

Tries to show how the interest in philosophie that characterized the robe and bourgeoisie in the later 17th century ran parallel to the philosophe movement in the 18th century and shared much with it, but in the end has a basically different conclusion on the political and social level.

88) Bernhard Groethuysen, Entstehung der bürgerlichen Welt- und Lebensanschauung in Frankreich is the jumping off point for the bourgeoisie & philosophe harmony of interest in rationality, etc. The robe became conservative, Gossman opines, as its hold on noble office ~~xxxx~~ aged; "They were content with what had already been achieved." (89) Moreover, it held itself aloof from the masses, and was locked into a conception of social order, based on law, which made its conclusions about the possibilities of reform always conservative. They avoided systematic expositions of their beliefs (Montesquieu a good example) because their own self interest based on status & privilege could not be compromised with any ideal new order according to the principles of rationality which they professed.

90) There were areas where philosophes & robe scholars did agree, and for a while in the early part of the century they found themselves together. So, the peers supporting the parlement after 1720, and both argued for ancient privileges against the monarchy. (91) After 1730's, however, new prosperity (uses Labrousse) meant that the bourgeoisie began to grow in wealth & numbers. "It became progressively more difficult to satisfy its aspirations by absorbing its wealthiest members into the ranks of the privileged. For one thing, they were too numerous. For another, the new economic conditions resorted to some extent their confidence in entrepreneurial activity, so that they no longer inevitably wished to sink their capital into the purchase of lands and offices; in this way they came to regard the privileges of others less as something to be acquired by themselves ~~xxx~~ than as something old and pointless to be done away with. Thirdly, many noblemen and magistrates, sensing the threat to their predominance from the swelling tide of prosperous and educated merchants, manufacturers and financiers, tried to fight it (92) off by tightening restrictions and progressively closing the doors of privilege." All this rationalization based in footnote on Ford, 124-46; Labrousse, 18th cent 347-49; but ~~Egret~~ Egret in RevHist 1953, 1-14 demurs. The ~~in~~ proof of the crossroads lies in the ways that new literature took after 1750, and the three ways opening are those of Montesquieu, Rousseau & Voltaire.

Montesquieu fuses the two main theories of robe and sword authority; "the exclusiveness of earlier noble, royalist or parliamentary arguments was transcended.; Montesquieu's theory of the monarchy accommodated all the privileged orders of the ~~xxx~~ ancien régime...and showed that they were all dependent upon each other and part of a single unified system." [Footnote, using Bluche, Magistrats, 95-6, 303-6, 334-8 & passim, to effect that the distinction between robe & sword was functional, and not social since they did mix socially.] (93) Montesquieu's fusion of philosophie and feudalism was something of a tour de force." It spoke to everyone, if one wanted it too--English & Austrians both approved, let alone most in France. Its lack of structure ~~xxxxxx~~ helped it.

Voltaire's Siècle de Louis XIV was monarchical in sense of ~~english~~ enlightened despotism, and it never allowed the parlement had any right to co-rule. ~~xxx~~ (94) The Parlements did not approve it.

Diderot ~~xxxxxx~~ represents the middle, too, in ~~the~~ La Promenade du sceptique where one character is advised to keep his criticism of religion & government a secret because of its explosive force. Gossman relates this to Rousseau's

earliest work, First Discourse, where he ~~xxxxx~~ deliberately didn't say everything he felt. (More on Rousseau below, at page 119)

96) "A certain number of thoughtful noblement, who were already making handsome profits from their farmers and sometimes also from minimizing operations of their lands, seem to have believed that a prosperous and free market would more than compensate them for the loss of their feudal privileges." Undocumented.

The common interest- of robe scholars and philosophes in terms of science developed over several pages. Rationality the key.

197) Several pages on the common element in robe scholar and philosophe interest in history, ~~xx~~ rejecting moral history, antiquarianism, etc. ~~XXXXXX~~

110) Most interesting are quotes from Gabriel Daniel on viewing history as change, seeing the differences in stages of "parlements". Boulainviller has something to the same effect, such as "Le décadence où se trouve à présent l'ancienne Noblesse est une conséquence nécessaire du changement qui s'est fait dans le gouvernement, dans la manière de faire la guerre, et de celui qui est arrivé dans les mœurs et dans les esprits..." and that every age has certain "advantages particuliers qui ne passent point à ~~à d'autres~~ d'autre Générations."

114) The differences in the historiography of robe scholars and philosophes is ~~xxx~~ great, however. For the latter, historiography was not sufficient; "The philosophes...tried to set themselves outside all existing or historical societies and to examine social relations from the point of view of reason or nature."

(115) The skepticism of the philosophes was a controlling discipline, not a pervasive philosophy." They believed in education to overcome the existing. The

robe scholars, on the other hand, ~~xxx~~ (116) ~~x~~ "tended to emphasize the powerlessness of man before the impersonal forces of history." If the philosophes applauded great men from the past as those who wrought good, the scholars debunked them and stressed institutions--above all, ~~xxx~~ law. (117) ~~XPAS~~ Pascal had argued that law provided the only means of maintaining order; the judicial bent to resolve by precedent makes the robe scholars as historians inclined to see the past as the source of truth [more my interpretation of Gossman than Gossman himself.] So, in effect, (118), the robe scholars were rationalistic in method, historicist in goal, but therefore conservative in philosophy.

(Worth examining sometime would be ~~Braxi~~ Bréquigny's essays on Commune & Bourgeois in prefaces to volumes XI & XII of the Ordonnances des Rois de France; Gossman says this appears to be third estate oriented, but in the end they defend the rights of Parlement (120-121 this shown.) The function of intermediary powers emerges, showing Montesquieu's influence.

123) Returns to Montesquieu saying that his ideas offer several possibilities for political organization, but in the end he says that there are these and only these, and that republican government won't work in a large state.. So, "History thus becomes the rule for the future, and the possibilities of human organization are defined by what has already been (124)". "History, as the scholars practiced it, always seemed to turn out, however philosophical it might be, to justify and substantiate the existing order, even while defining the possibilities of modifying it." (124) A good footnote to this is given.