. 3).

¹⁹⁰"Cahier de doléances," p. 101; Arrest de la Cour de Parlement de Paris, Contre ceux qui tiennent le party de Henry de Bourbon, p. 5; DUJON, op. cit., pp. 5, 8-9; "Instruction de ce que doivent faire les Deputez de la ville de Paris, aux Estats qui se tiendront à Reims" [8 June, 1591], in Mémoires de M. le Duc de Nevers (Paris: Jolly, 1665), vol. 2, p. 617.

¹⁹¹Arrest de la Cour de Parlement donné à Rouen, Contre ceux qui ont par cy devant assermenté vivre & maintenir la Religiõ Catholique Apostolique & Romaine. Avec Ordonnance & mandement à tous Gentils-hommes de se trouver és troupes de l'armee de l'Union Catholique [23

Sept. 1589] (Paris: J. Parent, 1589), [p. 4]; Cf. Requete presentee à Messieurs de la Court, par les Eschevins, pp. 6-7. The Parisian *cahier* of 1588 suggested that noblemen should be supervised by the *procureur du roy*, and that any lord who mistreated his peasants or tried to extort new charges be "privé de sa terre ou de son fief, et soit déclaré roturier." See "Cahier de doléance," p. 113. It should be noted that the League was not alone in employing the threat of *dérogeance* as a tactic to detach noblemen from the enemy camp. Henry III declared Leaguer noblemen "ignobles, roturiers, vilains, infâmes, intestables, indignes & incapables de tenir aucuns états, offices & dignités." See Edit du Roi, par lequel Sa Majesté déclare tous les biens, meubles & immeubles du Duc de Mayenne, Duc & Chevalier d'Aumale, & de ceux qui, volontairement, habitent ès Villes de Paris, Rouen, Toulouse, Orléans, Chartres, Amiens, Abbeville, Lyon & le Mans, & tous autres qui tiennent leur Parti, acquis confisqués [27 April 1589] in GOULART, Mémoires, vol. 3, pp. 268-269.

¹⁹²Arrest de la Cour de Parlement donné à Rouen, [pp. 4-5]. Lists of nobles who shirked their duty would be drawn up in each *vicomté* and sent to the court clerk. See also DUJON, op. cit., pp. 9-10.

¹⁹³PALMA-CAYET, op. cit., p. 444; Cf. Mandement du Ban et Arriere-Ban, pour se trouver pres la personne de Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne [22 Dec. 1589] (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), pp. 4-5; and Reglement faict par Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne Pair & Lieutenant general de l'Estat Royal & Couronne de France, & le Conseil general de l'union des Catholiques establi à Paris, pour pourveoir & remedier aux desordres [6 April 1589] (Paris: F. Morel, 1589), p. 7.

¹⁹⁴DUJON, op. cit., pp. 11-12; See also PALMA-CAYET, op. cit., pp. 248-249, 262-264; RAYNSSANT, op. cit., f. 17r; and Le Dispositif, avec advertissement et advis à Messieurs les deputez des estats generaux (n.p., 1588). The last item asked that the Inquisition be reintroduced (p. 19).

¹⁹⁵DUJON, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

¹⁹⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷"Articles sur lesquels les Catholiques de Paris desirent leur estre presentement et promptement pourveu" [15 Nov. 1591], in J. LOUTCHITZKY, Documents inédits pour servir à l'histoire de la Reforme et la Ligue (Paris, 1875), pp. 279-280. The lack of popular support for the Sixteen's coup, along with Mayenne's counter-attack, put an end to this project. See also L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 5, pp. 128-129; and BARNAVI & DESCIMON, La Sainte Ligue, le juge, et la potence, pp. 218-220.

¹⁹⁸"Articles sur lesquels les Catholiques de Paris desirent," pp. 279-280.

¹⁹⁹Advis aux Catholiques françois, sur l'importance de ce qui se traicte aujourd'huy, sur l'irresolution de quelques scrupuleux (Paris: A. le Riche, 1589), p. 5.

²⁰⁰Edict du Roy sur l'Union de ses subjects Catholiques [21 July 1588] (Paris: N. Nivelles, 1588), p. 9; see also Reglement faict par Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne, pp. 3-12.

²⁰¹RUBYS, op. cit., p. 58; PIGENAT, op. cit., pp. 56-118, esp. part II, chapter 3 (pp. 78-86).

²⁰²PIGENAT, op. cit., pp. 69; see also p. 81. Pigenat took a very ultramontane position on the Pope's temporal authority. See also MASSON, op.cit., for a denunciation of "ces seditieux Borbonnistes, ces boutesfeux Navarristes, ces Partisans Royaux, ces dissumulez atheistes" (p. 46).

²⁰³"Cahier de doléances," pp. 100-101.

²⁰⁴Coppie d'une lettre escripte à Monseigneur le Duc de Nyvernois, p. 23; see also Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique de France, p. 31; ROSSANT, op. cit., p. 124; BERNARD, Advis, pp. 39-40.

²⁰⁵H.G. KOENIGSBERGER, "The Organization of Revolutionary Parties in France and the Netherlands during the Sixteenth Century," Journal of Modern History, vol. 27, no. 4 (1955), p. 349; Denis RICHET, "Une tradition terroriste," Magazine littéraire, no. 168 (Jan. 1981), pp.13-15; LABITTE, op. cit., p. 205; BARNAVI, Parti de Dieu, p. 187. One League pamphlet actually used the term "terreur" in referring to the arrest of Politiques. See Coppie des memoires secrets en forme de Missive, Envoyez par un Polytique mal-asseuré à un sien amy aussi Polytique de ceste ville de Paris (Paris: J. Gregoire, 1589), in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol. 12, p. 251.

²⁰⁶RICHET, "Tradition terroriste," p. 13.

²⁰⁷Advis aux Catholiques françois, sur l'importance de ce qui se traicte aujourd'huy, p. 17. See also "Acte de la Ligue," [Paris, 15 June 1588], in LOUTCHITZKY, Documents inédits, p. 228; Advis sur ce qui est a faire, pp. 8-9, 19-20, passim; La Trahison descouverte des politiques de la Ville de Rouen, ([Paris: A. Du Brueil], 1589), pp. 4-5, passim; Discours des trahisons, perfidies, et desloyautez des Politiques de Paris, pp. 7, 11, 16, passim; and VARAINE, Harangue, p. 4: "Il faudra, dis-je, cognoistre les bons & fideles Catholiques, d'avec les dissimulez, qui sont plus à craindre que les heretiques & Politiques."

²⁰⁸MASSON, op. cit., p. 46; Coppie d'une lettre escripte à Monseigneur le Duc de Nyvernois, p. 23.

²⁰⁹Coppie des memoires secrets en forme de Missive, p. 252.

²¹⁰L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 290. L'Estoile also reported the case of a servant turning in his master for having displayed mirth.

²¹¹Response du peuple Catholique de Paris, p. 6.

²¹²DUJON, op. cit., p. 13. Dujon was here warning of the consequences a failure to establish a special court to judge Politiques would have. Cf. Discours des trahison, perfidies, et desloyautez des Politiques de Paris, p. 9: "[les Politiques] furent justement punis par le peuple irrité de telles perfidies."

²¹³Coppie des memoires secrets en forme de Missive, p. 278.

²¹⁴[Jehan de CAUMONT], La Harangue et proposition faite au Roy sur l'union de toute la noblesse Catholique de France (Paris: A. le Coq, 1588), pp. 21-22. See also Advis a Messieurs des estats, pp. 29-30.

²¹⁵Coppie d'une lettre escripte à Monseigneur le Duc de Nyvernois, p. 23. According to L'Estoile, the Sixteen and the Chevalier d'Aumale planned "une Saint-Berthélemi à Paris de tous les plus apparans et signalés Politiques." L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 5, p. 71.

²¹⁶L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 230.

²¹⁷Ibid., p. 251.

²¹⁸CORNEIO, op. cit., p. 238. The Sixteen evidently thought well enough of Corneio's account to publish it as a pamphlet.

²¹⁹I am referring specifically to Jean Hamilton's quasi-legal robbery of 1000 *écus* from Pierre Bernard, and to the case of Philippe Le Gay, whose condemnation for attacking a *parlementaire* was overturned. See ASCOLI, "«The Sixteen» and the Paris League," pp. 414-418; L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 5, p. 8.

²²⁰L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 203. Five months later the *Hôtel-de-Ville* ordered certain prominent Parisians to pay 1000 *écus* each or have their valuables seized. Registres, vol. 9, p. 360.

²²¹L'ESTOILE, vol. 3, pp. 235f, 303-304, vol. 5, pp. 10ff; the Sixteen's terror is discussed at length by Albert GERARD, "La Révolte et le siège de Paris (1589)," Mémoires de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris et de l'Ile-de-France, vol. 33 (1906), pp. 65-150.

²²²BARNAVI, Parti de Dieu, p. 183.

²²³L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 5, pp. 131-132.

²²⁴BARNAVI & DESCIMON, La Sainte Ligue, le juge, et la potence, p. 26.

²²⁵[François de MONTHOLON,] Remonstrance faite par Monsieur le Garde des Seaux de France en l'assemblée des Estats (Paris: F. Morel & J. Mettayer, 1588), p. 20.

²²⁶J. HUIZINGA, The Waning of the Middle Ages, trans. F. HOPMAN (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), p. 61.

²²⁷Ibid.

²²⁸[Matthieu de LAUNOY], Lettre du Roy de Navarre escripte à la Royne d'Angleterre. Avec une remonstrance sur icelle, à la noblesse qui le suit et tient son party (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1590), p. 13. Emphasis mine.

²²⁹J. BALTEAU, "Une publiciste du XVI^e siècle: François de Lalouette," Revue des questions historiques, vol. 107 (1927), p. 99.

²³⁰Response de menu peuple (1589); Harangue au reverendissime et illustrissime legat Henry Cajetan, faite par aucuns Bourgeois de Paris (1590); Coppie d'une lettre escripte à Monseigneur le Duc de Nyvernois par un sien Serviteur (1589); Lettre ou advertissement à un Seigneur François (1589).

²³¹Ellery SCHALK makes a similar point in From Valor to Pedigree (Princeton, 1986), p. 107; see also SALMON, "French Satire," pp. 82-83.

²³²George RUDÉ, "Ideology and Popular Protest," Historical Reflections, vol. 3, no. 2 (1976), pp. 69-77.

²³³Georges DUBY, The Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined, trans. A. GOLDHAMMER (Chicago, 1980), p. 41, *passim*.

²³⁴*Ibid.*, p. 160.

²³⁵Marc Angenot argues that despite their ulterior differences, opposing groups may share ideological presuppositions. What gives ideas their pertinence is their context and ideological compatibility. See ANGENOT, *op. cit.*, pp. 180-188.

²³⁶See JUZDA, *op. cit.*, p. 23: "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." See also Colin KAISER, "Les Cours souverains au XVI^e siècle: morale et Contre-Réforme," Annales, vol. 37, no. 1 (1982), pp. 27-28. Kaiser argues that the new ethos and identity of late sixteenth-century *parlementaires* was imposed upon them by the king and public opinion, and subsequently accepted by them.

²³⁷"Boucher copie textuellement et sans scruples des pages entières d'Hotman." C. LENIENT, La Satire en France ou la littérature militante au XVI^e siècle (Paris: Hachette, 1866), p. 389. The question of League borrowings from Huguenot theory has generated considerable debate, with most commentators agreeing with Lenient. See MESNARD, *op. cit.*, pp. 371, 383; LABITTE, *op. cit.*, pp. 72, 107, 163; GOULD, *op. cit.*, pp. 82ff; ORLEA, *op. cit.*, pp. 75ff; WEILL, *op. cit.*, p. 233; BARNAVI, Parti de Dieu, p. 149; ASCOLI, "«The Sixteen» and the Paris League," p. 107; R.A. JACKSON, "Elective Kingship and *Consensus Populi* in Sixteenth-Century France," Journal of Modern History, vol. 44, no. 2 (1972), pp. 162-163; D.R. KELLEY, The Beginning of Ideology: Consciousness and Society in the French Reformation (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 313-314, 329; Denis RICHET, La France moderne: l'esprit des institutions (Paris: Flammarion, 1973), pp. 133-134; Quentin SKINNER, The Foundations of Modern Political Thought (Cambridge, 1978), vol. 2, p. 345. The one comprehensive study devoted to Leaguer political thought concedes that Jean Boucher "depended a great deal" on Huguenot theory, but insists that Boucher was unusual among League writers. See BAUMGARTNER, Radical Reactionaries, pp. 142-143. For interpretations which minimise the Leaguers' borrowings, see J.W. ALLEN, A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century (London & New York, 1960), pp. 345-346; W.F. CHURCH, Constitutional Thought in Sixteenth-Century France (London & Cambridge, Mass., 1941), p. 156.

²³⁸Hotman was instructed by the Huguenot high command to write a new polemic so that "those arguments formerly of use to us may be entirely refuted." Correspondance inédit de Robert Dudley, comte de Leycester, et de François et Jean Hamilton, ed. P.J. BLOK (Haarlem, 1911), p. 210, cited by J.H.M. SALMON, Society in Crisis: France in the Sixteenth Century (London, 1975), p., 235. See also WEILL, *op. cit.*, p. 199; KELLEY, *op. cit.*, p. 329; YARDENI, Conscience, pp. 183-184.

²³⁹DORLEANS, Advertissement des Catholiques Anglois, p. 161. For other references to *monarchomach* theory in League pamphlets, see Discours sur les calomnies imposees, pp. 18, 92-93;

La Vie et innocence des deux freres, pp. 8-10; and Advertissement des nouvelles cruauitez & inhumanitez desseignés par le Tyran de la France (Paris: R. Thierry, 1589), pp. 11-12. The last two attack the Huguenots for abandoning their ideas when they ceased to be convenient. The irony of the transposition of political doctrines was not lost to contemporaries. See Ch. VALOIS, op. cit., pp. 93-94. The *monarchomachs* were not the only influence on Leaguer theory; Oudart Raynssant's discussion of despotism shows that he had been reading Bodin. See RAYNSSANT, op. cit., f. 5v.

²⁴⁰HARDING, "Revolution and Reform in the Holy League," pp. 401-402. Cf. BARNAVI, p. 157.

²⁴¹SKINNER, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 338.

²⁴²Apart from its hundreds of French pamphlets, the League propaganda machine produced a handful of theoretical Latin treatises, the most prominent of which are De justa abdicatione (1589), by Jean Boucher, and De justa republicae christianae autoritate (1590), by the mysterious "Rossaeus" (possibly Guillaume Rose, bishop of Senlis). Baumgartner finds evidence of *monarchomach* ideas in Boucher's treatise, but considers Rossaeus's work more mediaeval, and argues that Rossaeus was unfamiliar with Huguenot political thought, though acquainted with Protestant theology. BAUMGARTNER, Radical Reactionaries, pp. 123-160.

²⁴³Coppie d'une lettre escripte à Monseigneur le Duc de Nyvernois, p. 13. See also the response to Henry III in Responce des Catholiques zelez et unis, f. D.iv verso: "Nous vous avons tousjours recogneu pour nostre Roy & Seigneur legitime: mais maintenât Dieu nous cōmande de ne vous obeyr point estât ennemi de son Eglise, & retrâche du corps d'icelle."

²⁴⁴Justification de la guerre entreprise, p. 19.

²⁴⁵Summa theologica, prima secundae, quaestio 90, art. 3, and secunda secundae, quaestio 42, art. 2; Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, book III, dist. 44, quaestio 2, art. 2, in St Thomas AQUINAS, Selected Political Writings, ed. A.P. D'ENTREVES, trans. J.G. DAWSON (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1954), pp. 111, 113, 161, 183, 185. J.W. Allen believes that even the Huguenot theorists innovated very little, and derived most of their thought from mediaeval philosophy. See ALLEN, op. cit., pp. 303, 313.

²⁴⁶WEILL, op. cit., p. 6. See also RICHET, La France moderne, pp. 133-134; and Perez ZAGORIN, Rebels and Rulers, 1500-1660 (Cambridge, 1982), vol. 2, pp. 70ff.

²⁴⁷BOUCHER, De justa abdicatione f. 11v, quoted in BAUMGARTNER, Radical Reactionaries, p. 128. But cf. ROSSANT, op. cit., p. 50: "Dieu plusieurs fois nous a laissé exēples [où] ... toute une populace à debouter un Roy pour establir un autre."

²⁴⁸Causes qui ont contrainct les Catholiques à prendre les armes, p. 529. Another pamphlet conferred the right to depose kings upon the church, the entire people, or "la meilleure & plus saine partie du royaume." See Justification de la guerre entreprise, p. 52. At the same moment the Leaguers were advocating constitutionalism and a powerful Estates-General, the nobility were losing faith in the institution; see Michael WOLFE, The Conversion of Henri IV: Politics, Power, and Religious Belief in Early Modern France (Cambridge: Harvard, 1993), p. 87.

²⁴⁹RAYNSSANT, op. cit., f. 37v. See also f. 73r: "Les Catholiques ... n'ont rien fait sans l'autorité des magistrats & officiers du royaume." Another pamphlet hinted that someone should avenge Guise by killing Henry III, but implied that this duty should fall upon the *gentilshommes*. See Causes plus particulieres qui obligent chaque état, surtout la Noblesse, de prendre les armes ([Paris], 1589), in GOULART, Mémoires de la Ligue, vol. 3, pp. 532-533.

²⁵⁰BAUMGARTNER, op. cit., pp. 118-120. Preachers may have been bolder than pamphleteers in exhorting tyrannicide. Several pamphlets alluded to tyrannicide, and one openly called for it, but without a theoretical basis. See Le Faux visage decouvert du fin renard de la France ([Paris]: J. de Varangles, [January] 1589, [p. 2]).

²⁵¹Le Fleau de Henry, p. 36. The idea (and practice) of tyrannicide was widespread in Italy in the previous century, and of course has classical antecedents. See Jacob BURCKHARDT, The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy (Oxford, 1945), pp. 35-39. Although Beza limited the right of rebellion to "magistrates," he allowed an exception where a private person had a "special calling from God." Theodore BEZA, De jura magistratum (1574), chapter 6, in J.H. FRANKLIN, Constitutionalism and Resistance in the Sixteenth Century (New York: Pegasus, 1969), p. 108. For the Leaguers, Clement was the agent of God, and pamphlets propagated the legend that God appeared to the monk in a vision and commanded him to slay the tyrant. See [Edme BOURGOING], Discours veritable de l'estrange et subite mort de Henry de Valois, par permission divine ([Paris: D. Millot or H. Velu, 1589]), in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol. 12, p. 385. Bourgoing, who counselled Clement, was later captured by Royalists and put to death by quartering at Tours. L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 5, p. 17. According to Boucher's version of events, Clement was an angel. BOUCHER, Lettre missive de l'evesque du Mans, p. 52.

²⁵²BERNARD, Advis aux François, p. 3.

²⁵³Vie et innocence des deux freres, pp. 11-12. This pamphlet referred directly to absolutist claims of divine sanction. It later asserted that the king must not oppress his people because "nous ne sommes pas ses serfs, ses esclaves, nous sommes freres en Jesus Christ, nous recognoissons un mesme pere" (p. 17).

²⁵⁴Discours sur les calomnies imposees, p. 56.

²⁵⁵Ibid, p. 55. This pamphlet specifically rejected "droict divin."

²⁵⁶PIGENAT, Aveuglement, p. 12.

²⁵⁷Coppie d'une lettre escripte à Monseigneur le Duc de Nyvernois, pp. 11-12; cf. Advis au Roy, p. 18: "s'est biẽ veu un peuple sãs Roy, mais il ne vist jamais un Roy sans peuple."

²⁵⁸L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, pp. 145, 266. L'Alouette emphasises God's part in this contract more than the people's. See chapter 3, supra.

²⁵⁹RAYNSSANT, op. cit., f. 75r-v.

²⁶⁰Discours sur la procedure indue de ceux de Ligue és Estats convoquez à Blois par sa Majesté (n.p., 1588), P. 4.

²⁶¹[André MAILLARD], La Fulminante pour feu tres-grand et tres-Chrestien Prince Henry III. Roy de France & de Pologne (n.p., 1590), pp. 36, 47.

²⁶²Devis familier, pp. 100-101. For a very early royalist account of the social consequences of the League's rebellion, see Readvis & abiuration d'un gentilhomme de la Ligue, contenant les causes pour lesquelles il a renoncé à ladite Ligue (n.p., 1585) in GOULART, Mémoires, vol. 1, pp. 111-120. The former League noble Jean de Saulx-Tavannes remarked that it would be desirable to institute an aristocratic state, and reduce the king to the same level as the Holy Roman Emperor, but feared that this would open the door to a popular state by giving power to the Estates-General. Mémoires de Gaspard de Saulx, in MICHAUD & POUJOLAT, Nouvelle collection, vol. 8, pp. 233, 240, cited by JOUANNA, Ordre social, p. 192. Ronald S. LOVE has pointed out that noblemen needed a legitimate king at the apex of the social hierarchy in order to justify their own status; "Winning the Catholics: Henri IV and the Religious dilemma in August 1589", Canadian Journal of History vol. 24, no. 3 (1989), p. 374.

²⁶³[Philippe DUPLESSIS-MORNAY], Exhortation et remonstrance, faicte d'un commun accord par les François Catholiques & Pacifiques, pour la paix (n.p., 1586), pp. 60-61. Cf. LA NOUE, op. cit., p. 81, L'ALOUETTE, Affaires, p. 165. See chapter 3, supra.

²⁶⁴Manifeste de la France, p. 27.

²⁶⁵*Ibid.* This pamphlet referred by name to the preacher and pamphleteer Jean Pigenat.

²⁶⁶CROME, op. cit., p. 120.

²⁶⁷La Vie et innocence des deux freres, p. 24. Robert Descimon argues that the "fable royaliste" of the Sixteen as an irresponsible rabble was the *officiers'* method of excluding the Sixteen from power. It also represented a break in traditional urban unity, and so was an engine of the League's revolt, which he interprets as an attempt to regain that unity. DESCIMON, Qui étaient les Seize?, pp. 26ff. Descimon also points out that the royalist legend of the "Ligue populaire" was in contradiction with that part of the dominant ideology that emphasised vertical links and loyalties (pp. 32-33).

²⁶⁸Harangue a reverendissime et illustrissime legat Henry Cajetan, p. 7.

²⁶⁹CROME, op. cit., p. 95.

²⁷⁰DUJON, op. cit., p. 4; "Cahier de doléances," p. 96. The *cahier* was referring to the Parisians whom Henry III's wicked counsellors planned to pillage on the Day of the Barricades.

²⁷¹Response du menu peuple, p. 6.

²⁷²Response du peuple Catholique de Paris, p. 6. This pamphlet was answering royalist accusations that the Parisian Leaguers were guilty of looting and other crimes.

²⁷³CROME, op. cit., p. 97.

²⁷⁴Roland MOUSNIER, Les Hiérarchies sociales de 1450 à nos jours (Paris: P.U.F., 1969), pp. 45ff. On the League's insistence that offices be awarded for virtue, see chapter 5, supra.

²⁷⁵[Charles PINSELET], Le Martyre de frère Jacques Clement, de l'ordre de Saint-Dominique ([Paris: R. le Fiselier, 1589]), in CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, vol. 12, pp. 410, 412-413; BOUCHER, Lettre missive de l'evesque du Mans, p. 52.

²⁷⁶PINSELET, Le Martyre de frère Jacques Clement, p. 410.

²⁷⁷Ibid., p. 402.

²⁷⁸Effects espouvantables de l'excommunication de Henry de Valois, & de Henry de Navarre (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), p. 8.

²⁷⁹Histoire admirable à la posterité, pp. 17-18.

²⁸⁰L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 5, pp. 6-110; THOU, op. cit., vol. 10, p. 679.

²⁸¹L'ESTOILE, op. cit., vol. 6, pp. 171-172. Cf. Faux visage, which prayed for "salaire, & recompense à celui qui tura le Tyran" (p. 2). Henry IV survived several assassination plots, including an attempt on his life in December 1594, and was finally struck down in 1610.

²⁸²Bref discours sur la deffaitte des Huguenots advenues le X. Juin, mil cinq cens octante huict (Paris: F. Plumion, 1588), pp. 9-10. This pamphlet also praised the townsmen for restraining themselves from mutilating the corpses of their enemies, and declared that the glorious memory of the battle would be left to posterity.

²⁸³Ibid., p. 8.

²⁸⁴PINSELET, Le Martyre des deux frères, p. 99.

²⁸⁵Seconde remonstrance a la Noblesse Catholique, p. 4.

²⁸⁶Coppie des memoires secrets en forme de Missive, p. 254. The same pamphlet told of merchants in their 50s equipping a horse and going into battle.

²⁸⁷Advertissement des nouvelles cruautez, p. 16. This pamphlet concluded: "[les grands] accusent le peuple, de s'y estre courageusement employé à ce, à quoy les grands l'ont excité, & faut confesser, que sans les peti[t]s qui se sont avancez comme enfans perdus, l'Estat de France eust esté abandonné" (pp. 16-17).

²⁸⁸La Nouvelle defaite obtenue sur les troupes de Henry de Valois, dans les Fauxbourgs de Tours, le huictiesme May 1589 (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), p. 14.

²⁸⁹ROSSANT, op. cit., p. 124.

²⁹⁰Ibid., p. 125.

²⁹¹Ibid. "Denys Rekel dict Denys le Chartreux," i.e. Dennis the Carthusian (1402-1471), called the "Ecstatic Doctor," born at Ryckel, Belgium.

²⁹²Ibid.

²⁹³Harangue au reverendissime et illustrissime legat Henry Cajetan, p. 7.

²⁹⁴Discours de deux belles deffaictes des ennemis executees en Champagne & Bourgogne (Paris: N. Nivelles & R. Thierry, 1589), p. 6. See also [Louis DORLEANS], Replique pour le Catholique Anglois, contre le Catholique associé des Huguenots (n.p., 1588), f. 16r; and Advis aux Catholiques françois, sur l'importance de ce qui se traict aujourd'huy, pp. 7-8.

²⁹⁵MASSON, *op.cit.*, pp. 58-59.

²⁹⁶CAUMONT, Advertissement des advissemens, p. 7. Denis CROUZET argues that the Leaguers did not seek to overthrow the social order, but to achieve a purely spiritual nobility through union with God. See "La Violence au temps des troubles de religion," Hisotire, économie, société vol. 8m, no. 4 (1989), p. 523.

²⁹⁷Remonstrance tres-docte envoyée aux Catholiques François, par un Catholique Anglois (Paris: A. de Brûeil, 1589), pp. 3-4. This passage was presumably referring to Gregory of Tours.

²⁹⁸Discours veritable et dernier propos de Monseigneur le Duc de Guyse (Paris: S. Marquan, 1589), [p. 6]. For a discussion of the notion of Paris as a city with a special collective mission, see Myriam YARDENI, "Le Mythe de Paris comme élément de propagande à l'époque de la Ligue," Paris et l'Ile de France. Mémoires, vol 20 (1969), pp. 53-58.

²⁹⁹Justification de la guerre entreprise, pp. 54-58.

³⁰⁰R.A. SCHNEIDER, "Mortification on Parade: Penetential Processions in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France," Renaissance and Reformation, vol. 22, no. 1 (1986), p. 140.

³⁰¹*Ibid.*, pp. 127-128.

³⁰²*Ibid.*, p. 132.

³⁰³Norman COHN, The Pursuit of the Millenium, revised ed. (New York: O.U.P., 1970), pp. 148, 172, *passim*.

³⁰⁴The *Manant's* debating skills had precedent in many earlier Catholic pamphlets which depicted unlettered swineherds, inspired by faith, outwitting learned Protestant theologians. See G.W. SYPHER, "«Faisant ce qu'il leur vient à plaisir»: The Image of Protestantism in French Catholic Polemic on the Eve of the Religious Wars," Sixteenth Century Journal, vol. 11, no. 2 (1980), p. 67. Cf. RAYNSSANT, *op. cit.*, f. 78r: "Je suis marry que le simple peuple void plus clair que vous en telles affaires." The narrator of one 1589 pamphlet was depicted as a domestic servant, a humble man unashamed of his condition, but conscious of his rude speech and wanting to better himself by study: "comme ma conditiō estoit petite ... m'estois tousjours amusé à choses basses, je voulu penetrer plus haut & plus avant & devenu plus curieux en rechercher les causes & les mouvements: Je commençé deslors à voir & lire tous les livres qui s'estoient publiez pour et contre la confederation, qu'on appelle (par un terme plus odieux) la ligue des Princes & Villes." Coppie d'une lettre escripte à Monseigneur le Duc de Nyvernois par un sien Serviteur, p. 3.

VIII
CONCLUSION
A REPUBLIC OF VIRTUE?

"When Adam delve and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?" This question was a courtly cliché before becoming the catchword of the English Peasants' Revolt of 1381.¹ In the fourteenth century, however, historical forces had not yet challenged feudal society as they were beginning to do by the sixteenth. This is not to imply that 1588 was a dry-run for 1789, however. The nobility's ideology, stood on its head, may have threatened the nobility, but it was not the ideology of Sieyès, still less that of Hébert. The bourgeois Leaguers did not question the hierarchical organisation of society, and made no claim that the *Tiers* represented the nation.

Leaguer pamphleteers frequently attacked unwelcome innovations, and harkened back to a vanished, happier world, but it does not necessarily follow that the League was *passéiste* or retrograde. The myth of the golden age has been a powerful element in revolutionary movements throughout history, and particularly in the contemporary era. The Leaguers' utopia, however, had a distinctly feudal odour: it was a well-ordered, hierarchically structured Catholic kingdom, but one open to talent, one where virtue reigned.

The Leaguers were at war with the social elites, noble and juridical, but unable to overthrow those elites because the Parisian bourgeoisie was immature, and lacked the "wherewithal"² both material and mental, to make a revolution. In Robert Mandrou's words, "une classe qui virtuellement veut faire la révolution, mais n'a pas conscience qu'elle peut faire une révolution, n'est pas une classe révolutionnaire."³

League writings often appear contradictory and incoherent, swinging from imploring the nobility to excoriating it, sometimes on a single page. Perhaps such incoherence was inevitable, as the League, lacking appropriate concepts of its own, used the dominant ideology as a tool to challenge the dominant class. Incoherence emerged as Leaguer pamphleteers built the movement's social ideology on foundations belonging to another class, on assumptions fundamentally antipathetic to the classes the League represented.

NOTES TO CONCLUSION

¹J. HUIZINGA, The Waning of the Middle Ages, trans. F. HOPMAN (Penguin, 1965), p. 61.

²Henry HELLER, Iron and Blood: Civil Wars in Sixteenth-Century France (Montréal: McGill-Queen's, 1991), pp. 119, 59.

³Robert MANDROU, Classes et luttes de classes en France au début du XVII^e siècle (Florence, 1965), p. 78.

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La Deffaite des troupes huguenottes et politiques, en Champagne: par le Sieur de Saint-Paul. Ensemble la prise de Bisseul: & la honteuse retraite du Baron de Thermes. Paris: Didier Millot, 1590.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1452; PALLIER #596; WELSH #203.

Deffaite des troupes Huguenottes qui estoient en Champaigne. Par Monsieur de saint Paul. Avec le nombre & les noms des Seigneurs morts & prisonniers. Paris: Nicolas Nivelles et Rolin Thierry, 1589.

•HAUSER #2956; LINDSAY & NEU # 1450; WELSH #202.

La Detestation des cruautez sanguinaires et abominables de Henry Devalé, en forme de regrets sur la mort & cruel assassinat par luy commis & perpetré en la personne de tres-haut & puissant Prince Henry de Lorraine, Duc de Guise, Pair & grand Maistre de France, Zelateur de la Foy Catholique Apost. & Romaine. [Paris]: Denis Binet, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1454; PALLIER #288.

Discours ample et veritable, de la defaite obtenuë aux Faux-bourgs de Tours, sur les troupes de Henry de Valois. Par Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne, Pair & Lieutenant general de l'Estat Royal & Couronne de France. Paris: Nicolas Nivelles et Rolin Thierry, 1589.

•HAUSER #2836; LINDSAY & NEU #1456; PALLIER #457; WELSH #204.

Discours au peuple de Paris et autres Catholiques de France, sur les nouvelles entreprises des rebelles, & seditieux. Paris: Michel de Roigny, 1585.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1165; WELSH #143.

Discours d'un vertueux Catholique qui est une juste & vraye deffense de la Majesté tres-Chrestienne, & ample responce contre ses capitaux ennemis, des heretiques du jourd'huy, leurs grandes & atroces injures, calomnies, maldisances, trahisons, machinations, & conjurations tresiniques & desseins fort à craindre & à redouter. n.p.: 1587.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1165; WELSH #143.

Discours de ce qui s'est fait et passe en la ville d'Orleans, par Monsieur le Chevalier d'Aumalle, et les habitans d'icelle, contre les gouverneurs de la Citadelle, & autres qui estoient à l'entour de ladicte ville. n.p.: 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU # 1458; WELSH #206.

Discours de deux belles deffaictes des ennemis executees en Champagne & Bourgogne. Par les Sieurs de Hautefort, de Fervagues, de Gionville, & autres Capitaines, le 23. jour d'Avril, 1589. Paris: Nicolas Nivelles et Rolin Thierry, 1589.

•HAUSER #2833; LINDSAY & NEU #1459-1460; PALLIER #444; WELSH #207.

Discours de la fuyte des impositors Italiens. Et des regretz qu'ilz font de quicter la France. Et de leur route vers les pays de Barberie. Paris: Jacques Gregoire, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1461; PALLIER #361; WELSH #*144.

Discours des trahisons, perfidies, et desloyautez des Politiques de Paris, qui avoyent vendu ladicte ville à Henry de Bourbon, chef des heretiques de France, ennemy juré de nostre sainte foy Catholique. Avec le discours des cruautéz, violemens, & sacrileges qu'il a commis es fauxbourgs de saint Germain, saint Jaques, & saint Marceau, par l'intelligence qu'il avoit avec lesdicts Politiques: qui on esté executez & punis durant les mois de Novembre 1589. "Sur la Copie Imprimee à Paris." (Lyons: Loys Tantillon, 1589).

•BAUDRIER II p. 408; HAUSER #2950; LINDSAY & NEU #1466; PALLIER #616.

Discours du progres de l'armee du Roy en Guienne, commandee par Charles de Lorraine, Duc de Mayne, Pair & grand Chamberlain de France. Paris: Nicolas Nivelles, 1586.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1097; PALLIER #26; WELSH #102.

Discours sur les calomnies imposees, aux Princes & Seigneurs Catholiques, par les Politiques de nostre temps. n.p.: 1588.

•LELONG II #18750; LINDSAY & NEU #1245; WELSH #*123.

Discours veritable de la deffaicte obtenüe sur les troupes des politiques & heretiques du pays & Duché de Berry, ce present mois d'Aoust. Ensemble le nôbre des morts & prisonniers, par le sieur de Neufviz le Barrois, commandant audit pays & Duché de Berry, en l'absence du Seigneur de la Chastre. Troyes: Jean Moreau, 1589. [Another edition, Paris: D. Millot, 1589].

•HAUSER #2939; LINDSAY & NEU #1469-1470; PALLIER #539; WELSH #208.

Discours veritable et dernier propos de Monseigneur le Duc de Guyse, Pair, & grand Maistre de France. Ensemble son Tombeau. Paris: Simon Marquan, 1589.

•HAUSER #2529; LINDSAY & NEU #1475-1476; PALLIER #293; WELSH #209.

Discours veritable sur ce qui est arrivé à Paris le douzième de May 1588, Par lequel clairement on congnoit les mensonges & impostures des ennemis du repos public allencontre de Monseigneur le Duc de Guise, Propagateur de l'Eglise Catholique. Paris: Didier Millot, [1588].

•HAUSER #2467; LINDSAY & NEU #1247-1248; PALLIER #159; WELSH #154.

Le Dispositif, avec advertissement et advis à Messieurs les deputez des estats generaux, pour l'année 1588. n.p.: 1588.

•HAUSER #2512; LINDSAY & NEU #1249; WELSH #155.

[DORLEANS, Louis]. [Louis d'Orléans]. Advertissement des Catholiques Anglois aux François Catholiques, du danger où ils sont de perdre leur Religion, et d'experimenter, comme en Angleterre, la cruauté des Ministres s'ils recoyvent à la Couronne un Roy qui soit Heretique. [Paris], 1586. In CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, first series, volume II, pp. 111-202.

•HAUSER #2407; LELONG II #18535; PALLIER #32.

----- Apologie ou defence des Catholiques unis les uns avec les autres, contre les impostures des Catholiques associez à ceux de la pretenduë Religion. n.p.: 1586.

•HAUSER #2408; LELONG II 18524; LINDSAY & NEU #1152; WELSH #*106.

----- Le Banquet et apresdinée du Conte d'Arete, où il se traicte de la dissimulation du Roy de Navarre, & des mœurs de ses partisans. Paris: Guillaume Bichon, 1594. *BN 8° Lb³⁵ 608.A 351pp.*

•HAUSER #3081; LELONG II #19537; PALLIER #864; RENOARD III #578-580.

----- Remonstrances aux Catholiques de tous les Estats de France, pour entrer en l'association de la Ligue. n.p.: 1586.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1153; WELSH #*107.

----- Replique pour le Catholique anglois, contre le Catholique associé des huguenots. n.p.: 1588.

•LELONG II #18539; LINDSAY & NEU #1338; WELSH #176.

Du contemnement de la mort. Discours accomodé à la miserable condition de ce temps. Paris: Nicolas Nyvelle, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1477; PALLIER #632; WELSH #*146.

[DUJON, Jean]. [Jean Yon]. Articles remonstrez a Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne, Lieutenant General de l'estat & Couronne de France, par monsieur le Recteur &

l'Université de Paris, le 29 Novembre. 1589. Paris: Guillaume Chaudiere, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1401; PALLIER #618; WELSH #189.

Edit et déclaration de Monsieur le Duc de Mayenne et du Conseil général de la sainte Union, pour réunir tous vrais Chrétiens François à la défense & conservation de l'Eglise Catholique Apostolique & Romaine, & manutention de l'Etat roial. [5 August 1589]. [Paris: Nicolas Nivelles et Rolin Thierry, 1589]. In GOULART, Mémoires, volume IV, pp. 29-32.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1563-1564; PALLIER #542; WELSH #238.

Effects espouvantables de l'excommunication de Henry de Valois, & de Henry de Navarre. Où est contenue au vray l'histoire de la mort de Henry de Valois, & que Henry de Navarre est incapable de la Couronne de France. Paris: Nicolas Nivelles et Rolin Thierry, 1589.

•HAUSER #2876; LINDSAY & NEU #1479; PALLIER #519; WELSH #*147.

Etablissement du Conseil general de l'Union des Catholiques. Avec les ordonnances dudict Conseil. [18 February 1589]. Paris: Federic Morel, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1544; PALLIER #406; WELSH #228.

Exhortation à la sainte Union des Catholiques de France. n.p.: 1589. In GOULART, Mémoires, volume 3, pp. 511-519.

Exhortation aux Catholiques, pour attaquer promptement Henry de Valois, avant qu'il puisse avoir secours d'aucuns estrangers Heretiques. Avec une complainte des laboureurs, a Echo, qui habite és forests, contre Henry de Valois. [Paris]: Didier Millot, [1589].

•LINDSAY & NEU #1482; PALLIER #325.

Exhortation Catholique aux trois ordres de la France. Lyons: [Jean Pillehotte], 1589.

•BAUDRIER II p. 287; LINDSAY & NEU # 1486; WELSH #*148.

Le Faux visage desouvert du fin Renard de la France. A tous Catholiques unis, & saintement liguez pour la defence, & tuition de l'Eglise Apostolique & Romaine, contre l'ennemy de Dieu ouvert & couvert. Ensemble quelques Anagrammes & Sonnets propres pour la saison du jourd'huy. [Paris]: Jacques de Varangles, 1589.

•HAUSER #2571; LINDSAY & NEU #1489; PALLIER #369; WELSH #211.

Le Fleau de Henry soy disant Roy de Navarre. Par lequel avec vives raison il est chassé de la couronne de France, qu'impieusement & tyraniquement il se veut usurper. Paris: Guillaume Chaudiere, 1589.

•HAUSER #2908; LINDSAY & NEU #1490; PALLIER #534; WELSH #212.

La Foy et religion des politiques de ce temps. Paris: Guillaume Bichon, 1590.

•HAUSER #2908; LELONG II #18655; LINDSAY & NEU #1258; PALLIER #180; RENOARD III #499-501; WELSH #*125.

GUISE, Catherine de Cleves, Duchess of. Requete presentee à Messieurs de la Court de Parlement de Paris, par madame la duchesse de Guyse. Pour informer du massacre & assassinat commis en la personne de feu Monseigneur de Guyse. [Paris: Rolin Thierry], 1589.

•HAUSER #2540; LINDSAY & NEU #1527-1528; PALLIER #382-383; WELSH #219.

GUISE, Henry de Lorraine, Duke of. Coppie d'une lettre escrite au Roy, et extrait d'une autre aux Princes & Seigneurs François, le 17. jour de May dernier. Paris: Didier Millot, 1588.

•HAUSER #2477; LINDSAY & NEU #1308-1310; PALLIER #163; WELSH #167.

Harangue au reverendissime et illustrissime legat Henry Cajetan, faicte par aucuns Bourgeois de Paris au moys de Febvrier, 1590. Paris: Didier Millot, 1590.

•HAUSER #2982; PALLIER #660.

"Harangue au Roy en forme de Remonstrances, pour l'extirpation des heresies et heretiques, avec la Lettre escrite à Sa Majesté." [23 May 1588]. In Registres, volume IX, pp. 130-135. (Also printed as a pamphlet: Requete présentée au Roy par messieurs les cardinaux, princes, seigneurs, et des députez de la ville de Paris, et autres villes catholiques associez et unis pour la deffence de la religion catholique, apostolique, et romaine. Paris: Guillaume Bichon, Nicolas Nivelles, 1588.)

•HAUSER #2479; LELONG II #18690; LINDSAY & NEU #1361-1365; PALLIER #168-169; RENOUEAU III #516-517; WELSH #181-182Aa.

La Harangue faicte au Roy par la noblesse de la France, sur les guerres & troubles de son Royaume. Faict à Rouen, en ce moys de Juing 1588. n.p.: Paris, 1588.

•CLOUZOT #351; LINDSAY & NEU #189; PALLIER #1318.

Harangue faicte au Roy, par un depputé particulier de la Ville de Rouen, dans son Cabinet à Bloys, le 27. Octobre, 1588. Paris: Chez la veufve Dalier, 1588.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1320; PALLIER #247; WELSH #169.

Histoire Admirable à la posterité des faits et gestes de Henry de Valois. Comparez en tous poincts avec ceux de Loys Faineant: & la miserable fin de l'un & de l'autre. Avec un nouveau & fatal Anagramme du nom dudict Henry de Valois. Paris: Pierre des-Hayes, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1539; PALLIER #523; WELSH #227.

Histoire au vray du meurtre & Assassinat proditoirement cōmis au cabinet d'un Roy perfide & barbare, en la personne de Monsieur le Duc de Guise, Protecteur & Deffenseur de l'Eglise Catholique & du Royaume de France: Ensemble du massacre aussi perpetré en Monsieur le Cardinal, son frere, sacré & dédié à Dieu: Où sont balancez les services de leurs Predecesseurs & ceux qu'ils ont faits, avec une tant inhumaine cruauté & ingrate remuneration. Pour estre le tout veu & diligemmet considéré par gents de bien. De nouveau reveuë & augmentee des trahisons conspirees (mais en

vain par la providence divine) contre Messeigneurs les Ducs de Mayenne & d'Aumale; avec les pourtraits des massacres desdits Seigneurs de Guise & Cardinal. [Paris: Didier Millot], 1589.

•HAUSER #2532; LINDSAY & NEU #1540-1541; PALLIER #298; WELSH #*151.

"Instruction de ce que doivent faire les Deputez de la Ville de Paris, aux Estats qui se tiendront à Reims, & dont l'on pourra tirer quelques articles pour inserer en leur procuration auparavant la clause Cum libera, leuë publiquement en l'Hostel de cette ville, le 8 Juin 1591." In NEVERS, Mémoires, volume II, pp. 614-617.

Justification de la guerre entreprise, commencee et poursuivie souz la conduite de tres-valeureux & debonnaire Prince Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne. Par les Catholiques de la France contre les Heretiques leurs defenseurs, fauteurs, complices & alliez, contenant responce aux raisons amenées par les Politiques contre icelle guerre & entreprise. Paris: Guillaume Chaudiere, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1546; PALLIER #535; WELSH #229.

Le Karesme et mœurs du politique, où il est amplement discoursu de sa maniere de vivre, de son Estat & Religion. Paris: Pierre Mercier, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1547; PALLIER #351, 352; WELSH #230.

[LA CHAPELLE-MARTEAU, Michel]. Harangue de Monsieur le Prevost des Marchands President pour le tiers Estat. [16 October 1588]. Paris: Federic Morel, Jamet Mettayer & l'Huillier, 1588.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1314-1317; PALLIER #238; WELSH #168.

LA CHASTRE, [Claude de, Baron de la Maison-Fort]. Declaration de Monsieur de La Chastre aux habitans de Bourges, le 4. Avril. Paris: Didier Millot, 1589.

•HAUSER #2831; LINDSAY & NEU #1548; PALLIER #431; WELSH #231.

[LANGELIER, Nicolas, bishop of St-Brieu]. Remonstrance du Clergé de France, faite au Roy le XIX Novembre 1585 par Monsieur l'Evesque de S. Brieu, assisté de Monseigneur illustrissime Prince & Reverédissime Cardinal de Bourbon, Archevesques, Evesques, & autres Deputez. Paris: Jean Richer, 1585.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1112; PALLIER #10; WELSH #135a.

[LAUNOY, Matthieu de]. Lettre du Roy de Navarre escrete à la Royne d'Angleterre. Avec une remonstrance sur icelle, à la noblesse qui suit et tient son party. Paris: Nicolas Nivelles & Rolin Thierry, 1590.

•HAUSER #2901; LINDSAY & NEU #1698; PALLIER #686.

----- Remonstrance. Contenant une instruction Chrestienne de quatre poincts à la Noblesse de France, laquelle faisant profession en apparence de la Religion Chrestienne, Catholique Apostolique & Romaine, suit neantmoins le party de l'heretique & employe ses armes pour maintenir l'heresie. Paris: Nicolas Nivelles &

Rolin Thierry, 1590.

•HAUSER #3015; PALLIER #723, 777.

Lettre d'un lieutenant general de province, à un des premiers magistrats de France.

Paris: Michel Jouin, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1551; PALLIER #411; WELSH #232.

Lettre du Roy de Navarre aux illustrissimes seigneurs de la Republique de Berne. Leuë publiquement en l'Eglise Cathedrale de Troyes le 20. de ce mois de Septembre, à fin que chacun cogneut clairement le but du Biernois. Paris: Guillaume Chaudiere, 1589. In CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, first series, volume 13, pp. 217-221.
•HAUSER #2902; LINDSAY & NEU #1530, 1536-1537; PALLIER #575; WELSH #222, 224-225.

Lettre ou advertissement à un Seigneur Francois. Catholique pour le destourner & toute la Noblesse, d'aller au camp du Roy de Navarre. Utile à toutes gens de bien, & à ceux principalement qui trop fragiles, ou inconsiderez, & surprins de je ne scay quelle apparence de frivoles raisons, voudroient contre toute equité, porter ce party à l'oppression de la S. Eglise de Dieu. Paris: Didier Millot, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1553; PALLIER #572; WELSH #233.

Lettres d'unyon pour estre envoyes par toute la Chrestienté. Touchant le meurtre & assassinat commis envers les personnes de monsieur le Duc de Guyse, & monsieur le Cardinal de Guyse son frere, & autres Princes & Seigneurs Catholiques, lesquels ont évité la cruauté commise en la ville de Blois. n.p.: 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1554; WELSH #234.

Les Lettres royaux de Henry de Vallois, n'augueres Roy de France: Avec la Responce & deffences, sur le refus à luy fait de l'interinement desdictes Lettres. Paris: Denis Binet, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1516; PALLIER #328; WELSH #221.

La Ligue tres-sainte, tres-Chrestienne, & tres-Catholique. n.p.: [1585].

•HAUSER #2371; LINDSAY & NEU #1556; WELSH #*153.

Litearchie contre les percutieux esprits, libelles, calomnies & Apologies naguieres faictes par aucuns heretiques ennemis de Dieu du Roy & des Princes chrestiens au scandale de l'Eglise Catholique Apostolique & Romaine. Pour la conversion des devovez restitution de l'Estat, & assopissement de ces troubles. n.p.: 1587.

•HAUSER #2421; LINDSAY & NEU #1187; WELSH #*111.

Mandement du Ban et Arriere-Ban, pour se trouver pres la personne de Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne, Lieutenant general de l'Estat Royal & Couronne de France.

[22 December 1589]. Paris: Nicolas Nivellet et Rolin Thierry, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1558; PALLIER #627; WELSH #235.

[MARCHANT, Michel]. Exhortation dernière a la noblesse, pour la delivrance de nostre Roy Très-Chretien. Paris: Pierre Hury, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1593; PALLIER #604.

----- La Paralytie de la France, avec le remède d'icelle. Paris: Pierre Hury, 1590.

•PALLIER #722.

[MASSON, Papire]. Avis à l'irresolu de Limoges. Qui peut servir à toutes les villes qui n'ont encores embrassé le party de la sainte union des Catholiques.

Paris: Robert le Fizelier, 1589.

•HAUSER #2860; LINDSAY & NEU #1404; PALLIER #345; WELSH #190.

[MATTHIEU, Claude, S.J.]. "Declaration des causes qui on meü Monseigneur le Cardinal de Bourbon, et les Princes, Pairs, Prelats, et Seigneurs, Villes et Communautéz Catholiques de ce royaume, de s'opposer à ceux qui veulent subventir la Religion et l'Estat." [Signed Charles, cardinal de Bourbon, at Péronne, 31 March 1585.]

[Rheims], 1585. In CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, first series, volume XI, pp. 7-19.

•HAUSER #2365; LINDSAY & NEU #1089-1090; WELSH #133.

[MONTHOLON, François de]. Remonstrance faicte par Monsieur le Garde des Seaux de France en l'assemblée des Estats. [16 October, 1588]. Paris: Federic Morel & Jamet Mettayer, 1588.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1334-1336; PALLIER #235; WELSH #175.

La Nouvelle defaite obtenue sur les troupes de Henry de Valois, dans les Fauxbourgs de Tours, le huitiesme May 1589. Par Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne, Pair & Lieutenant general de l'Estat Royal & Couronne de France. Paris: Nicolas Nivellet et Rolin Thierry, 1589.

•HAUSER #2836; LINDSAY & NEU #1588-1589; PALLIER #458-459; WELSH #242

[PIGENAT, Jean]. L'Aveuglement et grande inconsideration des politiques, dictz Maheustres, lesquels veulent introduire Henry de Bourbon, jadis Roy de Navarre, à la Couronne de France, à cause de sa pretendue succession. Le tout divisé en deux parties, l'argument desquelles se voit en la page suivante. Paris: Rolin Thierry, 1592.

•HAUSER #2858; PALLIER #804.

[PINSELET, Charles]. Le Martyre des deux frères contenant auvray toutes les particularitez plus notables des massacres, et assassinats, commis és personnes de tres-hauts, tres-puissans, et tres-chrestiens Princes, Messeigneurs le Reverendissime Cardinal de Guyse Archevesque de Reims, Et de Monseigneur le Duc de Guyse Pair de France. Par Henry de Valois à la face des Estats dernièrement assemblez à Bloys. [Paris], 1589. Second edition. In CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, first series, volume XII, pp. 57-107.

•HAUSER #2531; LELONG II #18845; LINDSAY & NEU #1604-1605; PALLIER #301.

----- . Le Martyr de frère Jacques Clément, de l'ordre Saint-Dominique, contenant au vray toutes les particularitez plus remarquables de la sainte résolution et très heureuse entreprise à l'encontre de Henry de Valois. [Paris: Robert le Fiselier, 1589.] In CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, first series, volume 12, pp. 397-414.
•HAUSER #2877; LINDSAY & NEU #1602; PALLIER #527.

Plaintes et remonstrances faictes au Roy et à la Royne mere. Par messieurs les Princes & Seigneurs Catholiques. n.p.: 1588.
•LINDSAY & NEU #1341; WELSH #*131.

Pleurs et souspirs lamentables, de Madame de Guyse: sur la mort & assassinat fait a son espoux, Monseigneur le Duc de Guyse, le vendredy vingt-troisiesme jour de Decembre, 1588. Paris: François le Jeune, [1589].
•HAUSER #2539; LINDSAY & NEU #1525; PALLIER #305; WELSH #166.

POISSON, Pierre. Harangue au peuple de France sur les louanges des anciens François, & de nostre Treschrestien Roy de France, & de Poloigne Henry 3. n'agueres empesché à respousser les estrangers, pour la manutention de l'Estat, & resjouissance de son heureux retour en sa ville de Paris. Paris: Denis Cotinet, 1588.
•LINDSAY & NEU #1343; PALLIER #135; WELSH #*132.

Le Pourtraict et description du Politique de ce temps extraict de l'Escripture Sainte. Paris: Hilaire le Bon et Pierre Chevillot, [1589]. In Belles figures, pp. 3-7.
•PALLIER #354.

Les Propheties merueilleuses advenues à l'endroit de Henry de Valois, 3. de ce nom, jadis Roy de France. Paris: Antoine du Breuil, 1589.
•LINDSAY & NEU #1611; PALLIER #548; WELSH #*157.

Propos tenus au Roy a la presentation de la requeste des Princes Seigneurs & Communautéz de l'Union pour la deffence de la Religion Catholique, Apostolique & Romaine. Paris: Nicolas Nivelles, 1588.
•LELONG II #18693; LINDSAY & NEU #1344-1345; PALLIER #171;
WELSH #*133, 177, 177a.

Propos tenus par les deputez de la ville de Paris. [Paris: Nicolas Nivelles, 1588.]
•LINDSAY & NEU #1339; PALLIER #171; WELSH #*130.

RAYNSSANT DEVIEZMAISON, O[udart]. [Odouart Rainsant]. Représentation de la noblesse hérétique sur le théâtre de France. Paris: Guillaume Bichon, 1591.
•LELONG II #19339; PALLIER #778, 506; RENOUEAU III #563, 542.

Reglement fait par Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne Pair & Lieutenant general de l'Estat Royal & Couronne de France, & le Conseil general de l'union des Catholiques establi à Paris, pour pourveoir & remedier aux desordres advenus à l'occasion des troubles

presens: Attendant qu'il y soit plus amplement pourveu par l'assemblee generale des Estats, assignez au 15. de Juillet prochain. [6 April]. Paris: Federic Morel, 1589.

•HAUSER #2844; LINDSAY & NEU #1570-1575; PALLIER #441, 450;
WELSH #240-241a.

Le Remercement des Catholiques unis, Faicts à la Declaration & Protestation de Henry de Bourbon, dict Roy de Navarre. Lyons: [Jean Pillehotte], 1589. ["Prins sur la coppie imprimee à Paris."]

•BAUDRIER II p.291; HAUSER #2898; LINDSAY & NEU #1578, 1621-1622;
PALLIER #413; WELSH #248, 248a, *155.

Remonstrance à la Noblesse Catholique de France, qui tient le party du Roy de Navarre. Paris: Nicolas Nivelles et Rolin Thierry, 1589.

•HAUSER #2918; LINDSAY & NEU #1623, 1719; PALLIER #620; WELSH #249, *173.

Remonstrance à tous bons et vrais Catholiques, lesquels veulent soustenir & maintenir nostre mere sainte Eglise, contre les faulx Heretiques de ce temps. Faict par un habitât de la ville de Vailly subject de feu Monseigneur le Reverendissime Cardinal de Guyse. [Paris]: Denys Binet, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1625; PALLIER #355; WELSH #250.

Remonstrance d'un Gentilhomme de Dauphiné, à Henry de Valois, pour le soulagement du pauvre peuple dudict Païs. n.p.: 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1626; WELSH #251.

Remonstrance et complaincte de la France. Aux Roys, Princes, Potentatz, Republics, Magistrats, Gouverneurs, Eschevins, & Peuples Catholiques, tant du party de l'Union, que des Rebelles. Paris: Guillaume Bichon, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1627; PALLIER #356; RENOARD #544; WELSH #252.

Remonstrance Tres-docte envoyée aux Catholiques François, par un Catholique Anglois. Paris: Anthoine du Brueil, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1628; PALLIER #536; WELSH #*159.

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Remonstrances faictes par les officiers de Henry de Valois, aux lettres patentes qu'il a decernees portans mandement de l'aller trouver. [Paris: Guillaume Bichon], 1589.

•BAUDRIER II p.295; GOLDSMITHS'-KRESS #249; LINDSAY & NEU #1358;
PALLIER #387; RENOARD III #545-546; WELSH #253.

Réponse aux justifications prétendues par Henri de Valois, sur les meurtres & assassinats de feu Messeigneurs le Cardinal & Duc de Guise, contenues en la Déclaration par lui faite, contre Messeigneurs le Duc de Mayenne, Duc & Chevalier d'Aumale. [Paris:

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•HAUSER #2548; LINDSAY & NEU #1631; PALLIER #385; WELSH #254.

Requete presentee à Messieurs de la Court, par les Eschevins & corps de la ville de Paris, Pour fair declarer tous Gentils-homme & autres, qui empeschent la sainte Union parjures & infideles, & decheuz de tous droicts & privileges. Et commandement à toutes les ville de se saisir d'eux, ou de les chasser comme criminels de leze Majesté divine. [4 February 1589]. Paris: Rolin Thierry, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1594; PALLIER #390; WELSH #244.

Responce aux calomnies proposez contre les Catholiques. n.p.: [1588].

•LINDSAY & NEU #1368; WELSH #*135.

Responce d'un grand seigneur de ce Royaume, reduit à la S. Union, à une lettre que luy a escrete le Roy de Navarre, En laquelle sont descrites les plus principales causes, qui l'ont meu à quitter le party Heretique. Lyons: [Jean Pillehotte], 1590.

•BAUDRIER II p.310; HAUSER #2921; LINDSAY & NEU #1721; WELSH #*174.

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•HAUSER #2550; LINDSAY & NEU #1632; PALLIER #424; WELSH #255.

Response du menu peuple à la declaration de Henry par la grace de Dieu autant Roy de France que de Pologne semee ces jours passés par les politiques. [Paris: Denis Binet], 1589.

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•LINDSAY & NEU #1638; PALLIER #471; WELSH #257.

[ROLLAND DE PLESSIS, Nicolas]. Remonstrances tres-humbles au Roy de France et de Pologne Henry troisieme de ce nom, par un sien fidele Officier & subject, sur les desordres & miseres de ce Royaume, causes d'icelles, & moyès d'y pourveoir à la gloire de Dieu & repos universel de cet Estat. [Paris]: 1588.

•GOLDSMITHS'-KRESS I #246; LELONG II #18746; PALLIER #230.

[RUBYS, Claude de]. Responce à L'Anti-Espagnol, semé ces jours passez par les rües & carreffours de la ville de Lyon, de la par des Conjurez, qui avoyent conspiré de livre ladicte ville en la puissance des Heretiques, & de la distraire du party de la Sainte Union. Lyons: Jean Pillehotte, 1590. [Also Paris: André Echar, 1590].

•BAUDRIER II p. 309; HAUSER #2932; LINDSAY & NEU #1723-1724; PALLIER #676; WELSH #*175.

[SAINCTION, Loys de]. [Louis Saint-Yon]. Histoire tres-veritable de ce qui est advenu en ceste ville de Paris, depuis le septiesme jour de May 1588, jusques au dernier jour de Juin ensuyvant audit an. Paris: Michel Jouin, 1588. In CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, first series, volume XI, pp. 325-350.

•HAUSER #2466; LINDSAY & NEU #1371-1372; PALLIER #190.

----- . Remonstrance faicte en l'assemblée generale des Colonels, Cappitaines, Lieutenans, & Enseignes de la Ville de Paris par Monsieur de Sainction, l'un desditz Cappitaines, en la Presence de Messieurs le Prévôt des Marchans & Echevins de ladicte Ville, le 5 Janvier, 1590. Paris: Guillaume Chaudière, 1590.

•HAUSER #2959; PALLIER #679.

[SAINT-GELAIS LANSAC, Urbain de, bishop of Comiges]. Advertissement particulier et veritable. De tout ce qui s'est passé en la ville de Tholose, depuis le massacre et assassinat commis en la personne des Princes Catholiques, touchant l'emprisonnement et mort du premier President et Advocat du Roy d'icelle, que de plusieurs autres choses dignes d'estre remarquees pour le profit, et utilité des affaires des bons et vrays Catholiques. Paris: Robert le Fizelier, 1589. In CIMBER & DANJOU, Archives curieuses, first series, volume 12, pp. 283-302.

•HAUSER #2824; LELONG II #18879; LINDSAY & NEU #1645; PALLIER #398; WELSH #258.

Seconde Remonstrance a la Noblesse Catholique qui tient le party du Roy de Navarre. Lyons: Jean Pillehotte, 1590.

•BAUDRIER II p. 311; LINDSAY & NEU #1725; WELSH #*176.

[SENAULT, Pierre]. Advis de Messieurs du Conseil General de l'Union des Catholiques estably à Paris, sur la nomination & election de Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne Pair de France, pour luy estre donné le tiltre, de Lieutenant General de l'Estat Royal & Couronne de France, attendant l'assemblee des Estats de ce Royaume. Avec l'Arest de la Cour sur ce intervenu & le serment faict par ledict Seigneur.

Paris: Federic Morel, 1589

•LINDSAY & NEU #1395-1396; PALLIER #417; WELSH #187.

Le Serment de la sainte Union, pour la conservation de la religion Catholique, & de l'Estat. Paris: Rolin Thierry, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1647; PALLIER #373; WELSH #259.

Sommaire responce a l'examen d'un heretique, sur un discours de la Loy Salique, faussement pretendu contre la maison de France, & la branche Bourbon. n.p.: 1587.

•HAUSER #2417; LINDSAY & NEU #1197; WELSH #145.

La Suite des remonstrances et articles presentez au Roy depuis la derniere Requete de Messieurs les Cardinaux & Princes Catholiques. Rouen: 1588.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1375; WELSH #*137.

Trahison decouverte de Henry de Valois, sur la vendition de la ville de Bologne à Jezabel Royne d'Angleterre. Avec le nombre des vaisseaux pleins d'or & d'argent prins par ceux de la ville de Bologne, envoyez par Jezabel audit des Valois.

Paris: Michel Jouin, 1589.

•HAUSER #2854; LINDSAY & NEU #1656; PALLIER #377; WELSH #*162.

La Trahison decouverte des politiques de la Ville de Rouen. Contenant un discours veritable de ce qui s'est fait & passé en ladicte ville, le Mercredi 7. & Jeudy 8. de ce present mois de Juin. Avec les noms des Capitaines qui avoyent conspiré à l'encontre de la sainte Union. [Paris: Antoine Du Brueil], 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1657; PALLIER #481; WELSH #*163.

Tumbeau sur le trespas et assassinat commis aux personnes de Messeigneurs de Guyse, à Blois, les XXiiie et XXiiiie decembre 1588. Paris: Jean Guérin, [1589].

In Belles Figures, pp. 48-50.

•PALLIER #313.

"Union juree entre tous les habitans de Dijon." Dijon: 5 April 1589. In LOUTCHITZKY, Documents, pp. 229-232.

VARAINE. Harangue, ou remonstrance faite a Monseigneur le Duc de Mayenne. Apres le retour de son armee à Paris, au Conseil de l'Union. Au Prevost des Marchans & Eschevins. Par le Sieur de Varaine Gentil-homme Catholique, tres-affectionné en ceste sainte cause, pour le repos de la France. Paris: Pierre Mercier, 1589.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1659; PALLIER #499; WELSH #260.

La Vie et innocence des deux freres, contenant au ample discours, par lequel l'on pourra aysement rembarrer ceux qui taschent à estaindre leur renom.

Paris: Anthoine du Brueil, 1589.

•HAUSER #2530; LELONG II #18818; LINDSAY & NEU #1664; PALLIER #314; WELSH #*164.

ZAMPINI, Matthieu [Matteo]. De la Succession du droict et prerogative du premier Prince du sang de France, deferée par la loy de Royaume, à Monseigneur Charles Cardinal de Boubon, par la mort de Monseigneur Francois de Valois Duc d'Anjou. Du traité du sieur Matthieu Zampini I.C. de ce que Gregoire de Tours, Aimonius & autres historiens de la France ont laissé par escrit.

Lyons: Jean Patrasson, 1589. [Also many Paris editions].

•BAUDRIER II p. 203; HAUSER #2394; LINDSAY & NEU #1668-1669; PALLIER #211, 270-272, 537; WELSH #261, *166.

B) Royalist Pamphlets

Advertissement à la Noblesse & villes de Bourgogne, tenans le party de la feinte Union.

n.p.: [1594].

•LINDSAY & NEU #1830; WELSH #*186.

Advertissement à tous bons et loyaux subjectz du Roy, Ecclesiastiques, Nobles, & du Tiers estats, pour n'estre surprins & circonvenuz par les propositions colorées, impostures, suggestions, & suppositions des conspirateurs, participans & adherens à la pernitéuse & damnée entreprise, Faicte & machinée contre le Roy, nostre souverain Seigneur, & son estat. Paris: Michel de Roigny, 1587.

•PALLIER #50; WELSH #*108.

Conference chrestienne, du quatre docteurs theologiens, & trois fameux Advocats, sur le faict de la Ligue, & levee des armes, faite depuis quelque temps en France, au nom de monseigneur le Reverendiss. & Illustriss. Prince, Charles, Cardinal de Bourbon: Contenant response, au libelle intitule, LE SALUTAIRE, Publié par ceux de ladite Ligue. Le tout adressé audit seigneur Cardinal, par le secretaire qui a reduite en escrit la susdite conference. n.p.: 1586.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1128; WELSH #*101.

Declaration du Roi, sur l'attentat, felonnie & rebellion du Duc de Mayenne, Duc & Chevalier d'Aumale & ceux qui les assisteront. [Blois: 1589]. In GOULART, Mémoires, volume III, pp. 203-211.

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Declaration du Roi, Sur l'attentat, felonnie & rébellion des Villes de Paris, Orléans, Amiens & Abbeville, & autres les Adhérans. [Blois: 1589]. In GOULART, Mémoires, volume 3, pp. 211-215.

•LINDSAY & NEU #1508, 1509, 1511, 1514; WELSH #217.

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•LINDSAY & NEU #1680; WELSH #*170.

Discours sur la procedure indue de ceux de la Ligue és Estats convoquez à Bloys par sa Majesté, depuis leur commencement jusques au mois de Novembre dernier. Auquel est adjousté un forme de Conference pour venir à union au fait de la Religion. n.p.: 1588.

•HAUSER #2516; LINDSAY & NEU #1244; WELSH #153.

[DUPLESSIS-MORNAY, Philippe]. Exhortation et remonstrance, faite d'un commun accord par les François Catholiques & Pacifiques, pour la paix. Contenant les commoditez de la paix, & les incommoditez de la guerre: où il est aussi parlé des causes des troubles

de ce Royaume, & du moyen de les pacifier. n.p.: 1586.

•LELONG II #18557; LINDSAY & NEU #1150; WELSH #141.

-----, Responce aux Declarations & protestatiōs de Messieurs de Guise, faictes sous le nom de Monseigneur le Cardinal de Bourbon, pour justifier leur injuste prise des armes. "Nouvellement Imprimé." n.p.: 1585.

•HAUSER #2368; LELONG II #18467; LINDSAY & NEU #1115-1116; WELSH #*97, 96.

HENRY III. La Harangue faicte par le Roy Henry Troiesiesme de France & de Pologne, à l'ouverture de l'assemblee des Trois Estats generaux de son Royaume, en sa ville de Bloys le seizième jour d'Octobre, 1588. Paris: Federic Morel, Jamet Mettayer, 1588.

•LINDSAY & NEU 31279; PALLIER #234; WELSH #170, *127.

[HENRY IV]. Declaration de la volonté du Roy, avec la Remonstrance faicte à sa Majesté, par les Princes de son sang, Officiers de la Courōne Seigneurs Gentils-hommes, & autres sujets de la France. [Declaration of St-Cloud, 4 August 1589].
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