

1974-03-10e: [ROYAL ADMINISTRATION] Monarchomachs, Nobles & *Polysynodie*

Ford, *Robe & Sword*, 176: *Polysynodie* was the hopeless effort of "barely literate soldiers and pompous courtiers" to rule. "Since last their class had played any major role in politics, the national government of France had become a huge and complex piece of machinery."

The monarchomachs system, generally, would have relied upon this very group that was so foolish in 1715-20, if one thinks literally. For their idea of *magistrature* in 1570s could not imagine the robe dynasties that were developing. So, the Monarchomach system, if not the swansong of the old nobility (that would occur only with the *Fronde* and the *Polysynodie*), was at least the appeal to a ruling class without a great future in France.

To the extent, therefore, that the *Monarchomachs* looked to the territorial nobility, which is the basis of the "sword" as opposed to the "robe" in later times, they were looking backwards but were not being impractical. To the extent that their ideas, especially Beza's, thought of a magisterial officialdom, they were clairvoyant but not practical. The time of the paradigm shift was still in the offing, the 17th century, but the anomalies of political power were already sensed to some extent by the monarchomachs.

Should we hesitate to say that the hierarchical view of the world still dominated the 16th-century mind; as much as the monarchomachs show a tendency to change. the locus of power, they still still society as one of hierarchical orders. Conversely, in the 18th century, we are in a world of mechanical function of the machinery of government, where the hierarchical sense is lost in favor of the functional.