

**A Study of the Term *Politique* and its Uses
during the French Wars of Religion, c. 1562-98**



Thesis submitted by Emma Claussen, St John's College
For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Oxford,
Trinity Term 2016

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This study of the term *politique* during the French Wars of Religion (c. 1562-98) argues that it is a keyword in the sense that it is active and actively used in French explorations of the political, in the forming and undermining of collective identities in a period of civil crisis, and in the self-fashioning gestures of a shifting political class. I sample and analyse a range of texts – from treatises that form part of the canon of early modern French political writing (such as Bodin's *Six livres de la Republique* [1576] and the *Satyre ménippée* [c. 1593]) to anonymous polemical pamphlets – all of which feature prominent uses of the term *politique*. Certain of these sources gave rise to a longstanding historiographical impression that *politique* referred, in the period, to a coherent third party in the religious wars as well as to a related kind of expertise and its practitioner. This thesis builds on and extends recent work showing that there was no such party and no one in the period who directly identified as *politique*. Rather than seeking to identify the 'real' *politiques* or to establish a corrected definition of the term as used in sixteenth-century French, I argue that the term is strikingly and increasingly mobile across the period, coming at times to refer to mobility itself in conceptions of politics and political action. Dialogue emerges in the thesis as a key conceptual arena and discursive mode for writers attempting to work out what they and others mean by the term *politique*. I use philological and word-historical methods to examine writers of the period who seek to determine what makes a good or bad *politique*, to present themselves as *politique*, or to condemn *politiques* as morally bankrupt, and – in some cases – to do all of the above in the same text. Almost every text I analyse in the thesis offers its own definition of *politique*, and attempts to be definitive, but I show that all these attempts to make the reader recognise the 'true' meaning of *politique* are extending the drama rather than concluding it.

Long Abstract

This study of the term *politique* in France during the Wars of Religion (c. 1562-98) shows it as a tool in, and not simply a reflection of, arguments about political organisation and the boundaries of belonging. The thesis argues that the term *politique* is a keyword in the sense that it is active and actively used in French explorations of the political, in the forming and undermining of collective identities in a period of civil crisis, and in the self-fashioning gestures of a shifting political class. Far from simply designating the ‘third party’ in the wars (a party now known to have never formally existed), I argue that the term is strikingly and increasingly mobile across the period, coming at times to refer to the mobility in the term’s sphere of application itself. The shifting and proliferating lexical field around the term *politique* was part of a cultural and political moment (in the wake of the Reformation, the spread of humanist practice, and internecine warfare) in which language was changing rapidly and meaning and truth were equally unstable and difficult to grasp. Within this, however, the term *politique* may be said to have been particularly powerful and unstable. During the Wars of Religion, writers were both self-conscious about the difficulty of defining politics and *politiques*, and keen to harness the power of the word for their own purposes. *Politique*, in this period, is often the name of a flexible, skilled, and sometimes morally bankrupt character who figures as hero or villain (and often something in between) in treatises, dialogues, and polemical tracts. As a character, the *politique* enacts or corrupts the powerful potential of the abstract noun, and embodies its mobility. I show writers of the period asking what makes a good or bad *politique*, seeking to present themselves as *politique*, or condemning *politiques* as morally bankrupt – and sometimes all of the above – often in the same text.

I use philological and word-historical methodologies (inspired by Kenny [1998], and Mac Carthy [2013] and Scholar [2013]) to analyse endogenous uses of the term *politique*, while also paying attention to cognate terms such as *police* and to neighbouring terms in its semantic field. This kind of historically attuned literary analysis is particularly apt for a study of the term *politique*, because the history of its use is one marked by myth-making and

misconstruction. The traditional narrative was that a *Politique* party emerged as a distinct force for compromise between warring Catholic and Protestant factions, militating for and facilitating the ultimate victory of Henri IV. Recently historians have pointed out that there was no such party. Greengrass (2012) writes that to see the outcome of the wars as a *Politique* triumph is to ‘misconstrue rhetoric and reality’. My thesis seeks to show how these misconstructions occurred, as writers sought to make use of or to minimise the dangerous mobility to which *politique* referred in this moment of political chaos. In this way I show language-users as active in the construction, misconstruction, and remembering of political experience. My study contrasts with those that emphasise the use of the term as non-referential insulting speech act (Miernowski, 2001), and those that give singular generalised definitions of the term *politique* as used at different moments of the wars (Demonet, 2005), emphasising the messiness and the might-have-beens that accompanied textual contestation of political systems, categories, and identities. It also contrasts with existing literary studies of politics that tend to focus on single authors (often Montaigne), particular metaphors (e.g. Williams, 2011), national identity (Hampton, 2001), or the status of rhetoric (Kahn, 1985). As such it contributes a differently weighted account to studies of literature as a political phenomenon and politics as a literary-linguistic experience.

The account offered here demonstrates that the term *politique* is both the object of sustained reflection across decades on the part of many different writers who read and respond to one another, and also contingent upon the immediate context, particularly when that moment is one of particular crisis. Key moments in this thesis, then, are 1572 (around the Saint Bartholomew’s Day massacres) and 1589-93 (around the assassination of the King’s main rivals, then of the King himself, followed by the siege of Paris). What emerges from this account is a word history that is clear in its outlines. At the start of the wars, the term, broadly speaking, referred to skilled negotiation and the successful management of political differences; after a decade of war, writers such as Jean Bodin gave the word a more authoritarian gloss, partly to counter the uses of Huguenot writers whose *politiques* offered an

alternative set of political principles for a Reformed Europe. The power and the flexibility of this keyword was then negatively framed by radical Catholic polemicists who painted the *politique* as their most monstrous enemy, and perhaps unwittingly laid the foundations for the idea that there really was a *Politique* party; at the end of the wars, supporters of Henri IV satirised and appropriated these uses to further their own cause and undermine their radical Catholic opponents. Although I analyse uses of *politique* in a broadly chronological order, my aim is not to present a single narrative. It is, rather, to show that the term was active in coexisting, competing narratives, and to explore the ways in which different writers contested and re-calibrated other uses. Each chapter thus explores a set of contexts for uses of the term *politique*, and offers a form of counter-narrative to the chapters that surround it. Almost every text I analyse in the thesis offers its own definition of *politique*, and attempts to be definitive, but I show that all these attempts to make the reader recognise the ‘true meaning’ of *politique* are extending the drama rather than concluding it.

Chapter One is an overview of uses of the term before, during, and just after the Wars of Religion, looking at a large number of texts, starting with Le Caron’s *Courtesan* dialogues (1556) and Etienne Pasquier’s *Pourparler du Prince* (1560), before looking back to Rabelais and Guillaume Budé, and then forward to Montaigne and François de la Noue. The purpose of this is to offer a broader context for the more specific analysis carried out in the rest of the thesis, in order to give a sense of the textual landscape from which these uses emerged, or were distinct. This chapter, then, serves as the pre-history within the word-history of the thesis; a pre-history in Cave’s sense of the term (Cave, 1999), in which I read this broader set of uses of *politique* as having a bearing on later uses, of which the authors themselves may not have been conscious.

Chapters Two and Three are a pair in the sense that they both look at texts written in or around the crisis of 1572, and respond to the violence of the massacres and the ensuing challenges to royal authority, I also argue, however, that the texts in question are part of a

much longer history of political theory. Chapter Two is a comparison of Jean Bodin's *Six livres de la Republique* (1576) with the paratexts of Loys Le Roy's translation of Aristotle's *Politics*: this is the point in my thesis at which I look in most detail at classical inheritances and at texts that form the canon of political theory. I explore how Bodin and Le Roy's uses of the abstract term *politique* represent a moment of positive construction of meaning, embodied in the masculine substantive, *le politique*, who is the agent of a particularly powerful kind of knowledge (*la politique*). Chapter Three looks at the anonymous dialogue, *Le Reveille-matin des François* (1574), in which the principal speaker is called Le Politique, as well as a dialogue called 'Le Politique' and a treatise entitled 'Discours politiques', both in Simon Goulart's *Memoires de l'estat de France sous Charles neufiesme* (1576-8). In this chapter I argue that Huguenot writers reinforced and appropriated positive, powerful uses of the word *politique* circulating in erudite discourse to argue for an alternative vision of how society should operate, and what politics should be. They do so partially with reference to their understanding of Machiavelli's *Prince*: Chapters Two to Four show that while the relation between 'Machiavel' and *politique* is a dynamic one, it is not always central to the story of *politique* as a keyword, and certainly not a relation of straightforwardly negative association, despite the apparently anti-Machiavellian mood of much late sixteenth-century political writing.

Chapters Four and Five are another pair, focusing on texts written *c.* 1588-94, another particularly febrile period of crisis as the Catholic *Ligue* attempted to take control of France and Henri de Navarre attempted to realise his claim to the throne. Chapter Four looks at highly vituperative radical Catholic pamphlets with the term *politique* in the title which attempt to pin the masculine substantive down as the enemy of their cause. The sources are perhaps particularly significant in this study for the fact that the *politique* character is the primary object of these texts, rather than working as a supporting device. The pamphlets stage a moment of recognition in which the meaning of *politique* is fixed and known as 'enemy' (sometimes actually advertising this in their titles and marginal notes, of which one is 'comment reconnoistre un politique'). I show that these uses, while responding to an immediate situation

of crisis, are part of a longer textual genealogy. Chapter Five analyses uses of *politique* in longer texts written in 1593 – the year of Henri’s conversion to Catholicism and the year in which his accession to the throne became inevitable – which respond to and satirise the flurry of insulting uses that proliferated in 1588-89. These texts are the *Dialogue d’entre le Maheustre et le Manant* and the *Satyre ménippée*, of which the latter in particular was highly influential in constructing, post-hoc, the narrative of *politique* triumph at the end of the civil wars. In Chapter Five I argue that both the *Dialogue* and the *Satyre* engage in and block attempts at re-describing the meaning of *politique* as a means of inviting a final reckoning as the wars concluded, and as a way of attempting to shape the historical narrative already being constructed about the word *politique* and what, or who, it meant.

The thesis offers four main conclusions. First, the word *politique* is inherently mobile, and its shifting semantic field is fundamental to its uses and meanings rather than something to be corrected in hindsight. Second, a character, figure, or *persona* named *politique* is prominent among these uses, and functions as a tool used by writers to fashion themselves as *politiques* or in opposition to *politiques*, and to compel their readers to recognise themselves as political subjects and others as political enemies. Third, writers use the term to argue about and intervene in their immediate political context, as well as to participate in a longer-term set of arguments about what it means to act politically and to exist as an individual within a collective. Finally, although I show the term operating across a wide spectrum of generic contexts, dialogue is a privileged concept within, and crucial discursive mode for, sixteenth-century explorations of the many meanings of the term *politique*.

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– Conventions –

I refer to all titles by the MHRA system. The only exceptions are a few standard texts for which it is more appropriate to follow the conventional mode of reference. Direct short references to one text are usually indicated in parentheses within the text; all others are placed in footnotes. Dates placed after the titles of books in the main text refer to their first publication in printed form. I quote all primary sources in their original language. I have used the same spelling conventions as the editions used, except that when quoting early modern texts, I distinguish between ‘i’ and ‘j’, ‘u’ and ‘v’, and resolve abbreviations. Any suggested emendation (of spelling or punctuation, place or date of publication, name of author, etc) is placed in square brackets. In general I italicize *politique* in my text, and capitalize the noun when it refers to the supposed (largely fictional) *Politique* faction or party. When the term refers to a named character in a dialogue I capitalize but don’t italicize. Practice in primary material, with respect to both spelling and capitalization of *politique*, is entirely inconsistent, and I preserve these inconsistencies when quoting.

– Abbreviations –

CUP = Cambridge University Press

OUP = Oxford University Press

PUF = Presses universitaires de France

Introduction: Politics and Politiques

This is a study of a term, *politique*, as it was used and abused in sixteenth-century French writing during the intense internecine conflict known as the Wars of Religion (c. 1562-98). The many, often overlapping, referents of this term as both noun and adjective include a general sense of the political; a specific kind of politics; a way of being political; a person or people engaged in political action in ways both general and specific. These uses can be both laudatory and deeply insulting in the texts that I analyse in this thesis, and where they have been read as ‘neutral’ I show that even these uses are connected to other moments of praising, blaming, and re-assessing *politique* people and things. Writers used the term *politique* to establish and fortify their positions in the chaotic, violent political landscape of late sixteenth-century France. Connected to this jostling for position and authority, the term also has a place in historical accounts of the wars, supposedly indicating a middle party between warring Catholic and Protestant factions; or simply a conciliatory attitude; or a more fixed sense that the most important political goal ought to be a strong and stable monarchy. Rather than attempting to create a hierarchy of these multiple uses, I show how *politique* and its referents become increasingly plural and mobile throughout the Wars of Religion, and that this mobility, figured variously as doubleness, ambivalence, ambiguity, and monstrosity, is a fundamental element of the sixteenth-century experience of the political in France. In this way, the term *politique* was a tool in arguments about political organisation and the boundaries of belonging. A crucial manifestation of this was often the invention of a character, *le politique*, who embodies the mobility of the term and is an agent of negotiation and a figure for

discursive flexibility and ideological change in the ‘conversation politicque’ of the period.¹

Writers from Rabelais, to Ronsard, to radical Catholic preachers, were all conscious of the powerful potential of spoken and written language, and often engaged in arguments about what words could, or should mean. Towards the end of the Wars of Religion in particular, writers were very conscious of the way the term *politique* had changed, now carrying – for some – a strongly negative charge:

Ce nom de Politique estoit un nom d’honneur,
C’estoit le juste nom, d’un juste Gouverneur.
D’un prudent Magistrat, qui par raison civile
Sçavoit bien policer les membres d’une ville,
Et qui saige & accord, par accordans discords,
De Citoyens divers tireroit de bons accords.
Comme fait Edinthon, quand son Luth il manie
Qui de tons differends fait naistre une armonie,
Dont il pointe nos esprits, & par un son vainqueur
Des-robbe nostre aureille & nous pille le coeur.
Aujourd’huy ce beau nom, souillé de mille vices
N’est plus qu’un nom d’horreur, qui destruit les polices,
Un nom rempli d’ordure, & qui est mesprisé
Par le crime de ceux qui en ont abusé.²

This is the opening of a pamphlet written in verse, printed in 1588, entitled *Description de l’homme politique de ce temps*. The author regrets the degradation of ‘ce nom de Politique’: once honorific, now horrific. The first ten lines are devoted to what this term formerly referred to: a special kind of person – a ‘juste Gouverneur’, a ‘prudent Magistrat’ – who could employ their powers of reason to create harmony among a diverse population: who could, then, fully activate the potential of the verb ‘policer’.

The author draws an analogy with Edinthon, a lute-player at the Valois court, who

¹ Gargantua refers to ‘conversation politicque’ in a discussion with Frere Jean in *Gargantua*; see François Rabelais, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. by Mireille Huchon (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), p. 110. For a detailed discussion of this, see Chapter One below, pp. 69-73.

² *Description de l’homme politique de ce temps avec sa foy et religion qui est un Catalogue de plusieurs heresies et athéismes, où tombent ceux qui préfèrent l’estat humain à la Religion Catholique* (Paris: G. Bichon, 1588), p. 3.

created musical harmonies of different tones, and in so doing was master of the ears, hearts, and minds of listeners. The harmonies of a lute player, and of the *politique* as [he] formerly existed, are figured as a kind of conquest of the crowd. The majority of rhymes in lines 1-10 are *rimes riches*, and the lines often tied together by internal rhymes and repetitions, so that the form and the content are aligned. The last four lines mark a stark change in tone: today, the poet announces, the word *politique* is sullied by a thousand vices, and so destroys the *police* rather than arranging its inhabitants into harmonies. It is striking here that the noun itself ('un nom d'horreur, qui détruit les polices') is the destroyer of harmony. Here, the poetic harmony also suffers a decline in standards; the rhymes of lines 11-12 are only *suffisantes*. This mirrors the moral decline in the meaning of *politique*, which has been degraded ('mesprisé') through misuse ('abusé').

This verse gives a highly polarised sense of what *politique* could mean: 'honneur' on the one hand and 'horreur' on the other. The rest of the poem gives one version of how 'honneur' became 'horreur', and extends the musical metaphor, portraying French society as a grotesque chorus following the wrong conductors. In the view of the poet, toleration of religious difference strikes a fatally false note, and *politique* has become a problem precisely because it has come to mean endless negotiation, and endless quarrelling, between different groups who ought instead to have had religious harmony imposed upon them. Bemoaning this fundamental lack of harmonious accord, the poem is the expression of an angry stalemate. What it offers beyond its immediate argument about how and why *politique* went wrong is precisely this evocation of perpetual quarrelling and degradation of meaning through such misuse of language. The opening line creates an analogy between harmonious government

and clearly defined meaning; the dissonance caused by bad politics is equally analogous to an uncontrollable proliferation of negative associations. This thesis tells another version of this story of struggles over meaning of this key term with its proliferating associations, and attendant arguments about what makes for good or bad politics. With its neat alexandrines (recalling, with its fourteen lines, a sonnet, even if it doesn't follow Petrarchan or *Pléiade* convention) this verse also shows cultural inheritances put to use in a text that serves ideological functions far removed from concerns traditionally associated with, for instance, the *Pléiade*, or innovation in the sonnet form. Kelley, in fact, calls the Reformation a 'primal scream', expressed in a traumatic complex of human experiences.³ Between sonnet and scream, this thesis explores uses of *politique* that belong to discursive traditions of both Renaissance and Reformation, showing how this crucial term operates at the limits of communication to test and expand the possibilities of literature as an agent of change.

Attention to uses of the word *politique*, accompanied by analysis of the texts in which these examples appear, provides insight into politics as a discursive experience and literature as a political phenomenon. As a discursive experience, politics is always on a dialogic spectrum, from convivial conversation, to quarrel, to violent hostility and vituperative condemnation of the other. As a political phenomenon, literature is the location for these friendly or hostile conversations, exposing, articulating, and adjusting the balance of power between ideas and interlocutors. An idealistic view of literature as a privileged form of linguistic communication is that it can enable a more convivial experience of politics. Humanism as expressed in France and Italy c. 1400-1500 is sometimes thought to have espoused precisely this kind of optimism about the

³ Donald R. Kelley, *The Beginnings of Ideology: Consciousness and Society in the French Reformation* (Cambridge: CUP, 1981), p. 7.

beneficial effects of the rhetorical upon the real.⁴ One argument, which I explore in Chapter One, is that this is precisely the political potential of a *politique* vision inherited from Erasmus, and developed in the politico-poetic circle around Michel de L'Hospital. This thesis, while subscribing in some sense to the view that literature can or could be a non-violent space for political conversation, shows that literary forms are just as much a space for quarrels, vituperation, and virtual violence that in some cases can be quite concretely tied to real acts of violence on real bodies.⁵ The high literary form of the poem just quoted, which ultimately incites murderous action, is a case in point: this too is literature; this too is where facility with language and keen attention to nuance can lead. Moreover, we see in different ways throughout the thesis, in every chapter, how staged dialogues effectively will consensus into being, more often than not evoking plurality the better to suppress it.

1. *Histories of Politics*

Politics, and political thought, occur in every era. Modern political theory supposes a timeless aspect to such concerns:

We are all concerned with our relationship to authority, with notions of good social arrangements, with hierarchies of urgency and significance in deciding whether to support or resist public policies, with ways of

⁴ Kahn writes that 'early' humanism evinced faith in the potential of rhetoric to achieve moral good, but that in the later Renaissance, this faith gave way to intense skepticism; she writes that the works of Erasmus, Montaigne, Hobbes 'reveal an awareness of the ideal alliance of rhetoric and prudence, [but] their rhetorical strategies prove to be symptomatic of an increasing anxiety or skepticism about the power of rhetoric to persuade to right action'. See Victoria Kahn, *Rhetoric, Prudence, and Skepticism in the Renaissance* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 27. J. H. M. Salmon and Jan Miernowski also refer to a crisis of faith in the humanist project in the context of the civil wars. See J. H. M. Salmon, 'Cicero and Tacitus in Sixteenth-Century France', *The American Historical Review*, 85.2 (1980), 307-31, and Jan Miernowski, "'Politique" comme injure dans les pamphlets au temps des guerres de Religion', in *De Michel de L'Hospital à L'Edit de Nantes: Politique et religion face aux Eglises*, ed. by Thierry Wanegffelen (Clermont-Ferrand: Presses universitaires Blaise Pascal, 2002), pp. 337-56.

⁵ On the nexus of cultural, social, and political causes of violence in early modern France, see Natalie Zemon Davis, 'The Rites of Violence: Religious Riot in Sixteenth-Century France', *Past and Present*, 59 (1973), 51-91, and *Ritual and Violence: Natalie Zemon Davis and Early Modern France*, ed. by Graeme Murdock, Penny Roberts, and Andrew Spicer (Oxford: OUP, 2012).

asserting our will over others, and with the need to succeed or defend ourselves when faced with competing views in those areas.⁶

Histories of early modern political thought identify early modern experience as ‘political’ and certain textual production as ‘political thought’ if it can be categorised as treating these concerns. Thinking historically about early modern politics, then, relies on acknowledgement of the particularity of institutions, representations, and vocabularies that express and facilitate this eternal and eternally flexible concept, politics. According to historians of political thought, the early modern period saw changes in practices of politics and habits of political thought that were the seeds of the modernity we know today. Histories that focus on French politics (largely written in French) have tended to see this period as a transition from constitutional monarchy to more centralised forms of monarchic power (generally referred to as absolutism).⁷ This moment in French history is often treated by anglophone historians of modern political thought looking at politics from a supra-national perspective as a transitional phase between Machiavelli, where everything begins, and Hobbes, or the American and French Revolutions.⁸

Within their *longue-durée* accounts of how social change was wedded to intellectual tendencies and processes, historians of political thought are often keenly aware of how language use is a key indicator of socio-political experience, and of change.⁹ Quentin

⁶ Michael Freeden, ‘Thinking Politically and Thinking About Politics: Language, Interpretation, and Ideology’, in *Political Theory: Methods and Approaches*, ed. by David Leopold and Marc Steers (Oxford: OUP, 2008), pp. 196-215 (p. 196).

⁷ *L’Absolutisme en France*, ed. by Fanny Cosandey and Robert Descimon (Paris: Seuil, 2002); Arlette Jouanna, *Le Pouvoir absolu: Naissance de l’imaginaire politique de la royauté* (Paris: Gallimard, 2013).

⁸ See Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 2 vols (Cambridge: CUP, 1978), and *Hobbes and Republican Liberty* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008); Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and Government 1572-1651* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993); J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975).

⁹ Koselleck goes as far as saying that there is no such thing as society without common concepts, and above all, no field of political action; he differs from Skinner in placing more emphasis on ‘the autonomous power of words’, whereas Skinner sees the centre of power as those who use words and is

Skinner places particular emphasis on rhetoric, and on the agency of language-users in the construction of new institutions and ideologies; his argument in the second volume of his *Foundations of Modern Political Thought* is that the crisis and conflict of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries fundamentally de-stabilised various categories and led to the establishment or re-calibration of alternatives both conceptual and practical: his examples are the sovereign, the city, and particularly the various vernacular words for the state (*l'état, lo stato, the state, etc.*).¹⁰ Viroli, meanwhile, refers to a 'forgotten revolution' in early modern conceptions of politics, which he sees as being articulated through change in language, from 'art of government' to 'reason of state' (a process started, for Viroli, by Machiavelli, and inaugurated by Botero, who criticised this 'new' aspect of politics in *Della ragion di stato* in 1589).¹¹ In a different way, Viroli makes a similar argument to the anonymous author of the sonnet quoted above – that 'the word politics' became somehow degraded over the course of the sixteenth century:

Before the revolution, the word politics had only a positive connotation. Afterwards, it acquired, for the most part, only a negative connotation. Having enjoyed for three centuries the status of the noblest human science, politics emerged from the revolution as an ignoble, depraved, and sordid activity: it was no longer the most powerful means of fighting oppression and corruption but the art of perpetuating them.¹²

more careful to acknowledge socio-political experience beyond particular or specialized linguistic frameworks. See Reinhart Koselleck, 'Begriffsgeschichte and Social History', in *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. 77-92 (p. 81).

¹⁰ Skinner writes, 'The surest sign that a society has entered into the secure possession of a new concept is that a new vocabulary will be developed, in terms of which the concept can be articulated and discussed', in *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, II, p. 352. Harro Höpfl, in his analysis of Justus Lipsius, has commented that 'Much of the most valuable historiography of political thought has resulted from treating terms like *jus, virtù, arête, respublica, polis, state, civitas, commonwealth, politique, libertas*, etc. as requiring historical exegesis, rather than casual modernisation'. See Harro Höpfl, 'History and Exemplarity in the Work of Lipsius', in *(Un)masking the Realities of Power: Justus Lipsius and the Dynamics of Political Writing in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Erik de Bom (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2011), pp. 43-72 (p. 44).

¹¹ Maurizio Viroli, 'The Revolution in the Concept of Politics', *Political Theory*, 20.3 (1992), pp. 473-95. See *From Politics to Reason of State: The Acquisition and Transformation of The Language of Politics, 1250-1600* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992).

¹² Viroli, 'The Revolution in the Concept of Politics', p. 477.

Skinner and Viroli tell the history of politics in sixteenth-century Europe as a narrative of progress towards something new (the modern state; reason of state) if not necessarily towards something good. Hiding in plain sight within these arguments is a network of terms – politics, *politique*, *politico*, *politicus*; the ‘word politics’, in much of the source material on which Viroli bases his argument, was not politics, for example, but *politico*. Maclean has shown how the terminology of politics, between ‘prudence’ and ‘policy’, underwent significant shifts in the early modern period.¹³ In this thesis I argue that these shifts were staged and argued over in uses of the term *politique* itself. If the concept of politics was changing, and if it was generating a new set of vocabulary around figures and institutions (the sovereign; the state), what might these terms have meant for the people who used them? How did these words and their meanings operate in discussions and debates about the nature of political community, how it should be formed, and who should direct it?

This thesis focuses on the French contribution to this network of terms used in various contexts in various European vernaculars in the early modern period. I have attempted to follow the historicising approach prevalent in early modern literary studies, focusing on endogenous uses of the term *politique* and excavating its meanings in sixteenth-century terms rather than proceeding from the various definitions of politics and power current in my own moment of writing, even as these inform my understanding of the political dimensions of literature. The focus is on *politique* because – as we shall see, and as the poem *Description du politique* has already shown – the meaning of the French vernacular term was the object of particularly active and self-conscious contestation. *Politique* was also the name given to a powerful character in

¹³ Ian Maclean, ‘From Prudence to Policy: Some Notes on the Pre-History of Policy Science’, *Guest Lectures* (Nijmegen: Katholieke universiteit, 1993) 5-27. See especially Maclean’s gloss on the semantic field and associated concepts around *politeia* in the early modern period, p. 8.

narratives, treatises, and dialogues written about politics at the time, as well as being a term that historians have used to define attitudes and allegiances during the chaotic civil war period. French texts are therefore especially productive for interrogating the connection between the literary and the political, and the boundaries and possibilities of verbal communication encapsulated in the history of this one crucial term. This is also, of course, a pragmatic limitation, given the wealth of source material and the time available for the completion of a thesis. Future work might very well tease out the connections between, at the very least, the French, English, Latin, and Italian nexus of terms that all correspond in some way to the idea and practice of ‘politics’ and the figure of the ‘political actor’. Some of these connections are sketched in what follows. Echoes of Italian political writing (French responses to Machiavelli’s *Prince*) are explored in Chapter Three, and Chapter Five briefly hints at the web of connections between French politics, *politiques*, and English drama at the turn of the seventeenth century. Further work on this broader network might take earlier Italian writing into account, for example Machiavelli’s reworking of the ‘vivere politico’ in his *Discorsi* and the way in which the Italian term *politico* was part of the development of what is now known as civic humanism.¹⁴ It might also explore how use of the French term *politique* was taken as a marker of allegiance in England and in the English expatriate community, leading, perhaps, to other ways of understanding and using a term of French origin beyond national boundaries.¹⁵ This study of the term *politique* tells a

¹⁴ See, for example, Niccolò Machiavelli, *Opere*, ed. by Corrado Vivanti, 3 vols (Torino: Einaudi-Gallimard, 1997), I, p. 216: as part of an oft-quoted comparison between Sparta and Venice, Machiavelli suggests that the balance those states achieved between conflicting interest groups represented ‘la vera vita politica’ (the true political life). Hans Baron coined the phrase ‘civic humanism’, in *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny*, 2 vols (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955). See also Eugenio Garin, *Italian Humanism: Philosophy and the Civic Life in the Renaissance* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1965), and *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections*, ed. by James Hankins (Cambridge: CUP, 1995).

¹⁵ Jan Machielsen gives an interesting account of *politique* being used in this way in the Netherlands, in ‘The Lion, the Witch, and the King: Thomas Stapleton’s “Apologia pro Rege Catholico Philippo II”

particular set of stories that are connected to these other narratives both general and particular, the telling of which is not, however, in its purview.

2. *Histories of Politiques*

A study of the term *politique* on its own is necessary owing to the enormous mass of textual material that uses and contests it during this forty-year period. ‘Nostre contestation est verbale’, wrote Montaigne.¹⁶ The Reformation, indeed, can be described as both the product and the cause of wholesale disruptions of the terms by which early modern people defined ethical, religious, and social categories, accompanied by extensive printed production in which these definitions and disruptions were at least partially located. Accordingly, the French Wars of Religion were accompanied, and spurred on, by a war of words facilitated by ever more efficient printing practices: as one historian has it, the wars were ‘lost and won by the ability of Catholics and Huguenots to create and block competing narratives and representations of each other’.¹⁷ Between radical Catholics and their Huguenot opponents, historians and critics have traditionally located a nebulous group of people called *Politiques*: those moderate Catholics who, according to one definition, prioritised the welfare of the nation above religious principle, and thus were concerned with bringing the devastating wars to a close, no matter that the theological debates raged on.¹⁸ These so-called *Politiques* supposedly played their part, too, in such competing

(1592)’, *English Historical Review*, 129 (2014), 19-46. Maclean treats this more briefly in ‘From Prudence to Policy’, pp. 14-15.

¹⁶ Montaigne, *Essais*, ed. by Jean Balsamo, Michel Magnien, and Catherine Magnien-Simonin (Paris: Gallimard, 2007), III, 13, p. 1116. This famous phrase has been extracted, maxim-like, to express in a nutshell the vast, bloody, and chaotic European conflicts of the early modern period. See, for example, Brian Cummings, *The Literary Culture of the Reformation: Grammar and Grace*, 2nd edn (Oxford: OUP, 2007), p. 15.

¹⁷ Luc Racaut, *Hatred in Print: Catholic Propaganda and Protestant Identity During the French Wars of Religion* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), p. 5.

¹⁸ The definition is Terence Cave’s, from *Thomas More’s Utopia in Early Modern Europe: Paratexts and Contexts* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), p. 81.

narratives and representations. Their successes in this arena were thought to have facilitated the victory of Henri de Navarre, crowned Henri IV of France in 1594 after his (re-) conversion from Protestantism to Catholicism.¹⁹

The traditional historiographical narrative has its roots in the work of sixteenth-century writers who harnessed the power of *politique* as a tool of negotiation. One of the reasons why this term has been so compelling, and so tricky, for historians is the fact that the term was thus mobilised and contested, both during and immediately after the Wars of Religion. Even as the poem *Description du politique* was being written, printed, and re-printed, others were spreading counter-arguments and alternative uses. If he is to be believed, one such ‘other’ was the Parisian diarist Pierre de L’Estoile, a recurrent supporting actor in the cast of figures who might in some way be *politique*. As well as recording many instances of insulting uses of the term, he describes himself as having a hand in engineering alternative meanings for the word. This hand is quite literal; he writes how he copied by hand and bravely passed around one poem responding to anti-*politique* propaganda of the kind expressed in *Description du politique*, including the following verse:

Mais vous, qui tant vous dites Catholiques,
Sans qu'on vous ait fait tort en vos moiens,
Courez la guerre à vos concitoiens
Que vous nommez Roiaux et Politiques.²⁰

¹⁹ See Charles Labitte, *De la démocratie chez les prédicateurs de la Ligue*, 2nd edn (Paris: Durand, 1865); Francis de la Crue, *Le Parti des Politiques au lendemain de la Saint-Barthélemy: La Molle et Coconat* (Paris: Plon, 1892). This view is reprised in literary studies, particularly concerning the *Satyre ménippée*, a text I discuss in Chapter Five. Lestringant and Ménager write: ‘l’esprit national auquel s’identifie le parti des Politiques, et dont la *Satyre ménippée* est l’expression triomphante, milite en faveur d’une monarchie instaurée plutôt que restaurée’ – see ‘Introduction’, in *Etudes sur la Satyre ménippée*, ed. by Frank Lestringant and Daniel Ménager (Geneva: Droz, 1987), pp. 7-18 (p.17).

²⁰ Pierre De L’Estoile, *Mémoires-Journaux*, ed. by Gustave Brunet et. al, 11 vols (Paris: Librairie des bibliophiles), V, p. 261 and p. 267.

When exactly L'Estoile wrote this has some bearing on what kind of use of *politique* this is, but more than this, it shows a struggle being played out over the words *royaux* and *politique*.²¹ L'Estoile's part in this is to pass on the message that these words describe loyal citizens, who show loyalty by supporting the heir to the throne. This message was reinforced by contemporary historians – Palma Cayet, De Thou, La Popelinière, Pasquier – who all lived through the wars, all wrote versions of recent history during and after the wars, and all refer to a group of people called *Politiques* who were the enemies of the Catholic *Ligue* and who supported the victorious Henri IV. One Catholic polemicist, writing as the wars drew to a close, referred to La Popelinière as the *politique* Herodotus.²² It is a truism that history is written by the victors, a view seemingly confirmed by these early historians who have been described as *politique*, and whose writing gave fodder to the idea that a victorious *Politique* party heralded a new politics for post-war France.

This idea of an anti-*Ligue* group known as the *Politiques* had a long afterlife. In the early modern period, it survives to an extent in Furetière's dictionary (1690) and in a different way in the *Encyclopédie*. Furetière defines the feminine substantive as 'La premiere partie de la Morale, qui consiste en l'art de gouverner et de policer les Estats pour y entretenir la seureté, la tranquillité, et l'honnesteté des mœurs'. He also notes that *politique* can categorise books, and across the entry he cites a number of prominent authors, with a fairly broad linguistic and geographical range and emphasis on sixteenth-century political writing: Aristotle, Bacon, Cardano, Lipsius, La Noue, Machiavelli. When he comes to the other substantive form, noting a

²¹ This could have been written any time during the final decade of the sixteenth century, although it is from his journal for 1592. On Pierre de L'Estoile, his writing practice, and the composition of his *Mémoires-Journaux*, see Tom Hamilton, 'Pierre de L'Estoile and his World in the Wars of Religion' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 2014), especially pp. 125-205.

²² [Louis d'Orléans], *Banquet et apresdinee du comte d'arête* (Paris: Bichon, 1594), NP.

knowledgeable or discriminating person whose field of expertise is government, the emphasis on sixteenth-century contexts for understanding this term is clear, with the references to the *Ligue* and to Machiavelli:

POLITIQUE. s.m. et f.

Celui qui sçait l'art de gouverner, ou qui en juge suivant les lumieres qu'il a acquises. Les plus grands *politiques* ont été trompez par les evenements, ont eu une fin malheureuse. Dans les troubles de la Ligue il y avoit les *Politiques*, qui estoient du party du Roy contre les Ligueurs. Les Nouvellistes sont tous *politiques*, et jugent à tort et à travers de tout ce qu'ils voyent arriver dans les Estats. Machiavel étoit un grand et dangereux *politique*.²³

Moreover, the ethical status of the person named *politique* is in doubt, despite the tight connection between 'la politique' and 'la seureté [...] des moeurs', and many of the examples are negatively framed: the best *politiques* have been defeated by circumstance; the 'nouvellistes' err in judgement; Machiavelli was a significant and dangerous *politique*. The *Politiques* of the Wars of Religion are also negatively framed in a different way, defined by their opposition to the *Ligue*. They are described as being of the 'party du roy', which is slightly ambiguous – it could imply that they helped to form a party in support of the king, but also simply that they took his part in the conflict.

Several decades later, in an unsigned *Encyclopédie* entry, the plural substantive *Politiques* shows a crystallisation of the so-called *Politiques* into an identifiable party:

²³ 'Politique', in Antoine Furetière, *Dictionnaire Universel* (La Haye & Rotterdam, 1690) <<http://www.classiques-garnier.com/numerique-bases/index.php?module=App&action=FrameMain>> [accessed 26 May 2016]. Richelet's definition of *politique* is along similar lines but has different examples; two quotations from Pascal indicate that writer's suspicion of the duplicity of the *politique* person; this would be interesting to explore in an account of seventeenth-century uses of *politique* or in a longer discussion of the afterlives of the sixteenth-century keyword. See 'Politique', in Pierre Richelet, *Dictionnaire françois* [1680] (Geneva: Widerhold, 2007) <<http://ezproxy-prd.bodleian.ox.ac.uk:2242/numerique-bases/index.php?module=App&action=FrameMain>> [accessed 3 August 2016].

POLITIQUES, s. m. pl. (*Hist. mod.*) nom d'un parti qui se forma en France pendant la ligue en 1574. C'étoient des catholiques mécontents, qui sans toucher à la religion, protestoient qu'ils ne prenoient les armes que pour le bien public, pour le soulagement du peuple, & pour réformer les désordres qui s'étoient glissés dans l'état par la trop grande puissance de ceux qui abusoient de l'autorité royale; on les nomma aussi *royalistes*, quoique dans le fond ils ne fussent pas trop soumis au souverain.²⁴

This is a quite different 'party' to that which might have sided with the King against the *Ligue*, in Furetière's definition (although it reproduces L'Estoile's connection between *politique* and *royal*): this group of *Politiques* developed from 1574 and supposedly stood against the abuse of royal authority, and on the side of the Huguenots despite not being Huguenot themselves. The *Encyclopédie*'s general entry on *Politique* has something in common with the seventeenth-century dictionaries, in defining it as the art of government and emphasising its importance within philosophy. It goes further, however, in its statement of the ethical doubt associated with politics, 'cette science si utile & si dangereuse'.²⁵ The *Encyclopédie* also puts sixteenth-century authors at the heart of discussions of what *la politique* could and should facilitate; in this case the authors are Jean Bodin (relying heavily on the portrayal of Bodin in De Thou's *Historia*) and Machiavelli. Several paragraphs are then devoted to anti-machiavellism, concluding with enthusiastic praise of Frederick the Great's *Antimachiavel* (1740). Frederick wrote this work at the height of his relationship with Voltaire, who wrote to him in 1739 urging him to defeat pernicious Machiavellianism and restore the term *politique* to its 'true meaning':

J'ose exhorter toujours votre grand génie à honorer Virgile dans Nisus et dans Euryalus, et à confondre Machiavel. C'est à vous à faire l'éloge de l'amitié. C'est à vous de détruire l'infâme politique qui érige le crime en vertu. Le mot *politique* signifie, dans son origine primitive, *citoyen*; et

²⁴ 'Politiques', in Denis Diderot, Jean d'Alembert, et. al., *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, par une Société de gens de lettres* (1751-72), ed. by Robert Morrissey and Glen Roe <<http://artflx.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/philologic/getobject.pl?c.11:2093.encyclopedie0113>> [accessed 13 September 2016].

²⁵ 'Politique', in *Encyclopédie* [accessed 13 September 2016].

aujourd'hui, grâce à notre perversité, il signifie *trompeur de citoyens*. Rendez lui, monseigneur, sa vraie signification.²⁶

This alternative definition of *politique* as, alternately, *citoyen* and *trompeur de citoyens*, is another formulation of the continuum between harmony and discord – between virtue and infamy – presented, in an entirely different context, in the sonnet *Description de l'homme politique*. What we can infer from this brief tour of early modern definitions of the term *politique* in the centuries following the Wars of Religion is that the sixteenth century provided the crucial frame of reference (possibly because authors risked the wrath of censors, and worse, if they referred in a critical way to the politics of their own time); that there was a sense that some kind of partial group or party had existed during the Wars of Religion known as the *Politiques*; and that as both noun and adjective the term *politique* carried with it dubious ethical connotations, the darkest of which centred around that apparent paradigm of political deviousness and deviance, Machiavelli.

In the nineteenth century, liberal historians searching for the origins of their nascent democratic state re-fashioned the vaguely-defined *Politique* group as the expression of a particularly French kind of heroism, moderate and moderating, who in the spirit of Erasmus and following the example of Michel de L'Hospital, navigated the tempestuous passions of the war period and emerged triumphant, heralding the nationalist, secular liberalism of the post-revolutionary age.²⁷ The most influential of these studies was probably Francis de la Crue's *Le Parti des Politiques au lendemain de la*

²⁶ Voltaire, Letter to Frederick, Crown Prince of Russia, 25 April 1739, in *Correspondence*, ed. by Theodore Bestermann, 107 vols (Geneva: Institut et musée Voltaire, 1953-65), XLV, p. 111. My thanks to Kelsey Rubin-Detlev for this reference.

²⁷ 'Le bon sens d'Erasmus, la probité de L'Hospital, ce fut là le double programme de ces Politiques d'abord raillés par tout le monde [...]. Mais laissez faire le temps; laissez les passions s'amortir, laissez l'esprit français avec sa logique droite se retrouver dans ce pêle-mêle, et ce parti grandira', wrote Labitte, pp. 180-81; de la Crue writes that the *Politiques* sacrificed themselves for the eternal principles of 'libertés religieuses et publiques', p. 349.

Saint-Barthélemy (1892). This study reprises in many ways the definition of the substantive plural given in the *Encyclopédie* – according to la Crue, the *Politiques* formed in the aftermath of the terrible massacres of 1572, driven by patriotic duty: a group of noblemen compelled to lobby for peace and temper the rage and inconsistency of the monarchy; their values were later adopted by the Parisian bourgeoisie who supported Henri de Navarre.²⁸ In these accounts, the *Politiques* embodied good political action, and were thus themselves the resolution to the problems presented by the negative potential of the word *politique* and the concepts to which it was attached. Later historians of the Wars of Religion largely accepted this understanding of what *politique* meant, even if they were not so fulsome in their praise; some use it as an umbrella term to cover both opposition to the monarchy from 1572-84, and opposition to the *Ligue* and support for the Monarchy from 1584-98.²⁹

Over the past two decades, historical conceptions of the meaning of *politique* have undergone a significant shift, born of the abandonment of the longstanding assumption that there was a coherent *Politique* party with any kind of consistent political ideology, and no evidence of anyone directly referring to themselves as

²⁸ See de la Crue, pp. 1-22; pp. 345-48. De la Crue acknowledges that the term changed meaning over the course of the wars (pp. 347-48). In his conclusion, he writes: ‘Henri IV triomphe des Lorrains et de l’Espagne. Avec lui, le parti national est au pouvoir, et avec le parti national, le parti de la tolérance religieuse, autrement dit les Politiques’, p. 348. This triad of *partis* is striking in that, even in this triumphalist narrative, ‘le parti des politiques’ is analogous with other parties and so still plural and undefined.

²⁹ See Frederic Baumgartner, *Radical Reactionaries: The Political Thought of the French Catholic League* (Geneva: Droz, 1976); and Jean-Marie Constant, *La Ligue* (Paris: Fayard, 1996); Robert J. Knecht, *The Rise and Fall of Renaissance France* (Oxford: OUP, 2001); J. M. H. Salmon, *Society in Crisis: France in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Methuen, 1979). Mack Holt goes as far as identifying a *politique* struggle around the youngest Valois prince, the Duc d’Anjou, until his death in 1584 when the Catholic *Ligue* was formed, after which point the historians I have just mentioned tend to refer more to a *politique* party or attitude). See Mack P. Holt, *The Duke of Anjou and the Politique Struggle during the Wars of Religion* (Cambridge: CUP, 1986). Barbara Diefendorf refers to the ‘*politique*, or pragmatic, resolution to the conflict’, in *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford: OUP, 1991), p. 7.

politique.³⁰ This shift is rooted in the linguistic turn in history, from which emerged a stronger focus on language use and the growing realisation that *politique*, when applied to any particular person or group, was often an insult during the Wars of Religion, and the consequent contestation of the influence of De Thou.³¹ The figure of the *Politique*, previously so useful in delineating the political arena of the civil wars, thus becomes – as Beame and Demonet have shown – a myth, a cipher, a propaganda tool in which the *Politique* is either hero, or villain, and actually nothing at all.³² Greengrass laments that to discuss the success of Henri IV as a *politique* triumph is to ‘misconstrue rhetoric and reality’.³³

Perhaps, then, historians and critics shouldn’t use the term *politique* at all when describing early modern political experience, since corrupted modern uses do not reflect the way that early moderns perceived their socio-political experiences (this is Greengrass’s suggestion). If modern writers continue to place importance on this term, they either apply their own exogenous definition, or focus on linguistic analysis of endogenous uses that indicate troubled, ambiguous, and often overwhelmingly negative meanings. Those who opt for the former suggest, like Beame, that the term

³⁰ Mark Greengrass, ‘Epilogue: Régime Change, Restoration, Reconstruction and Reformation’, in *Politics and Religion in Early Bourbon France*, ed. by Alison Forrestal and Elizabeth Nelson (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 246-57 (p. 247). Baumgartner commented in 1976 that ‘an adequate study of ‘Politique’ thought has yet to be written’, *Radical Reactionaries*, p.18. It may yet prove that such a work is never written, in light of the growing consensus that there was no such thing. Beame and Bettinson have both written article-length studies analysing the inconsistencies in historical uses of the term *politique*: see Christopher Bettinson, ‘The Politiques and the Political Party: a Reappraisal’, in *From Valois to Bourbon: Dynasty, State and Society in Early Modern France*, ed. by Keith Cameron (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1989), and Edmond Beame, ‘The Politique and the Historians’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 54.3 (1993), 355-79. The best recent accounts of how *politique* was applied and sometimes mis-applied are found in *De Michel de L’Hospital à L’Edit de Nantes*, ed. by Thierry Wanegffelen, and Marie-Luce Demonet, ‘Quelques avatars du mot “politique” (XIV^e-XVII^e siècles)’, *Langage et société*, 113.3 (2005), 33-62.

³¹ See Miernowski, ‘“Politique” comme injure’, and Mark Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV: The Struggle for Stability*, 2nd edn (London: Longman, 1995), p.14.

³² Beame, ‘The Politique and the Historians’, pp. 362-63; Demonet, ‘Quelques avatars du mot “politique”’, p. 54.

³³ Greengrass, ‘Epilogue’, p. 248.

may be used to indicate an ‘attitudinal terrain’.³⁴ Turchetti, Jouanna, and Yardeni have argued that the term *politique* may indicate a certain mentality, united within what Jouanna refers to as ‘une famille d’esprits’.³⁵ They have argued that the term unites those who lobbied for peace towards the end of the wars, drawn predominantly from one of two groups: either rootless or dissatisfied nobles who were Catholic but did not align themselves with the radical Catholic faction and often had personal connections with Protestants; or members of the rapidly growing *noblesse de robe* who represented a late-Renaissance French formulation of civic humanist attention to the life and wellbeing of the city and the nascent nation.³⁶ This latter group is particularly important to this thesis, as it was made up of lawyers and parliamentarians who wrote and published discussions of philosophy and politics, who knew each other, who read each other’s work, and who used – and argued over – the word *politique*. This points to overlap between the evocation of ‘mentalities’ and an approach which emphasises analysis of uses of the term in context: attention to word use offers a productive way of examining how the writing of literature participates in the creation and the remembering of political attitudes, in which the line separating rhetoric from reality is more blurred than Greengrass suggests. After all, the purpose of rhetoric is to

³⁴ Beame, p. 379.

³⁵ See Mario Turchetti, ‘Une question mal-posée: l’origine et l’identité des Politiques au temps des guerres de Religion’, pp. 357-90 (p. 390), Arlette Jouanna, ‘Les ambiguïtés des Politiques face à la Sainte Ligue’, pp. 475-93, and Myriam Yardeni, ‘La pensée politique des ‘Politiques’: Etienne Pasquier et Jacques-Auguste De Thou’, pp. 495-510 (esp. p.509), all in *De Michel de L’Hospital à L’Edit de Nantes*.

³⁶ On the dissatisfied nobility and the rising *noblesse de robe*, see Arlette Jouanna, *Le Devoir de révolte: La noblesse française et la gestation de l’état moderne, 1559-1661* (Paris: Fayard, 1989), and Robert Descimon, ‘L’Invention de la noblesse de robe. La Jurisprudence du Parlement de Paris aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles’, in *Les Parlements de Province: Pouvoirs, justice et société du XV^e au XVIII^e siècle*, ed. by Jacques Poumarède and Jack Thomas (Toulouse: fraMespas, 1996), pp. 677-90. In his introduction to a recent study of Pierre de L’Estoile, Henri-Jean Martin explicitly associates the development of the *noblesse de robe* with the advent of printing, describing it as a new ‘aristocratie du savoir’. (As an avid collector of books and pamphlets, a signer of privileges, the grandson of a legal professor, and a lawyer in the Paris *parlement*, L’Estoile could not have been more of a *robin*). Martin associates this group with the *libertins érudits* described by René Pintard in *Libertins érudits* (Paris: Jammes, 1970). See Henri-Jean Martin, ‘Préface’, in Florence Greffe and José Lothe, *La Vie, les livres et les lectures de Pierre de L’Estoile: Nouvelles recherches* (Paris: Champion, 2004), pp. 9-15 (pp. 9-11). The idea of an identifiable *libertin* group has been problematised as much as that of a *Politique* party; see below, n. 46.

construct persuasive perceptions of reality, and if the term *politique* has engendered centuries of apparent misconstruing, or mis-construction, perhaps it would be more useful to restore a sense of this being partially the deliberate intention of those who used the term – with consequent, or concomitant, ambiguity and plurality – rather than to castigate the readers who misconstrued. This study aims to contribute to histories of the period by giving an account of the textual dimension of political struggles acted out in uses of the term *politique*, showing that literature, in its broadest sense, was consciously used to attempt the construction and deconstruction of the way political reality was perceived. It also aims to contribute to the literary-critical discussion of sixteenth-century politics, which has so far focused on single-author studies, on national identity, on rhetoric, and on humanism and its discontents.³⁷

Another element of the present critical attitude to the term *politique* and its various referents, real or imaginary, is to draw a line between the abstract noun on the one hand, and the person either named *politique* or qualified as such by an adjectival use of the term on the other. The majority of criticism I discuss above is concerned with the latter kind of word use. Demonet makes precisely this distinction, arguing that there was a stable, neutral understanding of the abstract term *politique* as ‘concerned with government’, and that it was the concrete substantive that experienced the degradation in ethical status described by anonymous sixteenth-century polemicists

³⁷ Studies of the relation between literature and politics that focus on a single author are mainly about Montaigne: see, for example, *Montaigne politique*, ed. by Phillipe Desan (Paris: Champion, 2006), and Biancamaria Fontana, *Montaigne's Politics: Authority and Governance in the Essais* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008). For descriptions of Montaigne as *politique* see, for instance, David Quint, in *Montaigne and the Quality of Mercy: Ethical and Political Themes in the Essais* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), p. 103; for suggestions that he shouldn't be described as such, see Marie-Luce Demonet, 'Le Politique 'Nécessaire' de Montaigne, in *Montaigne Politique*', pp. 17–37, and Fontana, pp. 81-82. On nation and identity in France, see Timothy Hampton, *Literature and Nation in the Sixteenth Century: Inventing Renaissance France* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001). All these studies deal with rhetoric and with the humanist legacy, but on this topic see especially Kahn, *Rhetoric, Prudence, and Skepticism in the Renaissance*.

and prominent twentieth-century historians.³⁸ I am very much concerned in this thesis with distinctions made between abstract and concrete iterations of *politique*, but consider that there is an important connection of mutual influence between these iterations so that the abstract *politique* might be more stable, in a way, but is never neutral. Writing on the political dimension of aesthetic (and specifically literary) production, Jacques Rancière defines politics as regulating both perception and possibility: ‘La politique porte sur ce qu’on voit et ce qu’on peut en dire, sur qui a la compétence pour voir et la qualité pour dire, sur les propriétés des espaces et les possibles du temps’.³⁹ The sense that *la politique* regulates communal experience is very much in tune with sixteenth-century definitions and so seems to prove in a way the stability of the abstract term (hardly surprising, since Rancière’s major theoretical references are, as they were for sixteenth-century writers, Aristotle and Plato). But the point he makes is that the abstract concept is channelled into speech, sight, space, and time; into subjective quantities that regulate and are regulated by subjects who speak, see, and exist in space and time. I argue, then, that *la politique* and *le politique* operate in a kind of dialectical relationship. I explore this relationship in my thesis, looking at the subjective substantive *politique* as a character who negotiates between the abstract and the concrete, as well as operating as an imagined hero or villain whose virtue or vice is contingent upon the specific circumstances of the religious wars.

My choice of topic has required me to identify and analyse a sample of texts from the period concerned, since a survey of all texts that make use of the term *politique* during the Wars of Religion would be a near-impossible undertaking, and might risk being more list than thesis. All of the texts in my sample were printed during the religious

³⁸ Demonet, ‘Quelques avatars du mot “politique”’, p. 34.

³⁹ Jacques Rancière, *Le Partage du sensible. Esthétique et politique* (Paris: La fabrique, 2000), p. 14.

wars, except works by Rabelais, Budé, Pasquier, and Le Caron analysed in the pre-history offered in Chapter One, and L'Estoile's *Mémoires-journaux*, much of which was written during the wars, but which was printed during the reign of Henri IV. I have selected texts that have the word *politique* in their title, or feature a principal character called Politique, or that make particularly unusual or compelling use of the term in response to texts that fit into the former two categories. I have also included discussion of authors and texts lent prominence in the critical and historical discussions to date. Part of my aim, indeed, is to revise a putative *politique* canon (already being formed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as Furetière and the *Encyclopédie* demonstrate) in which authors such as Bodin, Montaigne, and Machivelli have traditionally featured. While these authors are central to accounts of literature, politics, and their connections, in the sixteenth century, they find a central place in my thesis only in so far as my focus on endogenous uses of the term *politique* allows, and – where that focus pushes them to the margins – I comment on this fact and on its implications for a revised *politique* canon. This approach has different results for the three figures just mentioned. I look in detail at Bodin's *Six livres de la République* both because his text is an instance of positive construction of *politique* on a linguistic and conceptual level and because his name consistently recurred in lists of *Politiques* compiled during the period. I give Montaigne a marginal place within the thesis, because the way he uses (and, often, tends to avoid) the term *politique* makes him eccentric within the wider 'conversation politicque', on which I find that he nonetheless casts much indirect light. Machiavelli, meanwhile, is a key recurrent figure, but marginal too in that – contrary to what much of the existing scholarship might give one to expect – neither his name nor his works are a focal point for the negative associations made in the later part of the wars.

The texts in Chapters Two to Five are gathered around two key dates: 1572 and 1589. Both were moments of intense crisis in the religious wars; in 1572 thousands of Protestants were massacred, starting in Paris and spreading through the provinces: a moment of chaos and cruelty that hardened all parties and severely undermined the strength of the monarchy. In 1589, Henri III was assassinated, and the Protestant Henri de Navarre became heir apparent, but could not claim the throne due to the intense resistance of radical Catholic factions. At these moments, at which – arguably more so than at any other time before the Revolution – any central political authority or consensus were wishful fantasies rather than managed realities, printed production intensified, and intensified around debates over what *politique* could, or should mean.

My focus is on a range of literary and theoretical contributions to this debate. I could have selected a corpus based on what a typical, exceptional, or simply historically documented sixteenth-century figure would have read, using the inventory of Pierre de L'Estoile's library or painstaking re-constructions of Montaigne's.⁴⁰ While L'Estoile and Montaigne appear in this thesis as interested, active readers, so do authors of many of the texts I discuss, whose lives and reading habits are less well documented. Rather than attempting to reconstruct a 'typical' reader of politics and *politiques*, and thus privileging one perspective, the readers evoked in this thesis are many, reading from various temporal and political perspectives: this is a 'conversation politicque' in which many seem to be writing at cross-purposes. This approach leads me to explore canonical texts of sixteenth-century literature, and of early modern thought, alongside anonymous pamphlets and diatribes. In this way, I work both with and against literary, political, and *politique* canons. A different corpus could have focused entirely

⁴⁰ On L'Estoile's library, see Greffe and Lothe. On Montaigne's library, see *La librairie de Montaigne: Proceedings of the Tenth Cambridge French Renaissance Colloquium, 2-4 September 2008*, ed. by Philip Ford and Neil Kenny (Cambridge: Cambridge French Colloquia, 2012).

on manuscript letters, legal documents (certainly, future work could incorporate such source material; letters are quoted infrequently below but often referenced in the texts I focus on in detail). A different approach could, moreover, have been centred on key institutions – the royal court; the *Parlement*; even (in a revisionist kind of way) the Faculty of Theology at the Sorbonne, which did much to shape the political lives of those who used and abused the term *politique*. But I look at the term *politique* at a time when institutions had diminishing or conflicted authority, and where the nascent ‘French state’ whose key pillars they formed was at least as chimerical as the contested concept of politics itself. My emphasis on the literary and the theoretical is a way of exploring this chimera, and of assessing how different kinds of writing participate therein. I therefore focus on the term *politique* when it refers to a text, a character in various texts, and a fictional or theoretical persona operating either within or beyond institutions, that anyone might adopt to navigate, or to explain, the inexplicable mess of late sixteenth-century France, and that can be used centuries later to address the dangerous, porous boundaries between words and deeds.

3. Methods

My focus on the term *politique* draws inspiration from two related methodological approaches: keywords and word histories. The study of particular words and concepts as a means of tracking socio-political and cultural changes, debates, and trends, is increasingly established in early modern studies, in the disciplines of literary and cultural analysis, and in intellectual history.⁴¹ In the wake of the linguistic turn that

⁴¹ See Neil Kenny, *The Uses of Curiosity in Early Modern France and Germany* (Oxford: OUP, 2004); Richard Scholar, *The Je-Ne-Sais-Quoi in Early Modern Europe: Encounters with a certain something* (Oxford: OUP, 2005); Emily Butterworth, *Poisoned Words: Slander and Satire in Early Modern France* (London: Legenda, 2006); Timothy Chesters, *Ghost Stories in Late Renaissance France: Walking by Night* (Oxford: OUP, 2011); Wes Williams, *Monsters and their Meanings in Early Modern Culture: Mighty Magic* (Oxford: OUP, 2011); *Renaissance Keywords*, ed. by Ita Mac Carthy (Oxford: Legenda, 2013); Jonathan Patterson, *Representing Avarice in Late Renaissance France* (Oxford: OUP, 2015). On this approach in intellectual history, besides

established an essential, if variable, gap between signifier and signified, I take the instability of meaning in all forms of language use as read, but suggest that the term *politique* experiences a particularly significant version of this instability, and that this is spurred and intensified by writers who use the word to argue for and against different interpretations of what its meaning might be. In making this argument, I draw on Richard Scholar's proposition for a 'new philology' in which particular 'keywords' are considered as 'sites of encounter and conflict between *different* ways of seeing culture and society': a proposition that itself draws on Raymond Williams's study, *Keywords*.⁴² In *Keywords*, Williams argued that studies of this kind can demonstrate social and historical processes occurring *within* language.⁴³ As such, my argument hinges less on a passive relation between text and politics, in which the text is evidence for particular events or thoughts, so much as on a dynamic relation in which the text, via the engineering of 'keywords' such as *politique*, participates in the construction of 'real' socio-political experience.

A keywords approach accounts for changes in meaning, treating variation not as aberration but as an inevitable consequence of the variation within society. How exactly meaning is conveyed, and how terms relate to concepts, has been a matter for much debate.⁴⁴ In exploring how the term *politique* gains and loses different meanings, I take inspiration from the model offered by Neil Kenny, who emphasizes the inconsistency and permeability of words denoting concepts in the early modern period

Skinner and The Cambridge School, and Koselleck, see Kari Palonen, *Politics and Conceptual Histories: Rhetorical and Temporal Perspectives* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 2014).

⁴² Richard Scholar, 'The New Philologists', in *Renaissance Keywords*, pp.1-10.

⁴³ Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Society and Culture* (London: Fontana, 1988), p. 22.

⁴⁴ Indeed, Quentin Skinner criticizes Williams for glossing over the difficult relation between words and concepts in 'The Idea of a Cultural Lexicon', *Essays in Criticism*, XXIX (1979), pp. 207-24. The tension between Williams and Skinner is also one of priority – Skinner seeks a vocabulary that historians can use to explain and understand social experience, and to categorise trends, whereas Williams prioritises language-users without the same concern for categorizing them after the fact.

in his study of curiosity. He argues that ““concepts” exist through a continuous process of being constructed and undone, not only from century to century, but from text to text, and even from sentence to sentence’.⁴⁵ Kenny’s approach allows for readers who misconstrue, and indeed for authors who engage in deliberate manipulations of language to this end. His discussion of curiosity, both influenced by postmodern accounts of the impossibility of fixed meaning, and sympathetic to early modern confidence in the referential capacities of language, explores ‘clusters’ of meaning that refer in ever-shifting and imperfect ways to concepts and objects.⁴⁶ Part of the crisis that the word *politique* represented for its early modern users, I argue, is that at certain moments of particular contestation it tested and undermined confidence in language and its referential capacities. The term *politique* is contested by reference to other words, so that by following this approach I show this keyword encountering other terms with histories of their own: *liberté/libertin*, *heretique*, *royal/royaliste*, *prudent/prudence* are some of the most significant.⁴⁷

A strength of this method is to counter teleological claims about ‘progress’ towards absolutism, or modernity, or *laïcité*, by including the also-rans and might-have-beens in the history of the word *politique*; in this thesis I deliberately emphasise competing uses, some of which have faded more than others from historical memory. Kenny shows that this kind of approach, which Skinner worries could become a kind of ‘linguistic fetishism’, is necessary to show that the attempts people make to engineer meaning (attempts that make a term ‘key’) are messy, problematic, and

⁴⁵ Neil Kenny, *Curiosity in Early Modern Europe: Word Histories* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998), p. 20.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 28-32.

⁴⁷ On *libertinage*, see Louise Godard de Donville, *Le Libertin des origines à 1665: Un produit des apologetes* (Paris: Biblio 17, 1989). Godard de Donville argues that *libertinage* and *libertins* were defined partially by people who sought to condemn certain attitudes and practices, and partially by those wishing to exonerate them, rather than by people who identified as *libertin*, and in this respect the histories of *politique* and *libertin* share some similarities.

compromised.⁴⁸ A charge laid at the door of postmodernists and the critics inspired by them is that they emphasise undecidability to the detriment of what Said calls ‘the actuality of reading’, resulting in ‘reductiveness, cynicism, or fruitless standing aside’; Kenny overcomes this by referring to moments of construction as well as deconstruction.⁴⁹ Indeed, a compromise must be found between undecidability and decision if, in line with a keywords approach, words are thought to *do* things, even if not to *be* things in a relation of direct equivalence.⁵⁰ Pragmatic linguistics offers a means of compromise here, and a way of suggesting how meaning might be constructed, if not fixed; broadly speaking, pragmatics accounts for context-dependent aspects of meaning, that is meaning acquired relationally as a result of the cognitive effort of language users and interpreters – so that language, and any resulting meaning, is fundamentally cooperative.⁵¹ Essentially, for my purpose here, this model of how language and meaning interact is useful because it allows me to make the point that words mean things and do things because people think they do, and want them to, and because the success or failure of social organisation depends, to an extent, on people being able to agree (or not) over what they all might mean when using key terms like *politique*.⁵²

⁴⁸ Kenny, *Curiosity in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 30-31. The debt to postmodern criticism is clear (and acknowledged by Kenny).

⁴⁹ Edward W. Said, *Humanism and Democratic Criticism* (Basingstoke & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 60-61.

⁵⁰ J. L. Austin, *How To Do Things With Words* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).

⁵¹ Laurence Horn and Gregory Ward, ‘Introduction’, in *The Handbook of Pragmatics*, ed. by Laurence R. Horn and Gregory Ward (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), pp. xi-xviii.

⁵² I am also influenced here, in my understanding of how meaning is communicated by Relevance Theory. While acknowledging that some de-coding work occurs in communication, Relevance Theory treats meaning as a cognitive effect that is largely dependent on the relevance assigned to inferences made by association and therefore determined to a considerable extent by context. Relevance Theory is not limited to verbal or textual communicative acts; further work, perhaps with a slightly altered methodology, could consider the scope for non-verbal communication of the political. See Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, ‘Relevance Theory’, in *The Handbook of Pragmatics*, pp. 607-32, esp. p. 607 for the relation between ‘code’ and ‘inference’; *Relevance: Communication and Cognition* (Oxford: OUP, 1986); and *Meaning and Relevance* (Cambridge: CUP, 2012).

4. Politics and Politiques

A particularity of this thesis and its methods arises due to its focus on politics, and on *politiques*. Keywords approaches expose the politics inherent to language use; Williams is remembered as a Marxist critic, Edward Said's defence of philology calls on public intellectuals to pursue a kind of postmodern humanism that might be a route to liberation for marginalised and exiled groups.⁵³ Recent work on early modern terminology follows Said's injunction in some ways by excavating the gender politics operating in the use of words like 'avarice', 'curiosity', and 'discretion'.⁵⁴ In this thesis I also show the gendered dynamics of the characterisation of *politique* as masculine agent of power. But what about the politics of *politiques* in a more general way?⁵⁵

Politique as a focal point for conceptual arguments and debates about what kind of person should incarnate political action, political wisdom, and political error, has a bearing on theorisations of what politics actually *is*. Elizabeth Frazer has recently described the concept of politics as a 'complex' operating across several dimensions, defined by political theorists who focus on one or more of these dimensions, which are: state-society-individual; publicity-secrecy; deliberation; openness-closure.⁵⁶ My thesis explores the term *politique* across and beyond these dimensions, but a keywords study of the term *politique* – how it was contested, and used to contest the nature of politics – lends itself to particular focus on deliberative understandings of the political, since *politique* is subject and object in (as it happens, often unsuccessful) deliberation,

⁵³ Said, p. 83.

⁵⁴ See Kenny, *The Uses of Curiosity*, pp. 310-424; Patterson, pp. 78-119; Timothy Chesters, 'Discretion', in *Renaissance Keywords*, pp. 103-17, esp. pp. 109-13.

⁵⁵ On the relation between literary techniques and tropes, and politics or public discourse more broadly, see *Metaphor and Discourse*, ed. by Andreas Musolf and Jörg Zink (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), especially Christ'l De Landtsheer, 'Collecting Political Meaning from the Count of Metaphor', pp. 59-78, and Jonathan Charteris-Black, 'Metaphor and Political Communication', pp. 97-115.

⁵⁶ Elizabeth Frazer, 'Political Theory and the Boundaries of Politics', in *Political Theory: Methods and Approaches*, pp. 171-95 (p. 194).

on a spectrum between strong praise and extreme blame.⁵⁷ The seemingly endless mobility of *politique* within these deliberative acts places it at the open end of the openness-closure spectrum, wherein there can be no final settlement or definitive decision, evoking Chantal Mouffe's understanding of politics as necessarily 'agonistic', against Jurgen Habermas's proposition of a deliberative politics that aims at resolving *agon* and building consensus.⁵⁸ Habermas refers to consensus as 'communicative recognition'; my thesis is all about attempts to recognise *politiques* and trigger recognition and re-cognition in the reader. Within this, I show that any such recognition is at best partial and in any case always offers multiple possibilities. In this sense I understand the political in the sixteenth century in sympathy with Mouffe's theorisation of contemporary politics, showing the term *politique* operating as a dynamic element within a fundamentally quarrelsome discourse that necessarily constructs and de-constructs concepts and forms, through the use of that word and others.⁵⁹ Privileging 'agonistic' over 'democratically consensual' understandings of the political is a way of following the clues given in the poem *Description du politique*, which bemoans a lack of imposed consensus (figured as harmony) and describes the *politique* as the embodiment of discord.

⁵⁷ This way of conceptualizing politics maps imperfectly on to theorizations of deliberative and epideictic rhetoric that would have been more familiar to the early moderns; this underlines the longstanding connection between conceptualizations of politics, rhetoric, and communication. Victoria Kahn has shown how deliberative rhetoric and the possibilities it was thought to offer were central to the reception of humanist practice across Europe in which (I argue) the story of the term *politique* has its place. See *Rhetoric, Prudence, and Skepticism*, p. 20.

⁵⁸ See Jurgen Habermas, *Postmetaphysical Thinking: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: Polity, 1992); and Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox* (London: Verso, 2000), esp. pp. 80-107.

⁵⁹ Alain Viala has described the creative and socially constructive impact of literary quarrelling. See Alain Viala, 'Un temps de querelles', in *Le temps des querelles*, ed. by Jeanne-Marie Hostiou and Alain Viala (= *Littératures classiques*, 81 (2013)), 5-21, esp. pp. 18-19. Mouffe has a related view of the creative potential of productive tensions expressed in linguistic form, and draws on philosophy of language (especially on Rorty, who has worked on pragmatics) to make this point, p. 9.

I take inspiration from Habermas and from Mouffe in particular, then, in my attempt to navigate the relation between deliberative consensus and endless quarrelling that occurs in sixteenth-century literary responses to, and interventions in, the political, via uses of the term *politique*. Despite the differing contexts with which Habermas and Mouffe are concerned, conceptualisations of consensus are particularly relevant to a study of the sixteenth-century *politique* because, as I discuss above, it has been taken as both representative of, and the means of achieving, the fragile post-war consensus encapsulated by the Edict of Nantes.⁶⁰ Moreover, although most if not all sixteenth-century writers considered democracy deeply undesirable, the liberal historians I discuss above saw in the Wars of Religion and the supposed *Politique* triumph the proto-democratic seeds of modern governmental forms. I argue rather that the term *politique* is a means of imposing, negotiating, and refusing consensus, and that tracing its uses in texts within and beyond the literary canon demonstrates some of the power dynamics at work in literature. ‘The political’ as expressed in sixteenth-century uses of the term *politique* operates outside the boundaries of the normative political models outlined by theorists from Plato to the present (tyranny, monarchy, democracy etc.), constantly seeking and testing those theoretical and institutional forms.

We shall see below how the term *politique* is often placed on one extreme or the other in sixteenth-century writing (‘friend’, or ‘enemy’, for instance) precisely because it incarnates dubious compromise, its mobility between such categories allows modern readers to place the word in a kind of ethical no man’s land that some call pragmatic

⁶⁰ Some critics also take inspiration from the early moderns to make sense of modern political experience. Kahn discusses how twentieth-century theorists (Freud; Schmitt; Kantorowicz; Cassirer; Benjamin) turned to the early modern period in the context of crises of liberalism and increasing preoccupation with theological-political conflict. See *The Future of Illusion: Political Theology and Early Modern Texts* (University of Chicago Press: Chicago and London, 2014), esp. pp. 2-22.

compromise (!), a middling term for the middle ground, occupying what Cave refers to as a 'zone médiane'.⁶¹ Cave derives this term from Aristotle's proposition of a *meson* (middle term) between opposites, used to resolve the problem of how to define terms and thus reach definitive judgement. In Cave's account of Renaissance ethics, this system of oppositions offered no precise middle that could be counted on: as such the 'middle term' is more mobile, occupying a 'zone' rather than a fixed location.⁶² The so-called *Politiques* came to be known in history writing as a group that followed the 'middle path' of compromise between polarised opposites during the civil wars; in fact, I argue here that the 'middlingness' of *politique* is a function of uses of the word itself, which in turn developed out of Renaissance habits of reading, thinking, and conceptualising ethical problems at the frontiers between deliberative consensus, autocratically imposed meaning, and chaotic, murderous disagreement. My thesis explores the agonistic tensions of the *politique* 'zone médiane' that go beyond the *agon* articulated by Mouffe precisely because there was no agreed governmental form, democratic or otherwise, no state beyond the theoretical or imaginary. The writers I discuss are seeking not just representation but the forms that would make representation possible, in ways that depend to greater and lesser extents on consensus achieved through dialogue: staged dialogues between characters who embody ideas and problems; real dialogues between writers and readers whose survival might depend on the consensus, or common ground, that their writing and reading has the potential to create.

At the heart of my exploration of these problems of form and representation is the problem of decidability raised above: the question of meaning itself, and whether it

⁶¹ Terence Cave, *Pré-histoires: Textes troublés au seuil de la modernité* (Geneva: Droz, 1999), p. 85.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 99.

remains fundamentally open, or whether some questions really can be closed. Who decides on meaning, and how, and in whose interests? Can conflicting aims – with, at their heart, conflicting visions of the value of life and the purpose of society – be made to speak to one another, be reconciled? If yes, how so? If not, what is lost? All these are the questions urgently asked, and tentatively, provisionally answered, in sixteenth-century uses of the term *politique*.

Chapter One is an overview of uses of the term *politique* before, during, and just after the Wars of Religion, looking at a large number of texts by writers as varied as Rabelais, Etienne Pasquier, Le Caron, Michel de L'Hospital, Montaigne, and François de la Noue. The purpose of this is to offer a broad context for the more specific analysis carried out in the rest of the thesis, in order to give a sense of the textual landscape from which these uses emerged, or were distinct. In this way, the chapter serves as the pre-history within the word-history of the thesis, but also – in looking ahead to Montaigne and La Noue – offers an alternative narrative to the one followed from Chapters Two to Five. Chapters Two and Three work as a pair in the sense that they both look at texts written in or around the crisis of 1572, which, with the massacres of Saint Bartholomew's Day, represented a high water mark of communal and confessional violence. Chapter Two is a comparison of Jean Bodin's *Six livres de la Republique* (1576) with the paratexts of Loys Le Roy's translation of Aristotle's *Politics* (1568), exploring how the abstract term *politique* experiences a moment of positive construction in these works, embodied in the masculine substantive, *le politique*, who is the agent of a particularly powerful kind of knowledge (*la politique*). Chapter Three looks at the anonymous dialogue *Reveille-matin des françois* (1574), in which the principal speaker is called Le Politique, and two texts included in

Simon Goulart's *Memoires de l'estat de France sous Charles neufiesme* (1576-78), one a dialogue called 'Le Politique' and the other a treatise, 'Discours politiques'. In this chapter I argue that Huguenot writers reinforce and appropriate positive, powerful uses of the word *politique* circulating in erudite discourse to argue for an alternative vision of how society should operate, and what politics should be. They do so partially with reference to their understanding of Machiavelli's *Prince*: both Chapter Three and Four show that the relation between 'Machiavel' and *politique* is not the one of straightforward and one-way negative association suggested by Furetière in 1690.

Chapters Four and Five are another pair, focusing on texts written *c.* 1588-94: another particularly febrile period of crisis as the Catholic *Ligue* attempted to take control of France and Henri de Navarre attempted to realise his claim to the throne. Chapter Four looks at highly vituperative radical Catholic pamphlets with the term *politique* in the title which attempt to pin the masculine substantive down as the enemy of their cause. The poem I cited at the beginning of this introduction is revisited in this chapter, in which polemicists respond to the intense mobility increasingly attached to this term. They attempt to stage a moment of recognition in which the meaning of *politique* is fixed as 'enemy' (sometimes actually advertising this in their titles and marginal notes, of which one is 'comment reconnoistre un politique'). Chapter Five analyses longer texts written in 1593 – the year of Henri's conversion to Catholicism and the year in which his accession to the throne became inevitable – which respond to and satirise the flurry of insulting uses that proliferated in 1588-89. These texts are the *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant* and the *Satyre ménippée*, of which the latter in particular was highly influential in constructing, post-hoc, the narrative of *politique* triumph at the end of the civil wars. In Chapter Five I argue that both the *Dialogue* and

the *Satyre* engage in and block attempts at redescribing the meaning of *politique* as a means of inviting a final reckoning as the wars concluded, and as a way of attempting to shape the historical narrative already being constructed about the word *politique* and what, or who, it meant.

Overall I argue that at the start of the civil wars the word *politique* operates in erudite discourse written by authors with humanist and legal training who make positive constructions of the term's meaning, to create a powerful political agent who might just represent the solution to the religious wars when these are reframed as a civic problem: the 'juste gouverneur' figure evoked at the start of the sonnet *Description de l'homme politique*. Unfortunately for writers like Bodin, this powerful figure becomes dangerous as a voice of an alternative vision for French, and indeed for European politics in writing by Huguenot French writers. Radical Catholics then effect a version of the same thing, transforming the *politique* from hero to evil villain. The memory of this supposedly villainous character is then reinforced and adjusted in works written at the end of the wars that attempt to bring an end to the conflict, most famously in the *Satyre ménippée*, a work so closely associated with the triumphant liberal *politique* of later memory that it demonstrates just how blurred – and how deliberately so – the line between rhetoric and reality can be. None of these *politiques* are the true or real versions: they all represent textual (rhetorical, if you will) interventions in the ongoing complex dynamic that was (and perhaps still is) politics.

– Chapter 1 –

Pre-Histories and Word Histories

Where might a reader encounter the term *politique* in sixteenth-century France? In this opening chapter, rather than outlining an origin, a trajectory, and a conclusion, I show the emergence of various kinds of *politiques*, both substantive and adjectival, as a new and potentially dissonant term. Firstly, I look at Etienne Pasquier's *Pourparler du Prince* (1560) alongside Loys Le Caron's *Courtesan* dialogues (1556), which I see as a crucial moment of emergence for the *politique* as a character who incarnates political action; I then move earlier in the century to the predominantly adjectival uses in prose writing by Budé and Rabelais, before concluding with an assessment of La Noue's *Discours politiques et militaires* (1587) and Montaigne's *Essais* (1580-95). The purpose of looking at such a set of texts is to give a sense of the textual landscape within which uses of the term *politique* emerged. As we shall see below, Etienne Pasquier was one of the first in a long line of historians to emphasise contingency in the meaning of *politique* in the context of the wars. Such emphasis on contingency represents a privileging of the immediate context of word use; it is my approach throughout the thesis, and particularly in this chapter, to consider contexts of a longer *durée* alongside contexts of immediate and alarming crisis. This chapter, then, serves as the pre-history within the word-history of the thesis; a pre-history in Cave's sense of the term, in which I read this broader set of uses of *politique* as having a bearing on later uses, of which the authors themselves may not have been conscious.⁶³ I take the dialogues by Pasquier and Le Caron as texts on a threshold between phases in the term's use, where the substantive is emerging in a new and distinctive way. Earlier uses by Budé and Rabelais offer a more diffuse set of

⁶³ Terence Cave, *Pré-histoires*, p. 15.

associations that can be understood both locally and as marks on a discursive horizon, without reducing the singularity of the text or viewing it simply as the pre-cursor to the fuller expression of an idea or an experience.⁶⁴ Montaigne and La Noue represent the afterlives of these earlier ‘traces’. They are included in order to make counter-factual gestures towards what the story of the term *politique* might have been, to offer contrasting perspectives on what it turned out to be, and to explore how authors placed in a putative *politique* canon used – or did not use – the term *politique*.⁶⁵

Although every example discussed is an instance in which the term *politique* is used to striking effect, it is not an obviously prominent ‘keyword’ in all the texts in the sense of being defining, defined, re-defined, or contested – instead, I deliberately allow suggestive traces to work as highlights and lowlights of the central narrative of the thesis. I explore links between the term *politique* and its cognate terms, as well as a developing set of associated words: *gouvernement, histoire, liberté, loix, magistrat, ordre, party, philosophe, philosophie, prince, prudence, science*. Between and around these terms is the word *politique*, which emerges as a means of negotiating between ideal and real, practical variations of the concepts, institutions, and authority figures to which these other terms refer. At the heart of the chapter is the idea of dialogue, and the meaning(s) that conversations can produce, and in this I take inspiration from an episode in *Gargantua*, in which the eponymous giant gestures towards a ‘conversation politicque’, that he just might be having with Frere Jean. All the texts I discuss here stage the meeting of various words and concepts around the locus of the term *politique*, so that this fragmented history is one of a long, divergent ‘conversation politicque’.

⁶⁴ Cave, *Pré-histoires*, p. 16. For an exploration of the possibilities of pre-historical methods, see *Pre-Histories and Afterlives: Studies in Critical Method*, ed. by Anna Holland and Richard Scholar (London: Legenda, 2009).

⁶⁵ This putative canon is sketched by Demonet in, ‘Quelques avatars du mot politique’, p. 45.

1. Endings and Origins

It makes little sense to speak of sixteenth-century origins when the vernacular term *politique* had been in use for several centuries, and its Latin and Greek equivalents for millennia before that. In the early seventeenth century, Jacques-Auguste De Thou attempted to clarify the origin of the plural substantive *politique* as it had come to be used ('*Politicorum nominis origo*': 'the origin of the appellation "politiques"') – but his conclusions were essentially vague; he dated the term's origin to the moderate faction that developed in the wake of the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacres – but earlier in his history he had described 'politici' as those who followed the traditional religion and lobbied for peace from 1568; a gloss that seems to reflect a post-hoc historical categorisation of a mentality as well as being representative, as he claimed, of a new kind of word use that developed from the late 1560s.⁶⁶ Thus, even in De Thou endings and origins blur and merge. In 1573 the *Président* of the Rouen *Parlement* described *politique* as 'nouvellement introduit'; in 1589 a *Ligueur* pamphlet described the word as 'nouvellement usité'.⁶⁷ Clearly, in these instances, the same word may have very different meanings; what it retains is novelty, with all its potential for disruption and dissonance.

De Thou's contemporary, Etienne Pasquier, was keenly aware of these new and disruptive iterations of *politique*. In Book Eight of his major work, *Les Recherches de la France*, which he began publishing in the 1560s and continued to expand until his death in 1615, he discusses language change and customary usage.⁶⁸ Chapter Fifty-

⁶⁶ Quoted in Ingrid de Smet, *Thuanus: The Making of Jacques-Auguste de Thou (1553-1617)* (Geneva: Droz, 2006), pp. 240-41.

⁶⁷ Letter quoted in Jouanna, *Le Pouvoir absolu*, p.177; *Le Karesme et moeurs du Politique où il est amplement discoursu de sa manière de vivre, de son Estat & Religion* (Paris: Pierre-Des-Hayes, 1589), p. 5.

⁶⁸ For the publication history of Book Eight of the *Recherches*, see Etienne Pasquier, *Les Recherches de la France*, ed. by Marie-Madeleine Fragonard and François Roudaut, 3 vols (Paris: Champion, 1996), III,

Five is entitled ‘Du mot Huguenot’, and opens with the following lament: ‘Le plus grand malheur qui puisse advenir en une République, c’est lors, que soit par fortune, soit par discours, l’on voit un peuple se bigarrer en mots de partialitez’.⁶⁹ Pasquier blames ‘Courtizans’ for the initial use of *Huguenot*, and goes on to describe the subdivisions that grew from the terms *Huguenot* and *Catholique* as if the process were a form of toxic cell division which eventually produced the term *Politique*, considered worse than *Huguenot*⁷⁰:

Mot qui en peu de temps s'épendit par toute la France, se formant au milieu de nous deux partis contraires, le *Huguenot* et le *Papiste*, que nous appellâmes depuis *Catholique*: desquels, comme d'une pépinière furent produits plusieurs rejettons de partialitez, tantost de *Catholiques associez*, tantost de *Catholiques malcontents*. Il n'est pas qu'en nos derniers troubles, le party *Catholique* ne fut encore subdivisé en *Politique*, que l'on estimoit de pire condition que le *Huguenot*, parce qu'il plaidoit pour la paix.⁷¹

Pasquier is talking here about dangerous words, but he is also talking about parties and partiality as the qualities or associations that make words dangerous, and in so doing he is providing evidence for a story that later historians would re-tell with special emphasis: that of a *Politique* party who came to triumph against the *Ligue* at the end of the civil wars.⁷² For Pasquier, though, the words that have grown like weeds from the seed-bed (‘pépinière’) of ‘partialitez’ are a set that give meaning to each other, and *politique* is one term amongst them. This chapter of the *Recherches* relates a moment of transition in political history and in the history of the word *politique*. Thirty

p. 1496 n. 1. For an account of the genesis, approach, and source material of the *Recherches*, see Fragonard and Roudaut, ‘Introduction’, in Pasquier, *Recherches*, I, pp. 3-41. On Pasquier, see also George Huppert, *The Idea of Perfect History: Historical Erudition and Historical Philosophy in Renaissance France* (Urbana, Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1970), pp. 28-69; ‘Etienne Pasquier et ses *Recherches de la France*’, *Cahiers V. L. Saulnier*, 8 (1991), especially the contributions by Colette Demaiziere (pp. 23-33) and Arlette Jouanna (pp. 105-119), on Pasquier’s ideas about language and on his proposition for the ‘mythical origins’ of the French state respectively. See also James H. Dahlinger, *Etienne Pasquier on Ethics and History* (New York and Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007) and *Saving France in the 1580s: Writings of Etienne Pasquier* (New York: Peter Lang, 2014).

⁶⁹ Pasquier, *Recherches*, III, p. 1670.

⁷⁰ The *Politiques* were frequently presented as a greater evil than the Huguenots or Calvinists in *Ligueur* polemic; I discuss this in Chapter Four.

⁷¹ Pasquier, *Recherches de la France*, pp. 1676-77.

⁷² On the emergence of impartiality as a virtue in seventeenth-century Europe, see *The Emergence of Impartiality*, ed. by Kathryn Murphy and Anita Traninger (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014).

years earlier, Pasquier had written a dialogue in which a main character was named Politic (*Le Pourparler du Prince*, 1560), but in the *Recherches*, Pasquier does not relate the brief rise of the anti-*ligueur politique* to earlier uses of the term. Why? What changed in between? What ideas and trends influenced those early uses?

The sixteenth-century ‘conversation politicque’ was influenced by various longer-term intellectual developments and linguistic trends; in this sense *politique* was both ‘nouvellement usité’ and a long time in the making, influenced by the various intellectual and inter-related linguistic ‘streams’ that Pocock and Pagden identify as the main languages of political theory in early modern Europe: ‘political Aristotelianism’, ‘classical republicanism’, ‘political economy’, and ‘the science of politics’.⁷³ The different languages of early modern politics, and indeed of *politiques*, are also, it must not be forgotten, more straightforwardly the different tongues of Latin and French, and of Ancient Greek. The story of the word *politique* in French is, after all, partly that of its emergence as a vernacular term, as a translation – and indeed, adaptation – of the Latin *politicus*.

Politicus was frequently a reference to the Aristotelian curriculum of moral philosophy taught at the Sorbonne (*ethica*, *politica*, and *oeconomica*). Rubinstein shows how the term *politicus* was treated with lively engagement in commentaries of Aristotle from Aquinas onwards; he sees the epicentre of work on the Latin term as late Medieval and Renaissance Italy, where it was also a substantive in active use in legal discourse (some

⁷³ Anthony Pagden, ‘Introduction’, and J. G. A. Pocock, ‘The Concept of Language and the *métier d'historien*: Some Considerations on Practice’, in *The Languages of Political Theory in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 1-18 and pp. 19-38.

Medieval lawyers referred to themselves as ‘politici’).⁷⁴ Hankins suggests that duplicitous ‘habits of mind’ developed through the legal and diplomatic occupations of humanists who were professionally obliged to be persuasive at all costs, and to argue *pro* and *contra*.⁷⁵ These Latinate-Italian legal contexts were replicated and altered in French legal writing, where a more idealistic vision of the political man – ‘homo politicus’ – developed, representing ‘in many minds [...] that compound Renaissance ideal of scholarship and social utility, of private learning and public virtue’.⁷⁶ Rubinstein argues that the essential French context for both the term *politicus* and its vernacular iteration, *politique*, was the theorisation of constitutional monarchy.⁷⁷ Pocock suggests that the ideal historian becomes conversant with and able to identify the different ‘codes’ of political thought in order to select the most important, as Rubinstein does. I want to suggest an alternative approach in which there may be no ‘essential’ French context for the term *politique*, and argue that the uses I discuss as part of the pre-history of the term do not conform to a ‘constitutionalist’ code.⁷⁸ The ‘languages’ in which *politicus* and *politique* operated were porous and inter-connected. The rise of the substantive form in the mid-sixteenth century accompanied intellectual and socio-political developments that could well be described according to a number of sub-languages but were at once more and less than the sum of such parts.

⁷⁴ See Nicolai Rubinstein, ‘The History of the Word *politicus* in Early Modern Europe’, in *The Languages of Political Theory in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 41-57.

⁷⁵ James Hankins, ‘Humanism and Modern Political Thought’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism*, ed. by Jill Kraye (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), pp. 118-40.

⁷⁶ Kelley, *The Beginnings of Ideology*, pp. 203-11.

⁷⁷ Rubinstein, p. 52. This was the idea of a constitutional monarchy in which checks and balances – ‘justice’, ‘religion’, and ‘police’ – regulate monarchic power, differentiating this model from what classical theory described as ‘tyranny’ and also from the model that came to be known as ‘absolutism’. The writer to articulate this view most thoroughly was Claude de Seyssel (c. 1450-c. 1520), in *La grant monarchie de France* (1519). See Claude de Seyssel, *La Monarchie de France, et deux autres Fragments politiques*, ed. by Jacques Poujol (Paris: Librairie d’Argences, 1961). On French understandings of the role of the monarchy in late Medieval and early modern France, see Colette Beaune, *Naissance de la nation France* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985).

⁷⁸ Pocock, ‘The Concept of Language’, p. 23.

As *politique* was emerging as a vernacular term, so the vernacular was emerging as the language of government and of power following François I's decision, in 1530, to make French the official language of his kingdom. The development of the vernacular as the language of the elite in political and cultural institutions was consciously informed by language users, and influenced by forms of elite sociability as well as by ideas about art, poetic convention, and good government.⁷⁹ Pasquier opens Book Eight of his *Recherches* with a discussion of the development of 'nostre vulgaire françois'; in his work the connections between common (or uncommon) language and community (or its splintered version) are clear.⁸⁰ If there was a 'symbiotic dialogue' between Latin and French in the period leading up to the civil wars, this dialogue is present in the term *politique*, and others beside it – alongside dialogue between the different 'languages' identified by Pocock, and between genres of writing that historians today read as 'political'.⁸¹ And as we shall see, uses of the term explicitly develop in dialogue form.

2. Politiques in Dialogue(s) 1550-68: Le Caron, Pasquier, Michel de L'Hospital

Dialogue emerges as a key context for the term *politique* both literally, in formal terms, and metaphorically, in the meetings of figures, ideas, and languages.⁸² We encounter

⁷⁹ See Philip Ford, *The Judgment of Palaemon: The Contest between Neo-Latin and Vernacular Poetry in Renaissance France* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013).

⁸⁰ Pasquier, *Recherches*, III, p. 1496. On the emergence of the vernacular see, of course, Du Bellay's *Déffense et illustration de la langue françoise* (1549).

⁸¹ Ford, p. 22.

⁸² On dialogue in early modern Europe, see Jon R. Snyder, *Writing the Scene of Speaking: Theories of Dialogue in the Late Italian Renaissance* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1989); Colette K. Winn, *The Dialogue in Early Modern France 1547-1630: Art and Argument* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1993); Anne Godard, *Le Dialogue à la Renaissance* (Paris: PUF, 2001); Jean Vignes, 'Dialogue', in the *Dictionnaire du littéraire* (Paris: PUF, 2002), pp. 147-49; Eva Kushner, *Le Dialogue à la Renaissance: Histoire et poétique* (Geneva: Droz, 2004); *Printed Voices: The Renaissance Culture of Dialogue*, ed. by Dorothea Heitsch and Jean-François Vallée (Toronto, Buffalo & London: University of Toronto Press, 2004). Most of these works treat 'high' culture; Tatiana Debaggi Baranova has also looked at the dialogue form in polemical pamphlets during the Wars of Religion, in *A coups de libelles: Une culture politique au temps des guerres de religion (1562-1598)* (Geneva: Droz, 2012), pp. 416-35.

conversations, lessons, agreements, persuasion, conversions; we also find rants, diatribes, miscommunications, confusions, and other kinds of strange meeting. Since the readings of this thesis are also based on dialogic, conversational, inferential models of the communication of meaning, the notion of dialogue is also important on a theoretical level. Discussions of sixteenth-century dialogue have often emphasised the way in which dialogues exemplify the Renaissance passion for the ‘life’ of ideas.⁸³ The term *politique* is formed in dialogue, acts in dialogue, develops its set of relevant meanings in dialogue and – as I have suggested already, and discuss throughout the thesis – is the location of multiple encounters and so is a medium for the possibilities and dangers of dialogue. Three texts on the threshold of the period in which the word *politique* came to be ‘key’ show how this might work. The first two were written by Loys Le Caron in 1556, the other by Etienne Pasquier in 1560. Writing dialogues, and thought to have been writing in dialogue with each other, Le Caron and Pasquier use the substantive *politic* to refer to a particular kind of skilled actor in the circles of power. Theirs are threshold texts in the sense that they were written on the brink of civil war, and also in that they both make use of a substantive form of *politique* (spelt *politic*) that refers to a particular kind of person who embodies and manages the best kind of ‘conversation politicque’. I start this section by looking at how Le Caron evokes a figure referred to as ‘nostre politic’ who will be instrumental in creating the best kind of ‘police’; in the *Pourparler*, meanwhile, Pasquier’s *Politic* character shows the qualities of such a figure in action. I then examine Pasquier’s paratextual comments on the *Pourparler* in 1560 and 1596, before concluding the section by looking at how Michel de l’Hospital, archetypal *Politique* of the traditional historical

Transnational dialogue has received particular attention in recent years; see Helen Hackett, *Early Modern Exchanges: Dialogues between Nations and Cultures, 1550-1750* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015).

⁸³ Snyder, p. 6. See also Kushner, p. 9.

narrative, ultimately failed to navigate the relation between the ideal and the real inherent to uses and applications of the term *politique* in this threshold moment.

Pasquier and Le Caron knew each other. Both were *jurisconsultes*, frequented the court, and gained reputations as men of letters; Pasquier wrote poetry and four dialogues before devoting his life to his *Recherches*; Le Caron also wrote poetry and Platonic-inspired dialogues such as *Claire, ou la beauté* (published with his other dialogues in 1556). The dialogues I discuss here were clearly influenced by a more famous Italian work, Castiglione's *Libro del cortegiano* (first printed in Italy in 1528); Le Caron's two dialogues are both called *Le Courtisan*, and Pasquier's *Pourparler du Prince* (1560) features a character called *Le Courtisan*, but both texts seek to distinguish between good and bad *courtisans*, and seem to decide that a morally upstanding *courtisan* is actually a *politique* (we recall how, by the 1590s, Pasquier blamed 'courtizans' for the spread of 'mots de partialitez').⁸⁴ Both dialogues centre on the role of the prince, and have been read as staging either a transition from constitutionalism to 'absolutism' (Le Caron), or a defence of constitutional monarchy (Pasquier).⁸⁵ Both dialogues also explore the relation between the prince and philosopher, and explicitly introduce an idealised figure to mediate this relationship by speaking wisdom, if not truth, to power: the *politique*.

The full titles of Le Caron's dialogues are *Le Courtisan, que le Prince doit philosopher, Ou, de la vraie sagesse et Royale philosophie*, and *Le Courtisan II, Ou de la vraie sagesse, Et des louanges de la Philosophie*. The first takes place between a character called Le Caron and another

⁸⁴ See Peter Burke, *The Fortunes of the Courtier: The European Reception of Castiglione's Cortegiano* (Cambridge: Polity, 1995). Neither Le Caron's text, nor Pasquier's are, however, treated by Burke.

⁸⁵ Jouanna, *Le Pouvoir absolu*, pp. 23-70, esp. pp. 24-34 and pp. 60-70. Jouanna doubts this reading and the dichotomy it implies between the two models.

called Philarete (lover of virtue); in the second, Le Caron is in dialogue with Le Courtesan. In these dialogues, the ultimate goal is ‘ordre et police’, and ‘repos’; the term *police* here then corresponds to a set of rules with the implication that these are in place for the purpose of balance and harmony; ‘police’ is also figured as self-government, with the prince needing to ‘police’ himself before all others: ‘comment pourroit-il contenir une multitude, qui n’useroit de la police de soi-mesme?’⁸⁶ This use of *police* corresponds as much, if not more, to an ideal *polis* of the kind imagined in Plato’s *Republic*, as to constitutionalist uses, of which the most famous was Seyssel’s (in *La grant monarchie de France*, 1519 (see above, p. 50, n. 77). In the second dialogue, Le Caron and Le Courtesan discuss tyranny, and whether the prince is synonymous with law – Le Caron solves the problem of all power resting in the hands of one individual by imagining a prince who has absorbed all the crucial lessons of philosophy and is both more and less than a single person, anticipating Jean Bodin’s portrayal of the monarch as a place-holder, the embodiment of abstract centralised power.⁸⁷ This view, expressed by the character Le Caron, depends on an acceptance of Plato’s notion that an ideal state is born from symbiosis between ‘The Prince’ and ‘The Philosopher’, (mediated here by the Le Caron character).⁸⁸ The *police*, then, appears as something that emerges and is defended through managed symbiosis.

The term *politique* is used quite infrequently; it appears attached to ‘lois’ in a list of things that are ‘convenable au repos’: ‘fermer les villes de murailles; se flechir aux lois politiques et constitutions de leurs Rois, Princes, Magistratz, ou si d’autre nom leurs

⁸⁶ Louis Le Caron, *Dialogues*, ed. by Joan A. Buhlmann and Donald Gilman (Geneva: Droz, 1996), p. 72. This is a topos on the correlation between self-discipline and aptitude for government articulated at length by Socrates in Plato’s *Republic*.

⁸⁷ On the monarch as the embodiment of power in the pre-modern period, see Ernst Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies: Studies in Medieval Political Theology*, 7th edn (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997). See Chapter Two for more on Bodin.

⁸⁸ Plato, *Republic*, 8, 471c-502c; Alan Ryan, *On Politics: A History of Political Thought from Herodotus to the Present* (London: Penguin, 2013), p. 65.

gouverneurs estoient appelez'.⁸⁹ Here, the names of those involved in government appear uncertain, or as if there may be other names and types already active, or which could exist in the future. This anticipates, perhaps, the close of the first dialogue, in which Le Caron concludes by describing a particular kind of person, distinct from both philosopher and courtier, who will facilitate the symbiosis between 'The Prince' and 'The Philosopher'. He is referred to as 'Nostre politic' (and perhaps the -c ending differentiates the substantive from the adjective):

Mais plusieurs Courtisans, comme les oiseleurs imitent les voix et dégoisements des oiseaux: ainsi s'efforcent de contrefaire en toutes choses les gestes et contenance des seigneurs pour tirer d'eux quelque faveur. Iceux ne me semblerent jamais digne d'estre estimez: parce qu'il est trop servil et abject de complaire tousjours à l'erreur ou impudence des princes, ou de la sotte multitude. Nostre politic se doit estudier à rendre sa personne si accomplie, qu'il ne monstre rien en lui, qui puisse estre blâmé. Nous lisons de Temistocle et Pericle, quand ilz dresserent leurs esprits à la Chose publique: icelui s'estre premierement retiré des banquets, et cetui-ci avoir changé son ornement de corps et sa contenance, congnoissants bien, que s'il n'est possible de corriger tous les vices, qui sont en l'homme, au moins faut réprimer ceux qui sont les plus evidents et se recontrerent de premiere face. Car de celui, qui est élevé en telle dignité on est accoustumé de regarder et noter chacune parolle, châcune chose, qu'il fait ou dit, la vertu, la delectation, est tout ce qui lui echappe par gravité ou plaisir publiquement et en sa maison.⁹⁰

This perfect, blameless *politic* appears in opposition to 'plusieurs Courtisans' who are self-serving flatterers; this word is used to contest and re-define what it means to be a courtly adviser and to work on the meanings and associations of *court(e/i)san*. The *politic* follows the model of Temistocles and Pericles, who have corrected their vices as much as possible. These vices are described as superficial ('les plus evidents', 'de premiere face'), so that the goal of this blameless *politic* is to not be obviously flawed; a kind of dissimulation. But if 'nostre politic' can be thus self-controlled, and place public interest before his own, he will have access to virtue that will make him be

⁸⁹ Le Caron, p. 68.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 120-21. This discussion of internal and external morality further reprises themes of Plato's *Republic*, especially Chapter 6.

essential to the success of a good prince, and thus to the ‘repos’ of a realm. The explicit association ‘chacune parole’ and ‘chacune chose’ implies a reciprocal relation between his near-blameless language and his near-blameless conduct; this ‘dignité’ is also potentially that of this elevated term *politic*, which is now the name of a better kind of courtier, and a better kind of man.

There is some suggestion that Pasquier wrote his *Pourparler du Prince* in response to Le Caron’s *Courtesans*; we might then see the Politic character in the *Pourparler* as an extensive vision of how ‘nostre politic’ might conduct himself (gender is not emphasised, but masculine pronouns are used).⁹¹ The *Pourparler* is a discussion between characters named L’Escolier, Le Philosophe, Le Courtesan, and Le Politic: the first three all make lengthy statements in response to the Politic’s opening reformulation of Plato’s philosopher-prince problem: ‘En effect’, says the Politic, ‘vous estes tous de cest avis, qu’il faut un prince philosophe: mais vous établissez divers fondements de ceste philosophie’.⁹² The term *politique* (with its spelling variants) appears very rarely in the body of the text; its primary use is as the name of the character. This character listens to, and then responds to, the propositions of the Escolier, the Philosophe, and the Courtesan. Each proposes, according to the Politic, an imperfect model of the philosopher-prince: the Politic summarises their positions before they start (‘si vostre discours tiennent lieu, rendez-vous vostre prince ou escolier, ou hermite, ou paraventure tyran’) and then extensively criticises them after they have spoken.⁹³ The link between language and action is a confident one here: their ‘discours’ could each end up having an impact on reality. Each character is a

⁹¹ Béatrice Sayhi-Périgot, ‘Commentaire des *Pourparlers*’, in Etienne Pasquier, *Pourparlers*, ed. by Béatrice Sayhi-Périgot (Paris: Champion, 1995), pp. 270-533 (pp. 298-302).

⁹² Pasquier, ‘*Pourparler du Prince*’, in *Pourparlers*, pp. 51-106, p. 53.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

version of the person who must speak to power (embodied in the Prince) and thus direct its (his) impact; they are all versions of what a *politique* could be, but the Politic is the character that, so to speak, they should emulate.

The Escolier proposes a scholarly prince whose power and glory will come from extensive reading and mastery of eloquence; the *Politic* casts doubt on this, instead recommending a restricted reading list made up of Plato's *Republic*, Cicero's *De Officiis*, and Horace's *Sententiae*, plus as much good history as possible.⁹⁴ The Philosophe emphasises the vanity and vice of man, and advises that the King reject the world and learn not to fear death; the Politic more or less agrees with this but warns that a prince unafraid of death could behave recklessly, and says moreover that this is an impractical attitude because the prince is likely to be too disheartened by this kind of education; this reads as a critique of Plato's austere vision, for all that the *Republic* and later Neo-Platonisms represent crucial influences on this text.⁹⁵ The Courtesan is the third to speak, and advances a theory of tyranny that has been described as 'Machiavellian'; the Politic gives this character shortest shrift.⁹⁶ The Politic concludes *Le Pourparler* with a critique of tyranny, advocating the importance of the *Parlement* 'mitoien entre le roy et le peuple', with due emphasis on role of the *Magistrat*: 'c'est une regle assuree qu'il est requis en toute République bien policée que le peuple soit sujet au magistrat, & le magistrat à la loy'.⁹⁷ This certainly seems an advancement of a model of constitutional monarchy, but the characterisation of the Politic as moderator both incorporates and goes beyond that particular political language.

⁹⁴ Pasquier, 'Pourparler du Prince', pp. 56-57 (the Escolier's praise of eloquence) and pp. 82-3 (the Politic's refutation of the Escolier).

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 61-66 (The Philosophe) and pp. 88-89 (the Politic's refutation of the philosopher).

⁹⁶ Sayhi-Périgot, 'Commentaires', p. 282.

⁹⁷ Pasquier, 'Pourparler du Prince', pp. 70-80 (The Courtesan), and pp. 90-100 (the Politic against tyranny).

The 1560 *Au Lecteur*, not reproduced with subsequent printed editions, introduces the *Pourparler* as ‘tirez du commun cours de ce temps’, and opens with a description of Pasquier’s process: he writes, ‘Je pourpensay longuement à qui je les devois presenter’, and says that he has constantly been re-thinking his text (‘toutefois repensent en moy’).⁹⁸ Together, the terms ‘pourparler’, ‘pourpenser’, and ‘repenser’, suggest a particular kind of thinking and discussion: perhaps one that bears on the future; also one that is complex and careful.⁹⁹ From the discussion that follows it emerges that this kind of thought and discussion involves the juxtaposition and eventual synthesis of varied positions and opinions. There are references throughout the text to the form of the discussion: the narrator who introduces the discussion before the characters start talking (who might reasonably be loosely identified with the author, since he refers to the real illness that forced the real Pasquier to take time away from the law in 1559) says that he has been inspired by the ‘diversité d’humeurs’ which are ‘assez divers de jugement’: ‘de laquelle diversité se tiroy je pourtant profit ainsi que, par le heurt & attouchement violent du caillou avec l’acier, on voit ordinairement sortir quelques estincelles, lesquelles receuillies en bonne amorse allument puis apres un grand feu’.¹⁰⁰

This fire, indeed, has been lit in the heart of ‘Pasquier’, who has appreciated these ‘honnestes altercations’. Later in the text, the Courtesan agrees to participate in the debate precisely because of this tradition of ‘honneste altercation’: ‘comme en vos brigues et congregations solonelles l’on a coustume de passer par la pluralité des voix,

⁹⁸ Etienne Pasquier, *Un Pourparler du Prince* (Paris, 1560), p. ii. Béatrice Sayhi-Périgot comments that the word ‘pourparler’ is unusual in sixteenth-century French, particularly as a substantive, and suggests that it refers to ‘une idée générale de discussion portant sur l’avenir’. Béatrice Sayhi-Périgot, ‘Introduction’, in Pasquier, *Pourparlers*, pp. 9-50, p. 18.

⁹⁹ Perhaps this is the kind of ‘slow’ thinking that Cave and others consider to be a literary-critical kind of inferential cognition. See Terence Cave, *Thinking with Literature: Towards a Cognitive Criticism* (Oxford: OUP, 2016), pp. 21-24.

¹⁰⁰ Pasquier, ‘Pourparler du Prince’, p. 51.

je te donne encores, avec le Politic, le mien'.¹⁰¹ The term *Politic* is at the heart of a complex processing of terms and ideas, and – in this somewhat idealised account – manages to synthesise them to close the dialogue with the image of a successful, happy, and harmonious Republic. Small wonder, then, that the 'Pasquier' character at the beginning suggests that the Politic is the authoritative voice:

Si n'entends-je toutefois deroger à l'honneur & autorité des sages
Courtizans, lesquels à mon jugement (s'ils sont tels, comme le serment de
fidélité les oblige envers leur Prince) favorisent plus tost le party de mon
Politic, que de celui, qui semblera avoir quelque conformité de nom avec
eux.¹⁰²

Here, 'Pasquier' effectively suggests that 'sages Courtizans' (and we note here that, like later iterations of *politique*, a *courtizan* can be qualified as the good, wise kind) have more in common with the *Politic* than those with whom they have 'conformité de nom'. In a way, Pasquier is suggesting that names can and should change, and is problematising the category of the courtier through this staged encounter with 'mon Politic'. Pasquier's uses of the word 'party' evoke for later readers the history of the so-called party of the so-called *Politiques*; writing without the benefits and distractions of hindsight, he might have meant simply that wise courtiers will take the part, or even the good qualities, of the Politic. In the use of the plural ('les sages courtizans [qui] favorisent le party...') Pasquier certainly evokes a group whose central allegiance is to their king and who for that reason might strategically ally themselves with some kind of *politic-que* thinking. The fact that there is a 'party', then, seems to imply more a critical mass of people who share a viewpoint rather than an organised approach to government; 'party' is an expression of the plurality inherent to *politique*. This comment also evokes a community of readers who are themselves 'sages Courtizans' and may find themselves a part of 'le party de mon Politic'.

¹⁰¹ Pasquier, 'Pourparler du Prince', p. 54.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 53.

As we know, Pasquier did write again on this point with the benefit of such hindsight as was available to him. What is striking is that in the 1596 edition of the *Pourparler*, the real Pasquier still held the same, or a similar view, although the term *politique* had in the intervening period undergone the series of mutations that made being at least one kind of *politique* potentially very undesirable. It seems as though, despite his awareness of the *politique* produced by the toxic *pépinière* of the 1580s-90s, Pasquier wanted to defend a positive meaning of the now controversial keyword. A note to the opening of the *Pourparler* added in 1596 reads:

Il y a trente-deux ans, qu'avecq le premier livre des Recherches, ce Pour-Parler fut imprimé la première fois, dans lequel après avoir sous trois personnages discoursu trois diverses opinions sur le soing que le Magistrat souverain doit avoir au maniement de sa République, en fin l'auteur se ferme en celle du Politic, qui est l'utilité publique à laquelle le Prince doit se rapporter toutes ses pensées & non se s'avantager en particulier, à la foule & oppression de ses subjects.¹⁰³

In the dialogues of Le Caron and Pasquier, a person or character who is called Politic emerges as an authoritative negotiator of the terms, roles, ideas, and attitudes that the adjectival term *politique* can comprehend; the word appears as a synonym for managed plurality ('la pluralité des voix') in these accounts of what political discussion could and should be between truth and power, or between the philosopher and the prince. We have seen associated names – *Magistrat*, *Courtisan* – that will have varying importance in connection with uses of *politique* in the following decades. In these texts, the meaning of the word *politique* is formed in dialogue, and the function of the person who may then be named as *politique* is to manage and facilitate the kind of dialogue that enables the creation and maintenance of the best kind of *police*.

¹⁰³ Pasquier, 'Pourparler du Prince', p. 51, n. 1.

Pasquier's *Pourparler*, between 1560 and 1596, negotiates a delicate path between the abstract *polis* and the real world that the author inhabited. The boundaries wear particularly thin when the real author intervenes thirty-six years after its initial publication to align himself with the *Politic* of his dialogue, in which the young Pasquier had expressed a sense of possibility that 'discours' could impact upon or be somehow co-terminous with the real ('si vo, discours tiennent lieu', says the *Politic* in his introduction, 'rendrez-vous vostre prince ou escolier, ou hermite, ou paravanture tyran').¹⁰⁴ The later Pasquier, who evinces an ambivalent attitude to what 'discours' can achieve, retains this sense of possibility. In the context of the civil war that broke out two years after the first appearance of the *Pourparler du prince*, the connection between the ideal (or fictional), and the real, and the impact of words and texts, became increasingly troubled, just as the difficulties of acting in politics were magnified.

The 'real' figure who came to incarnate the difficulties of acting in politics was Michel de L'Hospital. He did attempt in real life to mediate between competing factions and different confessional groups, but his efforts did not succeed: he resigned, or was discharged, from his office as Chancellor in 1567 and thereafter lived a secluded life until his death in 1573.¹⁰⁵ At the end of the wars, L'Hospital was condemned and criticised in polemic as 'auteur et patron de l'erreur politique'.¹⁰⁶ L'Hospital's literary and historical afterlife had, at least initially (although the nineteenth century would

¹⁰⁴ Pasquier, *Pourparlers*, p. 53.

¹⁰⁵ On Michel de L'Hospital, see Denis Crouzet, *La Sagesse et le malheur: Michel de L'Hospital, chancelier de France* (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2002), and especially *De Michel de L'Hospital à l'Edit de Nantes*, ed. by Wanegffelen.

¹⁰⁶ *Description de l'homme politique de ce temps*, p. 4.

rehabilitate him as a liberal hero), become one of failed strategy and sad defeat.¹⁰⁷ It is within this narrative that he appears in histories both of sixteenth-century politics and in histories of the term *politique*, in which he is presented as the paradigmatic *politique* figure of the early part of the wars.¹⁰⁸

In 1558, between the publications of *Le Courtesan I* and *II*, and Pasquier's *Pourparler*, at the height of L'Hospital's success as a statesman, Joachim Du Bellay published his sonnet sequence, *Les Regrets*. Sonnet 167 is in praise of the 'Sage De L'Hospital'.

L'Hospital is presented as an idealised or perfect figure who provides a model for how to avoid vice, and who, as Du Bellay writes in the second verse, is so perfect as to practically elude all description:

Si je voulois louer ton sçavoir, ta prudence,
Ta vertu, ta bonté, et ce qu'est vraiment tien,
A tes perfections je n'ajousterais rien,
Et pauvre me rendrait la trop grande abondance.

The verse ends, indeed, with a comparison to Plato:

Ainsi jusqu'aujourd'huy, ainsi encor voit-on
Être tant renommé le maistre Platon,
Pour ce qu'il eut d'un dieu la voix pour témoignage.¹⁰⁹

In this verse L'Hospital appears as an idealised statesman of the kind that Le Caron and Pasquier imagined. The three men were all connected within a wider literary-political circle (associated with the *Pléiade* poets; indeed facilitating the entry of poets

¹⁰⁷ This is the account affectingly re-told by Denis Crouzet in his biography of the chancellor: see above, n. 104. L'Hospital's own view of government did not involve the kind of pragmatic vision he was later associated with. Denis Crouzet and Marie-Seong Hak Kim write that L'Hospital was deeply wedded to Christian principles with a Ciceronian gloss (*Caritas* as *amicitia*, according to Crouzet), and that he was a stubborn, inflexible political leader who became known for pragmatism despite himself. See Denis Crouzet, 'Grâce et liberté dans les *Carmina* de Michel de L'Hospital', and Marie Seong-Hak Kim, "'Nager entre deux eaux". L'idéalisme juridique et la politique religieuse de Michel de L'Hospital' in *De Michel de L'Hospital à L'Edit de Nantes*, pp. 223-42, and pp. 243-54.

¹⁰⁸ Pagden, 'Introduction', p. 2.

¹⁰⁹ Joachim Du Bellay, *Les Regrets* (Paris: Gallimard, 1967), p. 198.

such as Ronsard into courtly circles) in the decades preceding the civil wars.¹¹⁰ This circle was also the meeting point of various ‘languages’; not just Latin, French, and Greek, but streams of religious thought described variously as Erasmian and Ciceronian, and clearly influenced, as we have seen, by Platonism, and by the very idea of Plato.¹¹¹ Ford has described this group as being at the ‘centre of *politique* thinking’; I’d suggest that this group is at the centre of a *politique* pre-history, in which different discourses met with a common aim of maintaining royal power and advancing culture as they understood it.¹¹²

Within this, Michel de L’Hospital is a particularly tricky figure to situate between endogenous and exogenous uses of the term *politique*. He rarely uses it himself in his *discours* and *remonstrances* of the 1560s. In one of these rare uses, in a valedictory speech given to the Paris *Parlement* in 1567, it is in adjectival form as an appraisal of French monarchs in the late medieval period, and their relation with the *Parlement*: medieval kings, he says, were more inclined to consult the *Parlement*, and so were ‘plus politiques et populaires qu’ilz ne sont maintenant qu’ilz tiennent du tranchant’.¹¹³ What L’Hospital does with *politique* here, in this unusual and isolated incidence of the adjectival term, is mix a ‘constitutionalist’ use of *politique* with an implicitly irenicist stance, while implying that the former belongs to the past, but that the latter is nonetheless predicated on negotiation and on smooth dialogue between the *Parlement* and the king.¹¹⁴ Since this is an isolated use, it would be an exaggeration to suggest

¹¹⁰ Ford, *The Judgment of Palaemon*, esp. Chapter Seven: ‘The Morel Salon: A Microcosm of the *Res Publica Litterarum*’, pp. 205-25.

¹¹¹ Ford, p. 223.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 223.

¹¹³ Michel de L’Hospital, Speech given at the *Parlement* of Paris, 26 July 1567, in *Discours et correspondance: La plume et la tribune*, ed. by Loris Petris, 2 vols (Geneva: Droz, 2013), II, pp. 94-95.

¹¹⁴ On attempts at peace-making during the religious wars, see Mark Greengrass, *Governing Passions: Peace and Reform in the French Kingdom, 1576-1585* (Oxford: OUP, 2007); Penny Roberts, *Peace and Authority*

that this is in any way representative of a stance that L'Hospital intended to be understood as *politique*; this is simply a pre-historical flare that might guide later readers a little too much if they are blinded, as it were, by hindsight.

Le Caron and Pasquier presented their *politics* as ideal(ised) negotiators – more between princes and schools of thought than between princes and *Parlements*, but particularly in light of their connections with L'Hospital's circle, and his place in histories of *politiques* and politics, their dialogues bring L'Hospital's failures of discourse and dialogue into relief, to suggest a stifling of the ideological impulses present in Pasquier's evocation of meetings of differing minds. In a speech given at Moulines in 1566, published as a *Remonstrance* (criticising the ambitions of rogue *juges*), L'Hospital opened by referencing the famous dialogues of antiquity (by Plato and Cicero) and suggested that his own 'propos' gained authority if understood as the product of his implicit dialogue with the monarch, present in his audience at Moulines.¹¹⁵ But no amount of *discours*, *remonstrance*, or *dialogue*, could put out the bloody conflict of the moment.

3. Between Philosophers and Princes Before 1550: Budé and Rabelais

There has been some suggestion that the Escolier in the *Pourparler du Prince* could be a veiled portrait of the celebrated humanist Guillaume Budé; unlikely as this seems, Budé *was* the pre-eminent scholarly figure of his day and a crucial conduit for forms of knowledge and its uses.¹¹⁶ In this section I look at prose writing by Budé (*De l'institution du Prince*, published in 1547 but written much earlier, *c.* 1519) and by Rabelais

During the French Religious Wars c. 1560-1600 (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), and Jérémie Foa, *Le tombeau de la paix. Une histoire des édits de pacification (1560-1572)* (Limoges: Pulim, 2015).

¹¹⁵ L'Hospital, *Discours et correspondance*, II, pp. 80-81.

¹¹⁶ Béatrice Sayhi-Périgot is sceptical about this, given Budé's extremely high standing at the time and the fact that the Escolier in the *Pourparler* is figured as a naïve young student with no experience of the real world, see Béatrice Sayhi-Périgot, 'Commentaires', p. 312.

(*Gargantua*, 1535) to examine how the term acts as a pivot between the prince and his adviser before this use came to be embodied in a particular *politique* figure. I see these texts as offering pre-historical traces of what was to come, as well as gestures towards a way of being political that is used, abused, and undermined in the texts I look at in the rest of the thesis. The title of Budé's *De l'institution du Prince* seems to fit squarely in the 'advice manuals for princes' 'sub-language', but I will show here, once again, the meeting of diverse associations and 'languages' in this treatise. Rabelais, meanwhile, famously tried, tested, digested, and ejected an uncontrollable mass of languages and ideas in his narrative works; we will see below that for him *politique* qualifies a kind of 'conversation', and is also used in conversations between an authority figure and his companion that lead to a testing or re-imagining of what government and politics could be.

In *De l'institution*, Budé uses the terms *police* and *politique* at certain moments of his treatise to evoke a flexible set of practices and rules employed by the monarch, suggested by [his] teachers. As part of the opening of the work, Budé argues that the Prince must be prudent, and that in doing so he must cleave to a particular kind of 'prudence civile' which he qualifies as 'plus politicque & introduicte sur les façons de la police'.¹¹⁷ Budé gives an account of prudence as a form of 'raison' that tempers the kind of impulsive bad judgement that diverts people from the path of righteousness; in the broader context of this passage, 'la prudence civile, qui est plus politicque' is presented as a kind of counter-intuitive thought process safeguarding man against 'erreur', 'vanité', and 'mensonges'. An opposition is established between 'politicque' and 'les façons de la police', and 'l'ordre des moeurs' and '[la] morale', which implies

¹¹⁷ Guillaume Budé, *De l'institution du prince* (Geneva: Droz, 1966) [Facsimile edition], p. 19. On prudence, *politique*, and their connection with the term *civil*, see Chapter Two, pp. 104-12.

that 'la morale' is potentially universal or total ('ordre') while that which is designated as 'politicque' is established through 'façons', that is, through craft. In Budé, while a constitutionalist application of 'police' as a check on a monarch's power could certainly be a context in which his reader might understand the term, I would suggest a broader sense of 'police' as a set of rules, potentially subject to change or to alternative interpretation or application (this changeability is implied through the plural 'façons'). Budé goes on to specify that 'politicque' is fundamentally linked to law, developing an opposition between *politicque/police/droit* and *moeurs/morale/equité charitable*.

The connection between the terms *politique* and *droit* is re-affirmed in the second of three passages in *De l'institution* where the term *politique* is used repeatedly; in the first use, again, the adjectives 'civil & politic' are paired. This occurrence of 'droict civil & politic' comes as part of a description of Phillip of Macedonia's advice to his son, Alexander:

Parquoy, puis que telle est la disposition du droict civil & politic: Que doibt-on juger du droict d'honneur, par lequel, la noblesse se doibt gouverner, & duquel les Princes ne peuvent ny soy ny aultre dispenser, sans extreme necessité: combien que leur autorité ayt puissance sur les loix civiles, & ordonnances positives? Ledit Roy enhortoît souvent son fils Alexandre (du temps qu'il estoit jeune enfant, & avoit Aristote, pour precepteur) de s'addonner du tout, & diligemment vacquer à la doctrine morale & politique dudict Philosophe, qui ont grande proximité ou affinité par leur nature. Et est la science politicque necessaire à ceulx, qui ont gouvernemens publicques, ou principaultés sur le peuple, ainsy que j'ay dict devant. Ce que tesmoigne Philippe, disant à son fils Alexandre, qui failloit qu'il fust instruit en ladicte science politique, à fin qu'il ne feist par ignorance plusieurs choses [...] Vray est, que usage & experience faict les gens saiges, quand ilz ont bon entendement. Mais la prudence acquise par doctrine, est plus seure, pour remédier à dommaige & deshonneur, & moins subjecte à estre obliée.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ Budé, p. 118.

The beginning of this passage poses the question of how to balance the right of the nobility to a measure of self-determination with the Prince's overall control of 'loix civiles'. This certainly evokes L'Hospital's later problematisation of the balance between prince and *Parlement*. Rather than immediately answering this question (which, evidently, was not resolved by anyone), Budé somewhat elliptically goes on with his account of Phillip's advice to Alexander that he apply himself to learning the lessons offered by his tutor, Aristotle, once again using a doublet structure for emphasis ('s'addonner du tout, & diligemment vaquer'). Both 'la morale' and 'la politique' are in question here, but once again the term *politique* receives special emphasis in Budé's development of the point, in which 'la science politique' is presented as particularly vital. The excerpt opens with a question and offers *politique* thought as a way of finding a solution that remains unknown and thus as plural as the 'façons de la police' discussed above. In the meeting here of the philosopher and the king, between them, there is the word *politique*, and thoughts and actions qualified as *politique* manage a threatening set of unknown outcomes (a kind of surety against 'dommage et deshonneur'). Budé returns to the question of expertise in 'les matieres concernentes le gouvernement politic' at the end of *De l'institution*, moving towards the conclusion of his text with a summary of what these 'matieres' are, that is, the expression of prudence (the most important princely virtue) and developed through a combination of experience, reading (especially of Solon), education, and natural facility; he comments that such expertise is relatively undeveloped at the present time.¹¹⁹ In the 1560s and 70s, as we shall see in Chapter Two, Budé's pupil Loys Le Roy, alongside Jean Bodin, will take this germ of a discipline and turn it into something far more central and significant.

¹¹⁹ Budé, p. 203.

We learn from Budé's text that in France under François I^{er}, there was a complex interweaving of *politique* knowledge and the virtue of prudence, in which the adjective *politique* emerges as a distinct and powerful means of qualifying the most successful kinds of prudence. We learn that this adjective is a characteristic of law, and of good – and negotiable – lawgiving enacted upon a *police* with plural potential, and that certain kinds of reading are recommended in order to extract the full promise of the term. A semantic field emerges in Budé's text that will be replicated, but also shift, in most if not all of the texts I analyse in this thesis. As an adjective, here, the term is attached to the following nouns: *philosophie, gouvernement, doctrine, droict, prudence*. More loosely associated terms are *publique, lecture, histoire, and façon*, and ancient authorities cited are Aristotle and Solon. This semantic field indicates the meeting of different 'languages' of political thought in Budé's text, while use of ancient authorities (and also, in the first quotation, the assertion that part of Aristotle's vocabulary has been corrupted in the vernacular) evokes the meeting of ancient and modern languages that also occurs in uses of the term *politique*. The meeting of different discourses and an emphasis on their practical application via effective education are hallmarks of a humanist method. What emerges in these meetings around this term in particular is a sense that rules and laws are made and broken by *politique* processes; for Budé there is no theoretical model community to be shaped by a model 'doctrine', but imperfect past models and unstable present ones that need careful crafting. The term *politique* offers a location for such meetings, and negotiations – and for this reason I suggest that we find a pre-historical trace in Budé of the embodied substantive *politique* who might attempt such negotiation.

Published a decade or so before Budé's *De l'institution*, Rabelais's *Gargantua* contains a far smaller number of uses of the term *politique*: here I consider two of only four occurrences in the whole of his *oeuvre*.¹²⁰ But the first, in the prologue, invites the reader to interpret the text that follows as revelatory in some way of the nature of 'l'estat politicq':

Puis par curieuse leçon, et meditation frequente rompre l'os, et sugcer la sustantificque mouelle. C'est à dire: ce que j'entends par ces symboles Pythagoricques avecques espoir certain d'estre faictz escors et preux à ladicte lecture. Car en icelle bien aultre goust trouverez, et doctrine plus absconce, laquelle vous revelera de tres haultz sacremens et mysteres horrificques, tant en ce que concerne nostre religion, que aussi l'estat politicq et vie oeconomique.¹²¹

Here, Rabelais famously figures his reader as a diligent dog able to find the 'sustantificque mouelle' of his text – and it turns out that part of that 'mouelle' might be 'politicq'. Whether Rabelais meant this seriously or not, this use of 'politicq' paired with 'estat' could be read as an early example of what Skinner has described as the articulation of a new vocabulary of the state, and the concomitant rise of the term 'state' in European vernaculars.¹²² Moreover, its appearance alongside 'oeconomique' evokes the Aristotelian curriculum. Rabelais's use here is therefore consistent with the story of a shift taking place in understandings of politics, reflected in word use. Rabelais's texts are an exuberant blend of many different types of writing and vocabularies; this blend is self-consciously and satirically constructed, as if the reader is invited to be conversant with multiple languages and idioms in the style of Pocock's ideal historian, and at the same time this invitation is laced with mockery and challenge, testing the limits of interpretation and meaning.¹²³ If, in his prologue,

¹²⁰ The others that I have found are in the *Tiers livre*, associated with 'juste' and 'justice', see Rabelais, p. 356, and p. 499.

¹²¹ Rabelais, p. 7.

¹²² Quentin Skinner, *Foundations*, II, p. 352.

¹²³ On multiplicity of meaning and the limits of interpretation in Rabelais, centred on the 'sustantificq mouelle', see Gérard Defaux, 'D'un problème l'autre: herméneutique de l' "altior sensus" et "captatio

Alcofribas/Rabelais offers his reader a role in an interpretive challenge, where would the *politique* ‘mouelle’ be found? A straight reading of Rabelais’s four (or five) books reveals an engagement with many of the political genres and ‘sub-languages’ outlined by Pagden, Pocock, and Skinner, and more – with their focus on the education of a prince, military practices, and engagement with classical authorities of what Budé defined as ‘science politique’. But supposing that the ‘mouelle’ were the word *politique* itself, then the ‘haultz sacremens’ and ‘mysteres horrificques’ pertaining to ‘l’estat politique’ are to be found towards the end of *Gargantua*, in Chapter Forty, in which Gargantua and Frere Jean discuss monastic withdrawal from the world. And this instance of discussion of the monastic rule in turn points the reader towards the alternate abbey in *Gargantua*, with its alternative (absence of) rules. These passages locate the term *politique* in a series of conversations about how space, community, and belonging, are understood and demarcated.

In Chapter Forty of *Gargantua*, the term *politique* appears in opposition to *retraict* in the discussion about monks. The discussion opens with Eudemon turning the view of monks as having withdrawn from the world on its head; instead he asks why monks are excluded from ‘toutes bonnes compaignes’.¹²⁴ Gargantua agrees that monks attract extreme opprobrium, and can explain why:

La raison peremptoire est: par ce qu’ilz mangent la merde du monde, c’est-à-dire les pechez, et comme mache-merdes l’on les rejecte en leurs retraictz: ce sont leurs conventz et abbayes, separez de conversation politique comme sont les retraictz d’une maison.¹²⁵

lectoris” dans le Prologue de *Gargantua*, *Revue d’histoire littéraire de la France*, 85 (1985), 195-216; E. M. Duval, ‘Interpretation and the “Doctrine Absconce” of Rabelais’s Prologue to *Gargantua*’, *Etudes rabelaisiennes*, 18 (1985), 1-17; François Rigolot, ‘Interpréter Rabelais aujourd’hui’, *Poétique* (1995), 269-85; more generally, see also François Cornilliat, ‘Interpretation in Rabelais, interpretation of Rabelais’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Rabelais*, ed. by John O’Brien (Cambridge: CUP, 2011), pp. 43-56.

¹²⁴ Rabelais, p. 110.

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 110.

Here, ‘conversation politicque’ is opposed to ‘conventz et abbayes’, as the house (‘maison’) is to the toilet (‘retrait’); within this, ‘conversation politicque’ designates what might be roughly described as ‘the social world’ (toilets and monasteries being, by contrast, places of isolation). This anticipates Le Caron’s dialogue, *Le Courtisan*, which describes the *politic* as occupied with the management of ‘la chose publique’. The elastic realm of ‘conversation politicque’ could be a positive space, where ‘toutes bonnes compagnies’ can be found, though perhaps this is undercut by the image of the world at large as a producer of sin, figured as shit. The monks are excluded definitively because they feed on this ‘merde du monde’. The word ‘conversation’, more obviously, also evokes dialogue, so that perhaps Frere Jean and Gargantua are at this moment engaging in a ‘conversation politicque’ that distinguishes Frere Jean, the exceptional monk, from all the rest. This moment can therefore also be read as a discussion about rules, and customs, especially considering that the word ‘conversation’ is defined in Nicot’s *Thresor de la langue française* as ‘consuetudo, conversatio, usus’, which connotes a set of meanings corresponding broadly to habit, regular use, and association – communal links and practices.

The opening of Chapter Fifty-Two (‘Comment Gargantua feist bastir pour le moyne l’abbaye de Theleme’), invites comparison to Chapter Forty on a structural level, not simply because a new kind of (anti-) monastery is being imagined.¹²⁶ A problem is raised (Frere Jean being fussy about his post-war reward), and answered in a manner qualified as ‘peremptoire’. ‘Peremptoire’ is a legal term used to introduce a definitive or quashing argument; Frere Jean thus effectively closes the case by stating that he cannot belong to or run a ‘real life’ monastery:

¹²⁶ For critical comparisons of Rabelais’s two abbeys, see, for example, Guy Demerson, *Rabelais* (Paris: Balland, 1986), pp. 54-55, and Miernowski, “‘Politique’ comme injure”, pp. 353-56.

Mais le moyne luy fist response peremptoire, que de moyne il ne vouloit charge ny gouvernement, “Car comment (disoit il) pourroy je gouverner aultruy, qui moy-mesmes gouverner ne sçauroids? Si vous semble que je vous aye fait, et que puisse à l’advenir faire service agreable, outroyer moy de fonder une abbaye à mon devis.”¹²⁷

Is this a second ‘conversation politicque’, if the first was indeed such? If so, it is a conversation that rejects the discourses present in the semantic field around *politique* operating in Budé’s text: government and law are banished. Frere Jean rejects the monasteries (and the *gouvernement* they offer), indicating a lack of desire, and a lack of ability resulting from a lack of knowledge (‘ne vouloit [...] gouvernement’ / ‘comment pourroy je gouverner’ / ‘gouverner ne sçauroids’).¹²⁸ The ungoverned state he imagines into being famously follows a single rule, ‘Fay ce que voudras’: this ‘devis’ is a distillation of the opening lines of Chapter Fifty-Seven: ‘Toute leur vie estoit employée non par loix, statuz, ou reigles, mais selon leur vouloir et franc arbitre’.¹²⁹ Thélème thus stands as separate from ‘la conversation politicque’ as did the useless ‘mache-merdes’; an idealised vision of communal liberty and pleasure then emerges, with all ‘meschans’ excluded. But its genesis was in a conversation between Gargantua and Frere Jean that suggested that the whole enterprise depended on past and future service from the monk to the prince; in other words, a measure of autonomy depends on the will of the prince, enabled – implicitly – by ‘conversation politicque’. Much is made in Chapter Forty of the ideal qualities of Frere Jean himself: ‘il n’est pas bigot, il n’est point dessiré, il est honeste, joyeux, deliberé, bon compaignon’ (precisely the qualities required in Thélème).¹³⁰ This excellent interlocutor is then able to use his standing with his prince to create a joyous (perhaps ideal) community. Perhaps the

¹²⁷ Rabelais, p. 137.

¹²⁸ Note the recurrence here of the self-government topos which also appears in Le Caron (see above, n. 86).

¹²⁹ Rabelais, p. 148.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

term *politique* in Rabelais thus implies a similar practice to that of the various *politic-ques* found in Le Caron, Pasquier, and Budé, even if the outcome is rather different.

4. Coda: Surviving Fragments

Between *c.* 1519 and *c.* 1562, a pre-historical excavation of uses of *politique* shows it operating as a means of mediation between different discourses of power and different sources of authority (particularly between the monarch and the philosopher, but also between established law and princely judgement, and between the monarchy, the nobility, and the *Parlement*). Leading up to the outbreak of civil war, what it evoked above all was potentially productive dialogue, and the figure of a person who might conduct that dialogue, named by Le Caron and Pasquier as *Politic*. Following the conclusion of this Chapter I will look at all kinds of dialogues and other kinds of texts featuring and using different kinds of *politiques*, mostly in staged textual and intertextual conversations that are less Pasquier's meeting of minds than attempts to strong-arm the reader or interlocutor into various ideological shapes. What, then, if anything, remained of the kind of *politique* that was more able to balance genuine alternatives, or for whom *politique* as a conceptual framework could and ought to present the possibility of peaceful resolutions? And how are the surviving fragments of the pre-war *politique* mitigated by their more openly violent and dangerous context? In this final section I look briefly at the use of the term *politique* in the work of two authors who, like Michel de L'Hospital, were political actors and negotiators: François de la Noue, and Michel de Montaigne.

By 1589, and the publication of François de la Noue's *Discours politiques et militaires*, the first thing to notice is that the term *politique* has reached a level of prominence such that it appears in the title of a contemporary work rather than simply as a reference to

a work by Aristotle. In this work, *politique* appears in a discussion of how to maintain harmony between fundamentally different confessional groups who must share living space. In La Noue, the ‘repos’, ‘harmonie’, and ‘ordre’ that good politics and *politiques* facilitate in earlier texts come to the fore, and La Noue argues extensively for ‘concorde politique’.¹³¹ La Noue is at pains to establish the difference (as well as the connection) between ‘la souveraine concorde’ and that maintained between men (i.e. ‘concorde politique’), and also to excuse himself from discussing the religious aspect further:

Là trouvera-on que la souveraine concorde est celle que nous devons avoir avecques Dieu; car celui qui ne se soucie de luy contrarier, mal-aisément se pourra-il bien accorder avec les hommes, en ce que la raison (qui est la guide qu’il doit avoir) commande. Mais pource que le discours de ce point appartient plustost aux théologiens qu’à l’homme politique, je m’en tairay.¹³²

In this passage, La Noue tacitly refers to himself as ‘l’homme politique’: he will not discuss ‘la souveraine concorde’ any further because it is a matter for theologians and not for *l’homme politique*, and as such, he, the presumed *homme politique*, can go no further. This statement comes at the end of the *deuxieme discours*. The *troisiesme* is in fact all about how religious disagreement is no grounds for civil dispute. This is the chapter that concludes with the call for ‘concorde politique’. As a Protestant, it is clear what La Noue would stand to gain in personal and spiritual terms from such concord, but also as a Protestant, he does not fit in with the typical view that the term *politique* was a tool used by, and against, moderate Catholics. At forty pages in length, this chapter amounts to much more than ‘un mot’, despite what La Noue says:

Un theologien eust fait un livre sur ceste matiere, mais je me contente d’en avoir seulement dit un mot, tant pour essayer de moderer en quelque façon nos aigreurs, qui nous separent trop, que pour reschauffer aussi

¹³¹ François de la Noue, *Discours politiques et militaires* (Geneva: Droz, 1967), e.g. p. 100.

¹³² La Noue, p. 61.

nostre charité, afin que cela nous serve au moins à nous réunir en une bonne concorde politique.¹³³

La Noue here has a more modest sense than earlier writers as to what ‘une bonne concorde’ might be: ‘some kind of’ moderation of disagreements. It might be too much to suggest that the fact that he seeks moderation ‘en quelque façon’ has anything to do with the ‘façons de la police’ discussed by Budé, but perhaps this could be read as a doubling of the idea of moderation (with ‘façon’ moderating the verb ‘moderer’!) and that the connotations of work and craft are implicit in the service that La Noue is offering. Throughout his text, La Noue underplays to a degree the proposed impact of his ideas, while emphasising that they will be of service and be useful (*servir* and *utilité* are key words in his text). Much of the text is about the present terrible state of France and its risk of irreversible decline. Towards the end of the third *Discours*, building toward the call for ‘concorde politique’ quoted above, La Noue complains about the ease with which insults are thrown (as L’Hospital had twenty years previously), and emphasises that the word *heretique* in particular has been mis-used: it is these failures of language that he seeks to moderate, and minimize.¹³⁴ La Noue, in other words, seeks to make a modest intervention in public life by using language that might act directly to soothe the present, grave problems that figure in large part as problems of language.

The author of the preface is the Sieur de Fresne, another Protestant noble; he writes that he has been thrown together with La Noue owing to the ‘miseres de ce temps’ (both were in exile in Geneva), that he discovered in La Noue’s papers a series of very useful observations on the present state of France and persuaded him to share them with the public. He further adds:

¹³³ *Ibid*, p. 100.

¹³⁴ La Noue, pp. 87-91.

L'auteur ne s'est point amusé à forger une Idee de perfection Utopienne, comme quelques Philosophes anciens et modernes, mais il s'est étudié à s'accommoder tellement à nostre gout et disposition, et propose ses conseils avec une facilité et utilité si evidente, que si nous n'y profitons, soit pour le public, ou pour nostre particulier, nous n'en devons accuser que nostre endurcissement et nonchalance.¹³⁵

This account of La Noue's *Discours* seems to enact a separation between *Philosophes* in general, and writing categorised as *politique et militaire*, which has more to do with 'nostre gout et disposition'. Or, this description tells the reader that what is to come is not about how to imagine a better or alternate society (perhaps a perfect or perfectly unrealistic one, as the adjective 'Utopienne' might suggest) but about how to manage the systems that are already in place. His advice, potentially useful for both private and public purposes, is so self-evident that only lost souls and the lazy could fail to benefit. This confidence about the 'real' application of the text seems to be built on the fact that it makes no attempt to 'forger une Idee de perfection Utopienne'. Perhaps this marks a move away from a Platonic or nascent utopian tradition of political writing which the earlier uses of *politique* I have outlined sit more easily alongside (Rabelais directly references and engages with this tradition, and Thélème has been read as a kind of utopia).¹³⁶ De Fresne suggests, instead, that La Noue follows the example of Tacitus, thereby bringing a new author into the frame of the *politique* reading list either prescribed or implied in all of the texts that make significant use of the term.¹³⁷ In La Noue, the term *politique* may qualify 'concorde', and is loosely born of a relation with De Fresne, who imagines a wider social function for the text, but the model is not one of dialogue or conversation.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 1-3.

¹³⁶ On the idea of utopia, see Cave, *Utopia in early modern Europe*, and *La Fortuna dell'Utopia di Thomas More nel dibattito europeo del'500: Il Giornata Luigi Firpo, 2 marzo 1995* (Florence: Olschki, 1995).

¹³⁷ It is considered by some that a move from Ciceronian to Tacitean rhetoric as the model for political writing occurred across the sixteenth century. See Salmon, 'Cicero and Tacitus', who sees Pasquier and Montaigne as architects of this shift, and considers it a result of 'the triumph of *politique* thinking', pp. 330-31. This move is staged – perhaps even parodied – in the *Satyre ménippée*, discussed in Chapter Five.

His contemporary Michel de Montaigne manages a discussion that retains a more explicitly dialogic form. Like La Noue, Montaigne also places Tacitus at the top of a *politique* reading list in III.8, ‘De l’art de conférer’, calling his histories ‘une pepiniere de discours ethiques et politiques, pour la provision et ornement de ceux qui tiennent rang au maniemment du monde’.¹³⁸ This comment evokes a number of intertexts, most obviously La Noue and the title of his *discours*, but also Pasquier’s description in his *Recherches* of partisan language as produced as if from a seedbed (‘comme d’une pépinière furent produits plusieurs rejettons de partialitez’). And Montaigne’s *Essais* themselves are drawn into this lexical and generic ‘field’ in translation, where they gained titles that further evoke the good version of the *pépinière politique*; in English, Florio calls them *The essayes or, Morall, politike, and militarie discourses*, and in Italian they are *Discorsi morali, politici et militari*.¹³⁹ Of Tacitus, Montaigne goes on to say: ‘Son service est plus propre à un estat trouble et malade, comme est le nostre present: vous diriez souvent qu’il nous peint et qu’il nous pinse’.¹⁴⁰ Like De Fresne, Montaigne introduces this kind of writing, then, as a service, and as having the potential to not only describe the present (unhappy) world but also to impact upon its management (‘maniemment’). Clearly some of his first and closest readers outside France viewed his *Essais* as offering precisely this kind of service.

In terms of *politiques* more ideal than real, Montaigne has a more equivocal relation, though not less enthusiastic, to those whom De Fresne and other sixteenth-century

¹³⁸ Montaigne, p. 986. On this chapter of the *Essais*, see Quint, *The Quality of Mercy*, pp. 102-44.

¹³⁹ See *The essayes or Morall, politike and militarie discourses of Lo: Michaell de Montaigne, done into English by J. Florio* (London, 1603), and Montaigne, *Discorsi morali, politici, et militari*, tr. dal sig. G. Naselli (Ferrara, 1590). These titles are perhaps testament to the fact that political writing was becoming increasingly prominent and that advertising Montaigne as a political expert would be a way to attract readers.

¹⁴⁰ Montaigne, p. 987.

readers would recognise as the *philosophes* dealing in *Idees*, particularly Plato. His treatment of Plato recalls in some ways the earlier texts by Le Caron and Pasquier, which as we have seen engage with, criticise, and speculate about the possibilities of how, and under whose influence, a better or even ideal community might be established and maintained.¹⁴¹ Earlier in the *Essais*, in I, 31, ('Des Cannibales') Montaigne writes that he wishes Plato could have seen the new world and how it exceeded the state that he imagined; one reading of 'Des Cannibales' is that an idealised vision of a real place (the New World) is offered as a counterbalance to a completely imaginary republic in order that Montaigne can condemn from a distance practices in the society in which he actually operates. The chapter explores historical and textual precedents for the Discoveries, and a problematisation of the appellation 'barbare' ('sinon chacun appelle barbarie, ce qui n'est pas de son usage'):

Comme de vray nous n'avons autre mire de la verité, et de la raison, que l'exemple et idée des opinions et usances du pays où nous sommes. Là est toujours la parfaicte religion, la parfaicte police, parfaicte et accomply usage de toutes choses.¹⁴²

Thus Montaigne takes up the question that we have seen posed variously so far from Rabelais to Pasquier, of what might constitute 'la parfaicte religion' (especially if understood as 'rule' as well as 'religious belief') and 'la parfaicte police', suggesting that the perception of perfection is governed by habit, and by the workings of human reason that Montaigne has just demonstrated can often be faulty. It is at this point in 'Des Cannibales' that Montaigne engages Plato in conversation, marked out by discourse verbs. This implicit dialogue can be read as born of a context in which authors wrote themselves into dialogue with prominent men and with philosophers,

¹⁴¹ See Richard Scholar, 'Montaigne et la "vanité" des utopies', *Revue de synthèse*, (Forthcoming, 2017), on Montaigne's engagement with utopia in the context of Plato.

¹⁴² Montaigne, p. 211.

but Montaigne's leap out of his own time-bound context is still a bold one.¹⁴³ Plato speaks first: 'Toutes choses, dit Platon, sont produites ou par la nature, ou par la fortune, ou par l'art'. Plato's philosophical imagination, Montaigne says (more or less to himself: 'il me prend'; 'il me desplaît'; 'il me semble'), could not stretch to a vision of the world as the early moderns experienced it. And so Montaigne speaks back to Plato (speaking back to the philosopher; speaking a kind of truth to a kind of power):

C'est une nation, diroy je à Platon, en laquelle il n'y a aucune espee de trafique; nulle cognoissance de lettres; nulle science de nombres; nul nom de magistrat, ny de superiorité politique; nul usage de service, de richesse ou de pauvreté; nuls contrats; nulles successions; nuls partages; nulles occupations qu'oysives; nul respect de parenté que commun; nuls vestemens; nulle agriculture; nul metal; nul usage de vin ou de bled. Les paroles mesmes qui signifient le mensonge, la trahison, la dissimulation, l'avarice, l'envie, la detraction, le pardon, inouies. Combien trouveroit il la republique qu'il a imaginée, esloignée de cette perfection: *virī a diīs recentēs*.¹⁴⁴

In the list of negatives that makes up the perfection of this 'nation', we are told that there is 'nul nom de magistrat, ny de supériorité politique'. This appearance of *politique* attached to 'supériorité', in a list of things that are not present in a perfect republic, locates the term in the register of the real and imperfect, recalling the phrase from III.8 quoted above: 'propre à un estat trouble et malade'. Are we to then understand that *politique* is implicitly Greek and explicitly corrupt, and that a happy *police* would not be governed by this difficult term, as the New World is not? But the dialogue with Plato in 'Des Cannibales' is counterbalanced by the reported discussions of life in the New World, where the ancient and new are both contrasted and overlapping (for example, Montaigne suggests towards the end that the language of the new world resembles Greek).¹⁴⁵ This mitigates the sense that knowledge of the new world can be a corrective on the old, and the idea of perfection fades, until the

¹⁴³ For example, one of Pasquier's other *Pourparlers* is a conversation between Alexander the Great and Rabelais. See Pasquier, *Pourparlers*, pp. 186-203.

¹⁴⁴ Montaigne, pp. 212-23.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 220.

chapter concludes with what seems like a joke: ‘Tout cela ne va pas trop mal: mais quoy? Ils ne portent point de haut de chausses’.¹⁴⁶ From ‘cette perfection’ to ‘pas trop mal’: the dialogues of ‘Des Cannibales’ offer a perfect *police* as an idea or a thought experiment, removed from real experience which can only really be ‘pas trop mal’. Within all this, the term *politique* might best be read as a problem or ‘trouble’ that Montaigne is annexing in discursive space. It is more problem than solution – in contrast to what Budé, Le Caron, and Pasquier (at least in 1562) imply in their uses of the term. Montaigne occupies a middle ground between the younger and the older Pasquier, in which alternatives, counter-narratives, perfections, and productive conversations survive, but where the term *politique* carries with it shades of discord and dissatisfaction.

In another later chapter, ‘De la Vanité’, in a discussion of his reluctant participation in public service, Montaigne returns to Plato, referring to him as the ‘maistre ouvrier en tout gouvernement politique’ but follows this with another striking negative construction, that is, ‘[Platon] ne laissa de s’en abstenir’:

La philosophie politique aura bel accuser la bassesse et sterilité de mon occupation, si j’en puis une fois prendre le goust, comme luy. Je suis de cet avis, que la plus honorable vacation est de servir au publiq et estre utile à beaucoup. *Fructus enim ingenii et virtutis omnisque praestantiae tum maximus accipitur, cum in proximum quemque confertur.* Pour mon regard je m'en despars: partie par conscience (car par où je vois le poix qui touche telles vacations, je vois aussi le peu de moyen que j'ay d'y fournir; et Platon, maistre ouvrier en tout gouvernement politique, ne laissa de s'en abstenir), partie par poltronerie.¹⁴⁷

Here, by implication Montaigne is tacitly portraying himself as a kind of minor ‘ouvrier en tout gouvernement politique’, who, like Plato, has removed himself from pursuing such work (‘telles vacations’) out of both modesty and cowardice (this

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 221.

¹⁴⁷ Montaigne, pp. 996-97.

contrasts with Budé’s account of how Alexander was advised to ‘diligemment vacquer à la doctrine morale & politique’).¹⁴⁸ The term *politique* is associated with public service in this passage in ‘De la vanité’, but the work of writing about it is dislocated from actually *doing* it, unlike in the passage praising Tacitus in ‘De l’art de conférer’. In Montaigne, the boundaries and potential points of overlap between real and ideal practice are thus tested and twisted in some of the few passages where the adjective *politique* appears. Much has been made (not least by Montaigne himself) of the *Essais* as a kind of extended dialogue between various selves, between texts, authors, ideas, and so on.¹⁴⁹ Perhaps they thus represent a survival of the principles of discussion and of a convivial humanist ideal of conversation, enabled by his so-called retirement from certain kinds of politics even as he continued his political career in the 1580s in various roles from Mayor of Bordeaux to general go-between between warring princes.¹⁵⁰ Montaigne’s standing to one side – however performative, or rhetorical – governs the way I treat his work in this thesis. Montaigne and his *Essais* are implicated in, and yet eccentric to, the uses of *politique* that made it so ‘key’ in writing during the Wars of Religion. Perhaps Montaigne’s ‘retreat’ from politics was not so much that as a strategic retreat from *politiques*.

¹⁴⁸ On ‘retrait’ in Montaigne, see John O’Brien, ‘Retrait’, in *Montaigne politique*, pp. 203-222. On Montaigne’s version of prudent political engagement, see also Ulrich Langer, *Vertu du Discours, discours de la vertu: Littérature et philosophie morale au XVI^e siècle en France* (Geneva: Droz, 1999), pp. 161-79, and ‘Montaigne’s political and religious context’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Montaigne*, ed. by Ulrich Langer (Cambridge: CUP, 2005). See also Richard Scholar, ‘Reasons for Holding Back in Two Essays by Montaigne’, in *The Emergence of Impartiality*, pp. 65-86. Many writers have attempted to plot the intricacies of Montaigne’s political stance, and his career; recent works beyond O’Brien, Langer, include Géralde Nakam, *Montaigne et son temps: les événements et les essais: L’histoire, la vie, le livre* (Paris: Gallimard, 1993), George Hoffmann, *Montaigne’s Career* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), and Philippe Desan, *Montaigne: Une biographie politique* (Paris: Jacob, 2014). That the connections between Montaigne’s life, his writing, and the world in which he lived and wrote, are hard to grasp and the object of ceaseless critical revision, perhaps demonstrates the success of the strategies mapped out by O’Brien in ‘Retrait’.

¹⁴⁹ See Terence Cave, *How to read Montaigne* (London: Granta, 2007), pp. 96-105.

¹⁵⁰ Montaigne’s supposed retirement, his reluctance, and his abstentions, could be in tacit dialogue with Rabelais’s discussion of different kinds of ‘retraictz’ in *Gargantua*; whether ‘retrait’ means ‘privy’ for Montaigne at any point would be interesting to consider.

Overall, in La Noue's *Discours*, and in Montaigne's *Essais* we see the instability of the term *politique* and its referents, which in adjectival form retain associations with 'loix' and 'gouvernement', and gain new associations with concepts ('concorde', 'supériorité') and authors (Tacitus). The substantive noun is rare in these works despite its generous post-hoc application to the authors discussed, but we see clearly in La Noue a concern about new and different names given to members of the community. By contrast, in Montaigne's report of the New World there is 'nul nom de magistrat', whereas for Le Caron the *Magistrat* had been part of a *politique* solution. In the context of the civil wars, plurality remains a key part of the term *politique* and its potential applications, but conversation is less productive, more negatively framed, and takes place in the shadow of the 'injures' bemoaned by La Noue.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have suggested that over the course of the century the term *politique* is itself a tool of generic division and synthesis; a word of power that could potentially manifest in a powerful person; a word that is always essentially plural, operating across discourses, in dialogue, and managing various parts and systems holding the body politic together (or not, as increasingly proved to be the case). The term *politique*, from its uses in the early sixteenth century in prose categorised as humanist (Rabelais, Budé), was connected to an intricate network of interpretive practices and possibilities. The descent into uncontrollable insults and sub-divisions of social categories has been viewed as evidence that any hope of Rabelais's Thelemite spirit finding real-life application was entirely and forever extinguished by the end of the religious wars; Salmon, moreover, writes of the sixteenth century as the slow destruction of 'that humanist ideal whereby a highly educated élite might participate in an enlightened

administration'.¹⁵¹ Is the term *politique*, then, a vector in a story of disappointment? Did the religious wars sever a connection between the ideal and the real in uses of the term *politique*? In the chapters that follow this one, I argue, rather, that the impulse towards reform, re-construction, and re-shaping of the political landscape is ever-present around uses of the term *politique*, even if the mutation inherent to the plurality of this keyword appears to produce more monsters than heroes. In this way, as I suggested at the opening, the term *politique* is continually 'new' even if also produced by a series of long-term developments in language and thought. First, we turn to would-be 'heroes', in Le Roy's and Bodin's articulations of adjectival and substantive *politiques* who offer resolution – even salvation – as opposed to destruction, and whose uses are closer in some ways to the constellation established in this pre-history than those that came later. Above all, they continue the conversation about *science politique* present in Budé, and re-shape their own substantive *politique* fixers who have similar powers but apparently different intentions to those imagined by Budé and Le Caron.

¹⁵¹ Miernowski, "'Politique" comme injure', pp. 353-56; Salmon, 'Cicero and Tacitus', p. 331.

– Chapter Two –

Les Sages Politiques?
Jean Bodin and Loys Le Roy

At the beginning of the civil wars, *politique* referred to the connections between different kinds of thought concerning government, and the mediation of a successful outcome. The noun and adjective were beginning to gain prominence, for example in the dialogues of Pasquier and Le Caron, where a character named Politic featured as a model for the facilitation of the best kinds of government. Following the outbreak of civil war, the fall of Michel de L'Hospital, and the rise of the Protestant and Catholic rival factions, uses of *politique* and the encounters they facilitated were more ambiguous, more conflicted, and more urgent. If we ask again where sixteenth-century readers would come across the word *politique*, the answer is that after *c.* 1570 they would find it under pressure, continually 'constructed and undone'.¹⁵² In other words, from this time, *politique* was a keyword of political and polemical writing. This was compounded by the massacres of Saint Bartholomew's Day, the loudest and bloodiest manifestation of civil war trauma. The next two chapters concern in different ways responses to the localised traumas of 1572, in a series of intellectual contexts both broad and highly specific. I begin here by looking at two authors who inherited the intellectual mantle of Budé, and who were similar in profile to Le Caron and Pasquier in that they were legally trained, historically minded, and held various public offices. These authors are Jean Bodin (1529/30-1596) and Loys Le Roy (1510-1577), and the texts in question are Bodin's *Six livres de la republique* (1576) and Le Roy's translation and commentary on *Les Politiques d'Aristote* (1568; reprinted 1576).¹⁵³ In

¹⁵² Kenny, *Word Histories*, p. 20.

¹⁵³ Jehasse writes that Bodin and Le Roy were part of the French 'grande génération humaniste'. See Jean Jehasse, 'Loys Le Roy, maître et émule de Jean Bodin', in *Etudes sur Etienne Dolet: Le théâtre au XVI^e siècle: Le Forez, Le Lyonnais et L'histoire du livre, publiées à la mémoire de Claude Longeon*, ed. by Gabriel-André Pérouse (Geneva: Droz, 1993), pp. 251-64 (p. 251).

their works we find the term *politique* undergoing a moment of robust positive construction. Bodin and Le Roy write that they are mobilising their version of *discours politiques* in the interests of the threatened kingdom. We will see that these authoritative gestures, made not in dialogue but in treatises and translations, invest the abstract noun and the masculine substantive with considerable power; the payoff for this is that the idealised form of conversation evoked in the previous chapter is not replicated here. Instead, the authors manage their different sources, and their knowledge of the different ‘languages of politics’, to assert a particular and exclusive way of thinking about politics, and of being *politique*.

Budé wrote that an education in *science politique* leads to the surest kind of prudence and that this is the best way of training ‘les gens saiges’:

Ce que tesmoigne Philippe, disant à son fils Alexandre, qui failloit qu’il fust instruit en ladicte science politique [...] Vray est, que usaige & experience faict les gens saiges, quand ilz ont bon entendement. Mais la prudence acquise par doctrine, est plus seure.¹⁵⁴

The structure of this chapter follows the progression in Budé’s second sentence: from *science* and *doctrine*, via *usage*, *experience*, and *prudence*, to *les gens saiges* who are named *politique*. John O’Brien writes of Charron that ‘[he] is one of a number of authors in the late Renaissance who are faced with the troubling difficulty of attempting to assert a proper sphere of action for the prudent man and his special cognitive powers’.¹⁵⁵ Here, I argue that the term *politique* is used to refer both to a version of that ‘prudent man’, and his ‘special cognitive powers’. I show the term operating in a semantic field alongside *prudence*, *sagesse*, *doctrine*, *science*, and *philosophie*, which locate the term as the referent of certain kinds of knowledge, leading to the articulation of a powerful figure,

¹⁵⁴ Budé, p. 118. (See further analysis of this excerpt in Chapter One).

¹⁵⁵ John O’Brien, ‘Aristotle’s Prudence, and Pyrrho’s’, in *Au-delà de la Poétique: Aristote et la littérature de la Renaissance / Beyond the Poetics: Aristotle and Early Modern Literature*, ed. by Ullrich Langer (Geneva: Droz, 2002), pp. 35-45 (p. 36).

le politique. In Chapter One we saw earlier examples of writers inventing characters to test out – or sometimes to parody – the limitations and possibilities for people who advise and instruct the monarch. In Le Roy’s commentary on Aristotle, and in Bodin’s *Republique*, among the roles and personas identified as useful or pernicious for statecraft, the *politique* emerges as a powerful, even visionary, figure, invested with all the various kinds of understanding that meet in *la politique*.

The narrative of special (or terrible) men emerging from a fertile (or corrupting) landscape of texts and ideas is, of course, common in historical writing.¹⁵⁶ In this chapter I show how the process of the emergence of special men to govern the troubled kingdom was imagined in mid-sixteenth-century France: a self-conscious construction involving no small amount of self-fashioning, where the roles of various *politiques* from Plato to Aristotle and beyond are problematised and reformulated, to the exclusion of other things that *politique* could have meant, and of certain people who by definition could not then qualify as *politique*.¹⁵⁷ The aptitude of certain kinds of ‘special’ men, born of a ‘special’ intellectual landscape, for prudent political action, is shown not to be accidental or inevitable, but – much like meaning itself – at least partly engineered in writing, and a kind of politics in itself.

1. The Republique and the Politiques d’Aristote

Le Roy and Bodin (especially Bodin) are often evoked (and often together), in discussions of sixteenth-century political thought, and in such discussions often

¹⁵⁶ Richard Tuck’s book on philosophy and government in the early modern period portrays Grotius, Selden, and Hobbes (all born in the 1580s) as the products (and fulfilment) of a European intellectual tradition that includes in its margins the works I discuss in this chapter. See Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*.

¹⁵⁷ Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

referred to as *politiques*.¹⁵⁸ They were also read together; the Cambridge scholar Gabriel Harvey wrote in the 1580s that you could not step into a study in that university town without finding its occupant reading either Bodin's *De Republica* (his self-translation of the *Republique* into Latin) or Le Roy's translation of Aristotle (in fact, Harvey wrote that people were reading Le Roy's 'expositions' of Aristotle, placing Le Roy in a kind of 'first author' position).¹⁵⁹ Their works represent a major engagement with Aristotle, whose *Politics* would have been the primary association of the term *politique* in erudite discourse before the civil war. Both state that they aim to update the discipline of politics for their war-torn age.¹⁶⁰ As prominent writers on politics, who make the term *politique* prominent within their works, Bodin and Le Roy facilitated the beginning of the life of *politique* as a keyword. The status of this term as a keyword in erudite discourse is demonstrated by the proliferation of other texts in the years after the publication of Bodin's treatise and Le Roy's translation with the word in its title.¹⁶¹

The emphasis on the term *politique* (and in some cases its Latin equivalent) was part of a wider set of changes in education and in thought, influenced by developments in legal studies and the rise of the discipline of history.¹⁶² Bodin and Le Roy's thinking

¹⁵⁸ Marie-Luce Demonet also refers to Bodin and Le Roy, alongside Pasquier, as the “vrais” *politiques* of the period, in ‘Le Politique “nécessaire” de Montaigne’, p. 35.

¹⁵⁹ Quoted in Howell A. Lloyd in ‘Introduction’, in *The Reception of Bodin*, ed. by Howell A. Lloyd (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), pp. 1-20 (p. 2).

¹⁶⁰ Their uses support Demonet's view that uses of *politique* in this period arise at the intersection of the reception of classical texts with current events. Demonet, ‘Quelques avatars du mot “politique”’, p. 33.

¹⁶¹ Such as Grimaudet's *Opuscules politiques* (1579), or La Noue's *Discours politiques et militaires* (1587). Beyond this, Justus Lipsius's *Politicorum sive Civilis doctrinae libri sex* (1589) shows the new prominence of the *politicus* word group beyond French linguistic or geographical boundaries. See *Unmasking the Realities of Power*, ed. by De Bom.

¹⁶² Werner L. Gundersheimer, *The Life and Works of Louis Le Roy* (Geneva: Droz, 1966), p. 47. See also Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities: Education and the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth and Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London: Duckworth, 1986). On history, see Huppert, and Anthony Grafton, *What was History?* (Cambridge: CUP, 2007, repr. 2012). On law, see Ian Maclean, *Interpretation and Meaning in the Renaissance: The Case of Law* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992). On the connections between developments in legal and historical approaches, see Julian H. Franklin, *Jean Bodin and the Sixteenth-Century Revolution in the Methodology of Law and History* (New York and London: Columbia University Press,

was shaped by the violence of their time (from the more-or-less Catholic position from which they wrote), and the intellectual possibilities offered by a century or more of European Renaissance. They synthesise and compare ideas and anecdotes to offer various kinds of *politiques* to their reader, as a form of textual diplomacy in troubled times. In Bodin and Le Roy the term *politique* operates as an antidote to chaos and conflict; the elaborately ordered societies potentially made possible by elaborately ordered *politique* thinking have little in common with the reality of France in the grip of civil war, and yet these texts announce themselves as insistent interventions in that reality.

Who then were these men who intervened thus, leaving room (as we shall see) for their own inclusion in a *politique* pantheon? Loys Le Roy (1510-77), disciple of Guillaume Budé and inheritor of Denis Lambin's chair in Greek at the *Collège royal*, published his major original work, *De la vicissitude ou de la variété des choses en l'univers* in 1575, two years before his death.¹⁶³ Le Roy was Budé's pupil and protégé – his first published work, the *Vita Budaei*, was Budé's funeral oration. Like Bodin, Le Roy rose to prominence from relatively low beginnings.¹⁶⁴ He studied theology in Paris, and then law in Toulouse. He was secretary to the Bishop of Rieux, and sent on various diplomatic missions, before being given an office in the Paris *Parlement* in 1559. In the 1550s he devoted his attentions to the project of translating a series of ancient Greek texts, such as Plato's *Symposium* (1558), and in the 1560s, alongside translations of

1963), and Kelley, *The Beginnings of Ideology*, and *The Foundations of Modern Historical Scholarship: Language, Law, and History in the French Renaissance* (New York & London: Columbia University Press, 1970).

¹⁶³ On Le Roy, see *Loys Le Roy: Renaissance & vicissitude du monde*, ed. by Daniel Duport (Caen: Presses universitaires de Caen, 2011). Le Roy has been the object of just three single-authored monographs in the last 150 years: Abraham Becker, *Un humaniste au XVI^e siècle: Loys le Roy (Ludovicus regius) de Coutances* (Paris: Lecène, Oudin et Ci, 1896), Gundersheimer, *The Life and Works of Louis Le Roy*, and Enzo Sciacca, *Umanesimo e scienza politica nella Francia del XVI secolo: Loys Le Roy* (Florence: Olschki, 2007). On Le Roy and Budé, see Katherine Macdonald, *Biography in Early Modern France* (London: Legenda, 2007).

¹⁶⁴ Gundersheimer, p. 10.

Xenophon, and Aristotle's *Politics*, he wrote a number of political pamphlets. One of these was devoted to praise of 'l'art politique': *De l'origine, antiquité, progres, excellence, & utilité de l'art Politique* (1567). This text was used as the preface (with a new title) to his translation of Aristotle's *Politics* in the 1568 and 1576 editions. The new title for the pamphlet-preface to the translation of Aristotle, reads:

De la Politique et des legislatureurs plus renommez qui l'ont pratiquee, et des auteurs illustres qui en ont escrit, specialemet de Platon & Aristote, avec le sommaire & conference de leurs Politiques, traduittes de Grec en François par Loys le Roy.¹⁶⁵

This summarizes Le Roy's concerns in the translation and paratexts: to define politics and describe those who practise it, to give an updated account of political theory in the French language, and to offer a synthesised reading of ancient authorities on the subject.

Jean Bodin received his early education from Carmelite monks in Angers, before moving to the Sorbonne under the protection of the Bishop of Angers in 1540. Like Le Roy, he studied and practised law in Toulouse, before returning to Paris in 1560 and embarking upon a career in the *Parlement*. In the 1570s he was attached to the household of the Duc d'Anjou (the king's youngest brother – in this context he was associated with what was later known as a *politique* conspiracy) and represented the third estate at the *Estats de Blois* in 1576.¹⁶⁶ He was a controversial figure throughout his career, and likely a heterodox thinker. His written output consisted of a number of lengthy treatises, mostly in Latin; his first published work was an oration on the importance of humanist education, *Oratio de instituenda in republica juventute ad senatum*

¹⁶⁵ *Les Politiques d'Aristote, tr. en fr., avec expositions, par L. le Roy* (Paris: Vascovan, 1576), p. a.iiij. All further references to Le Roy's translation and commentary will be to this edition. I am using the 1576 edition in order to look at the text as it was printed in the year of the publication of Bodin's *Six livres*.

¹⁶⁶ The Duke of Anjou's circle have been described variously as *malcontents* and *politiques*. See Holt, *The Duke of Anjou and the Politique Struggle*. The origin of association between this group and the term *politique* is in Simon Goulart's *Memoires*; see Chapter Three, pp. 139-40, n. 248.

populumque Tolosatem (Address to the Senate and People of Toulouse on the Education of Youth in the Commonwealth, 1559), followed by his famous method of history, the *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem* (1566). In 1578 he published a textbook of legal methodology, *Juris universi distributio*. He is best known, though, for his vernacular works, a treatise on sorcery (*De la démonomanie des sorciers*, 1580), and for the *Republique*.

The *Six livres de la République* are an enormous work that somewhat defy generic categorisation, since they encompass economic and constitutional theory, critiques of ancient and modern philosophy, historical reflections, and Biblical commentary. The originality and influence of his theories of citizenship and sovereignty are well documented.¹⁶⁷ In the preface to the *Republique*, Bodin writes that his purpose is to ‘esclaircir’ a field (*la science politique*) currently steeped in ignorance, and that he is writing in the vernacular because the civil wars have pushed France to a state of barbarism that the Latin tongue could not describe.¹⁶⁸ The famous theory of sovereignty is articulated in I, 8. The lengthy text around this chapter is a blueprint for the good exercise of sovereign power. Each of the six books has a different focus.

Briefly: Book I establishes theoretical principles; Book II looks at the different kinds of

¹⁶⁷ There is much scholarship devoted to Bodin’s political theory. See in particular Simone Goyard-Fabre, *Jean Bodin et le droit de la République* (Paris: PUF, 1990); *Politique, droit et théologie chez Bodin, Grotius et Hobbes*, ed. by Luc Foisneau (Paris: Kimé, 1997); *Bodin a 400 anni dalla morte: bilancio storiografico e prospettive di ricerca*, ed. by A. E. Baldini, *Il Pensiero politico*, 30.2 (Firenze: Olschki, 1997); Jean-Fabien Spitz, *Bodin et la souveraineté* (Paris: PUF, 1998); and Cesare Vasoli, *Armonia e giustizia: Studi sulle idee filosofiche di Jean Bodin* (Florence: Olschki, 2008). Franklin writes: ‘The account of sovereignty in the work of Jean Bodin was a major event in the development of European political thought’; see Julian Franklin, ‘Sovereignty and the mixed Constitution: Bodin and his critics’, in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought*, ed. by J.H. Burns (Cambridge: CUP, 1992), pp. 298-328 (p. 298). See also Goyard-Fabre, esp. p. 9.

More general recent works on Bodin include: Marie-Dominique Couzinet, *Jean Bodin* (Paris: Menini, 2001); Julian Franklin, *Jean Bodin* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), and *The Reception of Bodin*, ed. by Lloyd. See also Turchetti’s extensive introduction and notes in Jean Bodin, *Les six livres de la république: De republica libri sex / livre premier liber 1*, ed. by Mario Turchetti and Nicolas de Araujo (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2013).

¹⁶⁸ Jean Bodin, *Les Six Livres de la République*, ed. by Christiane Frémont, Marie-Dominique Couzinet, and Henri Rochais, 6 vols (Paris: Fayard, 1986), V, p. 14 and p. 10. All further references to the *Republique* will be to this facsimile edition.

rule (popular, aristocratic, monarchy, tyranny); Book III the role of officials (especially *magistrats*) and institutions; Book IV the rise and fall of various kinds of Republics; Book V examines laws and penalties; and Book VI discusses censorship, state finances, monarchy as the best form of government, and the underlying divine harmony that, according to Bodin, governs the universe.¹⁶⁹

This chapter explores texts placed explicitly in the political theory canon (Bodin, and Aristotle via Le Roy). Within the broader structure of my thesis, it is the point at which I look in most detail at theoretical inheritances and the ways in which classical sources inflect uses of the word *politique*, as well as how these authors build on, and divert, these inheritances. Returning to the question of where a sixteenth-century reader, or a reader of sixteenth-century texts, would have come across the word *politique*, she would have found it in these texts as a means of referring to other texts, a means of defining a discipline and categorising knowledge, and embodied in a figure whose expertise in the former made him (and it had to be a him) uniquely suited to the challenges of government in the context of civil war and political uncertainty. I begin by showing what was new about these uses of *politique* and attendant conceptions of what politics could and should be and do. The authors assert the novelty of their *politiques* by means of detailed comparison of (and with) various sources ancient and modern. Aristotle figures as both exemplary *politique* and inadequate *politique*: it is with and against him that Bodin and Le Roy fashion their own skilled *politique* negotiator and rule-maker. This skilled *politique* himself is governed by prudence; I explore the differences in their conceptions of prudent *politique* knowledge in terms of how their views are inflected by creative, reactive, or conservative impulses. The last part of the

¹⁶⁹ On Bodin's theology see Marie-Dominique Couzinet, 'La Logique divine dans les *Six livres de la République* de Jean Bodin', in *Theologie et Politique chez Bodin, Grotius et Hobbes*, pp. 47-70. See also Ann Blair, *The Theater of Nature: Bodin and Renaissance Science* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).

chapter is concerned with the masculine substantive, which absorbs the power of the abstract and adjectival uses. What do *politiques* do in Le Roy and Bodin, how do they do it, and who, indeed, might they be?

2. Introducing La Science Politique

I begin by discussing how Le Roy and Bodin explicitly define their work as belonging to a *politique* field of enquiry in introductory and paratextual material. In defining their work as *politique* they also work to define the conceptual associations of *politique* as adjective and abstract noun. In doing so, they claim a certain amount of novelty for their respective enterprises, but also situate their work within their broader intellectual and political moment, and in a longer history of political thought and *praxis*.

Of the hundreds of instances of substantive and adjectival uses of *politique* in Le Roy's translation of Aristotle, and the *c.* 50 uses in Bodin's *République*, the term is particularly prominent in paratextual material, especially in the prefaces.¹⁷⁰ In Bodin, the word *politique* is also used more frequently in the opening to various chapters than in the body of the arguments, in the kind of integrated preface that Genette describes as characteristic of pre-modern writing.¹⁷¹ These prefatory uses define the text as *politique*, and are also a privileged space in which the author makes claims about what is and should be designated as the right uses of *politique*. Bodin writes that his text focuses on 'plusieurs questions Politiques, qui me semblent necessaires d'estre bien entendues' (p. 11). The five uses of the term in the preface are clustered around this

¹⁷⁰ Mario Turchetti says there are more than fifty in, 'Bodin as Self-Translator of his *République*: Why the Omission of "politicus" and Allied Terms from the Latin Version?', in *Why Concepts Matter: Translating Social and Political Thought*, ed. by Martin J. Burke and Melvin Richter (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2012), 109-18 (p.112). I have counted forty-seven: six in the *Préface* (pp. 11-12); twelve in Book I (pp. 31, 36, 52, 107, 109, 179) two in Book II (pp. 40, 80); one in Book III (p. 45); eight in Book IV (pp. 98, 101, 109, 149, 152, 153, 212); 13 in book V (pp. 11, 19, 41, 42, 43, 67, 80, 98, 125, 141, 156, 165); and 8 in book VI (pp. 35, 82, 102, 163, 196, 234, 257, 261).

¹⁷¹ Gérard Genette, *Seuils* (Paris: Seuil, 1987), pp. 7-8.

statement, on this page, and are all adjectival ('questions politiques'; 'discours politiques'; 'science politique', 'philosophie politique'), using *politique* to qualify kinds of knowledge and ways of expressing thought.

Le Roy's preface defines his work as a meditation on various *politiques* ('la science politique'; 'la politique'; 'les Politiques d'Aristote'), and uses the term to define an area of study that itself defines and delineates the related landscapes of knowledge and power, so that the word *politique* performs the action that it describes. We see this particularly at the close of the preface, in which *la politique*, quasi-personified, appears at the head of an extremely long sentence describing how 'she' governs all constituent members of a community:

Elle nourrit les enfans, eleve le coeur des jeunes hommes, adoucit les molestes des plus aagez, soustient les pauvres, conserve les riches, plaist au bons, contente les sages, guide les magistrats, conduit les Roys et Empereurs, regit les estats, balance les superieurs et les inferieurs, orne la prosperité et console l'adversité (p. biv).

Le Roy uses the term more as a noun, Bodin as an adjective. This is likely because Le Roy is explicitly trying to inaugurate the 'restitution' of politics as 'mere de disciplines, maistress des moeurs' (p. aiiij^v). Bodin's *Republique*, meanwhile, is a work of global scope and ambition, and attempts to correct and adjust the ways in which various spheres of expertise are *politique*.

An important claim made by both authors is for the novelty of their works and their relevance for the contemporary moment. Bodin justifies his enterprise by suggesting that the body of existing 'discours Politiques' needs updating and extending, 'car Platon et Aristote ont tranché si court leurs discours Politiques, qu'ils ont plustost laissé un appetit' (p. 11). In his preface to the *Politiques d'Aristote*, Le Roy similarly suggests that *la politique* refers to a discipline in need of greater attention; he opens by

praising the successes of his age (the Discoveries; the ‘restitution des lettres’), but then laments the lack of attention that ‘la politique’ has received, despite its central, governing importance. As such, both emphasise their attempts to do something new with something very old: Le Roy is helping to restore *la politique* to its rightful place in the intellectual canon by elucidating Aristotle’s thorny text; Bodin is picking up where Aristotle and Plato left off. They were also, in a sense, picking up where Budé left off. For Budé, the lessons of the ancients are for the moderns to absorb and implement, without direct acknowledgement of the enormous historical gulf between Alexander and François I; Bodin and Le Roy, by contrast, are painfully aware of contemporary demands on political thought and action. Budé also emphasised the role of the teacher, and of teaching. Late in his own life, Le Roy also became a teacher, inheriting Lambin’s Chair in Greek at the *Collège royal*. In his inaugural lecture he announced his intention to profess not Greek but ‘politica’, pertaining to matters (‘res’) which are serious or pressing (‘graves’), important (‘praeclaras’), and have been neglected (‘omissas negligentur’); he expresses this view again, and more fully, in his translation of Aristotle.¹⁷² Did all this amount to a new politics, or a restoration of politics?

In articulating their sense of what *politique* was and should be, Bodin and Le Roy were using and responding to new methods of reading, and of organising information and argument, influenced both by Ramist practical methodology and by commonplacing techniques.¹⁷³ In the academy, developments in teaching practice and in thought

¹⁷² Loys Le Roy, *Prolegomena Politica. Oratio ab eo habita Parisiis inito professionis Regiae, in ennaratione Politicorum Aristoteles* (Paris: Morel, 1575), p. 10.

¹⁷³ Marie-Dominique Couzinet, *Histoire et méthode à la Renaissance: Une lecture de la Methodus de Jean Bodin* (Paris: Vrin, 1996), p. 21; Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), p. 154, n. 25; Francis Goyet, *Le sublime du “lieu commun”*: *L’invention rhétorique dans l’Antiquité et à la Renaissance* (Paris: Champion, 1996), p. 667. See also Ann Blair, *Too Much to Know*:

resulted in ‘a constant agitation of a group of interrelated terms: teaching (*doctrina*); learning (*disciplina*); method (*methodus*); art (*ars*); and science (*scientia*)’.¹⁷⁴ All of these became associated with the abstract substantive *politique* or were used in conjunction with the adjectival form. New uses of *politique* were born of this ‘constant agitation’, particularly in the domains of law, and of history.

Like Le Caron (who published a summarising treatise on French law in 1587) and Pasquier, Bodin and Le Roy were trained jurists; Bodin published a legal textbook shortly after the *Republique*.¹⁷⁵ The figures of *jurisconsulte* and *politique* were already associated in Latin legal discourse; in his *Commentarius de jurisprudentia Muciana* (1559), Baudouin writes ‘Jurisconsultus hoc est Homo Politicus’.¹⁷⁶ We also saw in Chapter One that Budé associated *droit* and *politique*. In Bodin’s *Republique*, the substantive *politique* emerges alongside and against the figures of *jurisconsulte* and *legislateur* in particular. Bodin’s second preface to the *Republique*, written (in Latin) for the third edition (1578) is, indeed, more focused on the figure of *jurisconsultus* than on the *politicus*.¹⁷⁷ This second preface describes how the lawyer must make a special effort to work out how to situate himself, and be situated in (and by) social mores, citing a legal commonplace that could be roughly translated as ‘who makes laws for the lawyers?’: ‘Aut illut juriscosultorum carmen, HOC JURE UTITUR, qui quo jure utitur

Managing Scholarly Information Before the Modern Age (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2010). Clearly, although commonplacing provided a base structural form for experiences as diffuse as ‘thought’, ‘memory’, and ‘reading’, (as Moss argues), there was a great diversity of methods and practices in this period (as indeed Moss shows in *Printed Commonplace Books*). Indicating Bodin’s particularity within the broader structure, Maclean refers to him as a ‘systematiser’, in *Interpretation and Meaning*, p. 26, and p. 122. On Bodin and Ramus, see Couzinet, ‘On Bodin’s Method’ in *The Reception of Bodin*, pp. 39-65, and Vasoli, pp. 45-46 and p. 90.

¹⁷⁴ Walter J. Ong, *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 156.

¹⁷⁵ Bodin aspired unsuccessfully to a professorship of law in Toulouse; see Franklin, *Jean Bodin and the Sixteenth-Century Revolution in the Methodology of Law and History*, p. 63.

¹⁷⁶ Quoted in Kelley, *The Beginnings of Ideology*, p. 203.

¹⁷⁷ See the translation by Mario Turchetti and Sara Miglietti in Bodin, *Republique* (2014), pp. 126-41.

nesciat?'.¹⁷⁸ Since Bodin later announces that his intention is to follow 'les reigles politiques' (p. 30), perhaps it is *politiques* who make law for the lawyers. The legal context is especially privileged in the semantic field that defines and is defined by the adjective *politique*, in Bodin's work. In this way, he introduces and uses the term *politique* to do work that Le Roy explicitly describes in his preface: to regulate and direct other disciplines relating to the construction and maintenance of republics, particularly law: 'c'est elle [la politique] sur laquelle toutes autres loix particulieres, locales ou temporelles, doivent estre dressees, reiglees, moderees, exposees' (p. aiiij). In linking *politique* so specifically with legal expertise and practice, Le Roy and Bodin were both replicating longstanding and obvious connections between law and government, and implicitly creating a new, strong link between those who wielded power and the members of the growing and increasingly prominent legal profession.

The newness of Bodin's and Le Roy's *politiques* is, however, really in their presentism; their 'nowness'. This is born of their attention to historical context and particularly to their contemporary moment and its historicity. Like Pasquier, too, Bodin and Le Roy were instrumental in the emergence of history as a distinct discipline; Bodin with his method of history, the *Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem* (1566), and Le Roy with his pamphlet on history and his major work, *De la vicissitude*, which articulates a broad-ranging historical vision.¹⁷⁹ For Bodin, the *Republique* is the fulfilment of his proposed historical method. In the *Methodus*, he writes that history explains the present and enables us to deduce what the future will be ('ex quibus non solum praesentia

¹⁷⁸ Bodin, *Republique* (2014), p. 135.

¹⁷⁹ See Philippe Desan, *Naissance de la methode: Machiavel, La Ramée, Bodin, Montaigne, Descartes* (Paris: Nizet, 1987), and Couzinet, *Histoire et methode à la Renaissance*.

commodè explicantur, sed etiam futura colliguntur’).¹⁸⁰ The printing history of Le Roy’s *oeuvre*, moreover, suggests a particular elision of *politique* and *histoire*; *Consideration sur l’histoire* was subsequently printed with *L’Excellence de l’art politique*, a joint edition that was re-issued in 1570, 1571, 1576, and 1599. Le Roy similarly states that history will ‘instruire le present et le futur’.¹⁸¹ He refers to his commentary as ‘une histoire politique’ in the *Argument* to Book II of the *Politiques d’Aristote*:

A ceste cause j’ay dressé une histoire politique, un recueil de toutes sortes, anciens & modernes, dont j’ay peu avoir la cognoissance, par lecture ou par autre recherche, le tout pour adjoûter aux Politiques de Platon & Aristote, comme chose tresnecessaire à l’intelligence de leurs livres, et à la cognoissance de la faculté politique (pp. 65-66).

Le Roy is advancing a method (‘histoire politique’) that will enact a kind of knowledge transfer from one kind of ‘cognoissance’ to another; from ‘histoire politique’ to ‘faculté politique’. He makes his motivation for this explicit in his *Argument* to Book I, where he writes that he intends to bring together ancient and modern sources for the benefit of ‘l’oeuvre politique’: he writes of his ‘esperance de rendre ainsi l’oeuvre politique plus accomplie par la conference des choses anciennes et modernes en chacune espece de police’ (p. 2). The practical means of this ‘conference’ is his translation from ancient Greek into the vernacular, updating two millennia of political thought for ‘nostre aage et patrie’ (p. 2), demonstrating the roles accorded to history and contingency in his conception of *la politique*.¹⁸² Bodin’s preface is even more urgent about the contingent need for updated *politiques* in the contemporary moment of ‘barbarie causee par les

¹⁸⁰ Jean Bodin, ‘Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem’, in *Oeuvres philosophiques de Jean Bodin*, ed. by Pierre Mesnard (Paris: PUF, 1951), pp. 105-277 (p. 112).

¹⁸¹ Loys Le Roy, *Consideration sur l’histoire françoise, et l’universelle de ce Temps, dont les merveilles sont succinctement recitées* (Paris: Morel, 1567), p. Diiij.

¹⁸² This was a new enterprise, as Le Roy claimed, although it was not the first vernacular translation of Aristotle’s *Politics*: Nicolas d’Oresme translated William Moerbeke’s Latin version into French c. 1268. Between Oresme and Le Roy, the vast majority of translations and commentaries on Aristotle were into Latin, including Jacques Lefèvre d’Etaples’s groundbreaking translation that applied humanist philological practice to the original Greek for the first time. See Charles B. Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance* (Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1983), p. 36 and p. 44.

guerres civiles continues’: this ‘barbarie’ is his reason for writing in the vernacular, for all and any who want to see France flourish once more (p. 10).

In their different ways Bodin and Le Roy do turn away from the habits of other writers now considered to have been working on ‘politics’: instead of taking the education and action of the prince as their central focus, they both announce their intention to look at overarching systems of appropriate knowledge and action, and situate figures, such as the sovereign, the *jurisconsulte*, the *magistrat*, and the *politique* within these systems. These systems are defined by the abstract term *politique*: Bodin announces his intention to ‘suyvre les reigles Politiques’ in his treatise (I,1 p. 30); Le Roy refers to ‘la politique’ as ‘la principale reigle’ (p. biv). And these *politique* systems will be adjusted according to pressing contemporary needs, leading to a marriage between their theorisations of normative systems, and a contingent pragmatism. The apparent paradox between synthesis and historicism in their approaches to their source material is the product of this marriage. In what follows, I look at three major consequences of their claims for the power and relevance of the abstract *politique*. The first is the treatment of texts and ideas classified as *politique*, Aristotle’s in particular. The second is an increasing link between *politique*, *usage*, and *experience*; an intensification of the connection between *politique* and *prudence*. The third is the embodiment of these conceptual elements in a pragmatic agent, *le politique*.

3. Aristotle’s Politiques?

An important element of Le Roy’s and Bodin’s new or updated *politiques* is their treatment of texts and authors classified as *politique*. There is an element of self-fashioning at work here, as they define their own work in relation to what has come before (Bodin), and comment on and in some cases adjust earlier work (Le Roy’s

commentary does this most obviously and extensively, but Bodin consistently quotes, comments, and adjusts in the *Republique*). In this way they participate in the early modern contestation of the figure of the (political) philosopher, with particular attention to [his] socio-political role, and begin to make an argument about what their own contributions are.¹⁸³

The most frequent use of *politique* in Le Roy's translation is a plural: 'les Politiques d'Aristote', which appears on the title page and at the head of every other page in the body of the text. But Le Roy's *politiques* are not exclusively Aristotle's – they respond to a broad range of classical sources, of which the most important intertext is Plato's *Republic*. In assembling and critiquing such a broad range, Le Roy's *politiques* become something like his own. By translating into the vernacular and emphasising the needs of contemporary readers, Le Roy's *Politiques* thus place him within the *Pléiade* project of 'illustration de la langue française', as well as representing an early articulation of the *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* (latent in his references to 'conference des choses anciennes et modernes') – his gesture of using a chair in Greek to profess politics can also be understood as a 'modern' intervention within the nascent *querelle*.¹⁸⁴ Being tentatively 'modern' in 1576 does not entail rejection of the ancient; the critical relation to Aristotle, Plato, and others is one of productive tension.

Le Roy is 'modern' in the sense that Aristotle and Plato are only a beginning. On the page, Le Roy often out-writes Aristotle, with lengthy italicised commentary on a single

¹⁸³ See *The Philosopher in Early Modern Europe: The Nature of a Contested Identity*, ed. by Conal Condren, Stephen Gaukroger, and Ian Hunter (Cambridge: CUP, 2006).

¹⁸⁴ Duport, 'Introduction', p. 7; Anthony Grafton argues that Bodin and Le Roy's attitudes to history identify them as early examples of *Modernes*, see Grafton, p. 174. I discuss a potential sixteenth-century articulation of the *Querelle*, and the place of Le Roy's *De la vicissitude* therein, in 'A Sixteenth-century Modern? Loys Le Roy's *De la Vicissitude*', *Early Modern French Studies*, 37.2 (2015), 76-92.

sentence, so using Aristotle's precepts as a starting point rather than as a definitive statement. The outcome of the 'conference' of ancient and modern observations sometimes undermines Aristotle: for example, when Aristotle suggests in Book I that the Greeks are suited above all others to the practice of empire, Le Roy observes that Aristotle makes this claim through patriotism but that in fact Greece was colonised multiple times. The transition from Roman to Byzantine Empire is described as a 'translation' (p. 10) – an insight into Le Roy's view of his own activity of translation, of changing words or names, of bringing objects under the control of different regimes of language and thought.¹⁸⁵ The practice of translation and commentary had been a traditional use of Aristotle in Aristotle studies ('Aristotelianism') since the early Middle Ages.¹⁸⁶ Through his method of contextualising and synthesising, Le Roy's approach contrasts not so much with 'Aristotle', but with 'Aristotelians' working in the scholastic tradition in which philosophical validity was logically intuited rather than derived from context or experience.¹⁸⁷ In Le Roy, relevant experience and awareness of the contemporary moment are crucial for political excellence.

In the *Republique* Bodin manages a balance between announcing his originality and acknowledging his many influences.¹⁸⁸ Within this, Plato holds a special place for

¹⁸⁵ Sciacca gives a list of Le Roy's named sources, p. 136.

¹⁸⁶ Copenhaver and Schmitt agree that Renaissance philosophy was conducted within a fundamentally Aristotelian framework but that Aristotle's reputation was in decline in the period. Between 1500 and 1650 there were more than six thousand commentaries on various parts of the *Corpus Aristotelicum* written in Europe (though relatively few in the vernacular): see Brian P. Copenhaver, 'Aristotelianisms', in *The Columbia History of Western Philosophy*, ed. by Richard Popkin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance*; Heinrich Kuhn, 'Aristotelianism in the Renaissance', in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2005) <<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotelianism-renaissance>> [accessed 3 August 2016].

On Paris as the centre of efforts to 'reinterpret and reform Aristotelianism', see David Lines, 'Lefèvre and French Aristotelianism on the Eve of the Sixteenth Century', in *Der Aristotelismus in der Frühen Neuzeit – Kontinuität oder Wiederaneignung?* ed. by Günter Frank and Andreas Speer (Harrassowitz: Wiesbaden, 2007), pp. 273-89.

¹⁸⁷ See Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance*, p. 5.

¹⁸⁸ Lloyd describes Bodin as a 'prismatic agent' in the transmission of ideas. See Lloyd, 'Introduction', in *The Reception of Bodin*, p. 2. Bodin examines and re-calibrates ideas from Plato to Cicero to Aquinas to

Bodin as he does for *Le Roy*: the mathematical harmony to which Bodin aspires in Book VI (and which he presents as the ultimate aim of good government) bears testament to this. Bodin makes clear, however, that he considers the Romans to have come closest to achieving the kind of Republic he's interested in building (I, 1, p. 37).¹⁸⁹ Whether Bodin's *Politiques* are Aristotle's to any extent is a matter for debate; Bodin is remembered as outspokenly anti-Aristotelian but some critics emphasise his debts to the Stagirite.¹⁹⁰ Although Bodin makes clear and definitive breaks with Aristotle, like his later reader, Hobbes, he nonetheless manages and retains Aristotelian influences, as he constructs his own vision of politics.¹⁹¹

Bodin disagrees with Aristotle on several key points, notably on the relation between economics and politics (I, 1), on slavery (I, 5), and on citizenship (I, 6). He typically begins his chapters asserting that no writer (or, as we shall see below, no *politique*) has tackled the subject before, or asserting that Aristotle has done so mistakenly; *Polit. d'Aristote* appears very frequently in the margins of the early editions of the *Republique* and most of these uses of *politique* signal a correction or adjustment of Aristotle's principles. Thus Bodin highlights the distinctiveness of his own contribution to a long conversation about politics. But in these introductory moments his references to

Machiavelli. He was, as Skinner points out, also conversant with Stoic humanism; see *Foundations*, II, p. 284, and p. 279. See also Goyet, *Le sublime du lieu commun*, p. 670, and Tuck, p. 52.

¹⁸⁹ Bodin's stated preference for Rome evokes another aspect of the *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*; writing about the debates of the following century, Norman shows that being 'Modern' was often a matter of asserting the supremacy of Rome over Greece. Perhaps, then, Bodin is a proto-Modern in this sense too. See Larry Norman, *The Shock of the Ancient: Literature & History in Early Modern France* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2011), pp. 21-22.

¹⁹⁰ Tuck puts Bodin at the forefront of what he terms the 'new, anti-Aristotelian science', See Tuck, pp. 26-27, and p. 62. Others emphasise continuity with Aristotelian frameworks. In terms of Bodin's absorption of an Aristotelian framework, Marie-Dominique Couzinnet emphasises his Aristotelian vocabulary, Vasoli argues that Bodin's approach follows 'una direttiva aristotelica', and Jehasse notes that, on a formal level, Bodin imitates the structure of Aristotle's *Politics* even if he rearranges the order of contents. See Marie-Dominique Couzinnet, 'On Bodin's Method', in *The Reception of Bodin*, pp. 36-65, (pp. 60-61); Vasoli, pp. 90-91; Jehasse, p. 263.

¹⁹¹ Ryan writes that while Hobbes 'despised' Aristotle's *Politics* and *Ethics*, and indeed disagreed with him on nearly all fronts, he 'silently appropriates [Aristotle's] views on many occasions'. See Ryan, pp. 425-26.

Aristotle are more ambiguous than those who emphasise his strident anti-Aristotelianism might allow; much later in the *Republique*, in VI, 5, on the highly controversial question of whether it is advisable to elect a monarch (Bodin says not), he writes that the topic has led even the best writers astray: ‘non seulement les simples et peu entendus en la science politique, ains encores ceux là qui sont estimez les plus suffisans’; he goes on to comment that ‘mesmes Aristote est d’avis qu’on eslise les monarches’ (VI, 5, p. 197). If Aristotle is among ‘les plus suffisans [en la science politique]’, this reminds us that Aristotle is useful to Bodin, to work both with and against. Elsewhere, Bodin refers to Aristotle as ‘un ancien politique’ (V, 2, p. 80), and earlier in the same chapter, as part of his argument against usury, writes that ‘Ceste loy a tousjours esté fort estimee de tous legislatureurs, et des plus grands politiques: c’est à sçavoir Solon, Lycurgue, Platon, Aristote’. Here, then, Aristotle has his place among ‘[les] plus grands politiques’.

Ultimately, for Bodin the ends justify the theoretical means, and in this sense his *politiques* are a composite of thousands of sources that belong to none but him. For all that he ends on a note of neo-platonic idealism, in the opening chapter of the first book (on the ‘fin principale’ of a good Republic) Bodin emphasises that his project is contained by the limitations of what he views as possible:

Toutefois nous ne voulons pas aussi figurer une Republique en Idee sans effect, telle que Platon, et Thomas le More chancelier d’Angleterre ont imaginé, mais nous contenterons de suyvre les reigles Politiques au plus pres qu’il sera possible. En quoy faisant, on ne peut justement estre blasmé, encores qu’on n’ait pas atteint le but où l’on visoit, non plus que le maistre pilote transporté de la tempeste, ou le medecin vaincu de la maladie, ne sont pas moins estimés, pourveu que l’un ait bien gouverné son malade, et l’autre son navire (I, 1, p. 31).

Here, Bodin places himself – as will La Noue fifteen years later – in an anti-utopian stream of political thought in which ‘les reigles Politiques’ (be they Plato’s or anyone else’s) can only be approximately followed in pursuit of curative and conservative political goals. Le Roy is more positive about Plato’s ‘exemplaire de perfection politique’ but says it is more divine than earthly: those who wish to will conform to this model ‘par imitation le plus près qu’ils pourront’ (p. aiiij^v). This pragmatic approach evokes none other than Aristotle, for whom the political goal was not ‘the best life’ but the ‘best possible (or practicable) state’.¹⁹² And although the language of practically applied political knowledge (*phronesis*) originates with Aristotle, such pragmatism almost inevitably leads both writers away from Aristotle, since it is contextually determined. Bodin notes that four thousand years of known world history have shown slavery to be a constant source of problems (specifically of uprisings and discord): writing from his late perspective (as he understands it), in a very different world to Aristotle’s, he thus rejects of slavery on pragmatic rather than ethical grounds, as it has proved too imprudent (1, 5 p. 106).

Overall, uses of term *politique* in Le Roy and Bodin indicate a canon of political thought and identify their place within it. The relation of attraction and repulsion to Aristotle and others is part of the process of fashioning the substantive, in which Classical texts are there to test and adjust, and Aristotle and Plato are prominent, but not singular, *politiques* themselves. This pragmatic mediation of different ideas and concerns is at the heart of what *politique* means in both Bodin and Le Roy. It is reminiscent of the process staged in Pasquier’s *Pourparler* even if the form and style are very different. Bodin and Le Roy make it clear that they wish to harness this

¹⁹² See Ryan, p. 105. In the Renaissance, Aristotle’s work was not always held up as an example of practical philosophy: Ramus criticised Aristotelians for their emphasis on intellectual as opposed to practical virtues. See Tuck, p. 25.

mediation as a means of responding to the devastating political circumstances of their contemporary moment. In this next section I look in more detail at how these authors develop this sense of *politique* as pragmatic mediation, and in so doing strengthen the semantic field of *politique-prudentia-prudence*.

4. Prudent Politiques

Budé wrote that an education in ‘science politique’ was necessary for those in government; that such an education would confer prudence and thus act as a surety against the kind of errors that inevitably befall leaders otherwise.¹⁹³ The terms *prudence* and *prudentia* are similarly strongly associated with *politique* in Bodin and Le Roy.¹⁹⁴ In Le Roy’s case, the connection is also striking in his wider *oeuvre*. He defines his printed collection of Latin opuscles, the *prolegomena politica*, as the sum of accumulated prudence (‘summa prudentia cumulata’).¹⁹⁵ At the opening of *De la vicissitude*, moreover, we find associations between *politique*, *usage*, and *prudence*, in a summary of intellectual virtues: ‘Au politique justice, fortitude, prudence, temperance, religion, militie, judicature, finance, conseil, magistrats et privez’ (‘politique’ is adjectival here, and agrees with ‘corps’).¹⁹⁶

For Bodin, the connection with prudence is also particularly strong in Latin, as a translation of *politique*; the Latin *politica* is, indeed, markedly absent from *De Republica*, although in the 1584 preface there is a use of *politica* – ‘politica decreta’ – perhaps indicating the way that the term retains strength as a disciplinary marker in

¹⁹³ Budé, p. 118. See Chapter One above, p. 66. Victoria Kahn writes that ‘prudence’ was understood in the sixteenth century (with references to Classical texts) as ‘the intellectual virtue of right judgement about our actions’. See *Rhetoric, Prudence, and Skepticism*, p. 21. See also Francis Goyet, *Les Audaces de la prudence: Littérature et politique aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2009).

¹⁹⁴ On prudence as a key concept in early modern political thought, see Maclean, ‘From Prudence to Policy’.

¹⁹⁵ Le Roy, *Prolegomena*, p. 3.

¹⁹⁶ Loys Le Roy, *De la vicissitude* (Paris: Morel, 1575), p. 5.

paratextual discussion.¹⁹⁷ Turchetti attributes the absence of *politica* from Bodin's Latin to linguistic purism: the influence of Bruni's argument that Cicero and Seneca didn't use this term, but translated the Greek as *civilis*.¹⁹⁸ It is testament, however, to the strength of the vernacular term *politique* that Bodin does not always simply translate it as *civilis* or *civitatis*; each translation is effectively a gloss, often with *prudentia* at its heart, for instance 'un traict de maître politique si sagement qu'il n'y eut personne qui s'en remua' becomes 'prudentia sine seditione gestum est'.¹⁹⁹ In this last example, the *prudentia*, which in French was 'un traict de maître politique', is put to use to quell sedition. This is a primary function of the *politique*, brought into being partly – as Bodin explains in his *préface* – to end civil discord.

Le Roy's attempt to inaugurate 'la politique' as foremost among the disciplines involves a lament that this overarching framework is frayed and neglected and calling for it to be tended to and renewed. This echoes his comments about the state of France in his dedicatory letter to Henri III in which he suggests that the horror of war ('l'horrible orage de guerre civile') could make way for peace and order if God is willing and if the prince agrees to 'gouverner prudemment' (p. ajii). In a sense, Le Roy offers his translation and commentary as a means to this end, his purpose both one of intellectual enquiry and of pragmatic advice that will make the reader more able to act prudently. The knowledge to which *la politique* refers is a spur to action, the pivot between thought ('nous cognoissons') and potential deed ('le devoir', 'offices', 'obeissance, honneur, reverence', 'maniere'):

¹⁹⁷ Turchetti, 'Bodin as Self-Translator', p. 109; Bodin, *Republique* (2014), p. 150. Turchetti translates 'politica decreta' as 'les principes politiques', p. 151.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 116-17. Pierre Mesnard translates 'civilis' and its cognates in the *Methodus* as *politique*, e.g. *Méthode*, p. 19; 'Methodus', p. 121.

¹⁹⁹ Turchetti, 'Bodin as Self-Translator', p. 113.

Nous cognoissons par ceste science le devoir des Princes envers leurs subjects: celuy des magistrats entre eux et avec les privez: quelles offices sont plus necessaires ou plus honnestes: quelle obeissance, honneur et reverence les inferieurs portent aux superieurs: quelle maniere ils gardent à achepter, vendre, permuter, louer, donner, recevoir, promettre, contacter, plaider (p. iiij).

From the start, Le Roy emphasises the real-world implications for his project and the practical aspects of *politique* knowledge; in the dedicatory epistle to Henri III he repeats what he had written ten years earlier in the preface to his translation of Xenophon: that ‘la politique consiste en l’usage’ (p. aii). Echoing contemporary concerns about the need for practice and for practical education, Le Roy consistently emphasises the need for both experience and book learning, referring to *la politique* as ‘cette science qui est imparfaicte sans le sçavoir et l’experience ensemble’ (p. aiij^v).²⁰⁰

Bodin also uses *la politique* to refer to a form of right-thinking practical action. He is more polemical than Le Roy in his preface with respect to contemporary political writing, stating that since Plato and Aristotle, writing qualified as *philosophie politique* has been dangerously mistaken: ‘chose qui a donné occasion de troubler et renverser de beaux Estats’ (p. 11). For Bodin as for Le Roy, *philosophie politique* has real-world consequences; here, it triggers trouble if ‘profaned’. From the very start, Bodin promises a different kind of political writing that will guide the troubled French kingdom to safety, marked as different by being in French rather than Latin. He opens his preface with the image of the ship of state threatened by imminent wreck; Bodin prays for its safe arrival at the ‘Port de Salut’ for which the text to follow is a

²⁰⁰ Tuck, p. 25. On the general trend for emphasis on ‘use’ and ‘practice’, see Grafton and Jardine, p. 168.

guide to safe passage through the resolution of ‘plusieurs questions politiques’ (p. 10).²⁰¹

This kind of prudent action, quelling sedition and ending discord, is promoted in Le Roy’s and Bodin’s uses of *politique*. Le Roy, though, places greater faith in politics as innovation within inevitable *vicissitudes*, whereas Bodin’s approach is more reactive, and more conservative. In Le Roy’s conception of how people will be able to work with *la politique*, there is greater emphasis on its creative function, facilitated by the right kind of teaching:

Quiconque entreprendra fonder nouvelle police, redresser la ruinee, conserver l’ancienne, reformer la corrompue, administrer l’establie, s’il est né à la politique, bien instruit et experimentee en icelle, ayant jugement de considerer murement la nature de chacune, leurs commencemens, accroissemens, forces, decadences, mutations, & comment l’une prent fin en l’autre: le fera beaucoup mieux ainsi endoctriné & préparé. (p. bi^v).

Here, the person acting politically in a number of ways is starting, rebalancing, and reforming, as well as conserving and administering established states. By contrast, Bodin stresses conservation and damage limitation, rather than naming that as one kind of administrative stance among many. He writes that at the very least, change should be ‘doux et naturel, si faire se peut, et non pas violent ny sanglant’ (p. 10).²⁰² Bodin uses similar vocabulary to the passage from Le Roy that I have just cited to express his conservative impulse, but with different emphasis – after he has established all the constituent parts of a Republic, Bodin will then deal with the question of change: ‘Après, j’ay remarqué l’origine, accroissement, l’estat fleurissant, changement, decadence, et ruine des Republicques avec plusieurs questions Politiques qui me

²⁰¹ For a detailed analysis of this metaphor in Bodin’s preface, and a study of political shipwreck metaphors in sixteenth-century France, see Chapter Three in Jennifer Oliver, “‘Au milieu d’un tel et si piteux naufrage’: The Dynamics of Shipwreck in Renaissance France (1498-1616)” (Unpublished doctoral thesis: University of Oxford, 2014).

²⁰² This is evocative of Montaigne in parts of I, 23 (‘De la coustume et de ne changer aisément une loy recüe’ – given the bloody violence of the period, one has sympathy for this stance).

semblent necessaires d'estre entendues' (p. 11). This is the moment that launches the matter of the book, marking the transition between the extended shipwreck analogy and the kind of navigation that Bodin proposes to his reader as a means of averting such disaster. The turning point, then, is 'plusieurs questions politiques'.

When we read the term *politique* as adjective or abstract noun in Bodin and Le Roy, we find a term that variously defines, regulates, and props up governmental and organisational activities, as well as (at least according to Le Roy) overseeing the generality of intellectual endeavour. The term indicates action, and operates as a pivot between thought and action; as an enabler of *praxis* – the right kind of *praxis*, figured as prudence.²⁰³ Both authors offer the term *politique* as a key to the management of change. The passing of time, then, is a crucial context to the connection between the word and its referents. The temporal context is not just one of present and future; both Bodin and Le Roy build their edifices partly on writings and anecdotes from the very distant past. This, too, is a function of the prudent politics they seek to articulate; prudence was a quality associated since Cicero with an ability to predict or anticipate future events, on the basis of historical knowledge.²⁰⁴ At different moments Bodin and Le Roy describe this knowledge as a kind of clairvoyance; this is part of the privileged vision that *politique* knowledge confers. Both Bodin's treatise and Le Roy's translation are, in part, surveys: of existing knowledge; of global history; of types of state; of the

²⁰³ The different ways in which *la politique* manages *vicissitude* (Le Roy) and transcends fateful circumstance (Bodin) is reminiscent of Machiavelli's concept of *virtù*, wherein *virtù* triumphs over the caprices of *fortuna*. On Machiavelli's *virtù* see for example Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics II: Renaissance Virtues* (Cambridge: CUP, 2002), pp. 160-85, and for a broader assessment of fortune and prudence in the Italian Renaissance see Mario Santoro, *Fortuna, ragione e prudenza nella civiltà letteraria del Cinquecento* (Naples: Liguori, 1966). Althusser added his part to the long-standing debate about the scandal and originality of Machiavelli by saying that it was rooted in his emphasis on practice: 'Il nous interpelle à partir d'un lieu qu'il nous appelle à occuper comme "sujets" (agents) possibles d'une pratique politique possible'. Louis Althusser, *Machiavel et nous* (Paris: Tallandier, 2009), p. 72.

²⁰⁴ Andrea Brady and Emily Butterworth, 'Introduction', in *The Uses of the Future in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Andrea Brady and Emily Butterworth (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 1-19 (p. 3).

various roles assigned to people in society. These surveys offer pragmatic readings of Aristotle and others, in order to construct composite *politiques* that represent the pinnacle of all-seeing political knowledge: textual action born of reaction to texts and to events, in which *politiques* (maybe Aristotle's, maybe Aristotle, but not necessarily) are the pivot between thought and action. And both texts evoke a masculine substantive figure who incarnates this knowledge and puts it into action, representing the link between theory and that practice they see as so crucial to proper politics.

5. 'Prudens et sçavans personnages'

A masculine substantive term, *le politique*, accompanies, indeed embodies, the conceptual keyword that we have hitherto traced through the works of Le Roy and Bodin. Interest in who exactly embodies good political action is a feature of the whole canon of western political philosophy; from Aristotle's figure of the statesman (*politikos*) to Plato's dialogue of the same name. Just as the term *politique* operates between thought and action, so the *politique* person puts thought into action (at least in theory). In his pamphlet-preface, Le Roy works through a political commonplace that has survived millennia – Aristotle's dictum that 'man is a political animal' (*Politics*, 1253a2) – and concludes that despite man's natural disposition to live in company, and in community, his more negative qualities (his passions) frequently threaten to destroy that community. Enter the special person with the capacity to manage this threat:

Il a esté nécessaire proposer quelque commandemens, à fin de dompter telles affections, & les remettre en droicte voye de justice. Aquoy aucuns excellens personnages entendans la faculté politique, se sont efforcez remedier (p. iiiij^v).

Le Roy goes on to name these persons 'legislateurs' rather than *politiques* (and in the title of the preface, it is *legislateurs* who practice *la politique*). But what this passage demonstrates is that certain people – *excellent* people – who have a privileged cognitive ability ('entendans la faculté politique') are crucial for communal harmony, and that

Le Roy is aware that this has been the case in theory and in practice since the time of Plato and earlier. Bodin and Le Roy construct a particularly powerful category for this prudent go-between (sometimes called *le politique*), whose special cognitive powers relate to new articulations of *la politique*. Francis Goyet sees the rhetorical training that students in humanist colleges received as the training of a political elite; while acknowledging the anachronism in the analogy, he implies a similar system in place to that of the *Ecole Nationale d'Administration* (ENA) which supplies the Elysée with its *politiques d'aujourd'hui* in contemporary France.²⁰⁵ The history of the term *politique* plays its part in this early modern socio-political phenomenon, with its educational contexts and echoes in the present.

The special and particular knowledge, and associated cognitive power, of a *politique* person is indicated in the association between *sage* and *politique*, and linked to evocations of prudence.²⁰⁶ In Bodin and Le Roy, as in their wider intellectual context, the figure of the *prudens* is strongly associated with that of the *sapiens*.²⁰⁷ Le Roy demonstrates these associations in the opening line of his dedication to Henri III, when he writes that the king is already surrounded by 'bon nombre de prudens & sçavans personnages' (p. *aij*). There are also instances of Bodin translating the masculine substantive *le politique* into Latin as *prudens legislator* (once again highlighting the importance of the legal context and the closeness of *legislateur* and *politique* for both

²⁰⁵ Goyet, *Le sublime du lieu commun*, p. 33.

²⁰⁶ For an exploration of the resurrection of the classical ideal of *sapientia*, see Cesare Vasoli, 'The Renaissance concept of Philosophy', in *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, ed. by Eckhard Kessler, Jill Kraye, Charles B. Schmitt, and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), 55-74, esp. p. 61. The pre-eminent example of an early modern French discussion of *sagesse* is Charron's *De la sagesse*, published just after the end of the civil wars in 1601.

²⁰⁷ Kahn has pointed out that this was common in the period, the result of Cicero's conflation of *prudencia* and *sapientia* in *De Officiis*. Kahn, *Rhetoric, Prudence, and Skepticism*, p. 201, n. 19. Cicero is, moreover, the archetype of the *prudens* in this period as a result of the popularity of *De Officiis*.

Bodin and Le Roy).²⁰⁸ Both authors are concerned with demonstrating, and – as we shall see – embodying, the qualities of these *prudens et sçavans personnages* who draw on both reading (‘la vertu contemplative’) and experience (‘actions politiques’) within a proto-secular framework (Bodin, I, 1, pp. 36-37).

A person who unites *le sçavoir et l’experience* to practical effect, and who therefore has the authority to command, in both Le Roy’s commentary and Bodin’s treatise, is often described as *politique*: usually as an adjective attached variously to ‘homme’, ‘philosophe’, and as we shall see, most commonly in Bodin, ‘le sage’; other associated nouns are, variously, ‘le prince’, ‘les magistrats’, and particularly ‘les jurisconsultes’. It is noticeable that these are all broadly civil categories, belonging in Henri III’s Palace Academy, the humanist study, or the *Parlement*; despite Bodin’s syncretist gestures religion is consistently presented as a separate field of action and enquiry from that defined by *la politique*.²⁰⁹ Although, of course, religious leaders had considerable political influence in this period, there seems to be a deliberate exclusion of the Church in these works. Unlike in later *Ligueur* polemic, the Catholic Church barely gets a mention; faith is always the abstract *religion*, and references to the civil wars are not framed in confessional terms. In this respect the authors seem to be staking out a space in which civil actors (*politiques*) can resolve questions that they are determined to understand in civil (*politique*) terms. Le Roy, in his commentary of Aristotle V, 2, highlights the separation of ‘la religion’ and ‘la police’, arguing that they are served by different kinds of *magistrats* (p. 395). In I, 3, Bodin specifically disassociates ‘le discours moral’ from ‘ce qui est politique’, leaving the former to ‘Philosophes and Theologiens’

²⁰⁸ Turchetti, ‘Bodin as Self-Translator’, p. 113.

²⁰⁹ On Henri III’s Palace Academy, see Greengrass, *Governing Passions*, pp. 42-54.

(p. 52).²¹⁰ A further distinction between ethics/‘la morale’ and politics is also made in

I, 1:

Nous ferons mesme jugement de la Republique bien ordonnee, la fin principale de laquelle gist aux vertus contemplatives, jaçoit que les actions politiques soyent preallables, et les moins illustres soyent les premieres: comme faire provisions necessaires, pour entretenir et defendre la vie des subjects: et neantmoins telles actions se rapportent aux morales, et celles cy aux intellectuelles, la fin desquelles est la contemplation du plus beau subject qui soit, et qu’on puisse imaginer (1, 1, pp. 36-37).

Here, ‘les actions politiques’ are necessary to facilitate ‘vertus contemplatives’ but belong to a different sphere (it seems, despite the thorny wording) from ‘actions morales’ or ‘intellectuelles’; rather, they are carried out to preserve life, and are justified because they serve the greater ‘end’, which is contemplation of the divine.

Politique pragmatism, condemned so vituperatively later in the period, appears here as a necessary stepping-stone to moral good.

6. Bodin’s Sages Politiques

When used to describe a kind of person, the term *politique* appears most often in Bodin in conjunction with *sage*, particularly in Books IV to VI, which are, broadly speaking, concerned with administration in practice rather than establishing principles and structures as in Books I-III.²¹¹ Between *sage* and *politique* it is sometimes unclear which is the noun and which the adjective, whether together they indicate ‘a wise person whose wisdom concerns politics’, or ‘a *politique* who is wise’. Where *politique* reads more as the noun, it might have been necessary to qualify [him] as ‘sage’ in order to indicate that he is *not* one of the bad *politiques* with whom later writers become increasingly obsessed. Machiavelli figures in Bodin’s preface as an unwise *politique*. In that discussion of Machiavelli, Bodin writes that good readers will agree that

²¹⁰ La Noue used almost exactly this phrase to justify his own approach, see Chapter One, p. 74.

²¹¹ Uses of *sage Politique* or *sages politiques* in Book IV: pp. 98, 101, 109, 149, 212; in book V: pp. 11, 125; in book VI, pp. 82, 163, 257. These account for *c.*20% of all uses of the term in the *Republique*.

Machiavelli has never truly grasped *la science Politique*: ‘ceux qui ont accoustumée de discourir doctement, peser sagement, et résoudre subtilement les hauts affaires d’estat, s’accorderont qu’il n’a jamais sondé le gué de la science Politique’ (*Préface*, p. 12). As such, ‘discourir doctement, peser sagement, et résoudre subtilement’ are the skills that permit true understanding of *la Science Politique*. Bodin then concludes the *Préface* by inviting his reader to ‘censurer à vostre discretion’ (*Préface*, p. 14).²¹² The *sage politique*, as well as an idealised administrator, is also Bodin’s version of an ideal reader, who will be – like him – a proficient reader of ancient, legal and biblical texts, and also, of course, of Bodin’s own text.

A strong thrust of Bodin’s argument in I, 1, is that the number of people who could ever be described as *sage* is inevitably very small; Goyet’s analysis of the restricted circle of *vrais prudents* leads him to a similar conclusion: he loosely translates this exclusive group as ‘the happy few’.²¹³ And what do they do, these happy few?

Primarily, the role outlined by Bodin for *les sages politiques* is to exclude and conserve. For example, in I, 5, the *politique* figure is the subject in a maxim-like phrase: ‘Or le sage politic n’est pas celuy qui chasse de la Republique les voleurs, mais celuy qui les empesche d’y entrer’ (I, 5, p. 109). In this case, the ‘sage politic’ is one who patrols the borders of a Republic (though via effective public administration rather than literal physical presence: it turns out the solution is poor-houses, in this case). Here then, we see ‘le sage politic’ enacting the kind of delineation and definition of space that we saw associated with *politique* knowledge (‘la science politique’; ‘la politique’) in the first section of this chapter.

²¹² Chesters writes that ‘discretion’ has four particular associations in the French Renaissance: separation, judgement, prudence and secrecy; in Bodin the dimensions of judgement and prudence seem to be at work. Chesters notes that the doublet ‘sage et discret’ is very common. See Chesters, ‘Discretion’, pp. 105-06.

²¹³ Goyet, *Les Audaces de la prudence*, p. 29.

The *sage politique* of the *Republique* is, moreover, imbued with an exceptional level of agency, able to counter the torrents, tempests, and twists of fate that Bodin evokes as the scourge of republics. In IV, 3, in a sub-section that argues that ‘les sages’ are not subject to astrological influence by dint of the wisdom that they have acquired, Bodin asserts that the ‘sage Politique’ can use his wisdom to alter the future and effectively cheat fate:

Si donc on a descouvert que la force des astres, qu’on pensoit inevitable, se peut affoiblir, et que les sages Medecins ont trouvé des moyens pour changer les maladies, et alterer les fievres contre leur cours naturel, à fin de les guarir plus aisement: pourquoy le sage Politique prevoyant les changements qui adviennent naturellement aux Republicues, ne previendra par conseil et remedes convenables la ruïne d’icelles? (IV, 3, p. 98).

The *sage Politique* uses his agency to provide ‘conseil et remedes’ and so to conserve the state via a kind of vision (‘prevoyant’) of corruptions that threaten the body politic. For Bodin *le sage politique* uses his exceptional agency to preserve and to police. Book IV is concerned with change (and its apparent synonym, ‘ruine’) of states. In the sub-section at the end of IV, 3, under the title ‘Il faut que le sage politique suyve les oeuvres de Dieu au gouvernement de ce monde’, Bodin makes it clear that the role of the *Politique* is to resist sudden change (IV, 3, p. 109). Elsewhere in IV, 3, Bodin suggests a direct correlation between ‘le sage politique’ and ‘le sage medecin’ – this correlates to the *préface*, where *la science politique* is intended as a guide to the *gouverneur* or *pilote* of the ship of state.

There is one instance in the *Republique*, at the opening of V, 6, where the *politique* appears as a noun in its own right: ‘Ce traicté depend du precedent, qui ne doit pas estre laissé, attendu qu’il n’y a ni Jurisconsulte, ni Politique, qui l’ait touché’ (V, 6, p. 165). The phrase in V, 6 is an almost exact *reprise* of the introduction to I, 8 where

Bodin asserts the need to define sovereignty ‘par ce qu’il n’y a ni jurisconsulte, ni philosophe politique, qui l’ait définie’ (I, 8, p. 179). V, 6 stands out as the only use of ‘Politique’ on its own. Since ‘sage politique’ is reprised fairly frequently in Book VI, it could hardly be argued that this moment marks any kind of fundamental shift, but it may still represent a minor threshold moment at which all the *philosophie*, *sagesse*, and *science* with which *politique* is associated across the *Republique* have been sufficiently absorbed that the word *politique* can stand alone, as a kind of abbreviation for relevant knowledge and the wise application thereof. Since Bodin, who was, although trained as a *jurisconsulte*, more of a go-between between different offices of power and influence, embarks upon attempts to ‘définir’ and ‘toucher’ subjects thus far neglected, he cannot be ruled out from being *politique* by his own definition in this context.

7. Who Could Be a Sage Politique?

Do Le Roy and Bodin present themselves as the powerful *politiques* who govern the limits and applications of *la politique*? I want to suggest that, in fact, they do; within the use of the term to denote a particular kind of man, there occurs a version of self-fashioning and self-promotion. This kind of self-fashioning is associated with the emergence of the new kind of *élite savante* in French society to which Bodin and Le Roy belonged: the *noblesse de robe*, that group whose positions as lawyers, magistrates, and so on gave them increasing social capital.²¹⁴ In this final section I discuss how the two authors reinforce their own position within an implicitly constructed genealogy of *politique* experts, and how this reinforces a social hierarchy in which most people are excluded from participating in government.

²¹⁴ See Robert Descimon and Elie Haddad, *Epreuves de noblesse. L’expérience nobiliaire de la haute robe parisienne (XVI^e-XVIII^e siècles)* (Paris: Belles lettres, 2010).

At the conclusion of his *préface* to *Les Politiques d'Aristote*, after the list of verbs attached to *la politique*, Le Roy connects the abstracted feminine *politique* to *les vrais politiques* via a gerund in the same passage that I discussed above (p. 93):

Elle nourrit les enfans, eleve le coeur des jeunes hommes, adoucit les molestes des plus aagez [etc.], promettant aux vrais politiques perpetuelle louange en recõpense de leurs extremes labeurs, & des indignitez qu'ils reçoivent souvent par brigues & enuies (p. bi^v).

If the 'brigues & enuies' seem prophetic of the avalanche of abuse later directed at so-called *Politiques*, Le Roy may have also been thinking of his career up to that point, characterised by a large output and little patronage (Gundersheimer writes that 'penury was the paramount fact of Le Roy's material existence').²¹⁵ The 'brigues & ennuis' could also have been a reference to the struggles of philosophers defined by Bodin and Le Roy as *politiques*; Aristotle and Plato were exiled, and the death of Plato's teacher, Socrates, was perhaps the pre-eminent example of the dangers of speaking truth to power in the ancient world. But Le Roy opens his next sentence with the phrase 'au regard de moy', and asserts that he has long frequented the courts of princes and is therefore in a position to reap the fruit to be found in joining together a reading of Aristotle and Plato with real experience of modern courtly life (p. aiiij^v). Le Roy thus invites his reader to associate him with *la politique*, and with the long-suffering *politique* who we meet for the first time at the close of the preface.

Meanwhile, Bodin is also engaged in advertising himself as innovator and new authority on *science politique*; numerous references to Bodin as 'the Aristotle of the sixteenth century' are the measures of his success in establishing himself as an authority on *la politique* for the modern age.²¹⁶ Bodin directly refers to a number of

²¹⁵ Gundersheimer, p. 71.

²¹⁶ See Howell Lloyd, 'Introduction', 1-20, p. 2.

ancient figures, both rulers and writers, as *Politiques*, beginning with Polybius in the *préface* (‘estim[é] le plus sage politique de son aage’, p. 12). Bodin refers to Aristotle as ‘un ancien politique’ (V, 2, p. 80) – this is the opening of a kind of genealogy of *politiques* whose works Bodin is updating and bringing together rather than replacing. Bodin also raises the question of who can, or ever could, live up to the great *politiques* of history: ‘Qui fut onques semblable à ce grand Auguste en prudence politique?’ he asks in IV, 6 (p. 152). This is a standard to live up to, and perhaps even surpass, with the right kind of instruction; the moderns have too often got it wrong in this regard.

Bodin’s treatment of Machiavelli is particularly fraught, but that does not mean that Machiavelli is excluded from being *politique*, or even from being *sage*. In the preface, Machiavelli is the only modern source named, and thus implicitly credited with first reviving *la science politique*, but with evil consequences. Bodin may have unacknowledged debts to Machiavelli at various moments in the *Six livres*, not least in V, 5 (‘S’il est bon d’armer et aguerrir les sujets, fortifier les villes, et entretenir la guerre’) in which he deals with ‘l’art militaire et politique’ (V, 5, p. 156).²¹⁷ In the introduction to the chapter, in which Bodin introduces his primary question (‘S’il est bon d’armer et aguerrir les subjects, fortifier les villes, et entretenir la guerre’) he writes that the question is a difficult one: ‘Je mettray le plus sommairement que faire se pourra, et ce qu’il me semble pour le mieux, laissant toutefois la resolution aux plus sages politiques’ (V, p. 125). Here, with the comparative ‘plus sages politiques’, Bodin comes close to naming himself among the *politiques* of his text; while superficially conceding to greater authorities, Bodin subtly places himself among them. And more:

²¹⁷ Sidney Anglo has pointed out Bodin’s possible use of Machiavelli in this chapter; see Sidney Anglo, *Machiavelli - The First Century: Studies in Enthusiasm, Hostility, and Irrelevance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 542. Anglo writes that Machiavelli’s *Arte della Guerra* used many commonplace *topoi* and so it is hard to infer direct influence on writers dealing with this subject.

he associates himself with Machiavelli here, if indirectly: if Machiavelli is a *politique* (albeit a suspect one), and has written extensively about the art of war, then he could even be one of the ‘sages politiques’ to whom Bodin refers as greater authorities on the subject. At a stretch, this could even be a tacit suggestion of further reading. In the next chapter I look at the robust attack on the evil, atheist Machiavelli made by Bodin in his preface, perhaps hastily so in the context of the publication of Gentillet’s *Contre-Machiavel*. Moments like this one in V, 5, which *could* imply Bodin’s approval of some parts of Machiavelli’s *oeuvre*, suggest that Bodin’s condemnation of the Florentine was only partial. Machiavelli, then, *could* be a *politique*.

There are some people, however who could never be *politique* in the view of Bodin and Le Roy. Neither would have considered that they could be criticised on the grounds of elitism or for excluding certain people from politics. Plato’s famous ‘gold, silver, and bronze’ castes and elaborate descriptions of ‘guardian’ class were even more overtly exclusionary. In Aristotelian terms, hierarchies of power were natural and biologically determined. Cicero, too, had been very clear that he felt that the many should be governed by the few, who had to be both wellborn and wealthy.²¹⁸ Although Bodin has no stipulations about a *politique*’s family background, he emphasises that only a very small number of people in any community can really be *sage*, or *sages politiques*. Meanwhile, despite rising to prominence from a relatively lowly background, Le Roy reprises at various moments the notion that a true *politique* is born and not made, ‘naissans raisonnable & politique’ and ‘né à la politique’ (*préface*, p. biv). However he allows that education and experience can make the right kind of man *politique*.

²¹⁸ Ryan, p. 142.

Beyond this, in keeping with Aristotle's view that some are naturally born to servitude and some to *la politique*, Le Roy, unlike Bodin, does not challenge the institution of slavery/servitude. Although Bodin is very interested in and knowledgeable about non-European cultures, both authors broadly locate *politique* knowledge in Western Europe, and their attitudes to 'The Discoveries' and the geographical determinism expressed by both authors privileges this space, although the Ancient Greek world did not correspond to today's arbitrary divisions between east and west, or between 'global North' and 'global South'. What this all amounts to is a policing of the boundaries of the select *politique* community: the abstract term *politique* is a tool of definition; *politique* people in the text delineate the borders of the wider community; and texts defined in some way as *politique* do the same for the shifting group of people identified as *politiques*, to the exclusion of the majority of the general global population, and the entirety of its female contingent.

Le Roy strengthens the exclusivity of *politique* in his translation. We have already seen how 'good' Latinate translations of the Greek *politikos* were established by Bruni, via Cicero, as located in the *civilis* word group. Le Roy follows this rule in some instances, notably in his translations of the phrase 'man is a political animal'. We have already seen how he qualified this phrase in his preface by evoking man's dangerous passions.

The full excerpt is as follows:

Car jaoit que l'homme soit naturellement civil, & plus sociable que nul autre animal, & soit à cest effect doué de raison & de parole pour la communication : toutefois estant subject aux passions qui le troublent souvent, & aux convoitises mauvaises qui le retirent incessamment du bien, il a esté nécessaire proposer quelques commandemens... (p. iij).

In his translation of the phrase itself, Le Roy has man as 'un animal civil', and in his commentary notes that 'la cité est composée d'hommes naturellement civils & politiques' (pp. 14-15). Men in *la cité* are both *civil* and *politique*: this double translation

implies that everyone is *civil* but not everyone is *politique*: Le Roy sees all men as being part of civil society, and being born with certain powers of reason, but considers that some are *more* reasonable, and more *politique*.

Directly following the discussion of man as a civil/political animal, Le Roy arrives at the section on ‘obedience & empire’, in which civil society is organised according to two kinds of power (‘gouvernement’): ‘seigneurial’, and ‘politique’. This is Aristotle’s point that models for ‘le gouvernement seigneurial & politique’ can be found in man himself, since his soul has seigneurial power over the movements of his body, and ‘l’intellect politique et royal’ controls his desires and thoughts (p. 30). A further separation between ‘politique’ and ‘seigneurial’ is made in the commentary on slavery/servitude, where Le Roy writes that ‘le politique’ is ‘pour le regard de ceux qui sont libres & egaux par nature, entre lesquels il y a vicissitude de commander & obeir: le seigneurial, sur les serfs par nature’ (p. 40). I conclude from all this that while all society is *civil*, within that there are *politique* and *seigneurial* relationships. Of course, Le Roy is commenting on Aristotle here rather than expressing his own views, but his earlier statements about the pertinence and use of his translation and commentary rather suggest that he treats this as relevant to his own moment rather than as a historical account of power and hierarchy in Aristotle’s Athens.

For Le Roy, then, *politique* defines social hierarchies as well as forms of government and of political agency; it reinforces the superiority of a small group of men over the majority of their fellow men, and certainly over women, too.²¹⁹ In Le Roy, as for

²¹⁹ On gender and female authority in early modern France, see Julie Hardwick, *The Practice of Patriarchy: Gender and the Politics of Household Authority in Early Modern France* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998); Thierry Wanegffelen, *Le pouvoir contesté: Souveraines d'Europe à la Renaissance* (Paris, 2008); Domna Stanton, *The Dynamics of Gender in Early Modern France: Women Writ, Women Writing* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014). The fashioning of a masculine *politique* subject is not just about controlling,

Aristotle, women are governed by *politiques*, but do not have *politique* qualities.

Translating the now notorious section on women's reduced intellectual capacity (*Politics*, 1260a4), Le Roy renders the opening as a statement that husbands control wives 'politiquement' (p. 64). Is woman a 'political animal', or is she simply subject to political control? What follows makes it quite clear:

Le mary commande la femme politiquement, non pour le regard de la parité de l'homme et de la femme, et vicissitude de commander qui ne sont ny doivent estre en eux: mais à la vigueur, force, auctorité, gravité, prudence en faicts et dictz, que nature donne communément plus grand au masle que à la femme (p. 64).

This passage places all the qualities associated with *politique* across the text explicitly in a masculine agent: *vigueur, force, auctorité, gravité, prudence en faicts et dictz*. Le Roy's only comment is to note that 'Le magistrat politique Durant' exemplified all the qualities denied women by Aristotle (p. 64); thus his commentary reinforces Aristotle's misogyny. In sum, among men, some are governed by the rules of *la politique* and could be *politique* themselves (there is a vicissitudinous movement within this group as to who actually wields power) and some are 'serfs par nature'; women are entirely relegated to servility through their apparently innate relative lack of *politique* qualities.

In *Republique* I, 3, Bodin establishes an analogous relation between the state and the family, and within this draws an analogy between marriage and statecraft. He refers to the Aristotelian trope discussed above about the soul controlling the body and the intellect controlling the mind; this is his opening gesture, before saying that he will leave the moral aspect of the question to 'philosophes et theologiens', and instead focus on what is 'politique':

excluding, and subjugating the feminine, though – it's part of an interrogation and policing of masculine identity. See Long, *Masculinity in Crisis*.

Or nous laissons aux philosophes et theologiens le discours moral et prendrons ce qui est politique pour le regard de la puissance du mari sur la femme, qui et la source et origine de toute societé humaine (p. 52).

When he translated this passage into Latin, for ‘ce qui est politique’ he had ‘quod hujus quaestionis proprium est’ – what is proper, or appropriate, to the topic at hand. This at once defines the ‘quaestiones’ of the book as ‘politique’ (if you work backwards to the French), and the question of man’s control of women as one of propriety, and of property.²²⁰ Men control (and possess) wives as they possess property; but women also define the men who are said to control them:

Combien que celles qui prennent si grand plaisir à commander aux maris effeminés ressemblent à ceux qui aiment mieux guider les aveugles que de suivre les sages et clairvoyans. Or la loy de Dieu et la langue sainte, qui a nommé toutes choses selon la vraye nature et propriété, appelle le mari *Bahal*, c’est à dire le seigneur et maistre, pour monstrier qu’à luy appartient de commander (p. 60).

Powerful women are figured here as preferring ‘effeminate’ men, and so preferring to lead the blind than to be led by ‘les sages et clairvoyans’. To be ‘sage et clairvoyant’ is to be squarely placed in the *politique* semantic field established in this chapter; women are thus excluded from being *politique* but used to define *politique* men and their behaviour. Bodin is not shy about directly criticising female rule, either (unlike Le Roy, who perhaps refrained owing to the patronage he sought and received from Catherine de’Medici in the 1560s). In VI, 5, evoking Salic law, Bodin argues against female rule, suggesting that female power in public government might subvert what he had established as a fundamental law of humanity in I, 3 (male dominion over women in the private sphere): ‘c’est une reigle politique, que ce qui est trouvé bon, et souffert en public, sera tousjours tiré en consequence en particulier’ (VI, 5, p. 234). Bodin the committed numerologist establishes women as being under the command of men in I, 3, near the very beginning of the six-book structure and excludes them

²²⁰ Kathy Eden has shown that *proprium* indicated both something fitting and something owned. See Kathy Eden, *The Renaissance Rediscovery of Intimacy* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2012), pp. 26-7.

from politics via ‘une reigle politique’ near the very end. We thus see that for Bodin, women are used to define what is *politique*, and *politique* is used to define their exclusion.

The abstract term *politique*, consistently translated into English as ‘politics’, is often considered the neutral term in a pairing with its more mobile, polemical counterpart, *le Politique*, that refers to a person rather than to a concept (although the person, as we have seen, may be the incarnation of a concept).²²¹ However, I have tried to show here that *la politique* is anything but ‘neutral’; rather, it represents a conservative, curative, and normative politics that delineate the boundaries of community, and places power in the hands of an exclusive group of men who, as the *président* of Rouen put it, hold power over a multitude. Le Roy and Bodin, with their non-noble backgrounds, seem to have experienced a form of social mobility produced by their humanist training and facilitated by church education, but in their respective works discussed in this chapter they make use of the term *politique*, and of its mobility and currency in the discursive sphere, to pull the proverbial ladder up after them.

Conclusion

The *président* of the *Parlement de Rouen* wrote in 1573 that:

Nous n’entendons pas parler comme on a nouvellement introduit et interpreté ce mot *politique* quasi: n’estant d’aucune religion, mais selon l’interprétation et définition des saiges et philosophes, c’est-à-dire sçavoir régir et gouverner une multitude d’hommes.²²²

In 1573, then, five years after the first edition of Le Roy’s translation of Aristotle and three years before the publication of Bodin’s *Republique*, the term *politique* was circulating in elite discourse as a way of describing a particular kind of person with a

²²¹ See, for example, Demonet, who defines *la politique* as ‘abstrait’ and ‘neutre’, in ‘Quelques avatars du mot “politique”’, p. 54.

²²² Quoted in Jouanna, *Le Pouvoir absolu*, p. 177.

particular kind of knowledge resulting from the interpretations and definitions offered by ‘saiges et philosophes’. In some ways, then, this is a perfect summary of the uses of the term in Bodin and Le Roy, who use it with reference to ancient authorities (who are ‘sages’ and ‘philosophes’) in order to confer this authority on to themselves and their readers. This is, then, at once the story of a particular theoretical and practical response to civil war, and the result of a humanist legacy, working together to produce a conceptual keyword (the feminine substantive) and its agent (the masculine substantive). This engineering of meaning had the ‘real-world’ consequences of an altered curriculum at the *Collège royal* during Le Roy’s tenure there, as well as potentially empowering readers of various *politiques* to act in legal and governmental contexts relating to the immediate crisis and beyond. The next chapters show, however, just how unsuccessful these attempts were in the short term, even if, in the long term, they have been associated with the rise of the centralised, authoritarian government in the following century. The *président’s* description of *politiques* ‘n’estant d’aucune religion’ – ominous in the context of confessional conflict, though not indicating atheism so much as a refusal to engage in partisan struggles in religious terms – anticipates the increased controversy *politique* attracted from 1576 onwards. The shadow of Machiavelli, the subtle divorce between ethics, religious devotion, and political action, and the pre-eminence of pragmatic prudence, all anticipate, too, the trouble to come, and the long history of *politiques* and politics as morally ambiguous or even amoral. In the next chapter, we turn to these troubles, and to Huguenot polemicists who had their own idea of what would best serve the political community, and what kind of *politique* person should perform that service.

– Chapter 3 –

A Wake-Up Call and A Call to Arms: Le Reveille-matin des François and Simon Goulart’s Mémoires de l’estat de France

The works I analyse in this chapter run counter to those of the previous: indeed, Bodin and Le Roy were deliberately writing against the authors whose works appear below. Here, then, we encounter the term *politique* in different spatial and semantic contexts. Where Bodin and Le Roy were focused on France, and largely operating within a Parisian intellectual arena with links to a European network of humanist activity that had peaked long before the civil wars, here authors look to Geneva, and to England, with a broader sense of a Protestant Europe to come. In this chapter, I explore uses of the term *politique* around and between polemic and political theory, and in doing so encounter responses to massacres, to the limits of monarchical power, and, once again, to that virtual synonym of Renaissance politics, Machiavelli. And although the texts I discuss here share many of the concerns and coordinates of those discussed elsewhere in this thesis, a new association with *politique* emerges particularly here: the idea of *liberté*, particularly related to freedom of conscience.

In the works by Le Roy and Bodin discussed in the preceding chapter, we see the term *politique* instrumentalised to indicate the path to a solution to all manner of civil, juridical, or governmental problems, as well as evoking a person who might be called a *politique* and is thus in a manner of speaking the ultimate ‘fixer’. Their writings were part of a revitalising of the field of politics as a distinct area of intellectual inquiry, and by the nature of their enterprise carry a certain optimism about the influence of thought on action, of rhetoric on reality, and the ideal on the real. But their attempts to attach connotations of firm action to the word *politique* were compromised in the

wider discursive sphere by increasing contestation of what exactly should count as *politique* knowledge. The quarrelsome (and increasingly violent) context led to a spiralling diversification of uses of the term *politique*. These uses increasingly contested other uses, and associated the term with ideologies, or parties – in this chapter, we see Huguenot authors appropriating the term to make their own political arguments. The dynamism of political discussion in 1570s France, and the dangerous uncertainty it wrought, was in some ways what Bodin in particular was trying to write out of politics in his *Republique*, notably in the chapter where he argues that rebellion against a monarch is never legitimate.²²³

Bodin's foreboding has indeed been read as a response to the texts that I discuss in this chapter, which have been defined under the umbrella term 'Huguenot Resistance Theory'.²²⁴ Following the brutal slaughter of a huge number of the country's Protestants, the exile or abjuration of many more, and the siege of the Protestant stronghold at La Rochelle, Protestant political authors began to make arguments that doubted or undermined royal authority, and suggested that the French monarchy had become degraded, and the king a tyrant. The most famous were written in Latin: Théodore de Bèze's *De Jure Magistratum* (translated into French by Simon Goulart, author-editor of the *Mémoires*), and Philippe Duplessis-Mornay's *Vindiciae contra tyrannos*, but the works I discuss here are some of the best known vernacular contributions to this discussion. This chapter, then, moves my study out of the genres of treatise and translation, and into dialogue and diatribe, with particular attention to three

²²³ Bodin, II, 5, p. 75.

²²⁴ The term 'Huguenot Resistance Theory' refers to works by French Huguenots theorizing resistance to the authority of the monarch if the monarch's actions compromise their faith. Authors grouped under this heading are referred to in French criticism as 'monarchomaques'. For a detailed analysis of Huguenot resistance, see Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, II, esp. Part III, pp. 189-349. See also Knecht, pp. 190-197, and Paul-Alexis Mellet, *Les traités monarchomaques: Confusion des temps, résistance armée et monarchie parfaite* (Geneva: Droz, 2007).

anonymous works: the *Reveille-matin des François* (a pair of dialogues first published in full in 1574), and two texts in Simon Goulart's *Mémoires des estats de France sous Charles IX* (1576-78): one a dialogue called 'Le Politique', the other a lengthy exposition of appropriate forms of government entitled 'Discours politiques des diverses puissances estampilles de Dieu au monde, du gouvernement légitime d'icelles, & du devoir de ceux qui y sont assujettis'.

The word *politique* appears most obviously in the title of the two texts from Goulart's *Mémoires*, and in the *Reveille-matin* as the name of one of the principal characters in both dialogues: 'le Politique', or 'un Seigneur Politic François'. These uses do not involve a complete break with the tradition discussed in the previous chapters (the 'Discours politiques' makes many references to Aristotle's *Politics*) but rather a mixing of erudite culture and contingent polemic. Besides this, their concern with preventing tyranny and their use of the dialogue form represent a kind of continuation of the tradition in which Le Caron and Pasquier (discussed in Chapter One) were writing. All the texts under discussion are composite constructions, both implicitly and explicitly polyphonic; explicitly in the dialogues between several characters, and implicitly in the organisation and construction of the texts. Goulart's *Mémoires* and the *Reveille-matin* mix the works of several different authors, often without attribution (the most famous, or notorious, of these textual borrowings is a lengthy extract from La Boétie's *Discours sur la servitude volontaire*, in the *Reveille-matin*, delivered by the Politique) – and more broadly in Goulart's *Mémoires*, in the huge variety of gathered sources, interspersed with the author's own narrative of events during the reign of Charles IX. Within this diversity of style and origin, the term *politique* has many functions.

In this chapter I look in detail at three of these functions. Following a more detailed outline of the texts at hand, and their composition, I look at the use of the term as the name of a particular character, as mobilised against a version of Machiavelli, and as a judicious reader, sifting through political writings in order to argue in favour of freedom of worship.²²⁵ In some cases (the ‘Discours politiques’ being one of these more extreme examples) the authors go as far as advocating tyrannicide: the assassination of the unjust ruler. In *Le Politique* one of the two speakers is named Politie, and represents ‘la liberté des peuples’, while her interlocutor, Archon, represents ‘l’autorité des Princes’: in the dialogue, the two characters explore the relationship between liberty and authority. Between liberty, judicious authority, and tyranny the term *politique* is used to distinguish each from the other. In this chapter, I show how writers hostile to the crown and sympathetic to the Protestant cause appropriate the term *politique* in their arguments for freedom of conscience and of worship, associating *politique* with *liberté*, in opposition to *tyrannie*, both in the dialogue *Le Politique* and in the other texts discussed. I make this argument not to suggest that the authors in question are somehow any more successful than Bodin or Le Roy in pinning down the *politique* and making the term work for them beyond the sphere of the text itself, but that they attempt to do so by taking advantage of the word’s mobility, which at the same time makes the term a matter for suspicion as well as for robustly attributed ‘pro-Huguenot’ content.

1. The Borrowers: The Reveille-matin and Goulart’s Mémoires

The *Reveille-matin*, which was, according to Kingdon, the ‘most popular and widely circulated piece of Protestant propaganda’ of the period, was, despite its own claim to have been printed in Edinburgh, likely printed in Strasbourg by the same press that

²²⁵ On the reception of Machiavelli in the sixteenth century, see Anglo, *Machiavelli: The First Century*. For the French reception in particular, see pp. 183-324.

issued a German version of Rabelais's *Pantagruel* and *Gargantua* so as to put Rabelais's anti-clericalism to work for the anti-Catholic cause.²²⁶ It has been attributed to the Huguenot writer Nicolas Barnaud, but this has never been proven.²²⁷ In any case, it seems likely that there were several authors, and editors, and 'voices', some of whom were there without permission (La Boétie, of course, had died a decade earlier, and the appropriation of his words in the *Reveille-matin*, and then the reproduction without permission of the entire treatise in Goulart's *Mémoires*, was purportedly the reason for the famed absence of the *Discours sur la servitude volontaire* from its intended place at the heart of Montaigne's *Essais*).²²⁸ Kingdon posits an English author for the first part of the second dialogue, which amounts to a lengthy critique of Elizabethan religious policy, and suggests that the final section of the first dialogue must have had a different author to the rest of it because, essentially, the prose is less lively (he calls it 'dry').²²⁹ The pseudonym on the frontispiece, Eusèbe Philadelphie, was used by Barnaud as well as by Théodore de Bèze and Hugues Doneau; Iagolnitzer points out that the name 'Eusèbe Philadelphie cosmopolite' implies a network of authors – she suggests that a group that included Barnaud, Doneau, Goulart, and François Hotman, compiled much of the *Reveille-matin*. Hotman has been posited as a main editor but Iagolnitzer casts doubt on this, suggesting that although Hotman brought

²²⁶ Robert M. Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres 1572-1576* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), p. 70.

²²⁷ Kingdon is unconvinced by the attribution to Barnaud, given the lack of resemblance between the *Reveille-matin* and Barnaud's other works. See Kingdon, p. 70. Kelley, however, seems to find the attribution convincing and sees similarities between the *Reveille-matin* and another work attributed to Barnaud, *Le Miroir des françois* (Paris, 1582). He considers that Barnaud held an idealistic, humanist-inspired view of the role of the *homo politicus*. See Kelley, *The Beginnings of Ideology*, p. 204.

²²⁸ Baranova suggests that, based on her study of Pierre de L'Estoile's collection, which contains pamphlets bearing strong resemblances to sections of the *Reveille-matin*, there must have been at least eight different authors. See Baranova, *A coup de libelles*, p. 189.

²²⁹ Kingdon, p. 79 and p. 75. Kingdon suggests the prominent Elizabethan puritan, Thomas Cartwright. It is worth noting, however, that this is speculation, and speculation that serves Kingdon's overall argument about the international and internationalising focus of Protestant writings in the post-Saint-Bartholomew period. This has been questioned by Huchard, who emphasises the specificity of the French context for which she feels the authors were primarily writing. See Kingdon, p. 72, and Cécile Huchard, *D'encre et de sang. Simon Goulart et la Saint-Barthélemy* (Paris: Champion, 2007), p. 10.

together many of the materials, he left it to Doneau to write it up.²³⁰ In any case, the hypothesis of a network of prominent Protestant men of letters being responsible for the *Reveille-matin* perhaps goes some way to explaining how the *Discours sur la servitude volontaire* ended up in print in its pages, having up to this point only circulated among a limited audience in manuscript form.²³¹ Moreover, this would also point to the form in some way reflecting the process of composition: dialogue and discussion within this network of readers and writers led to the printed dialogues of the *Reveille-matin*.

The *Reveille-matin* was translated into several languages, and widely circulated across Europe, though owing to its highly critical view of Elizabeth I, and the radical propositions made by the prophet Daniel, who appears at the end of the first dialogue, it was not universally well received, even by committed Protestants.²³² The operation of a well-organised and highly motivated network of Calvinists operating from their central hub in Geneva to spread the Reform across France, in a targeted and initially very successful campaign, has been well documented.²³³ But by the 1570s, the leading pastors in Geneva were not entirely in control of their flock; some of their most talented and prolific propagandists, horrified by events in their homeland, threatened to go rogue.

One such rogue-in-the-making was Simon Goulart, whose output in various fields was so prolific and diverse – as an editor, translator, adaptor, commentator, historian,

²³⁰ Mitchiko Iagolnitzer, 'La publication du "Discours de la servitude volontaire" dans les "Dialogi" ou le "Reveille-matin des Français"', *Bulletin de la société des amis de Montaigne*, 18-19 (1976), 99-108, pp. 107-08.

²³¹ On Protestant letter networks, see Mark Greengrass, 'Informal networks in sixteenth-century French Protestantism', in *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World 1559-1685*, ed. by Raymond A. Mentzer and Andrew Spicer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 78-97; especially concerning the use of manuscript letters and their use in the rising martyrology genre, pp. 61-71.

²³² Kingdon, p. 76.

²³³ See, for example, Salmon, *Society in Crisis*, pp. 117-46.

historiographer, mediator between Calvinists and Lutherans, author of *nouvelles*, essays, poems, and of one very unsuccessful play – that he has been called a ‘seismograph’ of cultural trends and contemporary thought.²³⁴ Born in 1543, he converted to Calvinism in Paris while he was studying law in the 1560s, and was ordained as a pastor in 1566. He was one of the most prolific and widely read literary pastors, but eventually fell foul of the Genevan authorities. He is perhaps best remembered for his *Mémoires de l'estat de France sous Charles IX*, a three-volume set of *recueils* of which the first appeared in 1576, although, somewhat perversely, the third volume was intended as the introductory one. It is this third volume – a mixture of treatises, letters, and documents – with which I am concerned here, and indeed particularly with the second edition, published in 1578.

In the mid-1570s, Huguenot leaders were working towards an alliance with the moderate Catholic nobility who felt pushed out by the Guises and perhaps too doubted Charles IX and Catherine de' Medici after the recent bloodshed. This faction, which came to be known as the ‘Malcontents’, rallied around Charles IX’s youngest brother, the Duc d’Alençon. With the ‘Malcontent’ alliance in mind, the first edition of the *Mémoires* was intended to persuade, or at least not to alienate, moderate Catholics. However, this alliance broke down, and thus Goulart felt free to include more radical resistance texts in his second edition, notably the ‘Discours politiques’ with its call for the assassination of a tyrannical ruler.²³⁵ The *Mémoires*, although one of the most widely referenced sources for histories of that phase of the civil wars, were not re-printed again in the sixteenth century, despite the fact that Goulart’s other

²³⁴ Olivier Pot, ‘Quand la Polygraphie devient une poétique’, in *Simon Goulart: Un Pasteur aux intérêts vastes comme le monde*, ed. by Olivier Pot (Geneva: Droz, 2013), pp. 7-53, p. 7.

²³⁵ This is Amy Graves-Monroe’s understanding of the expansion of the 1578 editions, see Amy Graves-Monroe, *Post Tenebras Lex: Preuves et propagande dans l'historiographie engagée de Simon Goulart (1543-1628)* (Geneva: Droz, 2012), p. 117.

writings were sought after (or perhaps, as Gilmont suggests, even informally commissioned) by a variety of printers throughout his career.²³⁶ It is likely that this work was not re-issued due to the controversy attached to parts of its content – the second edition of volume three was publicly burned in Bordeaux in 1579.²³⁷

Like the *Reveille-matin*, Goulart's *Mémoires* are composite texts bringing together many different 'voices'. Goulart's own narrative, with occasional use of first person pronouns, is interspersed with works by other authors, usually anonymous, and of various political and confessional persuasions.²³⁸ Incidences of the term *politique* reflect this diversity. Towards the beginning of volume three in both the first and second editions, the dialogue 'Le Politique' appears, with the full title given as:

Le Politique. Dialogue Traitant de la puissance, autorité, & du devoir des Princes: des divers gouvernemens: jusques ou lon doit supporter la tyrannie: Si en une oppression extreme il est loisible aux sujets de prendre les armes pour defendre leur vie & liberté: quand, comment, par qui, & par quel moyen cela doit & peut faire.²³⁹

The dialogue is introduced by the anonymous author in a prefatory epistle to his nephew, 'avocat en l'un des Parlemens de France'; he says he is writing to console himself and to offer his nephew both pleasure in reading and relief from suffering (p. 44), and that the dialogue that follows is roughly an account of conversations that they have had (p. 47). But the dialogue is between abstracted figures: Politie (who represents liberty) and Archon (sovereign authority).²⁴⁰ Whether or not this uncle and

²³⁶ Jean-François Gilmont, 'Simon Goulart et ses imprimeurs', in *Simon Goulart*, ed. by Pot, pp. 257-70 (p. 270).

²³⁷ Graves-Monroe, p. 124.

²³⁸ See Graves-Monroe, p. 109.

²³⁹ 'Le Politique' in Simon Goulart, *Mémoires de l'Etat de France, sous Charles Neufiesme. Troisième volume. Seconde Edition, reveue, corrigee & augmentee.* ([?], 1579), pp. 44-83 (p. 44). All further references to Goulart's *Mémoires* will be to this edition unless stated otherwise.

²⁴⁰ Archon of Athens was a citizen-sovereign elected by his people; a 'magistrat souverain', as Bodin put it, deciding in his famous chapter on sovereignty that Archon did not hold true sovereignty. Perhaps he had read 'Le Politique'. Bodin, I, 8, pp. 183-85.

nephew ever existed, or had these conversations, it is clear that this introduction describes a process of inspiration and composition similar to that which may have brought forth the *Reveille-matin*: conversations, and letters, between dismayed Protestants trying to enact a kind of restoration of common purpose, hope, and justice in writing, as it was not yet possible in person.

The anonymous author doesn't use the term *politique* again in the preface; one wonders whether Goulart may have added this word to the title. 'Le Politique' is followed in the *Mémoires* by the full text of *Discours sur la servitude volontaire*, which seems to be the product of a thematic organisation by the editor. Goulart's narrative then reprises without any obvious break on the printed page; only the author's brief introduction: 'Il est temps de reprendre le propos qui a esté differé quelque peu pour les traitez sus inserez' (p. 99^v). Jan Miernowski contends that Goulart strategically mixed the texts in the *Mémoires* so as to make it difficult for the reader to tell who had written what, and to know when one thing finished and the overarching narrative thread was being picked up again – the transition between the *Discours sur la servitude volontaire* and the return to the overall *propos* is an example of this technique, which Miernowski calls 'une sorte de ventriloquie'.²⁴¹

Within the ventriloquism at work in both the *Mémoires* and the *Reveille-matin*, the term *politique* is used – as we shall see – as a tool to argue against Machiavelli, and in favour of liberty; but first and foremost, it is a term that defines the text (in various titles) and

Politie, like Alithie in the *Reveille-matin*, is female; although the evocation of a feminine figure who embodies an abstract ideal is hardly unusual (and Le Roy comes close to something similar with *la politique*), these dialogues certainly give more space to nominally female voices than most of the other texts analysed in the thesis.

²⁴¹ Jan Miernowski, 'La mémoire des massacres chez Simon Goulart et les origines de la fable Protestante', in *Simon Goulart*, ed. by Pot, pp. 143-58 (p. 157).

is the name of characters who themselves contest and assert the boundaries of what might be considered *politique* behaviour and knowledge.

2. The Politique's Wake-up Call

The title of the *Reveille-matin des françois*, which Kelley translates as 'Alarm Bell', but could also be something like 'Wake-up Call for the French People', announces the text as one meant to inspire action.²⁴² In this section I discuss how the Politique is characterized, and how the character is used to alert readers to the need for action; I show how this Politique takes on powers of discernment and authoritative judgment, but that the moral/ethical stance taken by somebody called *politique* is nonetheless potentially dubious, or even dangerous, and more obviously so than in the texts I have looked at earlier in this thesis.

The *Reveille-matin des François* consists of two dialogues.²⁴³ The first edition, printed in 1573, contained only the first dialogue, which takes place at the house of Alithie (a figure for truth) in Hungary, under Turkish rule; the implication is that truth has been forced to travel beyond Christian Europe and settle in the land of its avowed enemy. Alithie is attended by a French refugee, Philalithie (whose name simply means friend of truth, and who thus plays the role of right-thinking listener, or reader). Philalithie introduces two other French exiles, the Historiographe, and the Politique. In the discussion that follows, the Historiographe gives an account of the rise of Calvinism in France, the ensuing persecution of Protestants, and in particular the days leading up to the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre, with a long description of the massacre itself. The Politique is presented as the companion and helper of the Historiographe,

²⁴² Kelley, *The Beginnings of Ideology*, e.g. p. 204.

²⁴³ *Le Reveille-matin des François, Et de leurs voisins* ('Edinbourg', 1574; repr. Geneva: Slatkine, 1977) [the *Arguments* are non-paginated]. All further references will be to this facsimile edition.

offers analysis of his account, and suggests conclusions (such as that Catherine de' Medici should never have been made regent). At the end of the dialogue, a character called Eglise arrives, and introduces the prophet Daniel to the company. Daniel issues a kind of manifesto (introduced as 'loix politiques') for a new society centred on liberty of conscience for French Huguenots. He essentially suggests extreme localisation of powers, or, as Kingdon puts it, the 'dismemberment of France' into hundreds of small city states on the Genevan model.²⁴⁴ The Historiographe and the Politique, Catholic at the start of the dialogue, are persuaded by what they hear and convert to the Reformed faith (that is, they swear loyalty to the Eglise character); this conversion is, however, signalled from the opening in the *Argument du premier dialogue*, which also states that after the conversation has finished, the Historiographe will travel to tell 'princes & Nations voisines' about 'les Tragedies francoises & leur devoir envers les bons'. The Politique is sent to inform the oppressed French people of Daniel's orders.

The second dialogue opens with the joyous reunion of the Politique and the Historiographe after their travels. In case his conversion was ever in doubt, the scene opens on the Politique in a tavern in Friburg in Brisgau singing Psalm 74; the Historiographe overhears him and is delighted to find his friend.²⁴⁵ They then tell one another of what they have learnt during their travels – followed by the Politique issuing what Kingdon has called 'a short treatise on resistance theory'.²⁴⁶ The dialogue ends as they call for rebellion against tyranny. In fact, just as Daniel appeared at the end of the first dialogue with a manifesto for a new society, at the end of the second, the Politique issues a call for the French to rise up against their 'voluntary servitude' to tyrannical leaders: this is the excerpt from *Discours sur la*

²⁴⁴ Kingdon, p. 76.

²⁴⁵ Singing the Psalms in French was one of the most recognizable parts of Calvinist worship.

²⁴⁶ Kingdon, p. 83.

servitude volontaire mentioned above, which in some ways makes La Boétie the unwitting Daniel of the second dialogue.

The Politique character in these texts is many things. First, I wish to focus on the fact that the word *politique* has the *potential* to be many things, and so represents an unstable category both vulnerable to and subject to contestation and therefore not implicitly worthy of trust and admiration as Le Roy and Bodin would have liked their ‘sages politiques’ to be, or at least to appear to be.

Although the Politique in the *Reveille-matin* quickly becomes a trusted ally of truth, and an emissary of the Reformed church, when he is introduced to Alithie, alongside the historian, her response is equivocal:

Je suis plus aise de te voir accompagné de l’un que l’autre, sachant combien l’un est nécessaire & profitable pour aider à la memoire, & servir à la posterité: & l’autre, le plus souvent pernicieux & dommageable, principalement s’il est nourry à la cour d’aucuns Rois & Princes que tu cognais bien: toutefois, si tu as tousjours bonne souvenance de ce que je t’ay enseigné, je m’assurerai que telles gens de les Politiques d’aujourd’hui ne te destourneront facilement de l’amitié que tu me portes (p. 1).

Alithie is introduced as the embodiment of truth in the *Argument*; her name derives from the Greek *Aletheia* (Αλήθεια), meaning truth or disclosure. ‘Dis-closure’ is a more literal translation of ‘A-letheia’: the meaning of which may be more legible to modern readers through the image of Lethe, the river of oblivion in the underworld of Greek mythology: *Aletheia* thus means the opposite of closure, oblivion, and concealment, and could also be translated as ‘unconcealed’. Her role in the text, in keeping with this name is apparently, then, to clarify meaning through disclosure. Viewed in this way, she is there to eliminate the shadows with which multiple and conflicting meanings

obscure truth and unity of sense; she is there to resolve the encounters and contestations present in terms like *politique*.

Alithie's comments about her new guests, the Politique and the Historiographe, are addressed to her friend, Philalithie. For her, the Historiographe can only be a positive presence, but the Politique is more likely than not to be 'pernicieux & dommageable'; she allows him entry only because she trusts that Philalithie has not forgotten the lessons he has learnt from her, and therefore thinks that he could not be easily swayed from the path of righteousness by 'les Politiques d'aujourd'hui'. This opening establishes the term *politique* as indicating a potentially damaging and untrustworthy character, owing to connections with certain kings and princes (one thinks here of Le Roy, who boasts in his *preface* to his translation of Aristotle that he is particularly qualified to comment on *la politique* precisely because he has frequented courts of kings and princes [see above, p. 116]). That the Politique of the *Reveille-matin* might be untrustworthy, and no friend to truth, evokes connotations of falseness that become more prominent, and more overtly contested, slightly later in the history of the term. But here, it is clear that the 'pernicieux & dommageable' status is not fixed: there can be such thing as a *politique* who is welcome in the house of truth. The ambiguous initial reception of the Politique by Alithie, and the mobility of the Politique in both spiritual and actual space across the discussions that follow (in which the Politique both travels through Europe and converts from Catholicism to Protestantism), both serve to show that the term *politique* as a substantive noun already incarnates, in the *Reveille-matin*, a considerable degree of mobility between various axes, not least that between perceived good and evil.

If the Politique brought by Philalithie to Alithie's Hungarian hideout is not a typical 'Politique d'aujourd'hui', but a 'good' one, then what makes him different? The *Reveille-matin's* Politique operates in the tradition of Renaissance dialogues in which the character is, to return to Snyder's formulation of the prevalence of dialogue in this period as part of a concern with 'the life of ideas', an abstract concept rather than an individual, either real or fictional, not corrupted by 'aujourd'hui'.²⁴⁷ All the characters' names (except Daniel's) derive from Ancient Greek abstract nouns and they are the embodiments of abstractions rather than specific people. The naming of a principal character in the *Reveille-matin* as le Politique is not the re-naming or thinly described portrait of any contemporary individual active in these events; this is the case not least because the result of the writing and editing process I describe above leads to inconsistency in tone and content. So perhaps there is an extent to which this Politique is categorised as 'good' because the use of the term *politique* in his name represents an animation of a concept in intellectual discourse that is imbued with positive connotations, not least in the immediate contemporary context in the works of Bodin and Le Roy. A similar process occurs in *Le Politique* in Goulart's *Mémoires* with the naming of the character Politie.²⁴⁸

The authors of the *Reveille-matin* make the Politique's apparent status as above and outside the contemporary conflict work for their purposes. In contrast, for example, with the later *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant* (1593; discussed in Chapter Five), in which both characters introduce themselves according to their allegiance in the

²⁴⁷ Snyder, p. 6.

²⁴⁸ The connection between the words 'Politie' and 'Politique' is not entirely clear; the first dictionary definition of 'Politie' is in the *Littré*, which gives the same Greek etymology as 'politique' and notes a medieval use of the word 'Politie' by Christine de Pizan associated with 'droit' and 'droitement'. See 'Politie', in Emile Littré, *Dictionnaire de la langue française* (Paris: Hachette, 1872-77). <<http://artflsrv02.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/dicos/pubdicollook.pl?strippedhw=politie>> [Accessed 29 June 2015]. Maclean shows that the concept of 'policy' in the modern sense of the term was not yet current in this period in 'From Prudence to Policy'.

contemporary conflict, in which they have participated on opposite sides, the *Politique* of the *Reveille-matin* enters the dialogue with no stated history or allegiance other than to truth, and only halfway through the first dialogue do we discover that he is a Catholic who has fled France in horror at the atrocities committed there. This means that throughout the first dialogue, the *Politique* gains ideological content, as it were; when we meet him, he is empty, but imbued with all the power invested in the word in its abstract form, and he is then ‘filled’ with ideas relating to specific events recounted by the *Historiographe*, and these ideas are ratified by the approval of *Alithie*. The *Politique* as an embodiment of intellectual abstraction is potentially compromised by the presence of the *Historiographe* and the detailed recounting of recent events, but in fact the writers manipulate this to create a *Politique* with a clear stance on contemporary events who is nothing like the duplicitous courtly *politiques* to whom *Alithie* refers. In this way, the writer(s) manipulate tropes of Renaissance dialogue to animate a *Politique* that corresponds with the powerful, elevated *politique* found in Bodin’s *Republique*, in order to lend authority to their partisan agenda (an excoriation of monarchs across Europe, from Charles IX to Elizabeth I and so on). *Alithie* might have been more truthfully named ‘opinion’, as she orchestrates the descent of the *Politique* from lofty abstraction to political engagement. In distinguishing the *Politique* from ‘les *Politiques* d’aujourd’hui’, then, the authors of the *Reveille-matin* draw on elite discourse to create a different kind of *politique*, but one who is no less engaged in the contemporary moment. In so doing, their use of the term represents an unusual one in the sense that their *Politique* is – or becomes – a committed Protestant, rather than acting as the moderate Catholic go-between characterised as *politique* by historians.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁹ The first of these historians seems to have been Simon Goulart, in the fragment ‘Commencemen des politiques qu’on appelle’ [p. 99^r] – this is an account of the early days of the ‘Malcontent’ faction

So what might the phrase ‘Politiques d’aujourd’hui’ have meant to contemporaries? The ‘moderate Catholic’ substantive meaning was clearly current, as the pamphlet *L’Allegresse Chrestienne de L’heureux succès des guerres de ce royaume* demonstrates. This Catholic-authored celebration in verse form of the Saint Bartholomew’s Day massacres denounces Gaspard de Coligny and extrapolates from that a denunciation of all those who shared his faith; such posthumous attacks explain the Historiographer’s wish to exonerate Coligny in the *Reveille-matin*. Perhaps the most famous of these was Pibrac’s notorious letter to Stanislas Elvidias; the Politique of the *Reveille-matin* pities Pibrac for having had to speak such untruths (p. 116; I discuss this again below, p. 152).²⁵⁰ The author of *L’Allegresse Chrestienne* both praises the desecration of Coligny’s body in death (which actually occurred) and continues a metaphorical dragging through the mud in verse; Coligny is the foil to the hero of the pamphlet, Charles IX, who has saved the kingdom by ordering the massacres. The poem as a whole is not so much an argument as an expression of jubilation; the existence of a dissenting view is briefly raised and dismissed:

Je sçay bien toutes fois que quelque politique
 Dira, ce n’est au Roy, de punir l’hérétique.
 Ce n’est donc pas au Roy de maintenir son sceptre,
 Son trosne, sans l’eglise estably ne peut estre.²⁵¹

These four lines suggest that a *politique* view could be a kind of proto-*laïcité* in which secular power has no jurisdiction over the spiritual realm (the author disagrees, saying that if that were the case, the king might as well not have any realm at all). And this view is not unique: in a letter of 1573 the president of the *Parlement* in Rouen defined the word ‘*politique*’ as designating one who did not take sides in the confessional

attached to the Duc d’Alençon.

²⁵⁰ Pibrac, apologist of *La Saint-Barthélemy*, was, we recall, the dedicatee of Bodin’s *Republique*.

²⁵¹ [Jean Touchard], *Allegresse Chrestienne de L’heureux succès des guerres de ce royaume, et de la justice de Dieu contre les rebelles au Roy, & comme de droit divin, est licite à sa majesté punir ses sujets, pour la Religion violée* (Paris: J. de Roigny, 1572), NP.

conflict but knew how to govern a multitude of men: this letter is quoted at the conclusion of the preceding chapter (p. 123).²⁵² Other pro-Charles Catholic pamphlets do not use the word *politique* at all, and nor do most Catholic sources critical of Charles; for example, the Duc d'Alençon's *Declaration*, made at Dreux in 1575, could very loosely be described as a 'malcontent' manifesto, and makes no use of the term.²⁵³ Greengrass has written that the most notorious *politique* of the age was Catherine de' Medici, but she is not described thus in the *Discours Merveilleux de la vie, actions et déportements de Cathérine de Médicis* which is credited with establishing her 'légende noire'.²⁵⁴

In 'Le Politique' and 'Discours politiques' in Goulart's *Mémoires*, other than the uses in the title the most frequent form is adjectival, as part of 'loix politiques' ('loix politiques' is also one of the only adjectival uses in the *Reveille-matin*, and introduces Daniel's edicts). In *Le Politique*, there is one occasion when, as the characters are discussing examples of rebellion against unjust monarchs, Politie qualifies the checking of Solomon's excessive spending by a prophet as 'un exemple purement politique' – which Archon then counters with 'un qui est purement pour la religion' (a rebellion against Joram, son of Jehoshaphat, who tried to introduce false gods [p. 68]). This moment of contrast between *religion* and the adjectival form of *politique* in *Le Politique* indicates potential opposition between religion and politics, even as the title of the dialogue indicates an attempt at resolution, and Politie attempts in her speeches to make politics work for religion.

²⁵² Quoted in Jouanna, *Le Pouvoir absolu*, p. 177.

²⁵³ See *Declaration de Monseigneur Francois fils & frere de Roy. Duc d'Alençon, &c. Contenant les raisons de sa sortie de la Court* (Paris, 1575).

²⁵⁴ Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV*, p. 15; Nicole Cazauran, 'Introduction', in *Le Discours merveilleux de la vie, actions, et déportements de Cathérine de Médicis, royne mere*, ed. by Nicole Cazauran (Geneva: Droz, 1995), pp. 11-54 (pp. 11-12).

All this points to a complicated and dynamic situation in which uses of the term relate to a fracturing of the traditional view of France as ‘le royaume trèschrétien’, a nation unified by a single faith. The *Reveille-matin* and *Le Politique* invent characters called Politie and Le Politique to mend these fractures, in moves both similar and – in ideological terms, strongly opposed – to those of Bodin and Le Roy. Unlike the *Ligueur* polemicists, who – as we shall see in the next chapter – turn against the *politique*, the Huguenot writers here take advantage of the term’s mobility and attempt to work it to their own advantage by fixing it in a particular form, so that *politique* opposes not religion itself, but his alter ego, the bad *politique*. And the bad *politique par excellence* is, of course, Niccolò Machiavelli – or rather, the sensationalised version of him who appeared in Huguenot polemic as the ideological inspiration of the massacres.

3. Le Politique contre Machiavel

As Anglo has shown, the French reception of Machiavelli was crucial to the development of the Florentine’s sulphurous reputation, and the development of ‘Machiavellian’ as an adjective indicating unprincipled, self-serving, and power-hungry behaviour.²⁵⁵ This negative reception was intimately linked to Protestant writing in the wake of Saint Bartholomew’s Day. Earlier French translators had been enthusiastic about Machiavelli and their translations were popular enough that *Il Principe* and the *Discorsi* were read widely in France from c. 1550; his influence on contemporary writers such as Le Roy and Montaigne has been much discussed and debated.²⁵⁶ Criticism of Machiavelli led to him being characterised as a bad version of

²⁵⁵ See Anglo, pp. 271-324.

²⁵⁶ On Le Roy and Machiavelli, see, for example, Maria Elena Severini, ‘Premessa’, in Loys Le Roy, *De la vicissitude ou variété des choses en l’univers, La traduction italiana di Ercole Cato*, ed. by Maria Elena Severini (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2014), pp. 7-13, pp. 12-13. On Montaigne and Machiavelli, see below, n. 269.

a *politique*, and somebody who was ignorant of the truth of *la science politique*. This had not always been the case; in the preface to his 1553 translation of the *Prince*, Guillaume Cappel praised Machiavelli as an expert in all things ‘Politique’: ‘[Machiavel] a si bien traité toutes les parties de Politique qu’il est aquis desja autant de louenge en toutes, que tous les autres ensemble sur chacune’.²⁵⁷

After 1572, in the context of the vilification of the Florentine Queen Mother, Catherine de’Medici, Machiavelli’s reputation as an expert in ‘toutes les parties de Politique’ suffered in tandem. Knecht writes that it was rumoured that Catherine ‘had brought up her children on Machiavelli’s *The Prince*, and that Anjou always carried a copy in his pocket’.²⁵⁸ The *Discours merueilleux* refers to Machiavelli as a highly influential *politique* at the Valois court:

Les Florentins, pour la pluspart (comme disent ceux qui ont mangé quelque peu de sel avec eux) se soucient peu de leur conscience: veulent sembler religieux et non pas l'estre, faisans grand cas (comme aussi Machiavel l’un de leurs premiers politiques le conseille à son prince) de ce qu’avait jadis fort souvent en la bouche l’ambitieux lion:

*Cherche d'avoir d'homme droit le renom,
Mais les effects et justes oeuvres non.
Fay seulement cela dont tu verras
Que recevoir du profit tu pourras.*²⁵⁹

Here, Machiavelli appears as a courtly *politique* in the same kind of use of the term that referred in previous chapters to Aristotle or Scipio; as an author, or an authority, using theory to improve practice. It is important to note that at this stage, where Machiavelli reception intersects with this study of the keyword *politique*, the description of Machiavelli as ‘l’un de leurs premiers politiques’ does not work to pass all the negative associations with ‘Machiavel’ on to the term *politique*, and *politiques* are not

²⁵⁷ *Le Prince de Nicolas Machiavelle secrétaire et citoyen de Florence*, trans. by Guillaume Cappel (Paris: Estienne, 1553), p. aiiii.

²⁵⁸ R. J. Knecht, *Catherine De’ Medici* (London: Longman, 1998), p. 164.

²⁵⁹ *Discours merueilleux*, p. 133.

blamed for the massacres. Rather, anti-Machiavellian writing makes the word an object of contestation; something to be salvaged from Machiavelli's supposed errors. We have already seen this at work, albeit briefly, in Chapter Two; this is explicitly stated in Bodin's preface to the *Republique*, written in the anti-Machiavellian context of the work's publication – Bodin writes a paragraph on 'un Macciavel' (the use of the indefinite article suggests that 'un Macciavel' is already a type, or stock character) which concludes that 'ceux qui ont accoustumé de discourir doctement, peser sagement, et resoudre subtilement les hauts affaires d'estat, s'accorderont qu'il n'a jamais sondé le gué de la science politique, qui ne gist pas en rues tyranniques'.²⁶⁰ Bodin thus joins the voices calling to shut Machiavelli out of political discourse, of which the loudest was, of course, Innocent Gentillet, whose *Discours sur les moyens de bien gouverner et maintenir en bonne paix un royaume ou autre principauté, contre Nicolas Machiavel* (1576) so came to typify anti-Machiavellian writing that it is more commonly known simply as the *Anti-Machiavel*. In his preface, Gentillet cautiously praises 'l'art Politique', with the caveat that it is not as reliable as mathematics and thus requires extremely delicate judgement to be properly applied.²⁶¹ He describes his aim in the work that follows in terms that strongly echo Bodin's critique of 'un Macciavel':

Mais mon but est seulement de montrer que Nicolas Machiavel Florentin, jadis secrétaire de la republique (maintenant duché) de Florence; n'a rien entendu, ou peu, en ceste science politique dont nous parlons, et qu'il a prins des maximes toutes meschantes, et basta sur celles non une science politique mais tyrannique.²⁶²

Anglo points out that Gentillet's reading reduced Machiavelli's writings to (sometimes poorly translated) maxims and aphorisms that distorted the content of his work

²⁶⁰ Bodin, *Republique*, I, p. 12.

²⁶¹ Innocent Gentillet, *Anti-Machiavel, Edition de 1576*, ed. by C. Edward Rathé (Geneva: Droz, 1968), p. 30.

²⁶² *Ibid*, p. 31.

(commenting that he was in this respect a ‘typical Renaissance reader’).²⁶³ Gentillet was neither the first nor the last to take this approach to Machiavelli; the excerpt from *Discours merveilleux* quoted above makes a marginal reference to Chapter XV of *The Prince* (on reputation, and how the Prince should not try to be wholly good) and reduces this chapter (in which Machiavelli says that it would be preferable if princes were entirely virtuous, but ‘because of conditions in this world, princes cannot have those qualities, or observe them completely’) to four lines of verse that instruct the Machiavellian prince to try to appear good without actually being good.²⁶⁴ In the *Reveille-matin*, the Politique makes similar reference to the teachings of Machiavelli: namely the principle that a divided population is easier to subjugate:

Le corps est foible & moins appareillé à combattre les autres, quand il a perdu la moitié de ses membres: qu’il n’y a chose plus miserable que la victoire és guerres civiles, laquelle affoiblit le vainqueur bien souvent autant que le vaincu, le livrant à la fin du compte entre les mains de ses voisins: que par tant l’opinion de Machiavelli (que le conseil du Roy sembloit suyvre, tenant ses sujets desunis) estoit une pernicieuse heresie en matière d’estat: qu’il valoit donc mieux conserver le tout, qu’en ruiner une grande partie (p. 21).

Here, the ‘opinion de Machiavelli’ (characterised as ‘une pernicieuse heresie’) functions as a lever in an argument against the common Catholic view that the Reformed faith represented a diseased limb in the body politic and should be cut off to save the rest (this point is made, for example, by Ronsard in his *Discours des miseres de ce temps*).²⁶⁵ The four references to Machiavelli in the *Reveille-matin* are made by the Politique: in two of these (p. 21, p. 142) it is to say that his views are ‘pernicieuse heresie’ and have ‘aucune valeur’, and in the other two (p. 37 and p. 107) Machiavelli is presented as having persuaded the king to order the massacres (p. 37), and as being the teacher of Catherine de’ Medici (p. 107), who in turn persuaded the king that he

²⁶³ Anglo, p. 299.

²⁶⁴ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, tr. by George Bull (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 66.

²⁶⁵ On the metaphor of the body politic see Kathryn Banks, ‘Interpretations of the Body Politic and of Natural Bodies in Late Sixteenth-Century France’, in *Metaphor and Discourse*, pp. 205-18.

need not keep his promises (this is a digestion of chapter XVIII of *The Prince*). In the *Reveille-matin*, then, the Politique character is partly an Anti-Machiavel himself.

In *Le Politique*, Politie is similarly critical of ‘Machiavel & les autres politiques modernes’ (making, as does Le Roy with different effect, polemical use of the term ‘moderne’). She makes this criticism of ‘Machiavel’ and other *politiques* in the discussion with Archon over whether pagan political thought is compatible with Christianity. Like Gentillet, Politie emphasises the need for good judgement:

ARCHON: Il semble bien qu’il y a grande convenance entre ce que Dieu a ordonné de la police civile en ses loix, & ce que les Payens en ont dit.

POLITIE: Il en faut juger avec discretion. Car Dieu y a esgard tellement, qu’il veut qu’elle se maintienne par charité & crainte de son nom, & que la conservation des estats soit reconnue de sa main, & les Philosophes, legistes, & autres politiques, qui ne sont esclairez en leur prudence & experience, que de la lumiere naturelle, n’ont bien souvent esgard à conserver la grandeur & dignité des estats, & des conducteurs d’iceux, & de les rendre perpetuels. Ciceron au troisieme livre de la Republique veut sus le patron de l’éternité du monde (comme les Platoniques le cuident estre eternal) rendre aussi la cité eternelle. Machiavel et les autres politiques modernes s’estudient fort à enseigner les moyens de ceste manutention, mais ils omettent le principal (p. 49).

The semantic field here is very similar to the one explored in Chapter Two, with the links made between philosophers, lawyers, and *politiques*; the references to Cicero and Plato; the emphasis on ‘prudence & experience’. Besides this, the critique of Machiavelli is somewhat subtler than the straightforward blame for Huguenot suffering attached to the Florentine in Gentillet and in the *Reveille-matin*. Machiavelli is positioned at the heart of a conflict between pagan morality (whose goal is an eternal city on earth) and Christian morality in which the state is maintained in God’s name ‘par charité & crainte’, and the only access to anything eternal is through religion: hence ‘Machiavel et les autres politiques modernes’ seem to emphasise ‘les moyens’

but omit 'le principal' (which is God). The focus on 'les moyens' as opposed to 'le principal' implies a conflict that wasn't present for Bodin, who wrote that the means were anything that would facilitate what he considered to be 'le principal' (see Chapter Two, p. 112).

This conflict, in which *Politie* is on one side and 'Machiavel et les autres politiques modernes' are on the other, comes close to evoking what Isaiah Berlin described as the true scandal of Machiavelli's politics: not the divorce of ethics from politics, but the portrayal of Western politics as caught between two incompatible ethical models, one pagan, and one Christian: the former associated with qualities such as public order, greatness, and discipline, and the other with charity, submission to the will of God, and a prioritisation of the salvation of the individual soul over any social or civil goal.²⁶⁶ Thus Berlin paints Machiavelli as the man who lifted the veil on the fundamental impossibility of syncretism between the Classical and Judeo-Christian traditions in the political sphere; without wishing to pronounce on the veracity, or not, of this binary, I might add that perhaps it could be a particular problem arising between the Classical tradition and Protestant interpretations of the Judeo-Christian tradition, with their emphasis on individual salvation as an interior process (Luther's justification by faith alone) rather than as the result of good works. This could in any case suggest a confessional explanation as to why *Le Politique* in particular seems to make Berlin's thesis for him, opposing 'charité' and 'crainte' with 'la grandeur & dignité des estats, & des conducteurs d'iceux' (p. 49).

²⁶⁶ Isaiah Berlin, 'The Originality of Machiavelli', in Isaiah Berlin, *Selected Writings: Against the Current, Essays in the History of Ideas*, ed. by Henry Hardy (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 25-79, (pp. 44-45). For a subtler account of early modern thinkers grappling with ideas about virtue according to both Christian and pre-Christian frameworks, see Michael Moriarty, *Disguised Vices: Theories of Virtue in Early Modern French Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

It seems, then, that the text called *Le Politique* and the character named Le Politique are *contre Machiavel* as a means of opposing Charles IX and Catherine de' Medici, and as a way of identifying what makes a *politique* good, but also as another way of opposing the way in which the words *politique* and *religion* are drifting apart in the discourse (a process facilitated, even encouraged, by the likes of Bodin – see above, pp. 111-12). Within this, the *Machiavel* word group interacts in a complex way with the *politique* – at once exemplifying the potentially dangerous mobility of *politique* and working as its opposing counterpart in writers' attempts to control this mobility and fix the *politique* as a person who is able both to argue for diversity in religion within one state, and who is still able to prioritise religion in politics. This complexity highlights the way in which *politique* at once designates an Anti-Machiavel, and the embodiment of the French experience of what Pocock called the 'Machiavellian moment', which he defined as the problem of attempting to build and maintain stable and lasting communities in the face of great conflict, and apparently inevitable instability.²⁶⁷ For Pocock, the 'Machiavellian moment' occurs when the fundamental instability of politics itself emerged as a kind of truth, in which 'to act in politics is to expose oneself to the insecurities of human power systems, to enter a world of mutability and *peripeteia* whose history is the dimension of political insecurity'.²⁶⁸ This problem is dramatised in *Le Politique* and *Le Reveille-matin* in their uses of the word 'politique' even as the writers seek to solve it.

One of Montaigne's rare uses of the term *politique*, and even rarer references to Machiavelli by name, seems to evoke the same problem: 'Notamment aux affaires politiques il y a un beau champ ouvert au bransle et à la contestation [...] Les discours de Machiavel, pour exemple, estoient assez solides pour le subject; si, y a-il eu grand

²⁶⁷ Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, pp. vii-ix.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

aisance à les combattre'.²⁶⁹ This moment in II, 17 ('De la praesomption'), contains the more stable adjectival use of *politique*, attached to 'affaire', and yet the presence of Machiavelli a few lines later, associated with the term ('pour le sujet'), with both cautious praise and allusion to the anti-Machiavellian context, shows Montaigne absorbing changes in use of the word at the same time as commenting on what he sees as the fundamentally contested and contesting nature of politics as a field of enquiry. The reference to the 'open field' ('champ ouvert') recalls his description of Tacitus's writing as 'une pépinière de discours ethiques et politiques', as well as Pasquier's condemnation of the 'pépinière' that spawned all the insults of the *Ligue* period, *politique* included. Here, in II, 17, Montaigne is once again on the outside looking in, commenting on the uncontrollably productive and destructive potential of texts defined as *politique*.

If this is a 'Machiavellian moment' in Montaigne, it is connected to a '*politique* moment' in which uses, and understanding, of the term *politique*, and of politics as an arena for thought and action, are highly unstable. Many critics have drawn links between Montaigne and Machiavelli, with III, 2 ('De l'Utile et de l'Honneste') treated as the paradigmatic example of Montaigne's engagement with the 'Machiavellian moment'.²⁷⁰ Here in II, 17, Montaigne is acknowledging the 'branle' and 'contestation' provoked by Machiavelli and attributing them to the kind of writing that it is, rather than to Machiavelli's particularly nefarious, brilliant, or shocking intervention. Montaigne's use of Machiavelli in II, 17 can therefore be read as a comment on the 'champ ouvert au bransle et à la contestation': a point about politics

²⁶⁹ Montaigne, p. 655.

²⁷⁰ David Schaefer, for example, views Montaigne as distinctly Machiavellian, particularly in III, 3. See David Schaefer, *The Political Philosophy of Montaigne* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 247-94. This view is criticized by David Quint, in *Montaigne and the Quality of Mercy*, p. 39. See also Valérie Dionne, *Montaigne, écrivain de la conciliation* (Paris: Garnier, 2014), pp. 67-92.

itself, rather than about Machiavelli on his (or indeed, on Montaigne's) own terms. These few lines in the middle of the *Essais* may seem emblematic of Machiavelli's reception in 1570s France, but in fact Montaigne is taking Machiavelli as an example of a particular moment in politics. The history of the term *politique*, here again, offers a reversal of narratives that place Machiavelli at the centre of a web of instability and intrigue: instead, Machiavelli as he was read and understood in 1570s France is emblematic of the conflict reflected, and fought out, in uses of the term *politique*.

4. The Politique Reader, between Liberty and Servitude

Machiavelli is not, of course, the only author to be manipulated in the name of a certain kind of politics, or to be named as *politique*, for better or for worse. In this section, I explore how the term *politique* is mobilised in a debate about what liberty is and what it should be – a debate that forms the context for Montaigne's difficulties in managing the way Etienne de la Boétie's major work was read.

In *Le Politique*, Politie and Archon's discussion of Machiavelli comes as part of a discussion about how to read. Directly after Politie's speech on Machiavelli, Archon suggests that he should simply be read selectively:

ARCHON: Il en faut prendre le bon & laisser le mauvais.

POLITIE: Au contraire, les hommes font toujours des perles & ornemens de la racleure & ordure des escrits des auteurs (p. 49).

Depending on how we read Politie's 'Au contraire', she could either be agreeing or disagreeing with Archon; she either agrees, and regrets that, 'au contraire', readers generally take the worst elements of a text and treat them as 'perles & ornemens', or the 'au contraire' indicates that, on the contrary, one must not attempt to read

selectively because readers always confuse swine for pearls. With this ambiguous statement, then, it seems that the author is demanding of Politie's reader the kind of reading that she herself advocates in her critique of Machiavelli: reading with discretion.²⁷¹ Throughout *Le Politique*, Politie's main function is as a reader and critic, providing glosses mostly on Biblical texts but also several times on Cicero (whom she criticises in conjunction with Machiavelli, but quotes approvingly later on [p. 74]). The Politique in the *Reveille-matin* has a similar role; he offers commentary and analysis of the Historiographe's accounts. His purpose in the text is explicitly linked to judgement in the *Argument*, in the sense of identifying 'fautes' on all sides (though he quickly loses the impartiality this evocation of 'tous les deux costez' implies): 'Le politique aide l'historiographe au récit de l'histoire & marque incidemment les fautes faites de tous les deux costez'. In the first dialogue in particular, the Politique character offers readings not only of Machiavelli but also of a number of other texts, ancient and modern. Here, then, the Politique character plays a similar role to the narrative voice of Bodin's *Republique* or Le Roy's *Politiques d'Aristote*: gathering sources and differentiating between them. The most frequently discussed Ancient is Cicero, again, and the most striking reading of a Modern is the gloss on Ronsard's *Franciade*.²⁷²

The Politique cites the episode in the *Franciade* in which a person called Bodille, in ancient France, rebelled against a tyrannical king and killed him and his pregnant queen. The Politique speculates that 'les vrais catholiques françois' might bring forth a 'nouveau Bodille', and expresses a kind of mock surprise that Ronsard was so daring as to encourage this: 'Comment est-il possible que Ronsard ait publié cela?' (p. 111). He repeats this surprise a couple of pages later: 'Dieu, qu'est-ce là? Qui vit jamais

²⁷¹ We saw in Chapter 2 how Bodin also required his reader to use their discretion, see above, p. 113.

²⁷² Pierre Ronsard, *La Franciade*, ed. by Paul Laumonier, Raymond Lebègue, and Guy Demerson (Paris: Nizet, 1983).

descrire mieux les choses dessous noms couverts?’ (p. 114). He continues to discuss the Bodille example, and concludes, ‘Asseure-toy Alithie, que Ronsard est merueilleusement subtil, il sçait bien pinser sans rire’ (p. 115). Alithie agrees, and says she is glad of it, because Ronsard’s writing will move readers to do their duty, but that this subtlety will mean that Ronsard will not be put to death by the tyrant king, nor be forced, as Pibrac was, to speak against his own judgement (‘se desdire’, p. 116). Thus, in the discussion of Ronsard, the Politique reads the Bodille episode as subtly conforming to Huguenot Resistance Theory, and in doing so, effectively re-writes that part of the *Franciade* into a nascent Resistance Theory canon, at the same time as problematising the term *catholique* (implying that ‘vrais catholiques françois’ will side with the Huguenots against tyranny). The Politique, then, in a similar fashion to Politie, embarks on a *process* of reading and borrowing from other texts in a manner so active that it amounts to re-writing. In doing so, he is participating in the same kind of textual practices followed by the authors of the text, and by Goulart in his *Mémoires*. It would seem that the Politique character, like Politie in *Le Politique*, is something like Anglo’s ‘typical Renaissance reader’, and as such he may also be (like Gentillet too, in his re-writing of Machiavelli into maxims that he rebuts) an increasingly typical Renaissance writer.

Terence Cave sees the sixteenth-century symbiosis between active reading, writing, and re-writing, as one of the fundamental changes in approaches to text that occurred in the early modern period, rendering it distinct, in this way at least, from Medieval and earlier periods. He credits Erasmus with theorising this shift, which he qualifies as, broadly speaking, anti-Ciceronian.²⁷³ The effect was to reverse the balance of

²⁷³ Terence Cave, *Retrospectives: Essays in Literature, Poetics and Cultural History*, ed. by Neil Kenny and Wes Williams (London: Legenda, 2009), p. 13.

power between author as authority and reader as interpreter: it is the reader who gives the text meaning, which can therefore only be a contingent one. For Cave, subjectivity of interpretation is thus intimately connected to a growing consciousness of readerly subjectivity, in which ‘the reader as an independent subject is beginning to impose himself and his own discourse as primary: the quotation is integrated into a new context authorised by the re-writer’.²⁷⁴ This leads to what Cave refers to as a ‘topos of textual appropriation’: a phrase that certainly seems to sum up both the writing practice of the various authors of the Protestant texts I discuss here, and the interpretive process enacted by Le Politique and Politie.²⁷⁵ In this way, the fragmentation of conceptions of politics, and the concomitant introduction of plurality to what Maclean describes as the traditional view of a political community as a singular, universal phenomenon, meets the change in reading practices that Cave has outlined.²⁷⁶ Cave describes this as a ‘generative’ reading process with a new emphasis on both the writer’s and the reader’s subjectivity: ‘[forcing] readers to constitute themselves in their turn as subjects’.²⁷⁷ His discussion is primarily centred on the reconfiguration of relations between text and individual reader; Montaigne is his key example, but he also cites the *Heptameron*, and Erasmus’s *Convivium Religiosum* – all his examples either contain dialogue or, like the *Essais*, operate on the principle of bringing different texts into dialogue with each other. This idea of ‘generative reading’ is virtually the opposite of the kind of relationship that Bodin sets up in his *Republique*, where the reader is more a recipient of pre-digested content. Bodin emerges, as I wrote in Chapter Two, as a kind of ur-reader who has done all the hard work for you;

²⁷⁴ Cave, *Retrospectives*, p. 14

²⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p. 15.

²⁷⁶ Maclean, ‘From Prudence to Policy’, p. 9.

²⁷⁷ Cave, *Retrospectives*, p. 16.

for the readers of these Huguenot texts, as for Cave's 'active readers', the work remains to be done.

But where the dialogues in the *Reveille-matin* and *Le Politique* differ from the texts discussed by Cave is not only in their less-than-canonical status, but in the goal of the heuristic exercise that these borrowed, appropriative texts and characters offer their readers: these texts attempt to reinforce their readers' attempts to constitute themselves in their turn as *Huguenot* subjects, as well as to force others to join them, and thus they attempt to constitute a community in the wake of the crises that had led to its extreme fragmentation. They appeal to the reader's agency, but not so that they may do as they see fit: the 'wake-up call' is intended to martial the reader, rather than to make them free to choose their own view of the purpose of politics (*Politie's principal*), and of what would constitute the good of the community. The reader is theoretically spurred, like the *Politique* in the *Reveille-matin* to re-organise society into a set of Protestant communities where Catholic Christendom used to be. The borrowed text that makes the most direct (and perhaps most compelling) appeal to the reader is La Boétie's *Discours sur la servitude volontaire*, in both the *Reveille-matin* and the *Mémoires*, the latter of which incorporated the *Discours* in full. And in the various authors' borrowings from La Boétie, there are explicit and striking connections with the term *politique*.

In the *Mémoires*, La Boétie's *Discours* is printed immediately after the dialogue *Le Politique*, and the marginal gloss that appears beside the reprised narrative following it is the 'Commencement des Politiques qu'on appelle, & des divers changemens, advenus depuis' (p. 99v). Here, then, the *Discours sur la servitude volontaire* appears

between two texts labelled *politique*; in the *Reveille-matin*, the excerpt from the *Discours* is spoken by someone called Le Politique. The effect is to associate La Boétie's *Discours* with a certain kind of *politique*, and in so doing to harness the *Discours* – described by Kingdon (who has clearly accepted Montaigne's account of the genesis of La Boétie's text) as a rhetorical exercise written two decades earlier by a 'Catholic schoolboy' – to serve an aggrieved, and radicalised, Protestant agenda.²⁷⁸

Meanwhile, in the *Reveille-matin*, the Politique speaks La Boétie's words; in particular, the opening of the *Discours*, which the Politique quotes at length as the conclusion of the second dialogue, including the impassioned diatribe against servitude:

Mais, ô bon Dieu! que peut estre cela? comment dirons-nous que cela s'appelle? quel mal-heur est celuy-là? quel vice, ou plustost quel mal-heureux vice? Voir un nombre infini de personnes non pas obéir, mais servir; non pas être gouvernées, mais tyrannisées [...] (p. 182).²⁷⁹

When the Politique has finished speaking la Boétie's words, the Historiographe expresses his approval in the strongest of terms:

Il n'y a rien de plus veritable entre les choses humaines, que ce que tu viens d'enseigner: que pleut à Dieu, que ces beaux mots eussent pieça esté semez au beau milieu d'une grande assemblee de nos Catholiques françois, je m'assure, qu'ils y aurait celuy d'entre eux, qui n'en fist bien son profit: nul auquel ils ne creassent par manière de dire, un nouvel esprit dans le ventre (p. 190).

Thus the author(s) appropriate the *Discours* as a call to arms for French Catholics; it is interesting that it is Catholics the Historiographe mentions, rather than Protestants.

This recalls the reference to 'vrais catholiques françois' made in connection with Ronsard's *Bodille*; both instances evoke a desire for an alliance against the tyrannical Charles IX between Protestants and moderate Catholics (and/or potentially the kind

²⁷⁸ Kingdon, p. 172.

²⁷⁹ Étienne de la Boétie, *Discours de la servitude volontaire*, ed. by Simone Goyard-Fabre (Paris: Flammarion, 1983), pp. 133-34.

of conversion experience that the Politique has in the first dialogue). That these ‘beaux mots’ should be distributed among the populace and breathe ‘un nouvel esprit dans le ventre’ gives a new thrust to La Boétie’s description of what he hopes for from the average enslaved citizen, that is, the will to be free, which is the first means of actually being free:

Je ne désire pas en lui si grande hardiesse; je lui permets qu'il aime mieux je ne sais quelle sûreté de vivre misérablement qu'une douteuse espérance de vivre à son aise. Quoi? si pour avoir liberté il ne faut que la désirer, s'il n'est besoin que d'un simple vouloir, se trouvera-t-il nation au monde qui l'estime encore trop chère, la pouvant gagner d'un seul souhait, et qui plaigne la volonté à recouvrer le bien lequel il devrait racheter au prix de son sang, et lequel perdu, tous les gens d'honneur doivent estimer la vie déplaisante et la mort salutaire?²⁸⁰

Since this is now the message to be dispersed among French Catholics, this re-writing of La Boétie’s *Discours* as a Politique’s call to arms (in a text whose title explicitly announces such a call) operates as an attempt to re-constitute these enslaved citizens as subjects who desire freedom. This fairly aggressive re-reading (and re-writing) of La Boétie seems slightly paradoxical in its attempt to strong-arm potential readers into breaking free from what they perhaps do not perceive as tyranny. This is what Montaigne complains about in I. 28, ‘De l’amitié’, where he writes about his friendship with La Boétie, and his reason for not reproducing *Discours sur la servitude* in the *Essais*. Others have got there first, and in quite the wrong spirit:

Parce que j'ay trouvé que cet ouvrage a esté depuis mis en lumiere, et à mauvaise fin, par ceux qui cherchent à troubler et changer l'estat de nostre police, sans se soucier s'ils l'amenderont, qu'ils ont meslé à d'autres escrits de leur farine, je me suis dédit de le loger icy.²⁸¹

²⁸⁰ La Boétie, p. 137.

²⁸¹ Montaigne, p. 201. On Montaigne as La Boétie’s editor, see, for example, Desan, *Montaigne: Une biographie politique*, pp. 210-16. Montaigne’s use of the verb ‘desdire’ here recalls the Politique saying in the *Reveille-matin* that Pibrac has been forced to ‘se desdire’, implying a link between ways of being *politique*, and of being political, and dishonest, retracted, or unspoken words.

Here, the authorial techniques of mixing ('meslé') run parallel to the disruption of the state (the 'police'), in a way that has made it impossible, so Montaigne says, for him to make free with the work his beloved friend produced in his youth, and which was originally the means of a great friendship, rather than of contestation and civil conflict.

Indeed, the way in which the authors 'make free' with their source texts, and the Politique determines his own meaning for the texts that he cites, seems to attempt to shut down the infinitely productive series of meanings and contexts implied in the relationship Cave posits between the individual reader and the text. In their attempt to free their readers, and win freedom of conscience for their co-religionists, the authors seem to be minimising the possibility of free thought, or free reading, just as they attempt to minimise the mobility of the term *politique* by anchoring it in a character who comes to represent a particular position.²⁸² These texts work with the diversity of thought, language use, and interpretation of various other texts, and in some ways enact this plurality, but always with a view to reducing it eventually to a form that serves their agenda. A word frequently associated with *politique* in the texts I have discussed here is *liberté* – whether in the words of La Boétie spoken by the Politique, in the description of Politie as representative of 'la liberté des peuples', or in an extended passage of the 'Discours politiques' in which 'liberté' is made a crucial element in 'la communion politique':

Si donc la multitude est rendue servile elle ne peut user de communion politique, car l'usage en subsiste par liberté: par consequent le nom de peuple & de cité se perdra suivant l'etymologie de ces noms qui

²⁸² For a discussion on free thinking in this period, and Montaigne's attempt to 'think with freedom about freedom of conscience', against contemporary trends, see Scholar, *Montaigne and the Art of Free Thinking*, esp. pp. 114-26 on 'De la liberté de conscience' (II, 19).

s'entendent estre dits de gens francs et non serfs ne bestiaux. Pareillement tel prince seroit despotique & non royal & politique (p. 187).

In this passage, the adjective *politique* is opposed to *servil* and *despotique* – and the suggestion is that for a people and their king to be qualified as ‘politique(s)’, the people must be ‘franc et non serfs’ – here, again, *politique* is used to signal a desirable state of affairs, and of being. The Politique of the *Reveille-matin* seems to be the embodiment of the impulse to fulfil this desire. But in attempting to force freedom of one kind in textual form in order to trigger it in reality, the writers end up demonstrating the limitations of liberty as a political end.

5. Memory and Projection: The Politique Agent

It is crucial to emphasise the textual practices at work in the construction of the Politique character, and in the other uses of the term *politique* found in these texts, because this gives a sense of how these Renaissance readers, working here as writer-compilers, used texts in an active way for their own purposes rather than passively receiving their influence. The works discussed in these chapters demonstrate a great degree of cross-pollination between different strands of discourse, across and beyond the ‘languages of politics’ explored in Chapters One and Two; this is clear in the names of the characters Historiographe and Politique, which evoke the higher register works of Le Roy and Bodin discussed previously, and whose roles in the text seem to carry the influences of those authors, but with different purpose and effect which cannot be seen as accidental. For these Huguenot authors, the potential of rhetorical interventions in the ‘real’ pertain not simply to potential future social configurations, but to present memories of the past which, after all, are only as ‘real’ as the words used to construct them; for Miernowski this is part of a ‘poetics of memorialisation’ at

work in Goulart's *Mémoires*.²⁸³ Running against the grain of contemporary Catholic narratives, the texts I discuss here offer accounts of the past, the righting of wrongs in text if not in fact, and a series of suggestions, appearing either under the title *politique*, or attached to the adjective (from Daniel's 'loix politiques' to the *Discours politiques* in the *Mémoires*) for how to create a better world to come. Critics and historians have argued that this is part of their deliberate creation of 'myths' (Kingdon) and 'fables' (Miernowski) that serve both the past and the future.²⁸⁴ In his discussion of Goulart's process of re-writing and correcting historical injustices, Pot suggests that his is more the dream of a poet than of a religious zealot, such is his faith in the power of language, and of written texts, to change the world.²⁸⁵ In any case, his faith was rewarded in the long term. Diefendorf has shown that the shared 'myths' or 'fables' invented by the authors of the *Reveille-matin* and the *Mémoires* had considerable longevity in French collective memory and reoccur in fictional, historical, and political output.²⁸⁶ Huguenot descriptions of the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacres had a rich afterlife, which continued into the nineteenth-century vogue for the history of the Wars of Religion.²⁸⁷

In her discussion of Thomas More's *Dialogue of Comfort Against Tribulation*, which he wrote while awaiting execution in the Tower of London, Eva Kushner suggests that the dialogue form, as well as being an 'idealised form of conversation' (in Synder's

²⁸³ Miernowski, 'La mémoire des massacres', pp. 156-57.

²⁸⁴ Kingdon, p. 5; Miernowski, 'La mémoire des massacres', p. 145.

²⁸⁵ Pot, p. 39.

²⁸⁶ Diefendorf discusses how the *Reveille-matin* the first instance of an account of Charles IX firing upon Protestants from a window in the Louvre, an act which would, she says, have been physically impossible. And yet the image was picked up by Bossuet and by Voltaire, and is said to have been referenced by Mirabeau in his discussions of freedom of conscience in the National Assembly. See Diefendorf, 'Blood Wedding: The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre in History and Memory' (unpublished University lecture, October 25 2006, Boston University), p. 20, and p. 139.

²⁸⁷ This reached its height, perhaps, in Alexandre Dumas's *La Reine Margot*, published in 1845; it was made into a highly successful film in 1994.

terms) connected with ideal forms of Renaissance sociability, became – in the context of confessional conflict and the persecutions that accompanied it – a form born of ‘necessity and powerlessness’.²⁸⁸ This certainly applies to the fragmented communities of France in the wake of the bloodiest (but not the first, or last) massacres of the civil wars, wherein families and networks were separated either for good or for the foreseeable future by bereavements, exile, abjurations, blockades, imprisonment, and so on. And there is reason to understand the dialogues in Goulart’s *Mémoires*, and in the *Réveille-matin*, as being formed in such a way, not only because of what we know about the historical context, but also because of how the dialogues and speakers are introduced, such as in the letter to the nephew from the author of ‘Le Politique’ citing his consolatory goals and the act of writing as a necessity in the circumstances (p. 45v). I think, therefore, that these dialogues of the French civil wars should be understood as part of a long tradition in political dialogues, running from Boethius’s *De Consolatione* (a dialogue between the author and Philosophy), through Thomas More, to the mostly anonymous writers and editors of the texts I discuss here.²⁸⁹ In the *Reveille-matin* and Goulart’s *Mémoires*, this tradition coexists with the use of various sub-genres of dialogue (didactic, humanist, conflictual, and consensual dialogues, to follow Baranova’s typology: all of these elements seem present in the texts I discuss here) and intersects with other generic traditions, old and new (tragedy, *mémoire*, martyrology, history-writing, politics in the sense that Bodin understood it).²⁹⁰

²⁸⁸ Eva Kushner, ‘Renaissance Dialogue and Subjectivity’, in *The Renaissance Culture of Dialogue*, ed. by Dorothea Heitsch and Jean-François Vallée, pp. 229-42.

²⁸⁹ Pocock sees Boethius as a paradigmatic figure in Renaissance political thought. See Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 36.

²⁹⁰ Baranova, p. 416. Critics have noted that a keyword of these highly successful Huguenot poetics of the 1570s and beyond is *tragédie*, or *tragique* – the most famous example of this being Agrippa d’Aubigné’s *Les Tragiques*, which he began writing in the 1570s. See Jean-Raymond Fanlo, *Traces, ruptures: La composition instable des Tragiques* (Paris: Champion, 1990). On Huguenot descriptions of the Saint Bartholomew’s Day massacres as ‘la tragédie des tragédies’, see Huchard, p. 315. For such descriptions in the texts discussed in this chapter, see *Le Politique*, p. 44v, and the ‘Argument’ of the *Reveille-matin* (NP.).

Pocock describes Boethius's *De Consolatione* as 'not a work of political philosophy, but the work of a political man'.²⁹¹ While I do not wish to discuss Boethius at any length here, it is tempting to imagine that Pocock's reading is a response to the form: a dialogue that constitutes the author and the reader as a political man – a political character – in contrast to the treatise Boethius never wrote which might have looked, to Pocock at least, more like 'political philosophy'. Such speculation aside, it is clear that the dialogues I discuss here also constitute (or perhaps 're-construct', or even 'de-construct') a 'political man' – or rather a man who is *politique*, or even called Le Politique. How the Politique is characterised, and how the term works within the highly complex polyphonic framework described above, has been made clear in two respects. Firstly, the word is a signpost for one of the many different generic and discursive templates borrowed and re-shaped by the various authors. Secondly, in the *Reveille-matin*, the term is paired with 'Historiographe' (the two characters are introduced as a pair in the first dialogue and are the only speakers in the second) to act as an indicator and agent of future change, while the Historiographe describes the past. These uses represent a confessionalised co-opting of the functions of historical and political writing as Le Roy and Bodin would have understood them. Bodin in particular mobilised all his erudition to argue that they were wrong. And yet by investing the term *politique* with an exceptional level of agency – far more, certainly, than the authors themselves were able to exert in reality – the Huguenot 'borrowers' had much in common with Le Roy and Bodin. This serves to demonstrate that in the mid-1570s the word experienced a moment of particularly strong construction and investment of different meanings, which no single author – or text – could contain.

²⁹¹ Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment*, p. 36.

Conclusion

In the *Reveille-matin des François* and Simon Goulart's *Mémoires*, the term *politique* operates as an organizational force directing the political thrust of the variously composed narratives. The choice of this particular term reflects its increasing currency in contemporary discourse, and also a desire to enact change in the 'real world' by manipulating a term imbued with particular agency and powers of discrimination and judgement. Uses of the term *politique* in these texts seem to have absorbed uses and contestations in other texts, and to absorb other texts in turn, like the *Discours de la servitude volontaire*. Within this framework, the impact of Machiavelli, and of anti-Machiavellian impulses, on the history of the term *politique*, in these texts at least, is not, as one might have expected, one in which *politique* becomes negatively charged through increasing proximity to the figure of the 'Machiavel' (we shall see in later chapters that the figure of the 'politique machiavelique' is in fact an invention of *Ligueur* pamphleteers). Instead, the impact of anti-Machiavellianism in the texts under discussion here is to increase the sense of mobility inherent in the word *politique*; to render it suspect because it *might* be Machiavellian. In this chapter, then, I have tried to excavate a moment in the history of the term *politique* in which a *politique* character becomes the embodiment of the various authors' positions in the increasingly contested semantic and ideological fields in which the word *politique* was becoming ever more mobile. As such, it seems that in the texts of this period the term comes to signal, and indeed embody, a 'problem of meaning' (to use Raymond Williams's phrase), whether you call that problem a 'Machiavellian moment' or the problem of liberty, or something in between.²⁹²

²⁹² Williams, *Keywords*, p. 22.

These authors' attempts to turn *politique* into something, and indeed someone, that they can rely on to speak for their cause and provide argumentative support were not especially successful. For one thing, responses to these texts do not seem threatened by their *politiques* – the Catholic riposte to the *Reveille-matin*, written by Arnaud Sorbin, *prédicateur* to Charles IX, does not even make use of the adjectival form of the word other than in reference to Daniel's 'loix et ordonnances politiques', instead focusing on *liberté* as a site of contestation, writing that 'Nous ne sommes non plus amateurs de la Tyrannie, que vous, & n'aimons pas moins la liberté, que vous en faites semblant' – it is just that he thinks they go too far, and push for 'dezbordees libertez'.²⁹³ But the associations between *politique* and *liberté* hold to the extent that they become part of the spectrum of negative associations around the term *politique* in *Ligueur* polemic, in which the *politique* becomes *libertin* (as well as *machiavelique*), as we shall see in the next chapter. These uses will represent part of the continuing process of re-appropriation in which the term *politique* appears in all its different guises: having been put to use by Protestants in the mid-1570s, in the following decade the term *politique* will be excoriated by their long-term opponents, who in turn borrow terminology and textual strategies from them as they go.

²⁹³ Arnault Sorbin, *Le Vray Resveille-Matin des Calvinistes, et Publicains François: où est amplement discours de l'auctorité des Princes, & du devoir des sujets envers iceux* (Paris: G. Chaudière, 1576), p. 7, and p. 71^v.

– **Chapter Four** –

‘Quel est ce monstre ici et comment a-t-il nom?’

The ‘Bad’ *Politique*

In the late 1580s, the term *politique* took on new and dangerous associations for those to whom the epithet was applied. This chapter and the one that follows it thus jump a decade or so in the chronology of the thesis, to look at textual responses to the heightened political tension after 1584, particularly around and after the assassination of Henri III in 1589. Previously we have seen how authors instrumentalised the word in order to give weight to their positions or their arguments: the word generally had positive strength. But the disturbing potential of the *politique* was always latent, and as we have seen, the Protestant polemicists, as well as Loys Le Roy and Jean Bodin, were always keen to demonstrate that they could distinguish between a good and a bad *politique*. In the pamphlet literature that proliferated in Paris in particular in 1588-89, it was the bad *politique* who took centre stage, with direct and harmful consequences for Jean Bodin, among many others. This was a result of the immediate crisis and of the longer reception of a number of texts, including those I have looked at in earlier chapters. In Chapters Two and Three, the term *politique* indicated a form of knowledge and a particularly knowledgeable, if potentially ethically suspect, subject, but in this chapter, as in Chapter Five, the question shifts from what the *politique* knows, to what can be known about the *politique*. In tandem, uses of the word occur in connection with verbs of knowing, recognising, and identifying. We shall see how pamphlet writers set out to define *politique* characteristics and behaviour, and yet struggle to do so, since the mobility of the term becomes perhaps *the* primary feature of the *politique* in these texts. The emphasis on attempted definition, and the difficulty thereof, suggests that these texts represent a moment in which the keyword *politique* is highly unstable.

In March 1589, Bodin rose to speak at the general assembly of the town of Laon, where he then resided. At this meeting, the town officially declared for the Catholic *Ligue* and against Henri de Navarre. Bodin tried to speak out in favour of townspeople who had been carried off to prison overnight, but those gathered shouted him down, threatening to erect a gibbet and saying that Bodin would be first upon it. Antoine Richart, who recorded all this in his *Mémoires*, says that the crowd was calmed, and other speakers replaced Bodin, who is seemingly forgotten until Richart reflects on the failed *harangue* a few pages later:

De Bodin il demeura seul sans fréquentation de personne, combien qu'en sa harangue il se fust efforcé de montrer son affection a la ligue en foullant aux piedz devant tous vraiz françois les droictz et auctoritez des estatz de France, mais en vain, car il estoit bien cogneu en la ville pour ung politicque et dangereux catholicque, dont cest une chose tres vraie que les hommes saiges nont pas tousjours une discretion ou jugement parfait. De quoy il est necessaire que souvent se demonstrent des signes de la foiblesse de l'entendement humain tel qu'il arrivera a Bodin en sa harangue qu'il feit a ceste eglise cathedrale ou il uza des paroles assez mal sonnantes que je ne veulx réciter. Cest acte lui donna une grande tache entre les gens d'honneur, il luy sembla ces parolles estre propres pour se rendre (contre sa conscience) plus agreable aux ligueurs a s'estendre ainsy par trop en sa harangue au mespris de son Roy, et comme depuis il feit encores a une responce quil sera dict cy apres, mais pour tout cela Bodin n'en fut davantage employé aux affaires publicques, les ligueurs se servant de lui seulement comme d'un baston a ruer aux noix.²⁹⁴

As this description suggests, Bodin had been trying to declare his new allegiance to the *Ligue*. He did the same in print in his *Lettre de Monsieur Bodin* (1590) which may have been a printed version of this failed *harangue*.²⁹⁵ Richart suggests that the listeners in Laon felt that this declaration was not made in good faith, but rather to save his own skin.²⁹⁶ What this anecdote makes clear, in any case, is that Bodin's *harangue* failed because he was well known as 'ung politicque et dangereux catholicque' (here, as in earlier instances, this could be read as adjective or noun, and is another instance of the term *catholique* being problematised in

²⁹⁴ Antoine Richart, *Mémoires sur la ligue dans le laonnais* (Laon: Libraries de la Société; Paris: Didron-Neveu, 1869), p. 68.

²⁹⁵ Jean Bodin, *Lettre de Monsieur Bodin* ([?], 1590).

²⁹⁶ Turchetti argues that the *Lettre* showed clear and perceptive political judgement, and considers that Bodin genuinely did back the *Ligue* at this stage of his life. See Mario Turchetti, 'Jean Bodin', in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2005) <<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/bodin/>> [accessed 2 August 2016].

conjunction with *politique*). Bodin's experience signals that, by 1589, the term *politique* was operating in a very different context, with an altered 'hum of connotations' that made the term a threat to people's lives, and was loud enough to drown out other words (Bodin's 'parolles assez mal sonnantes') as well as alternative uses of *politique*.²⁹⁷ In the *Lettre de Monsieur Bodin*, Bodin uses the term just once, to condemn 'tous les Huguenots, politiques, heretiques et atheistes' who make up 'le party du Roy de Navarre'.²⁹⁸ By this point, then, Bodin had abandoned the *sage politique* of his *Republique*, and was echoing the condemnatory uses of contemporary polemic.

This chapter deals with the moment at which the figure of the *politique* – along with the word – takes centre stage in textual attempts to understand chaotic political circumstances and to define boundaries of community and belonging within this turbulence. Bodin's failed speech in Laon is evidence on the one hand of the failure of language, but on the other of the power of language: the power of a word (*politique*) to designate a person as either belonging to, or excluded from, the political community. It is a turning point in the narrative of this thesis, demonstrating a different way in which sixteenth-century language users 'did things' with the word *politique*. Bodin is fundamentally alienated from his audience, because he is *known* ('cogneu') as a *politique*. In earlier chapters, the abstract noun *politique* was an object of knowledge, a way of knowing, a person who knows: here, instead, the *politique* person is the object to be known, recognised, and rejected. The meaning of the term has, in this context, quite literally been re-recognised, re-thought; or at least, that is the kind of shift in perception that some writers attempt to provoke in their audience. In the long drama of the civil wars, with its tragedies and its absurdities, we can point to the late 1580s as the moment in which the *politique* undergoes a kind of 'recognition', of *anagnorisis*,

²⁹⁷ Kenny, *Word Histories*, p. 18.

²⁹⁸ Bodin, *Lettre*, p. 7.

in which the term and its referents are revealed as the villains, or indeed, the monsters, of the plot.²⁹⁹ Except that in the multitude of texts this moment is repeated, re-staged, and always somehow incomplete, so that the shift from ignorance to knowledge managed by *anagnorisis* is never fully realised. Bodin may have been well known as a *politique*, but across the pamphlet literature I explore here, the *politique* can be tricky, hidden, nigh on unknowable, even as knowing who is *politique* is presented as vitally important. The drama of these moments of re-cognition, recognition, and failed communication then becomes that of an essential ambiguity of meaning. This reflects what is perhaps the key problem – and interest – of the term *politique* in this period: that it refers to *something*, but also to nothing. Half of the work of historians working on this topic has been to prove that there was no such thing as a self-identifying *politique*, or *Politique* party. In this chapter I confront the extent to which *politique* was a discursive construct, and the extent to which, at this moment of being particularly ‘key’, rhetoric surrounding politics and *Politiques* was a part of socio-political reality.

1. Polemical Pamphlets

The word *politique* – and attempts to establish, or re-establish the way that it was understood – became a crucial tool in the dramatic confrontation between the Catholic *Ligue* and the fractured monarchy. This was a battle to win over the hearts and minds of townspeople across France, and particularly of the Parisian populace.³⁰⁰ The conflict came to a head in 1588-9, when Henri III was forced to flee Paris in May (1588). In December 1588, Henri struck back, ordering the assassination of the Guise brothers. The following

²⁹⁹ Terence Cave, *Recognitions: A Study in Poetics* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), pp. 1-5. Bodin was known (‘cogneu’) as *politique*; Cave shows that the ‘cognitio/connaître’ word group was often used in Latin renderings of *anagnorisis*, p. 5.

³⁰⁰ On the history of the Catholic *Ligue*, see Constant, *La Ligue*, Baumgartner, *Radical Reactionaries*, and *La Ligue et ses frontières: Engagements catholiques à distance du radicalisme à la fin des guerres de religion*, ed. by Sylvie Daubresse and Bertrand Haan (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2015). On the *Ligue* in Paris in particular, see Elie Barnavi, *Le Parti de Dieu: étude sociale et politique des chefs de la Ligue parisienne, 1585-1594* (Brussels: Nauwelaerts, 1980).

year, Henri was assassinated in turn, by a monk then hailed as an avenging angel by the *Ligueurs*. In the wake of this, the already weakened French state effectively devolved into various city-states (including Laon), which sided with either the Protestant heir to the throne, Henri de Navarre, or with the *Ligue*. Paris was the *Ligueur* heartland. For the next ten years or so, Henri de Navarre waged a series of successful military campaigns and conquered the country town by town (he besieged Laon with devastating effect in 1594), but – famously – he could not enter Paris until he had converted to Catholicism. The battles were accompanied by a huge amount of printed production, particularly from presses sympathetic to the *Ligue*: they churned out news, propaganda, and anti-Navarre polemic.

In this chapter, I explore the strikingly rich proliferation of bad *politiques* in this mostly anonymously authored, mostly Parisian pamphlet material.³⁰¹ These sources are perhaps especially significant in this study for the fact that the *politique* is the primary object of these texts, rather than working as a supporting device, or being one character amongst several in a dialogue. They are mostly polemical pamphlets or *libelles*, as well as L'Estoile's journal and broadsheet collection, *Les Drolleries de la Ligue* (c. 1589-98).³⁰² They represent a

³⁰¹ It is likely that many of the authors were radical Catholic preachers aligned with the *Seize*. See Cécile Huchard, 'Echos des prédicateurs parisiens dans le *Journal du règne d'Henri IV de Pierre de L'Estoile*', in *La parole publique en ville des Réformes à la Révolution*, ed. by Stefano Simiz (Villeneuve-d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2012), pp. 181-95. On Parisian preachers, see Vladimir Angelo, *Les curés de Paris au XVI^e siècle* (Paris: Cerf, 2005); on their relation with the *Ligue*, see pp. 485-96.

³⁰² Baranova argues that it is anachronistic to refer to the short, cheaply printed polemical texts I discuss here as *pamphlets* in French, and that they should rather be referred to as *libelles*, or more precisely as *libelles diffamatoires*. See *A coup de libelles*, p. 33, and p. 35. However, in English, it seems that this problem of labelling does not exist. For 'Pamphlet', the *Oxford English Dictionary* gives as its definition a handwritten or printed short text, bound without a hard cover, adding that this may indicate a 'work of a polemical or political nature issued in this form'. The first example of this particular use is, in fact, from 1588 in a work called *Briefve Discoverie of Doctor Allens Seditious drifts*, which complains that 'Certaine ouersights in policie escaped this great politician in this Pamphlet, which is mere politike.' Here, interestingly, we see an English use of 'politike' as a negative adjective, alongside the nouns 'policie' and 'politicien' – and a description of a 'Pamphlet' as 'mere politike', suggesting that 'pamphlet' is the term that would have been used in sixteenth-century English to describe the texts I discuss in this chapter, and that an English reader would not have been surprised to find *politiques* in these pamphlets. Source: 'Pamphlet', *n.* in *The Oxford English Dictionary* <http://www.oed.com/search?searchType=dictionary&q=pamphlet&_searchBtn=Search>

significant proportion of all the primary texts discussed in my thesis, and almost all of them were produced in 1589-90, while Paris was under the jurisdiction of the radical Catholic *Seize*.³⁰³ Much of the enormous printed output of this period has been lost; there must originally have been much more in general, and in particular many more texts condemning *politiques*.³⁰⁴ These texts are relatively short, and were printed cheaply; many respond to or report key events (particularly the assassinations of the Guise brothers and Henri III). As such, they overlap in generic terms with the short, cheap, printed works that represent an early form of ‘news’ and informed city populations of the outcomes of battles, councils, and the like.³⁰⁵ It is therefore likely that they had a far wider audience than any of the other works I analyse in this thesis.³⁰⁶ At this time, numerous people were named as *politique*, and pamphlets conjured up the image of hundreds or thousands more *politiques* in towns and cities across France, not just in Paris and in Laon. In the crucible of these final

[accessed: 2 August 2016]. On the dating of the *Drolleries*, and for a detailed analysis of their compilation and significance, see Hamilton, esp. pp. 187-204.

³⁰³ Pallier estimates that the *Ligueur* presses produced over a thousand titles over a ten-year period and that almost a third were produced in 1589 alone. See Denis Pallier, *Recherches sur l'imprimerie à Paris pendant la Ligue (1585-1594)* (Droz, Geneva: 1976), pp. 55, 57, 215-17.

³⁰⁴ Pierre de L'Estoile describes how Senault, a leader of the *Seize*, worked with a particular printer, Nivelles, to produce a list of *politiques* to be arrested, hanged, or stabbed in Paris, the famous *Papier Rouge*, described by L'Estoile as a list of ‘tous ces Politiques (qu'ils appeloient) qui estoient les plus honnetes hommes et gens de bien de Paris’ – which points to the existence and circulation of more ephemeral documents targeting *politiques* that have not survived. L'Estoile's name was on the list next to ‘D’ (‘dagué’). See L'Estoile, *Mémoires-Journaux*, V, pp. 131-32. Modern historians rely heavily on L'Estoile's collections and journal to estimate the output of *Ligueur* printers; Pallier suggests that more than a thousand *Ligueur* pieces must have been printed during the years 1585-94, pp. 56-57. Baumgartner describes with regret the loss of many *Ligueur* documents on Henri IV's orders after his accession. See Baumgartner, pp. 18-19. One can speculate that there would be many more anti-*politique* pamphlets to peruse had Henri IV's agents not systematically destroyed large amounts of anti-Navarre material following his accession to the throne and reunification of the kingdom. Anxiety about the deleterious effects of unfettered pamphlet printing in the wake of the Wars of Religion led to sustained state censorship from the reign of Henri IV onwards. See Butterworth, pp. 12-13.

³⁰⁵ On the history of early modern news, and information networks, see *News in Early Modern Europe: Currents and Connections*, ed. by Simon F. Davies and Puck Fletcher (Leiden: Brill, 2014). For a case study of news pamphlets, with a focus on England, which includes some analysis of the transmission of news between France and England, see Paul J. Voss, *Elizabethan News Pamphlets: Shakespeare, Spenser, Marlowe and the Birth of Journalism* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2001). Histories of print at this time point to the strong appetite for news of all kinds in Paris during the *Ligue* years in particular; see Pallier, p. 57. The titles of some anti-*politique* pamphlets, especially those printed outside Paris indicate that their function is very much to report on provincial affairs. See table below, p. 174.

³⁰⁶ Racaut estimates that printed pamphlets in the period up to 1615 reached roughly 1% of the overall population, even if their content was disseminated more broadly in public preaching. See Racaut, pp. 40-41.

years of the religious wars, the term *politique* permeated everyday language to a far greater extent than it ever had before. The diarist Pierre de L'Estoile bore witness to the word being thrown from the pulpit and used to condemn opponents of the radical Catholic council known as the *Seize* who controlled Paris from 1590.³⁰⁷

Perhaps because they are popular, cheap, and brief, the extent to which these texts can be considered 'literary' has been debated by critics; following the linguistic turn and increasing interest in non-elite cultural forms, it has lately been the trend to argue in favour of the literary status of pamphlets and point out their varied use of literary techniques and references with the aim of pleasing, persuading, or sometimes offending the reader.³⁰⁸ In the wake of this trend, I take the value of these texts as objects of literary enquiry as read. But if these are literary texts, what kind of literature are they? Some of the anonymous or pseudonymous authors of these pamphlets make reference to the contingent nature of their form, suggesting the perishable immediacy of their rapid-fire content. Greengrass describes the pamphlets produced in this context as 'panic literature', meant to spur the reading or listening audiences to hateful words and deeds, and to stay firm against Henri de Navarre.³⁰⁹ It will be the aim of this chapter to analyse the hatred and violence incited by these pamphlets in their immediate context; to show the word *politique* instrumentalised as weapon. But writers of these pamphlets also situate their works in a wider, heterogenous literary field, and I also attempt to show where their pamphlets participate in the wider 'conversation politique' that occurred in sixteenth-century France. Many are, like the sonnet sequence I discussed in my introduction, written in literary style and filled with

³⁰⁷ L'Estoile, *Mémoires-Journaux*, V, p.173, for example. L'Estoile describes *politiques* being excommunicated and banned from church, rather as Bodin was driven from the church meeting at Laon.

³⁰⁸ Antonia Szabari discusses this trend in *Less Rightly Said: Scandals and Readers in Sixteenth-Century France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), pp. 5-8. She argues for literary readings of texts that a nineteenth-century critic referred to as 'mitraille' (Szabari, p. 5).

³⁰⁹ Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV*, p. 8.

humanist allusions. The anonymous writers lived in the same cultural world, and probably had similar educations and reference points, to the other writers discussed in this thesis. Moreover, an analysis of the term *politique* in these texts requires both ‘fast’ and ‘slow’ models of inferential communication, to understand both its immediate resonance and its looser ripples of association. The ‘recognition moment’ of the new *politique* of the 1580s depends on both kinds of associative understanding. Literature has recently been described as ‘an instrument of human cognition, continuous with spoken language yet with a longer life-span and more sustainedly reflective’.³¹⁰ The texts discussed here are more continuous with spoken language than any others analysed in this thesis, and in some cases offer a paucity of sustained reflection. And yet, their uses of language and argumentative constructions sustain extended reflection, revealing the attempts of these authors to influence or interrupt a longer conversation, as well as to impose new meanings of the term *politique* on Parisians attempting to make sense of their surroundings in a moment of chaos and deprivation.

In order to assess the various ways in which the term *politique* is re-calibrated so that the audience can recognise it as the evil element corrupting their communities, I look first at the negative associations made by the *Ligueur* propagandists, and at the particular function of this term as an insult, used to dehumanise ideological opponents. These kinds of uses place the term *politique* in the immediacy of the Parisian political situation in *c.* 1590, in which the term is best understood via a ‘fast’ inferential model. In their attempts to identify *politiques* as villains, the authors of the primary texts discussed below engage in an imaginative effort that creates a new iteration of the *politique* character we have seen in previous chapters: this time, as a monster. But a ‘slower’ reading of these texts shows that

³¹⁰ Terence Cave, *Thinking with Literature*, p. 7.

the *politique* is both subject and object here. I therefore go on to explore the ways in which the term refers to, and criticises, certain ways of speaking, thinking, and behaving, that the authors observe (or imagine) in *politique* subjects. It almost seems, in some of the texts under discussion, that the term *politique* refers primarily to its own discursive mobility: not so much a way of being, as a manner of expression. But the term *politique* did not simply refer to a discursive phenomenon. In the late 1580s, the material reality of the term *politique* – where the word was spoken, who spoke it, and the real people, such as Bodin, whose activities and very lives were gravely affected by uses of the word – comes to a fore, as the connection between words and bodies emerges from the texts under discussion. In this chapter, as nowhere else in this thesis, the real and the textual interact in urgent, violent ways.

2. 'Une marchandise meslée': A Proliferation of Politiques

From around 1588, a strikingly large number of texts specifically about *politiques* went to press, many of which had the word *politique* in their title (see Fig. 1), most published in 1589, and most printed in Paris. The titles demonstrate the new semantic field in which the term *politique* was operating c. 1589, and the difficulty writers had in precisely identifying *politiques*. Many of them are primarily concerned with describing *politiques* and advising the reader on how to identify them – several are presented as 'descriptions of the *politique*'. The titles of the pamphlets listed in Fig. 1 give a sense of *politiques* operating beyond the accepted norms of the political community, through associations with *perfidie*, *trahison*, *heresie*, *atheisme* and so on; there is also a strong emphasis on disruptive speech: *impostures*, *calomnies*, *caquet*, *cartel*. The *politiques* gestured at in these titles are therefore both insulted and insulting; *impostures* and *calomnies* both imply deceitful and slanderous speech. The generally quarrelsome context of the period is evoked by the encounters staged in some pamphlets between *politiques* and 'true' Catholics, and the evocation of *disputes* and *responces*. A sense

that the *politiques* are hidden, disruptive elements is also clear from the revelatory intentions announced by various texts ('trahison decouverte'; 'discours veritables'). The title of one pamphlet that appeared in Lyon in 1591 betrays a certain frustration with a *politique* 'qui ne s'est osé nommer'. But the *politique* not naming (him)self gives the writer an opportunity: to wield the term *politique* like a weapon, harnessing the power of naming, and name-calling, against certain ways of being, and of arguing.

Title	Place of Publication (if known)	Date of Publication (if known)
<i>Description de l'homme politique de ce temps avec sa foy et religion qui est un Catalogue de plusieurs heresies et athéismes, où tombent ceux qui préfèrent l'estat humain à la Religion Catholique</i>	Paris (G. Bichon)	1588
<i>La Foy et Religion des Politiques de ce temps. Contenant la refutation de leurs heresies</i>	Paris (G. Bichon)	1588
<i>Mémoires semez par quelques politics aux Estats, qui se tiennent, en la ville de Bloys. Avec la response Catholique à iceux</i>		1588
<i>Deux devis, d'un Catholique et d'un Politique, sur l'exhortation faicte au peuple de Nantes {...} le huitième jour de Juin, mil cinq cens quatre vingts et neuf</i>	Nantes (N. Desmarestz and F. Faverye)	1589
<i>Coppie de la responce faite par un polytique de ceste ville de Paris, aux precedens Memoires secrets, qu'un sien Amy lu avoit envoyés de Bloys, en forme de Missive</i>	[Lyon (J. Pillehotte)]	1589
<i>La Contrepoison contre les artifices et inventions des politiques et autres ennemis de la religion Catholique</i>	Paris (A. Le Riche)	1589
<i>Le Karesme et moeurs du Politique où il est amplement discours de sa manière de vivre, de son Estat & Religion</i>	Paris (Pierre-Des-Hayes)	1589
<i>Les impostures et calomnies des Huguenots, Politiques & Atheistes pour colorer le massacre és personnes de Messeigneurs les Cardinal & Duc de Guyse par Henry de Valois</i>		1589
<i>L'arprocratie, ou Rabais du caquet des politiques et jebusiens de nostre aage</i>	Lyon (J. Patrason)	1589
<i>Discours des trahisons, perfidies et desloyautez des politiques de Paris</i>	Lyon (L. Tantillon)	1589
<i>Discours veritable de la deffaitte obtenue sur les troupes des politiques et hérétiques, du pays et duché de Berry</i>	Paris (D. Millot)	1589
<i>La TRAHISON descouverte des politiques de la ville de Rouen</i>		1589
<i>La TRAHISON descouverte des politiques de la ville de Troyes</i>	Paris	1589
<i>Description du politique de nostre temps avec sa foy et religion qui est un Catalogue de plusieurs heresies et athéismes, où tombent ceux qui préfèrent l'estat humain à la Religion Catholique</i>	Lyon	1591
<i>Coppie d'une lettre escripte par un Catholique à un Politique, sur l'arrest prononcé en la Synagogue de Tours le cinquiesme d'aoust dernier</i>	Lyon	1591
<i>Responce au cartel d'un politique bigarré qui ne s'est osé nommer</i>	Lyon (L. Tantillon)	1591
<i>La Dispute d'un catholique de Paris, contre un Politique de la ville de Tours</i>	Paris (R. Nivelles and R. Thierry)	1591
<i>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 pretenduë succession, par Fr. I. P. D. en Theologie</i>	Paris	1592
<i>La Trahison Descouverte des Politiques de la ville de Troyes en Champaigne, Avec les noms des capitaines & Politiques qui avoient conspire contre la Sainte Union des Catholiques</i>	Paris (D. Binet and A. Du Bruel)	

Fig 1. Pamphlets with the word *politique* in the title, c. 1588-92. Sources: Bibliothèque nationale de France; The British Library.

As their titles indicate, many pamphlets acknowledge the difficulty of defining and describing the *politique* even as they set out to do precisely that. For example, the author of *Le Karesme et moeurs du Politique* (1589) makes the following statement at the beginning of the text, with a marginal note that says ‘que c’est que politique’:

Mais avant que j’entre plus avant en matiere, il ne sera pas impertinent de donner la definition de ce mot Politique nouvellement usité aux officines Françaises: car tel parle de Politique qui ne sçait paravanture pas comment il se doit usurper, d’autant qu’en ce lieu icy qui est Definy ne compete pas à ce que doit competer la Definition, suyvant l’homonymie ou equivocque de ce mot qui se doit distinguer en ceste sorte.³¹¹

Here, the author acknowledges that the word is ‘nouvellement usité aux officines’ (officines being ‘workhouses or shops’, according to Cotgrave – suggesting use beyond the traditionally cited spheres of *politique* activity, the *Parlement* and courts: perhaps it was a reference to printing shops in particular) and that it is a word frequently misused by those who do not know of what they speak. As such, the word is particularly tricky because of its ‘homonymie ou equivocque’: a potential plurality of meaning, and of varied uses (and mis-uses).³¹² The previous year, the author of *La Foy et Religion des Politiques*, had made a similar statement in his dedicatory letter (to an unnamed ‘grand Seigneur’):

Ceux que par deça & en privé & en public on appelle POLITIQUES, ne sont encore Huguenots manifestes, ne Catholiques vrais & zelez: mais une marchandise meslee, & boutique remplie de tant de sortes de droguerries confuses par ensemble, qu’il est fort difficile & dangereux de vous en escrire une parfaite diffinition.³¹³

Here the word *politique* is something that people are called, rather than call themselves: the appearance of the term alongside the verb ‘appeler’ is characteristic of this material as well as of some earlier uses of the term (for example, the fragment in Goulart’s *Mémoires*,

³¹¹ *Le Karesme et moeurs du Politique où il est amplement discoursu de sa manière de vivre, de son Estat & Religion* (Paris: Pierre-Des-Hayes, 1589), p. 5.

³¹² ‘Officine’, in Randle Cotgrave, *Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* (London: Islip, 1611), compiled by Greg Lindhal <<http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/cotgrave/search/6711.html>> [accessed 3 August 2016].

³¹³ *La Foy et Religion des Politiques de ce temps. Contenant la refutation de leurs heresies. Seconde edition* (Paris: Bichon, 1588), p. 3.

‘commencemen des Politiques qu’on appelle’).³¹⁴ And this name indicates a liminal, or mixed state: between Huguenot and ‘Catholique vrai’. The author uses commercial metaphors (‘marchandise meslee & boutique remplie de tant de sortes de drogueries’) to create a sense of confusion, and also of abundance – this could be read as a reference to the frequent use of the term as well as to its variation. Words, phrases, and even entire speeches were often referred to as having magical or drug-like properties in sixteenth-century France; in the next chapter we see this satirized in the *Satyre ménippée* (1593-94) whose subtitle is ‘la vertu du Catholicon’ (‘Catholicon’, a drug with declining efficacy, is a figure for radical Catholic polemic).³¹⁵ In this case, the term is ‘remplie de tant de sortes de drogueries’, which makes it difficult to define and its effects dangerous. The *politique* is then also dangerous precisely because it is ‘[une] marchandise meslee’.

As in the *Karesme*, it is this mixed state that makes the word *politique* so difficult to define perfectly: as such, these opening statements more or less define the term by its mobility between opposing people, terms, and ideas. And, as we shall see, this mobility is at the core of the authors’ critiques of *politique* thinking and behaviour. But there is also a sense in which the mobility of the term allows these authors to make of it what they will, and in some ways gives them the freedom to provide, on one level, a fairly fixed definition of the *politique* as a non-Huguenot supporter of Henri de Navarre, and thus as their ideological opponent. One way in which the term *politique* is ‘[une] marchandise meslee’ is in the flurry of insults that mark the use of this term in late sixteenth-century polemic as operating in a vituperative mode, as early modern hate speech.

³¹⁴ For more on the verb ‘appeler’ connected with uses of the term *politique*, see the following chapter.

³¹⁵ On sixteenth-century belief in the magical or drug-like power of words, see Butterworth, *Poisoned Words*, p. 24. The authors of the *Satyre ménippée* were strongly influenced by Rabelais; perhaps their ‘Catholicon’ is a nod to his ‘Pantagruelion’.

3. The ‘Bad’ Politique

As I discussed in the introduction to this thesis, sixteenth-century writers and public figures refer to themselves as *politique* only indirectly. Pierre de L’Estoile describes himself being referred to as *politique* but neither confirms nor denies his acceptance of the epithet.³¹⁶ The most immediately striking aspect of uses of the term *politique* in these texts is, then, the new negative force of the term in anti-Navarre writing. This is conveyed first of all by the appearance of the word within a cluster of other nouns such as ‘atheiste’, ‘heretique’, ‘navarriste’, etc – or simply by the identification of the *politique* as ‘enemy’, as in the pamphlet *La contrepoison contre les artifices et inventions des politiques et autres ennemis de la religion catholique* (1589) which purports to be a textual antidote to *politique* poison.³¹⁷ Another text, *Les impostures et calomnies des Huguenots, Politiques & Atheistes pour colorer le massacre és personnes de Messeigneurs les Cardinal & Duc de Guyse par Henry de Valois* (1589), associates the *politiques* with Huguenots and atheists in the title, as well as in more than half of the fourteen uses of the term in the body of the text, in which the *politique* is described as ‘atheiste, idiot, insensez’, and then a few pages later as ‘Politiques, ou plustost atheistes’.³¹⁸ This kind of language use can be described according to various theoretical schemes, either developed in Ancient Rome and received in Renaissance France (*vituperatio*; *calomnatio*, or slander), or by modern pragmatic linguists (illocutionary, or perlocutionary, speech acts).³¹⁹ In these texts, the term *politique* appears amidst a maelstrom of vituperative insults, through which the author(s) attempt to stage the *politique* as villain, to be recognised by the audience as the monster to

³¹⁶ E.g. L’Estoile, *Mémoires-Journaux*, V, p. 132.

³¹⁷ On clusters of negative epithets in political writing c. 1588-9, see Jonathan Patterson, “‘Diables incarnez, Machiavelistes, Heretiques’: The Villains of Pierre Matthieu’s *La Guisiade* Reconsidered”, *French Studies*, LXX.1 (2015), 1-16.

³¹⁸ *Les impostures et calomnies des Huguenots, Politiques & Atheistes pour colorer le massacre és personnes de Messeigneurs les Cardinal & Duc de Guyse par Henry de Valois* (1589), p. 6 and p. 8.

³¹⁹ On the conventions of slander, see Butterworth, esp. p. 20 and p. 31. On Speech Acts, see John Searle, Ferenc Kiefer, and Manfred Bierwisch, *Speech Act Theory and Pragmatics* (Dordrecht & London: Reidel, 1980).

be discovered and then vanquished in order to resolve the drama of the late-stage civil wars.

An important part of the vilification of the *politique* is the divorce from ideas of ‘good government’, instead setting up the *politique* as a fundamental cause of social instability. In general, the anti-*politique* pamphlets paint a picture of the *politique* as irreligious, or, at least, as prioritising human affairs over religious responsibilities both individual and collective.

This is summed up in one pamphlet in the following way:

Et pour autant que les uns & les autres crient sans cesse: L'Estat, L'Estat:
La Police, La Police, sans se soucier en premier lieu de la sainte religion:
voire disent la Police luy devoir estre en tout & par tout preferee, ils sont
justement appelez Politiques.³²⁰

This draws tight links between the terms *politique*, *estat*, and *police* that represents a marked change from the looser grouping of such terms in earlier texts. And, of course, the prioritisation of human affairs described here is portrayed as disastrous for the human realm as well as for the souls of those concerned, as demonstrated by one broadsheet in Pierre de L'Estoile's *Drolleries* (Fig. 2), which shows ‘La Marmite renversée des Huguenots, Politiques, Atheistes, Espernonistes, Libertins. Avec la Complainte des Ministres & predicans du Royaume de France’.³²¹ The image of the upturned *marmite* was a common one in woodcuts of the Wars of Religion, clearly influenced by the ‘world upside down’ topos so prevalent in both visual and written forms in the sixteenth century (and especially in religious polemic).³²² This image shows a crowd of *politiques* and their cronies (another list of negative epithets), including d'Espernon, Henri III's favourite, who is stoking the flames,

³²⁰ *La Foy et Religion des Politiques de ce temps*, p. 5.

³²¹ On the *Drolleries*, see Hamilton, pp. 164-205, and Gilbert Schrenck, ‘Introduction’, in Pierre de L'Estoile, *Les Belles Figures et Drolleries de la Ligue*, ed. by Gilbert Schrenck (Geneva: Droz, 2016), pp. ix-xxxii.

³²² On the image of the *Marmite renversée*, see Phillip Benedict, ‘Of Marmites and martyrs: Image and Polemics in the Wars of Religion’, in *The French Renaissance in Prints from the Bibliothèque nationale de France* (Los Angeles: Grunwald Centre for the Graphic Arts, University of California, 1994), pp. 109-37. On German popular propaganda, see Robert Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

around an upturned cauldron, which in this kind of image is generally considered to represent the state. A preacher kneels by the cauldron, remonstrating with the group: this represents the role that many Parisian preachers took upon themselves during the *Ligue* years, that is, trying to save the state from Henri de Navarre and other enemies of the true religion. The preacher holds a piece of paper, which might represent the texts that preachers were writing and printing in this period with the same purpose. The accompanying verse, in two stanzas, accuses Henri de Navarre of failing to right the *marmite*:

Las Prince des Navatrois tu te romps la teste,
De penser relever nostre pauvre Marmite
Puisque nostre bon Roy, qui en estoit le support,
Par un frère Jacobin, à esté tué & mis à mort.
Je pense qu'en Angleterre il nous faudra aller:
Puis qu'en ton pais ne pouvons pas retourner.

Toy Jean d'Espéron, tu as beau y souffler,
Le bois que fias apporter, ne sert de rien au feu,
Le brouet es expandu que tu avois fait dresser,
Il faut que tu en sois banny, & aille en autre lieu
Et aussi d'Aumont, Biron, & d'O, tous tes compagnons:
Qui en une nuict estes venu comme les champignons.³²³

³²³ Pierre de L'Estoile, *Les belles Figures et Drolleries de la Ligue* <<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148>> [accessed 15 September 2016].



Fig. 2. ‘La Marmite renversée’, woodcut on paper, in Pierre de L’Estoile, *Les belles Figures et Drolleries de la ligue* (c. 1589-98). Bibliothèque nationale de France
 <<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148>> [accessed 15 September 2016].

The poem ventriloquises the figures: they address Henri de Navarre and d’Espéron, complaining that they will never be able to right the *marmite*. The verse thereby puts a satirical gloss on this *marmite* image by implying (in the title) that the useless coalition of ‘huguenots, Politiques, Atheïstes, Espernonistes, Libertins’ is actually trying to stabilise the state but is unable to do so. The first person of the poem seems to be giving up and deciding to make a break for Protestant England; d’Espéron is summarily banished (‘il faut que tu en sois banny, & aille en autre lieu’). The poem is thus another attempt to exclude opponents of the *Ligue* from Paris, and from France, and the *politiques* are located among a set of groups deemed threatening and undesirable. This kind of redistribution of undesirable elements on a wider European map is a counter-move against the Huguenot polemicists discussed in Chapter Three, who attempt to convert all of Europe to the Reformed faith; this woodcut puts them back in their (English) box.

Pierre de L'Estoile records how associations between *Calviniste*, *politique*, *heretique*, *atheiste*, and *navarriste* were received and reinforced by the people of Paris, showing how these associations were formed in the world beyond the text. An example of this is his description of the execution of one Jean Guitel, from Angers, who was burned at the stake in July 1588:

Le peuple croioit et crioit (selon qu'on le faisoit croire et crier) qu'il estoit Calviniste; mais, au contraire, c'estoit un vrai atheiste, comme il montra evidemment au supplice, où il prononça execrables blasphemes contre Dieu, la S.e Trinité et autres articles de la foi chrestienne, que croient unanimement tant les Calvinistes que les Catholiques Rommains. Mais le malheur du temps estoit tel, et les esprits du simple peuple tellement empoisonnés des sorceries de la Ligue, que tous criminels estoient Calvinistes, Heretiques, Politiques ou Navarristes.³²⁴

In his use of the verbs 'croire et crier' (emphasised by being in parenthesis) L'Estoile implies a strong link between speech and belief, while suggesting that this link is forged and manipulated from above (by preachers).³²⁵ The excerpt shows the low view that Pierre de L'Estoile had of the Parisian populace, the 'simple people' whose minds had been poisoned by *Ligueur* propaganda and who thus thought that all criminals were Calvinists, heretics, *Politiques*, or supporters of Henri de Navarre – the implication is that the boundaries between all these were blurred to the extent that true atheists, such as Guitel, were mistaken for any of the other groups considered criminal by the *Ligue*. The frequent use of various insulting epithets together seems to have reinforced the condemnatory power of each of them, and their ability to convince, at least temporarily, the people of Paris that anyone designated as such was 'criminel'.

³²⁴ L'Estoile, *Mémoires-Journaux*, III, pp. 171-72.

³²⁵ On rumour and the 'public voice' in early modern France, and the role of the Wars of Religion in shaping them, see Emily Butterworth, *The Unbridled Tongue: Babble and Gossip in Renaissance France* (Oxford: OUP, 2016).

Taken as a whole, this body of polemical pamphlet material uses the term *politique* self-consciously in order to establish certain things: that the term is fundamentally ambiguous, but that there is no ambiguity about the moral evil that these writers associate with their version of it. The pamphlets are fairly homogenous: there is much overlap in terms of style and content, and in the context in which the term *politique* appears in these texts. In some ways, the clearest thing that they have in common is their declared opposition to various forces, so that they are fundamentally negative not only in the sense that they share a pessimistic vision of the contemporary world, but in that their purpose is destructive: to oppose the alternatives, as a means of defending *Ligue* politics and ideology.

What does *politique* actually mean, if anything, when used as a destructive force of opposition and reversal? Jan Miernowski has argued that the term should be understood primarily, if not exclusively, as an insult in this period: this was the primary rhetorical strategy of the pamphleteers, who deliberately turned the more positive associations of the term *politique* on their head in order to describe and circumscribe the abstract, indefinable ‘evil’ that they seek to persuade their readers is present in their enemies.³²⁶ He suggests that in such pamphlet literature the term *politique* is effectively content-free: not describing reality, or providing information, but an expression of pure antagonism.³²⁷ Perhaps this is what authors of pamphlets like the *Karesme* were referring to without realising when they described the difficulties and confusion in the definition of the word *politique* – because it is ‘only’ a speech act, designating criminality, and lacks a ‘real’ referent. This is what characterises ‘hate speech’, which Miernowski describes as being anti-discourse, anti-rhetoric, or anti-poetic (the latter, for example, in his analysis of Etienne Jodelle): polemical

³²⁶ Jan Miernowski, “‘Politique’ comme injure”, pp. 349-50.

³²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 349.

uses of the term *politique* are one such instance of this.³²⁸ An example of this might be the following apostrophe to the *politiques* in *Les Impostures et calomnies des Huguenots, Politiques &*

Atheistes:

Idolâtres & vilains, ennemis de toute sainteté, que religion & conscience ne poussent pas, ains votre pure trahison & affection de bien faire vos affaires, à bonne cause les Huguenots se moquent de vous, & disent que les Politiques sont pires que les Huguenots. Encores quelques uns d'eux pensent (trompez & ensorcelez) suivre la véritable et sainte religion.³²⁹

Here, the *politique* is wretched, damned, a heretic, idolatrous, *vilain*, enemy of sanctity, religion and conscience, treacherous, feigning good conduct, but at best tricked or enchanted, and at worst, worse than a Huguenot. Hate speech as negation, and as anti-content, seems to characterise uses of *politique* in this text, in which the best *politiques* have simply been bewitched ('ensorcelez' is often used to describe both the *politiques* and those who mistakenly trust them); the anonymous pamphleteers are attempting to break the spell.³³⁰

We have seen earlier that the word *politique* itself is characterised as 'une marchandise meslee [...] remplie de toutes sortes de drogueries'. One way in which this 'mixed bag' of toxic associations operates is as a whirl of insults that create a kind of inferential interference, so that what is revealed about the term *politique* is that its meaning is negative both in the sense of it referring to a 'bad' element, and in the sense that it simply means 'not *Ligueur* Catholic'. What seems to have happened, then, is that a dynamic element in early modern political writing – *politique* as specialised form of knowledge and its powerful agent – has been overturned and emptied of semantic content. And yet, the 'mixedness'

³²⁸ Jan Miernowski, *La Beauté de la haine: Essais de misologie littéraire* (Geneva: Droz, 2014). For his analysis of sixteenth-century hate speech, from Jodelle to the *Ligueur* pamphlets, see Chapter One, pp. 21-74.

³²⁹ *Les Impostures et calomnies*, p. 23.

³³⁰ Another example of this is *La Contrepoison contre les artifices et inventions des politiques et autres ennemis de la religion catholique* (Paris: J. Le Riche, 1589). Miernowski's sense of this kind of text as intended to perform a kind of purging through hate speech offers a way of thinking through the idea of the text as antidote to *politique* poison.

and ambiguity proper to the word *politique* in polemical pamphlets still refers to a particular person who is distinct from *libertins*, *atheistes*, and so on, even as distinctions between such categories can seem at times deliberately blurred. This particular person is a subject, as well as an object, and as such behaves and thinks in certain ways that also relate to flexibility and ambiguity, and can be recognised as such.

4. Mixed messages

The pamphlets I discuss in this chapter are not only *anti-politique*, but in some ways could be described as ‘anti-texts’ to the extent that their avowed purpose is generally more refutation than proposition. However, to do this they have to have some kind of content to resist, or refute. To this end, people called *politiques* are described as having certain qualities, or doing certain things. In the title of *La Contrepoison*, for example, they are shown as engaging in insulting and slanderous language themselves (‘artifices et inventions’); the *politiques* are, meanwhile explicitly figured as calumniators in the title of the pamphlet *Les Impostures et calomnies des politiques*. In this section I also show that these pamphlets work to refute particular works belonging to the longer sequence of political writings discussed across this thesis. The ‘mixed’ quality of the term *politique* thus also refers to its retention of other, earlier associations that a ‘slower’ inferential reading reveals as existing underneath the ‘white noise’ of insulting hate speech.

The authors of various pamphlets show awareness of the changes that the term has experienced, and a sense that the term could carry both positive and negative associations.³³¹ One of these pamphlets, written entirely in verse, opens with the following lines:

³³¹ Jan Miernowski, “‘Politique’ comme injure”, pp. 341-42.

Ce nom de Politique estoit un nom d'honneur,
 C'estoit le juste nom, d'un juste Gouverneur.
 D'un prudent Magistrat, qui par raison civile
 Sçavoit bien policer les membres d'une ville,
 Et qui saige & accord, par accordans discords,
 De Citoyens divers tireroit de bons accords.
 Comme fait Edinthon, quand son Luth il manie
 Qui de tons differends fait naistre une armonie,
 Dont il point nos esprits, & par un son vainqueur
 Des-robbe nostre aureille & nous pille le coeur.
 Aujourd'huy ce beau nom, souillé de mille vices
 N'est plus qu'un nom d'horreur, qui destruit les polices,
 Un nom rempli d'ordure, & qui est mesprisé
 Par le crime de ceux qui en ont abusé.³³²

These fourteen lines, which we first saw in the introduction of this thesis (p. 13), chart the transition in use of the term *politique* from being 'un nom d'honneur' (as we saw in the writings of Bodin and Le Roy published in the 1570s) to a 'nom d'horreur'. In this verse, as in the one copied and distributed by Pierre de L'Estoile, the term *politique* is brought into relief by the act of naming that accompanies it each time ('que vous nommez'; 'estoit un nom'; 'aujourd'hui ce beau nom'). This signals the potential of the term *politique* to be different each time it is uttered, depending on when and where it is used, and who uses it. The *politique* of the first few lines from the verse in the *Description* pamphlet resembles the 'sage politique' of Bodin's *Republique*, a 'prudent Magistrat' who maintained the peace through the application of his specialised knowledge. The new *politique* lulls his listeners into a false sense of security, but has a devastating effect on the *police*, so that the noun *politique* is now 'souillé de mille vices'. Similarly, in a tract addressed to the people of Limoges advising them to support the *Ligue*, the author uses the term *politique* positively early on, describing Scipio as 'le plus grand Politique de son temps', also evoking Bodin's uses of the term (Scipio is in fact named in the *Republique* as a notable 'sage politique', see Chapter Two).³³³

The negative connotations of the word *politique* are shown to be recent, a corruption of a

³³² *Description de l'homme politique de ce temps avec sa foy et religion qui est un Catalogue de plusieurs heresies et athéismes, où tombent ceux qui préfèrent l'estat humain à la Religion Catholique.* (Paris: Bichon, 1588), p. 3.

³³³ *Avis a l'irresolu de Limoges. Qui peut servir à toutes les villes qui n'ont pas encores embrassé le party de la sainte union des Catholiques* (Paris: Fizelier, 1589), p. 19.

previously positive, powerful word, by those who have abused its power. The contingency and transience of this manifestation of the *politique* is further highlighted in all the titles that refer to its belonging to the contemporary moment: ‘de ce temps’, ‘de nostre temps’, ‘d’aujourd’huy’. Later in the same text that praised Scipio as a great *politique*, the author rails against contemporary *politiques*, with the demonstrative ‘ces’ suggesting that these bad characters are numerous and potentially surrounding the reader, threatening and causing them to lose sleep:

Ce sont ces libertins Politiques, ces factieux Machiavelistes, ces séditieux Borbonnistes, ces boutefeux Navarristes, ces Partisans Royaux, ces dissimulez atheystes, contre lesquels tu te dois soigneusement parer, les surprises desquels tu dois redouter, leurs desseings de long temps projettez, leurs machinations couvertes & secrets, sont celles qui te doivent empescher le sommeil.³³⁴

In this later passage, the term *politique* is qualified as negative through appearing synonymous with the other groups in the list: Machiavellians, Bourbon-and-Navarre-supporters, partisans of the monarchy, and lying atheists. In the ‘Marmite renversée’ woodcut, the second stanza of the accompanying verse complains that the potentially *politique* ‘compagnons’ of d’Espéron have turned up suddenly – that they have popped up like mushrooms. But in fact, these associations work not only to qualify the *politique* as ‘bad’, but indicate exactly how the term became a ‘nom d’horreur’. Rather than just appearing out of nowhere, the bad *politique* is the product of the reception of a number of texts. It is not by chance that the *politiques* here are *libertins* or that the *libertins* are *politiques*; *libertin* may refer to the Huguenot texts discussed in the previous chapter, which make use of the term *politique* to argue for liberty in the sense of freedom of worship. The texts the *Ligueur* pamphlets are most obviously responding to, though, are the translations of Machiavelli, and the *Contre-Machiavel*, which I have demonstrated were already part of the increasingly

³³⁴ *Avis a l’irresolu de Limoges*, p. 46.

complex and contested history of the term *politique*. Numerous pamphlets refer to Machiavelli in relation to the *politiques*; the *Contrepoison* describes him, for example, as ‘l’evangile des Politiques’, echoing *La Foy et Religion des politiques*, which decries ‘le damnable conseil de l’Evangeliste de Cour Machiavel’ and blames his influence for the readiness with which princes and courtiers renege on their oaths.³³⁵

This pamphlet, *La Foy et Religion des Politiques*, quoted above defining *politiques* as those who cry ‘l’Estat, L’Estat: La Police, La Police’, goes on to name texts as *politiques*, as well as people: ‘tels que sont Belloy, Antiguizart, discours Politiques, Apologie du Roy de Navarre, Brutum fulmen &c. & autres’. In fact, the main body of the text is a step-by-step refutation, described in the subtitle as a ‘catalogue’, of all the errors made in these texts, complete with page references.³³⁶ There is one use of the term *politique* attached to the title of one of these texts: ‘Politique antiguizardé’ – referring, presumably, to Hotman’s *Le Tigre*, which was subtitled ‘anti-guisard’.³³⁷ The primary source for the errors catalogued in this text is Pierre de Belloy’s *De L’authorité du roy et crimes de leze majesté, qui se commettent par ligue, designation de successeur, & libelles escrits contre la personne & dignité du Prince* (1587), which directly attacked the *Ligue* (as the title shows). Belloy argued for obedience to the monarch in all circumstances, and that the king and Church were so fundamentally connected that defying monarchic authority in the name of the Catholic Church was a logical impossibility. This text itself was self-consciously part of a long-running textual quarrel, with the author stating that the intention is to correct the errors of the prolific Catholic

³³⁵ *Contrepoison*, p. 13; *La Foy et religion des Politiques*, p. 54.

³³⁶ This animadversion seems to be an example of what Butterworth calls the ‘practice’ of slander, a conventional approach of which was ‘close attention to the target text, reproduced and answered point by point’. Butterworth, p. 4.

³³⁷ *La Foy et Religion des Politiques*, p. 27. See [Hotman] *Le Tigre* (1560), facsimile ed. by Charles Read (Paris: Académie des bibliophiles, 1970).

pamphleteer Artus Desiré, and of his associates.³³⁸ Another pamphlet links *politiques* with Machiavelli, and De Belloy:

Qui est celuy qui ne sache que si ce Roy eust esté le maistre, & si les Politiques eussent obei & non disposé des affaires à volonté, que c'est le cousteau qui eust coupé la gorge à ses trahisons & dissimulations, qui eust faict perdre l'escrime à son Machiavel, & son trahistre, brutal & plein de toute impieté Belloy?³³⁹

In sum, then, the bad *politique* of *Ligueur* polemic c. 1588-93 did not appear overnight, no matter what alarming impression some polemicists wished to give to the Parisian populace. Rather, this dramatic turn in the history of the word emerged from a conflict-ridden textual genealogy, which led *Ligueur* sympathisers to use the term to attack their opponents, with recourse to well-practised mechanisms of slander, rather than, say, instrumentalising it for their own cause in a more positive way as the Huguenot polemicists had done in the previous decade.

5. Politique Manners

Politique not only refers to a set of texts and their political ideas, but also to certain ways of thinking and behaving that are also 'mixed', flexible, and ambiguous; these qualities also work to define the *politique* as 'bad' in the moral framework of these pamphlets, in a way that specifically counteracts ideological flexibility. Pamphlets such as *La vie et condition des politiques*, and *Le Karesme et moeurs du politique où il est amplement discoursu de sa maniere de vivre, de son Estat & Religion* (both 1589), demonstrate in their titles a wish to describe and identify *politique* behaviours. The aspects of these texts dealing with the 'vie', 'condition', and 'maniere de vivre' of so-called *politiques* are what set this word apart from the cacophony of

³³⁸ [Pierre de Belloy], *De l'autorité du roy et crimes de Leze Majesté, qui se commettent par ligues, designation de successeur, & libelles escrits contre la personne & dignité du Prince* (1587). Desiré was involved in a wide web of angry readings; he wrote his own *Contrepoison* against Clément Marot's sonnets in 1561.

³³⁹ *Les impostures et calomnies des Huguenots, Politiques & Atheistes pour colorer le massacre és personnes de Messeigneurs les Cardinal & Duc de Guyse par Henry de Valois* (Paris, 1589), p. 23

insults hurled in print, on the streets, and from the pulpit, at anyone doubting the *Ligue*. The ‘maniere’ and ‘condition’ of the *politique* generally imply being two-faced, changeable, and both willing and likely to change one’s mind. In the *Karesme*, the author makes it his mission to establish that the *politiques* are not trustworthy, complaining at the beginning that the *politiques* are skilful manipulators, able to take in even the very clever: ‘Qui ne s’y fie qui ne voudra, car les plus habilles y sont pris. Ceux la vous semblent coustumierement monstrier un plain & rond visage, ce pendant ils rampent soubs vos prés comme vipereaux’.³⁴⁰ Here, the verb ‘monstrier’ describes the *politique*’s ability to conceal his ‘viper-like’ true qualities – the sense is that the *politique* is a monster hiding in plain sight. The author of *La Vie et condition* echoes this anxiety:

Ce Royaume, ce que j’ay figuré estre un corps mallade d’extreme maladie et prest de sa ruine, a esté vivement assailly par les heretiques, ennemys de l’honneur de Dieu, & de sainteté, Atheistes, & politiques gens cachés couverts doubles en coeur & en bouche.³⁴¹

In this example, the *politiques* come at the end of the list of enemies, specifically described as ‘gens caché couverts doubles en coeur & en bouche’. The avowed aim of the pamphlet is to expose this double-ness, and to unveil what is hidden:

Le but donc auquel tend ce petit advertissement est de vous représenter les causes pour lesquelles vous vous devez garder de la cautelle, de la trahison, de la fraude trop découverte, de ses meschans Atheistes Politiques.³⁴²

The participle ‘découverte’ recalls the ‘caché couvert’ of the previous excerpt, underlining the author’s faith in the revelatory powers of his own text. And what they particularly seek to warn against, as well as the generally treasonous dual nature of this *politique* figure, is their ‘cautelle’ – defined by Cotgrave as a ‘wile’, a ‘sleight’, a ‘guileful devise or endeavour’, suggesting that the *politique* deceit is not only in the fact that they appear as normal humans

³⁴⁰ *Karesme*, p. 2.

³⁴¹ *La Vie et condition des politiques, et atheistes de ce temps avec un advertissement pour se garder d’eux & de n’admettre indiscretement & indifferement tous ceux qui s’offriront au party de la Sainte union* (Paris: Fizelier, 1589), p. 9.

³⁴² *Ibid*, p. 14.

when in fact they are monstrous vipers: it is in what they say, and how they say it.³⁴³ The *politiques* are associated with ways of talking – and, indeed, of arguing – in many pamphlets, though especially in the *Karesme* and *Vie et condition*. In *Les Impostures et Calomnies*, the author dares the *politiques* to try and have their way with words: ‘Apportent donc ces bonnes gens Politiques leurs belles raisons, & ils ne manqueront pas de bonnes responce. Mais qu’ils n’examinent la vie de celui contre lequel fausement ils debacchent leurs injures’.³⁴⁴ Here, there is the ‘calomnie’ referenced in the title, and the sense of opposition and antagonism which, as discussed above, is so characteristic of this kind of text: reasons versus responses, and the evocation of exchanged insults (‘injures’). The use of the term ‘injures’ places the ‘belles raisons’ of the *politiques*, and the ‘responce’ they received, in the register of slander as described by Butterworth. What is noticeable, too, is that this antagonism is about arguing as well as about insulting. And, in fact, a sense of quarrelling, debating, and exchanging of views (alongside insults), is present throughout this body of texts, with the *politique* figure an active participant in the quarrelling. Here, then, we encounter another version of the term as a dynamic element in dialogue, conversation, and quarrel. Some of the texts are exclusively in dialogue form, such as *Deux devis, d’un Catholique et d’un Politique, sur l’exhortation faicte au peuple de Nantes*, and *La Dispute d’un catholique de Paris, contre un Politique de la ville de Tours* (Paris, 1591). What I wish to emphasise, then, is that the figure of the *politique* conveyed when these texts are considered all together (as well as quite frequently in each individual reading) is a dynamic subject, as well as the object of hate. And what the *politique* subject is doing is talking and arguing, and doing so in a manner that effectively embodies the mobility we have already noted in the word itself: they are about to change positions, or hold two positions at once, and it is this which makes them monstrously bad.

³⁴³ ‘Cautelle’, in Cotgrave, *Dictionarie*, <<http://www.pbm.com/~lindahl/cotgrave/search/166l.html>>. [accessed: 26 July 2016].

³⁴⁴ *Impostures et calomnies*, p. 36.

The centrepiece of the *Karesme* pamphlet is a reported argument overheard by the author, between a *politique* and a devoted *Ligueur*, which exemplifies exactly what the author thinks is wrong with the *politiques*. The altercation is introduced with a general description of how the *politiques* ‘se laissent aller, tantost cy, tantost là’, and the author asks, sardonically, ‘Mais n’est-ce pas une belle perfection à un homme de s’accomoder à toutes choses?’³⁴⁵ This is followed by a description of a supposedly recent meeting between a faithful follower of the *Ligue* with one who ‘criait gros comme le bras que les ligués étoient aveuglés’:

Mais combien qu’il pensast avoir affaire à quelque niez qui luy accorderoit tout ce qui mettoit en avant, comme c’est la coustume de telles gens de detracter de l’union entre ceux qu’ilz pensent estre de leur farine, il fut contraint au mesme instant de chanter la Palinodie, car celuy qui l’escoutoit ayant plus de sang aux ongles que luy quelque semblant qu’il n’en feit, l’accuse & le reprent d’avoir mespris & parlé contre la Religion Catholique, Apostolique & Romaine. Il commença tout incontinent à filer le plus doux qui fut possible, qu’il estoit fort bon Catholique, qu’il n’avoit mis en ieu ces propos & altercations qu’en maniere de devis. Vrayment voila une excuse fort pertinente? Fiez-vous maintenant au Politique.³⁴⁶

The speaker who ‘criait gros’ assumes he has a sympathetic audience, but is ‘contraint au mesme instant de chanter la Palinodie’ when his interlocutor accuses him of having spoken against the true church. This about-turn is apparently effected due to the perceived threat of violence, as the ardent Catholic has more ‘real blood’ on his hands, whatever posturing the other sympathiser might engage in. The marginal gloss of this episode reads: ‘l’infamie du Politique’. The cardinal crime here, though, seems less the anti-*Ligue* opinion than the speaker’s protestations that what he was saying was only a way of talking, a figure of speech: ‘qu’il n’avoit mis en ieu ces propos et altercations qu’en maniere de devis’. The problem here is the *palinodie*, so that the author’s quarrel is really with the figure of speech, the manner of expression. And this, in fact, is the prime identifying feature of a *politique*: a ‘maniere de devis’, hiding within the ‘maniere de vie’ in the full title of the pamphlet. A

³⁴⁵ *Karesme*, p. 15.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 16.

very similar critique is expressed in *La Vie et condition*, in which the *politique* is a false friend, ‘serviteur du temps’ who should be recognisable from his ‘jargon’:

Sçavez-vous pas qu’il est serviteur du temps? Cognoissez vous point un
Pollitique & un heretique à son jargon? Vous representez-vous point que
le loup et le chien sont semblables? Et comme dit un ancien Sage, qu’un
flateur, un Pollitique, un paillard, un adultaire, un escornifleur, contrefaict
de fort pres l’amy?³⁴⁷

It is noticeable, too, that the *politique* is criticised not only on the grounds of his changeability – a feature of the word itself, as noted by the authors of various texts – but also for being a ‘serviteur du temps’: also a feature of the word itself, as indicated by the authors in their references to ‘aujourd’huy’, ‘ce siecle’. Here, then, the properties of the word seem almost indistinguishable from the properties of the referents to which the authors are trying to attach it in order to create an enemy and police the boundaries of society as they think it ought to function. Since the enemy is, to an extent, a way of using language, and ‘simply’ a word itself rather than real and identifiable people, it almost seems as though they are creating an enemy – a viper-like monster – from thin air, through their use of a particularly mobile term. The aggressive uses of the term *politique* in these texts, then, are ‘agonistic’ in their antagonism, as well as being insulting and condemnatory.³⁴⁸

But this is not just a closed discursive circle in which the word and its referent are interchangeable. These uses of the term *politique* are attached to the prizing or the decrying of various kinds of political activity in the real world. L’Estoile, with his Protestant associates and affinities, who avoided sectarian conflict even as it raged in Paris and threatened to engulf him, certainly seems to have been ambivalent about the merits of the respective confessional causes. Montaigne is known to have worked for Henri de Navarre

³⁴⁷ *La Vie et condition*, p. 25.

³⁴⁸ ‘Agonistic’ in the sense that they fulfil Viala’s conceptualisation of an ‘agonistic’ or ‘quarrelsome’ discursive mode in which quarrels have creative as well as destructive functions. See Alain Viala, ‘Un temps des querelles’, p. 18.

and to have occupied the role of a go-between in various political transactions.³⁴⁹ He could therefore have been diagnosed as *politique* on the basis of these pamphlets. Jean Bodin, for his part, perhaps earned the epithet ‘ung politicque dangereux’ (cited at the start of the chapter) owing to his demonstrating some of these characteristics; equally, criticisms of Bodin could have informed the pamphlets – the description of Bodin’s ignominy in a later section of Richart’s *Mémoires* conveys the close connections between ‘real’ and ‘written’ lives.

Richart details Bodin’s long enmity with the preacher Tholozan, who ordered a search of Bodin’s house in June 1589 and deliberated for some time before allowing his life to be spared after the discovery of a document detailing Henri de Navarre’s lineage and his descent from the house of Bourbon (thus making him legitimate heir to the French throne). He suggests that Bodin was wrong to attempt to stay in the town:

Il lui eust esté mieux pour son honneur sortir la ville au commencement de ces guerres comme feirent beaucoup daultres de sa qualité sans nager entre deux eaues comme il pensoit faire ou il a perdu tout l’honneur et la reputation quil sestoit acquis de longtems.³⁵⁰

Richart’s description of Bodin as swimming between two streams and consequently losing all honour and good reputation evokes the double-ness consistently associated with the *politique* in the pamphlet material: as we shall see, this monstrous ambivalence would be illustrated as a kind of sea monster, perhaps related to the emphasis on the fishy, watery qualities associated with political ambivalence by Richart and others. His attempt to be in two camps exiled Bodin in effect if not in fact, and represents the failure of his attempts to talk, or write, his way out of the problem.

³⁴⁹ See Hoffmann, *Montaigne’s Career*.

³⁵⁰ Richart, p. 230.

6. *The Politique Body*

The story of the term *politique* in pamphlets from c. 1588-93 is one in which words are used to conjure up ghosts and monsters, and to silence and exclude ideological opponents. I have shown in this chapter that the word was used negatively, but also creatively, to argue in favour of intransigence and against flexibility, mixing, and ambivalence. This is inextricable from the way that the word itself is used, and the meaning attributed to it, as the mobility of the word *politique* and the mobility of the person called *politique* have a symbiotic function both within specific texts, and also in the broader world that the critic can imagine with the help of chroniclers like L'Estoile and Richart. But the term *politique*, at the same time as referring to imaginary creatures, to ways of talking and speaking, and even – at its core – to the changeable potential of language itself, must also be thought of as attached to bodies, both general and particular. The author of *La Vie et conditions* makes this point:

Mais les autres qui sont invisibles, cachés & impenetrables par les yeux corporels qui ne se peuvent cognoistre que par fallacieuse ratiocination & discours seulement conjectural sont de bien plus difficile guarison & le plus souvent accompagnent le corps assiegé & affailli d'elles irremediablement jusqu'au cerceuil.³⁵¹

This passage echoes others in this and other pamphlets in which the author expresses frustration at the *politique* being hidden, or invisible, not immediately obvious to the eye – but rather recognisable from his way of speaking: his ‘fallacieuse ratiocination’ and ‘discours seulement conjectural’. But here the author suggests that this way of talking is often accompanied by a weak and corrupted body, and that the cure is all the more difficult owing to the metaphysical – rather than purely physical – nature of the problem. The sense that the *politique*'s weakness of mind would be associated with weakness of body is perhaps behind the ‘gestes mignardes’ described so dismissively in the *Karesme*. In this pre-

³⁵¹ *Vie et condition*, p. 8.

Cartesian period, there was no perceived dichotomy between mind and body, which were thought to be engaged in exchanges of mutual influence in much the same way as we have seen the ‘real’ and the ‘textual’ influence each other in this chapter.³⁵² Moreover, the sense of the ‘body politic’ suffering the illness of discord and civil war is a recurrent trope in these and other political writings, as is the metaphor of ‘good’ political action as medicine (as I discussed in Chapter Two).³⁵³ The ‘bad’ *politiques* figure in these pamphlets as a corrupted part of the body politic, as well as being described as having corrupted *politique* bodies of their own. The author of *La vie et condition* points to the connection between these two kinds of corruption: ‘Ce Royaume, ce que j’ay figuré estre un corps mallade d’extreme maladie et prest de sa ruine’.³⁵⁴ Besides this, there are examples of *politiques* being described as having particular physical predilections, notably where their stomachs are concerned.³⁵⁵ In the *Karesme* pamphlet, the *politique* is described as not observing Lenten strictures, but instead selecting the finest and softest livers to eat: *politique* softness (‘douceur’) is mirrored in their diet.³⁵⁶ This is part of a lengthy section in the pamphlet in which the *politique* is described as complaining about the ill effects of fish, and water, on his mind and stomach (further underlining a mind-body connection, as well as the associations with fish, and with water).

The fact that the *politique* figure emerges from these pamphlets as a figure for, indeed the embodiment of, discursive mobility gives a sense of the *politique* as more imaginary than real, especially given that there were no self-identifying *politiques* in this period. But for the

³⁵² On contemporary ideas about the body, see, for example, Lisa Silverman, *Tortured Subjects: Pain, Truth, and the Body in Early Modern France* (Chicago & London: Chicago University Press, 2001), and Banks, ‘Interpretations of the body politic’.

³⁵³ See also John O’Brien, ‘Intestinal disorders’, in *Writers in Conflict in Sixteenth-Century France: Essays in Honour of Malcolm Quainton*, ed. by Elizabeth Vinestock and David Foster (Durham, Durham University Press, 2008), pp. 239-60.

³⁵⁴ *Vie et condition*, p. 9.

³⁵⁵ O’Brien discusses metaphors of digestion and indigestion in relation to the body politic in ‘Intestinal disorders’.

³⁵⁶ *Karesme*, p. 18.

authors of these pamphlets, there was no doubt that there were real *politiques* out there in the world, with vulnerable and indulged bodies. The image of the pampered, liver-eating *politique* was informed by a material context of deprivation, nigh on starvation: supplies were generally disrupted by the civil war, and during the siege laid by Henri IV in 1590, thousands of Parisians starved to death, with preachers praising the dead as martyrs to the true faith.³⁵⁷ Huchard also points out that the period of Lent was a very active one for pamphlet production, often influenced by the Lenten sermons that attracted huge crowds (this is born out by the *Karesme* pamphlet, which emphasises the failure of *politique* piety during Lent, and may have been one such sermon).³⁵⁸

The context of deprivation must be taken into account when considering depictions of comfortable *politiques*, and the rage against them that preachers tried to inspire in their hungry audiences (both listeners in church and readers of their written tracts). And this material context serves to remind us that the term also had a material reality in terms of it being spoken by preachers as well as appearing in large letters as part of the title of pamphlets and broadsheets that were sold and passed around all over Paris at this time. Moreover, the term became attached to real bodies in the sense that actual people – not least Bodin, as I have shown – were condemned as *politique*: *La Foy et religion* names texts and authors, and some pamphlets, such as *La Trahison Descouverte des Politiques de la ville de Troyes en Champaigne*, contain the kinds of lists of *politiques* that L’Estoile describes as circulating in Paris at the same time. The pamphlet reports that eighteen *politiques* were taken prisoner and put to death – an example for any others who might be reading:

Quant à leur personnes l'on procede journallement à la mort ainsi que le crime le merite. Exemple certes tres necessaire pour vous autres messieurs les Politiques, qui troublez les affaires de ce royaume à vostre appetit, & qui taschez de jour à autre par vos imaginations dissimulees, & couvertes

³⁵⁷ See Huchard, ‘Echos des prédicateurs parisiens’, p. 184.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 187-89.

nous remettre en servitude, & nous livrer entre les mains de nostre ennemy ce qu'il ne plaise à Dieu de permettre.³⁵⁹

The reference to the *politique* ‘appetit’ and ‘imagnations dissimulees’ demonstrates further a link between mind and body – and, more generally, this passage reminds readers that the identification of *politique* people could and did lead to dead bodies labelled as *politique*: Bodin was threatened with this fate, but seems to have escaped (he is recorded as dying in or around 1596, probably of the plague). Pierre de L’Estoile gives one very striking description, however, of a group of notable *politiques* who did not escape: the leaders of the Paris *Parlement*, Brisson, Larcher, and Tardif.³⁶⁰ L’Estoile frequently describes executions and goes into considerable detail when the unfortunate people concerned are notables of the city. L’Estoile describes how Brisson attempted to avoid his execution by making a long speech, which L’Estoile interprets as partly an attempt at filibustering, as well as an attempt to persuade his captors, and his audience, that he ought to be spared.³⁶¹ Brisson had had a lengthy career as a lawyer and *parlementaire*, and is connected to the longer textual history of *politiques*: he was the author of a summary of French law that was updated and expanded by Le Caron in 1601.³⁶² Like Bodin in Laon, with deadlier consequences, his address to the gathered crowd failed to avert violence. After their deaths, the bodies of Brisson, Larcher, and Tardif were displayed to the crowd with labels on them: Larcher’s read ‘fauteur des Politiques’.³⁶³ This fact, alongside the chilling details recounted by L’Estoile, serves to

³⁵⁹ *La Trahison Descouverte des Politiques de la ville de Troyes en Champaigne, Avec les noms des Capitaines & Politiques, qui avoient conspiré contre la Sainte Union des Catholiques* (Paris: D. Binet and A. Brueil, [n. d., 1589?]), p. 11.

³⁶⁰ On the history of this targeted assassination, see Elie Barnavi and Robert Descimon, *La Sainte Ligue, le juge et la potence: L'assassinat du président Brisson (15 novembre 1591)* (Paris: Hachette, 1985).

³⁶¹ L’Estoile, *Mémoires-Journaux*, V, pp. 124-26.

³⁶² Barnabé Brisson and Louis Le Caron, *Le code du roy Henry III, rédigé en ordre par B. Brisson, augmenté et illustré par L. Le Caron* (Paris, 1601).

³⁶³ L’Estoile, *Mémoires-Journaux*, V, p. 126.

reinforce the point that use of the word *politique* had an active and deadly impact in the world beyond the text.³⁶⁴

Conclusion: The Politique Monster

In this chapter, we have seen the term *politique* operating in an urgent context, as a spur to the kind of social panic that led Greengrass to call this mass of pamphlets ‘panic literature’. The word operates as a deadly insult, and comes to refer to a monstrous figure of vaguely all-encompassing evil, in order to give readers the impression that the enemies of the *Ligue* were an organised opposing force as opposed to simply an increasing majority of French citizens. But the ‘bad’ *politique* was by no means fixed as one kind of speech act: rather, the pamphlets consistently and repeatedly refer to the mobility of the word: a mobility which becomes a fundamental characteristic of these monstrous figures the writers are attempting to create and to pin down. I have also tried to show in this chapter that this urgent moment of unusual focus on the word *politique* itself, as well as on the character called *politique*, may have been something of a sudden flurry, but was also a product of a broader context of political writing, from Machiavelli to Belloy – as well as being connected to the wider literary production of the time. Part of the work here has been to connect this moment in which the term *politique* is especially key to the longer story of its use across the period of the Wars of Religion. Throughout the chapter, I have talked about the fraught, interrelated connections between the real and the textual, in which real people like Bodin and Brisson experience a failure to persuade people with language, and to win respect on the basis of their writings, and writers of pamphlets tussle with the arguments and ‘fallacieuse ratiocination’ of imaginary *politiques*. When the term *politique* is particularly ‘key’, then, it refers to several different but connected linguistic and rhetorical functions, and in so doing

³⁶⁴ This said, the deadly impact is not exactly what the *Seize* may have intended; some suggest that, like the assassination of Coligny in 1572, this lynching was meant to trigger a new Saint Bartholomew’s Day. See Huchard, ‘Echos des prédicateurs parisiens’, p. 187.

becomes the focal point of conflicts being fought in the socio-political landscape beyond the text.

These different, but connected, linguistic and rhetorical functions all come together in the final source I will discuss here: an image of a grotesque body, a monster, named *Politique*. There are hardly any visual depictions of the *politique*: the two that are known are found in L'Estoile's *Drolleries* collection. The first, discussed above, is the 'Marmite renversée'; the second is this depiction of the *politique* as monster, accompanied by an ekphrastic verse, under the title 'Le pourtraict & description du Politique de ce temps' (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. 'Le pourtraict du Politique de ce temps', woodcut on paper, in Pierre de L'Estoile, *Les belles Figures et Drolleries de la ligue* (c. 1589-98). Bibliothèque nationale de France <<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148>> [accessed 15 September 2016].

The pamphlets I discuss in this chapter attempt to stage a moment of recognition, in which the *politique* is re-cognised and so recognised as malign. As Cave points out, the thing that is suddenly discovered in such a moment is 'marvellous: the truth of fabulous myth or

legend'.³⁶⁵ In this image from L'Estoile's *Drolleries*, the full mythological and 'fabulous' potential of these moves is realised: the *politique* is revealed as a monster who is an amalgam of mythological creatures – part Siren, part Dagon, and in the image, Medusa-like with snakes for hair (though this isn't referenced in the accompanying ekphrastic poem).³⁶⁶ The *politique* here may then be an amalgam of the endless factionalised quarrelling of contemporary discourse, figured as a 'Syrene' (whose clarion call will direct the ship of state to its doom) but also tied to the mast like Odysseus attempting to resist the Siren. The *Politique*, both subject and object, launches its own apparently injurious speech at the same time as receiving marks of opprobrium in the same text, and in this case in the same image. In the longer story of this thesis, this image also offers a kind of anchor, or moment of 'recognition', in which the essential mobility of the term *politique* is 'revealed', thus demonstrating the fundamental problem of meaning, and of knowledge, posed by this shifting, flexible term across decades of conceptual and actual strife. But as I suggested at the opening, this moment of 'recognition' is not one of resolution, but rather refers back to an endless ongoing discussion of what politics could and should be.

Much of the accompanying poem is devoted to explaining the various objects surrounding the central *politique* figure. For example, the poem explains that the *Politique* monster has a bottle in his/her hand, because its stomach is its chief concern, reprising other references to the *politique* as fonder of fine foods than of moral goods. However, the defining features of the *politique* monster are expressed in the first ten lines of the accompanying verse:

³⁶⁵ Cave, *Recognitions*, p. 2.

³⁶⁶ Pierre de L'Estoile had a vast collection of *canards* describing sightings of monsters, monstrous births, and so on. Wilson suggests that there was a particular spate of monster prints c. 1560-80, connected to the millenarianism of the epoch and anxieties brewed in the violence of the wars. See Dudley Wilson, *Signs and Portents: Monstrous births from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 32-36. See also Wes Williams, *Mighty Magic: Monsters and their Meanings in Early Modern Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), and *Monstrous Bodies/ Political Monstrosities in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Laura Knoppers and Joan B. Landes (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2014).

Quel est ce monstre ici, et comment a-t-il nom?
 Des Grecs est dit Syrene, & des Hebreux Dagon,
 Et ce Siecle aujourd'hui Politique l'appelle,
 Mais dites moy un peu, pourquoy est il femelle?
 Sa plus grande vertue est d'un chacun flatter,
 Et des plus fors le cueur & le courage oster.
 Pourquoi tirant vers bas & depuis la ceinture
 Est il comme un poisson? Pource qu'il est perjure
 Et qu'il cloche douteux de tous les deux costez.

The verse here has many of the features that I have pointed out as being characteristic of anti-*politique* polemic: an emphasis on naming, and on the temporary, time-specific nature of this naming ('ce siecle' in the poem, and 'de ce temps' in the title). More unusually, there is an emphasis on the 'femaleness' of this figure, mobilising longstanding associations between deceit and femininity, and perhaps also evoking what I discussed at the end of Chapter Two, namely that there are good and bad ways of being *politique*, that women cannot be good *politiques*, and that they lead potentially good (male) *politiques* astray. Female agency is certainly figured as destructive for a potential male audience here, where the feminised *politique* flatters and effectively 'unmans' 'les plus fors'. But this monster's gender is itself flexible; the repetitions of the masculine subject pronoun 'il', which refer to 'ce monstre', imply mixed gender as well as all the other mixed qualities at play here: a mix of myths, a mix of genders, and, perhaps most crucially of all, mixed opinions: 'il cloche douteux de tous les deux costez'. This monster, then, is a figure for changing one's mind: an embodiment of doubt, or its more ethically dubious relative, duplicity.

The monstrous *politique* could be considered anti-human, anti-society, or anti-morality, but this image also expresses anxieties about certain modes or behaviours, and thus carries content as well as being an act of aggression and condemnation. To suggest that the insulting function of the term *politique* is its only function would undermine what is particular to it, as opposed to the cluster of other terms that vilify supporters of Henri de

Navarre (himself, of course, a mobile and ambiguous figure): that is, its mobility and irrepressible ambiguity. Williams writes that in the sixteenth century, monsters were migrating from the realm of the real to the metaphorical; focus shifted from fantastical figures from uncharted territory, to the monster within the community, or even within the individual subject – and that the Wars of Religion were at the crucible of this change, as monsters came to represent ‘a whole brood of anxieties concerning hybridity, novelty, and change’.³⁶⁷ The *politique* monster seems a typical example of this, down to its hybrid gender and double tail.³⁶⁸ Indeed, the *politique* monster is both *an* amalgam, and amalgam itself. Neither one thing nor the other, the term *politique* in these texts refers to all manner of evils, in which the central evil is how it resists being pinned down even as polemicists seek to do so; in the following, final chapter, we will see how, as the wars draw to a close, writers attempt to put an end to this increasingly circular conversation.

³⁶⁷ Williams, *Mighty Magic*, p. 4.

³⁶⁸ It may have been a stock image but I have not found it elsewhere, e.g. in Ripa’s *Iconologia*. See Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia*, ed. by Piero Buscaroli and Mario Praz (Milan: TEO, 1992).

– **Chapter Five** –

Strange Meeting:
The *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant*, and *La Satyre ménippée*

The previous chapter demonstrated that by the late 1580s, the mobile semantic field around the term *politique* had been identified by Catholic polemicists as a particularly unstable and troubling element in political discourse: a figure for mobility, for changing one's mind, and for the incorporation of disparate elements into a monstrous whole, like the Medusa-mermaid in Pierre de L'Estoile's print. The meetings, encounters, and dialogues taking place within and around the term *politique* – and between characters or figures designated as *politiques* and their friends and enemies – became rhetorically violent, spilling over into real violence enacted on real people. In the *Satyre ménippée* and the *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant* (the first versions of which date from 1593), the term *politique* is both subject to re-description, and participates in processes of re-description as a response to this violence. In this chapter I analyse uses of the term in both texts to show how the word is at the heart of their attempts to re-configure the contemporary socio-political landscape and its memory, both literally and ethically, as the wars drew to a close. The objects of re-description and re-configuration are, as we shall see, various identities and characters, as well as behaviours (particularly conversion), and places (particularly Paris). I show how this can be extrapolated to understand both texts as attempts to re-establish, or re-align, the boundaries of belonging in 1590s France.

1. The Texts and their Contexts

In 1593, a text was printed under the title *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant, contenant les raisons de leurs debats et questions en ses presens troubles au royaume de France*. It became the unlikely survivor of Henri IV's campaign of censorship in the years

following the Wars of Religion; only a re-written royalist version was known until the original was discovered in the nineteenth century.³⁶⁹ The opening of the *Dialogue* stages the meeting of two interlocutors who are as yet unknown to one another somewhere outside Paris:

MAHEUSTRE: Qui vive?

MANANT: Qu'est-ce à dire: "qui vive", je n'entends point ce langage.

MAHEUSTRE: Responds à ce que je te demande: Qui vive, de quel party es-tu?

MANANT: Je suis catholique.

MAHEUSTRE: Et moy aussi, mais es-tu du party du Roy, ou des Princes de Lorraine?

MANANT: Vous me demandez trop de qualitez. Je ne vous sçaurois dire autre chose, sinon que je suis catholique, vivant en la Religion de mes peres.

MAHEUSTRE: Si faut-il que tu parles françois, et que je sçache quel party tu tiens.³⁷⁰

The mutual incomprehension is marked at the opening and close of this excerpt, with the Manant stating, 'je n'entends point ce langage', and the Maheustre responding a few lines later, with 'Si faut-il que tu parles françois' (p. 43). The opening watchword ('qui vive') immediately establishes a context of conflict and mistrust: two men meet in an unknown place and time, and need to discover whether they are allies or enemies.

The tension born of the refusal of the Manant to engage with the watchword and reveal himself as friend or foe, evokes another, better-known literary meeting that opens a play written within a decade of the *Dialogue* and set in the Danish kingdom of Elsinore:

³⁶⁹ See Baumgartner, p. 219.

³⁷⁰ *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant*, ed. by Peter Ascoli (Geneva: Droz, 1977), p. 43. All further quotations from the *Dialogue* will be from this edition.

BERNARDO: Who's there?

FRANCISCO: Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

BERNARDO: Long live the king!³⁷¹

Both the *Dialogue* and *Hamlet* open, then, with a meeting on the boundary of a kingdom, and an attempt to establish allegiances. Each opening also raises the broader question of who is, or should be, king: a question that each text poses throughout, but barely answers. In *Hamlet*, the implicit 'qui vive' is answered more quickly, but there is a strikingly similar sense of equivocation, of incomplete communication, and frustrated recognition. These opening lines have been much commented upon; Francisco's 'curious resistance to answering the question' has been viewed as laying a rhetorical pattern for the play of 'distortion of the relation between words and things'.³⁷² His response sets the expected pattern of words askew, in an exchange that evokes farce but where 'a sense of fear is much stronger than any intuition of the ridiculous'.³⁷³ Two recent editors of Shakespeare's *Complete Works* concur that this opening establishes the mood of a play in which no character 'unfolds themselves'; rather vaguely, they suggest that this makes the reader or audience reveal 'ourselves'.³⁷⁴ These themes – of uncertainty about words and identities, and the demands consequently made on the imagined reader – are certainly crucial to the *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant*, a text in which epistemological and political problems are as bound together as they are in *Hamlet*. Taken together, these two examples (*Hamlet* on the one hand among the best known texts ever written, in the early modern period or at any other time; on the other hand, the *Dialogue*, which

³⁷¹ 'The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark', in William Shakespeare, *Complete Works*, ed. by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen (London: Macmillan, 2007), pp. 1924-2003, p. 1924.

³⁷² Andrew Zurcher, *Shakespeare and Law* (Methuen, 2010), pp. 229-30. See also A. D. Nuttall, 'Hamlet: Conversations with the Dead', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, LXXIV (1988), pp. 53-69.

³⁷³ Nuttall, p. 54.

³⁷⁴ Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen, 'The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark: Introduction', in Shakespeare, *Complete Works*, pp. 1918-23 (p. 1918).

languished in a forgotten archive and today receives little critical attention) both evoke a generalised existential anxiety present in late sixteenth-century Europe, associated with concerns about shifting political alliances and uncertain royal succession, heightened by confessional conflict. In this chapter, I explore the ways in which the word *politique* occupies a fault-line in attempts to resolve generalised and particular anxieties about religious, political, and national identities, expressed in texts that, both as consequence and as remedy, put pressure on the relation between words and things.

In 1593, the Wars of Religion were drawing to a close. Following a series of military successes, Henri de Navarre was encamped outside Paris but unable to enter the city because its staunchly Catholic inhabitants would not tolerate a Protestant monarch. In January of 1593, a meeting of the *Etats généraux* was called in Paris by *Ligueurs* and their allies, without the agreement of Henri de Navarre, with the aim of electing an alternative king. This was a dismal failure. The following year, having (re)converted to Catholicism, Henri de Navarre made his triumphant entry into Paris. Although the mistrust, resentments, and injuries caused by the wars would take far longer to subside or be forgotten, that moment in 1594 effectively marked the defeat of the *Ligue*, and therefore the end of any viable opposition to the future Henri IV.

The *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant* was written by a diehard, and – given the circumstances – bitterly disappointed, opponent of Henri IV. The text gives a very detailed account of Parisian history in the years 1590-93, and draws on insider knowledge of the rise and fall of the radical Catholic Council which, supported by the preachers and the Sorbonne, ruled Paris after Henri III left the city on the *Journée des Barricades* in 1588. This knowledge has led critics to assume that the author must have

been a member of this council known as the *Seize*. The likeliest candidate is François Morin de Cromé, who has already appeared once in this thesis, though unnamed: Pierre de L'Estoile says he is the orchestrator of the lynching of Brisson, Larcher, and Tardif, and thus potentially the author of the *étiquette* attached to Larcher's body: 'fauteur de politiques'.³⁷⁵

The *Dialogue* stages a conversation between two adversarial interlocutors: the *Manant* (a burgher of Paris and supporter of the Catholic *Ligue*) and the *Maheustre* (a supporter of Henri de Navarre). The term *Maheustre* refers to the clothes worn by the future King's foot-soldiers and was already associated with the term *politique*, such as in the title of the pamphlet *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 pretenduë succession*, published in 1592 by a Sorbonne theologian.³⁷⁶ My sense is that the terms *politique* and *Maheustre* converged with the approach of Henri de Navarre's armies (populated by *Maheustres*) and increasing support for Henri among non-military citizens who were known as *politiques*. The *Manant* refers throughout the *Dialogue* to *politiques* who are the friends ('amis') of the *Maheustre*.

The two characters agree to conduct a discussion around the *Manant*'s proposition: 'devisons honnestement et sans injure ce que nous sommes' (p. 43). The injunction to proceed 'sans injure' points to the shift in this chapter away from the rapid-fire vituperation of the works discussed in Chapter Four. Instead, here, I discuss longer texts that re-work the uses of *politique* that were so prevalent around the crisis of 1589.

³⁷⁵ See L'Estoile, *Mémoires-Journaux*, p. 132; Ascoli, pp. 24-26. As I discuss below, 'fauteur' is one of a group of frequently used negative descriptors in the *Dialogue*; the frequency of this otherwise relatively unusual term perhaps strengthens the sense of connection between that pivotal murder and the text. *Fauteur* often appears near the term *politique*; for example, at the close of the text when the *Manant* refers to the *Maheustre* and his associates disapprovingly, as 'Politiques et fauteurs d'heretiques' (p. 211).

³⁷⁶ On potential origins of the term *Maheustre*, see Baumgartner, pp. 211-12.

In some ways these re-workings could be read as attempts to settle once and for all the long-running ideological conflicts of the civil wars; but this does not mean, in the case of the *Dialogue*, reconciliation between the Maheustre and the Manant. Their discussion is encapsulated in the following excerpt:

MAHEUSTRE: Il n'est pas raisonnable que ceux qui desirent la paix souffrent pour les opinionastres.

MANANT: Il est moins raisonnable perdre sa religion pour reconnoistre un heretique. (p. 125)

Here, you could be forgiven for reading this as evidence that neither of the characters is particularly 'raisonnable', since they are fighting over the lesser of two reasons: the Maheustre does not see why everyone has to suffer because of the stubbornness of those who refuse peace, but the Manant considers it still less reasonable to fatally compromise one's faith by recognising a heretic's claim to the throne. Throughout the text there is little, if any, consensus: it is a *dialogue de sourds*. Ménager argues that the Maheustre and the Manant are speaking at cross-purposes throughout the *Dialogue* due to a fundamental opposition between theology, represented by the Manant, and civil law, or politics, represented by the Maheustre: the text stages a refusal, to a certain extent, of the possibility of secular and religious authority joining forces in government.³⁷⁷ The core of this position is a refusal to accept that Catholics and Protestants can coexist within the same state; the Manant predicts perpetual civil war if people persist in trying to make this happen (p. 56). And yet, what is striking about the work is that it nonetheless mounts such a devastating critique of the *Ligue* that Henri de Navarre was delighted with it and commissioned a royalist revision that was

³⁷⁷ Daniel Ménager, 'Le *Dialogue entre le Maheustre et le Manant*: Mystique ou politique?', in *Histoire et littérature au siècle de Montaigne: Mélanges offerts à Claude-Gilbert Dubois*, ed. by Françoise Argod-Dutard (Geneva: Droz 2001), pp. 97-108 (p. 105).

printed with a pro-Navarre text that proved far more popular with contemporaries: the *Satyre ménippée*.³⁷⁸

The *Satyre ménippée*, like the *Dialogue*, was written in 1593, during the uneasy period of truce before Henri IV's coronation. The conceit is that it is the record of the 1593 *Etats généraux*, kept by an Italian diplomat. It was expanded greatly between 1593-5, but here I am primarily looking at the text that corresponds to the edition printed in Tours in 1594, because of the near-simultaneity with the composition and dissemination of the *Dialogue*. The 1594 prologue, 'L'imprimeur au lecteur', explains the picaresque adventures of the manuscript that took it to its Parisian printer: the original writer had originally intended to send it to his Florentine master, but on his prolonged journey home – via Amiens, and Flanders – he was robbed of all his possessions by a servant, who was then robbed by some monks, who then could not read the Italian and gave it to another monk who could, who was then himself robbed by a group of 'Gentilhommes' – likely a comic reference to the group who composed the *Satyre* – who translated it into French and gave it to the anonymous printer. 'L'imprimeur au lecteur' is followed by a series of further prefatory pieces: *La vertu du Catholicon*, in which 'charlatans' attempt to sell a bogus wonder-drug called 'La Catholicon' (a figure for empty *Ligueur* rhetoric) to Parisians under its 'Spanish' name, 'higuero d'inferno'. This is followed by *La Procession des Ligueurs* (a description of a kind of 'opening ceremony' of the *Estats*), then by *Tapisseries*: ekphrastic descriptions of tapestries depicting absurd images of episodes in the histories of the wars, including

³⁷⁸ They were also read and even printed together around the time of their composition: a royalist version of the *Dialogue* (thought to have been edited by none other than supposed editor of the *Satyre*, Pierre Pithou) was first included as an appendix to the *Satyre ménippée* in an edition falsely dated 1593, but compiled no earlier than the beginning of 1595. An extract from the *Dialogue* is also included under the title *Abrégé* in a 1599 edition of the *Satyre*: thus the original *Dialogue* was co-opted to serve the purposes of propaganda for Henri IV: a hint that the opposition between the texts may not be so stark.

one of the Battle of Ivry which took place in 1590, depicting ‘les ligueurs qui montrent leur cul aux maheustres’.³⁷⁹ The main body of the text is composed of supposed transcriptions of the speeches made at the *Etats généraux*. A series of *Ligueur* speeches are answered, and opposed, by that of Colonel d’Aubray, ‘pour le tiers estat’ (in life, d’Aubray was *Prévôt des Marchands*). All were real historical figures, but the *Ligueurs* are given a grotesque makeover: the Duc de Mayenne (Lieutenant of Paris) appears unconscionably bloodthirsty, Cardinal Pellevé and the papal legate Sega give barely coherent speeches in Latin, Italian and French, and Bishop Roze (in real life, rector of the Sorbonne) has all the eloquence and learning of Rabelais’s Maistre Janotus.³⁸⁰

The final and by far the longest text of the *Satyre ménippée* is d’Aubray’s long *harangue*. This is a restrained but passionate plea for an end to war, and a robust defence of the legitimacy of Henri de Navarre. D’Aubray’s overall position can be summed up in his own words: ‘Enfin chascun est laz de la guerre en laquelle nous voyons bien qu’il n’est plus question de nostre religion, mais de nostre servitude’ (p. 177). Here, he makes the argument for peace, minimising the theological controversy by suggesting that the question is fundamentally a civil one (‘de nostre servitude’). D’Aubray has been taken as a *politique* spokesman largely because of this position.³⁸¹

In contrast to the stark quality of the prose in the *Dialogue*, the *Satyre* abounds with imagery, neologisms, and scatological humour; the work has been described as

³⁷⁹ *Satyre ménippée*, ed. by Martial Martin (Lyon: Presses universitaires de Lyon, 2010), p. 47. All further quotations from the *Satyre* will be from this edition unless otherwise stated.

³⁸⁰ The similarity to Rabelais’s pedantic *Sorbommiste* is possibly a deliberate one, given that the new 1595 preface cites Rabelais as a key influence on the text. See *Satyre ménippée*, ed. by Martial Martin (Paris: Champion, 2007), p. 161.

³⁸¹ The reference to *servitude* also evokes La Boétie, and the discussions of *liberté* and *servitude* around uses of *politique* explored in Chapter Three.

carnavalesque.³⁸² It is thought to have been compiled by a group of men belonging to what Martin describes as ‘une élite savante’, who favoured the accession of Henri de Navarre, and were led by Pierre Pithou.³⁸³ The profiles of Pithou and other suggested authors are similar to those of most others referenced in this thesis. That the *Satyre* was composed and circulated by a particular elite group especially evokes the Huguenot authors discussed in Chapter Three, highlighting that attempts to define political communities around the term *politique* were often a communal effort. A comparison between the two groups also demonstrates that – for all the emphasis placed on lawyers and the *noblesse de robe* in the construction of the royalist *politiques*, apt in the case of the *Satyre* – groups of elite men with shared educational backgrounds and common literary and theoretical references came up, at different times, with very different visions of the political community.

There is a European scope to the text: its picaresque journey to print; the Spanish and Italian characters; its various translations and numerous references to England. This transnational frame of reference and the text’s mobility across Europe recalls that of many other of the texts discussed in this thesis and marks it out as another attempt to re-define political belonging both within and beyond national contexts. In the *Satyre ménippée* in particular this also functions as a means to define, and defend, what the authors consider to be France, or Frenchness. As part of this, various categories are

³⁸² Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, tr. by Hélène Iswolsky (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1984), pp. 60, 63, 186-87; Martial Martin, ‘Préface’, in *La Satyre ménippée*, (2007), pp. xv-clxxxiii (p. liv).

³⁸³ Pierre Pithou, a Protestant who narrowly escaped death in the Saint Bartholomew’s Day massacres, reverted to Catholicism in 1573. He is described by Kelley as a ‘patriotic philologist’. In 1576 he wrote a pamphlet entitled *Les Libertez de l’eglise gallicane*. Kelley sees his role in the *Satyre ménippée* two decades later as evidence of his commitment to Gallican ideals; that is, to the religious independence of France. See Kelley, *The Foundations of Modern Historical Scholarship*, pp. 242-56. For more on Pithou, see *Pithou, les lettres, et la paix du royaume*, ed. by Marie-Madeleine Fragonard (Paris: Champion, 2003). For an account and biographical details of probable contributors to the *Satyre ménippée*, see Martin, ‘Préface’, pp. xlvii-lvi.

problematised and challenged in the text: *catholique, françois, ligueur, politique*. Where the *Dialogue* seeks to confirm for posterity that the *politiques* were enemies of the true faith, the *Satyre ménippée* seeks to re-habilitate them as decent, ordinary French citizens, and in so doing to normalise their support for Henri IV. In making a case for peace, and for Henri, the *Satyre* has also been viewed by critics and historians as the expression of the *politique* sentiment that won out at the end of the wars; this in strong contrast to the *Dialogue*, considered the final *cri de coeur* of their defeated opponents.³⁸⁴ These texts, then, have been viewed as representative of the main opposing ideological groups at the end of the Wars of Religion.

In this chapter, I trace the modulating uses of the word in these two texts that occupy a threshold position in a putative *politique* canon – between Valois and Bourbon, between civil war and uneasy peace, between political pamphlet and literary text. I have tried to show throughout the thesis that the term *politique* features in a series of dialogues and conversations, as well as being a textual location of encounter and debate. As this thesis draws to a close, the final texts are failed dialogues and, in the case of the *Satyre ménippée*, grotesque, parodied speech. I put these texts into dialogue with one another to consider the outcome of the ‘conversation politique’ of the Wars of Religion. Among the polemical works of the late sixteenth century, the *Dialogue* has received more literary attention than most (notably from Ménager in 2001).³⁸⁵ Its peculiar form has also received some attention, with several critics noting its departure

³⁸⁴ *Etudes sur la Satyre ménippée*, ed. by Frank Lestringant and Daniel Ménager (Geneva: Droz, 1987), p. 17. Elsewhere, Ménager details the three principal readings of the *Dialogue*: as ‘l’expression passionnée d’une conviction catholique’; as a source used by ‘Politique’ historians to document the downfall of the *Ligue*; as ‘le manifeste d’une pensée politique radicale’. See Ménager, ‘Le *Dialogue entre le Maheustre et le Manant: Mystique ou Politique?*’, p. 98.

³⁸⁵ Aside from Ménager, Demonet has also looked at the *Dialogue*, notably in M.-L. Demonet, ‘Le Politique ‘Nécessaire’ de Montaigne’, pp. 31-32.

from, and innovation in, the conventions of dialogue.³⁸⁶ The *Satyre ménippée*, meanwhile, has long been held as a monument of the French literary canon, and as much a literary event as a political one.³⁸⁷ It was significantly expanded between 1593 and 1595; it circulated in manuscript in 1593, and was first printed in Tours in 1594. It sold very well, and has been viewed as a kind of textual salve that healed discord in France as the wars ended; Kenny writes that even if this impact has been exaggerated, it was ‘perhaps the most effective textual intervention of all in the Wars of Religion’.³⁸⁸ It was quickly translated, for example into English in 1595 as *A Pleasant Satyre, or Poesie*.³⁸⁹ The extent of its practical impact after the pivotal events of 1593 has, however, been called into question, as Henri IV’s victory was more or less assured from late-1593, sealed by his re-conversion to Catholicism and secured by a lack of any convincing opponent.³⁹⁰ In light of this, some see the *Satyre* and the *Dialogue* as ‘reified’ texts (in a sub-Marxist sense) in which previously live debates and struggles are shrouded in irony, and in ‘literariness’; this argument emerges particularly in studies of the *Satyre* that argue for its genesis being contingent on a brief political

³⁸⁶ Ménager comments on the remarkable modifications of form within the *Dialogue*, see Menager, ‘Le *Dialogue entre le Maheustre et le Manant*’, p. 100; Ascoli writes that new, more balanced kinds of dialogue (in comparison with the highly partisan pamphlet dialogues) were emerging at this moment in the civil wars, see Ascoli pp. 14-15; Baranova writes that in fact among such dialogues, Cromé’s is unique, see Baranova, *A coup de libelles*, pp. 424-25.

³⁸⁷ I am indebted to the comprehensive list of secondary criticism provided by the editor of the 2007 edition of the *Satyre ménippée*, Martial Martin. See ‘Bibliographie’ in *Satyre ménippée: le libelle roi*, ed. M. Martin, < http://www.satyremenippe.fr/bibliographie_menippe > [accessed 26 May 2013]. The *Satyre* also represents an innovation in literary form; something the authors make clear in their 1595 preface, where they discuss at length their reasons for calling the text a *Satyre ménippée*. See *Satyre ménippée* (2007), pp. 160-62. On the history of the Menippean satire, see Ingrid de Smet, *Menippean Satire and the Republic of Letters* (Geneva: Droz, 1996), esp. pp. 42-45 for her assessment of how the *Satyre ménippée* fits into the broader tradition. On satire more generally, see e.g. Pauline M. Smith, *Continuity and Change in Renaissance Satire* (Hull: University of Hull Press, 1993).

³⁸⁸ Neil Kenny, ‘Introduction’, in *Writers in Conflict in Sixteenth-Century France: Essays in honour of Malcolm Quainton*, ed. by Elizabeth Vinestock and David Foster (Durham: Durham University Press, 2008), pp. 1-14 (p. 12).

³⁸⁹ *A pleasant satyre or poesie: wherein is discovered the Catholicon of Spayne, and the chiefe leaders of the League. Finelie feicht over, and laide open in their colours. New turned out of French into English*, tr. by Thomas Wilcox (London, 1595).

³⁹⁰ This narrative is persuasively contested by Jean-Paul Barbier-Mueller, see ‘Pour une chronologie des premières éditions de la *Satyre ménippée*’, *Bibliothèque d’Humanisme et Renaissance*, 67.2 (2005), 373-93 (p. 392).

necessity, and its continued production and development being a more ‘literary’ process.³⁹¹ I want to challenge this position and suggest that the texts in question employ literary strategies to intervene in politics. In their different ways, both texts work to imagine and engineer new kinds of communities from the public that they describe and are writing for (the *Dialogue* draws stark lines between the *politiques* and *le peuple catholique de Paris*; the *Satyre* gestures to a broader public of reasonable citizens and grotesque, babbling *Ligueurs*).³⁹²

In this chapter, I argue that rather than reading either text as the manifesto of a particular *politique* or *Ligueur* position, it is more productive to look at how the authors test and re-orient these categories in order to make arguments about recent history, and to intervene in the political future of their communities. The *Satyre* is an attempt to broker peace, and the *Dialogue* is a call to endless war, or to martyrdom; both are staged conversations of a kind. In both texts – appropriately enough, given that this chapter marks the end of the present narrative about the history of the term *politique* – the authors offer, and invite, a final reckoning.

2. Naming, re-naming, and re-describing: ‘Noz amis, que vous appelez Politiques’

Both the *Dialogue d’entre le Maheustre et le Manant* and the *Satyre ménippée* make considerable use of terms broadly designating the adversarial categories of this period (seen in action in Chapter Four): *Ligueur*, *royaliste*, *heretique*, *gallican*, *politique*. The word

³⁹¹ This is certainly Turchetti’s view, see ‘Une Question mal-posée’, p. 385.

³⁹² On the question of emerging regional and national identities formed through the manipulation, and participation, of a reading public, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983). Anderson’s starting point is in the eighteenth century but his observations apply to earlier contexts, with the caveat that the communities constructed by the imaginative efforts of authors and readers in the eighteenth century are not ‘nation states’ in the modern sense. See Timothy Hampton, *Literature and Nation in the Sixteenth Century*.

politique occurs c. 30-35 times in each text.³⁹³ It usually appears attached less to particular events or people, than alongside other terms (from *heretique* to *royaux*). Both texts, then, resonate with the insults fired from the Catholic presses of Paris in the preceding decade. I show here that the writers not only reflect and repeat certain associations but that they intervene in order to put their own gloss on the meaning of *politique*.

The Manant makes the first use of the term *politique* in the *Dialogue*, referring to ‘tous ceux du party contraire, tant heretiques, athees, Politiques, envieux qu’ambitieux’ (p. 85). These, broadly, are the words associated with *politique* in the Manant’s speeches throughout, with the addition of ‘fauteur’ (meaning co-conspirator, accomplice) – for example, in a discussion of the tactics of the self-appointed radical Catholic council (the *Seize*) c. 1591: ‘ils ont resistez par armes et conseil, aux entreprises et intelligences des heretiques et des fauteurs Politiques’ (p. 113), or ‘tous heretiques et leurs fauteurs de Politiques’ (p. 121). The term does not always appear with all of these tags, but does so in the first seven uses, and then again emphatically in the last two. It therefore seems that the author takes care to repeat the negative associations that would have been familiar to readers in the wake of the flurry of polemical pamphlets discussed in Chapter Four. A primary feature of uses of the term *politique* in the speeches of the Maheustre is the contestation of these dangerous connotations. All but two of the uses of *politique* in the Maheustre’s speeches are constructed around the central referring phrase ‘noz amis, que vous appelez Politiques’ (see, for example, p. 132 and p. 153). The exceptions are: ‘tous ceux qui estoient disposez à la paix avec le Roy, que vous appelez Politiques’ and ‘noz amis et confederez, que vous appelez Politiques’ (p. 161

³⁹³ See *Dialogue*, pp. 85, 92, 113, 116, 121, 122, 124, 130-32, 140, 148, 153, 168, 169-72, 184-85, 209; and *Satyre ménippée* (2010), pp. 27, 45, 55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 66, 67, 71, 80, 81, 92, 101, 105, 130, 154.

and p. 168). That the word nearly always appears introduced by the relative clause ‘que vous appelez’ in the speeches of the Maheustre serves to highlight this term in particular as contested, with the ‘que vous appelez’ indicating implicit doubt of the appellation. Moreover, the terms ‘amis’ and ‘confederez’ function in opposition to those used around ‘Politique’ by the Manant (‘heretique’, ‘atheiste’, ‘fauteur’).

Much though the structure of the *Satyre ménippée* invites a sense of opposition no less stark than that established in the *Dialogue*, the uses of *politique* cannot be placed on either side of this opposition. Instead, a fairly coherent picture emerges across the whole of the text of *politique* as a favourite insult of the grotesque *Ligueurs*, and people called *politique* actually being decent, loyal citizens. In the *Ligueur* speeches, negative associations are less strong than those implying mortal sin in the *Dialogue*: the only instance of ‘Politiques Herétiques’ is from Segá (discussed above); otherwise the *politiques* are simply ‘meschan’ (e.g. p. 59) or ‘impudent’ (p. 109). The most frequent associated term is in fact ‘royaux’ (in roughly half the *Ligueur* uses). Thus the *Satyre* problematises anti-*politique* associations by establishing alternative connotations in the speeches of the *Ligueurs* themselves. In the Papal legate Segá’s *harangue*, the *Ligueurs* are described as ‘François Espagnolisé’, murderers of ‘pères, frères, cousins, voisins, Magistrats, Princes du sang, Politiques Hérétiques, en cette guerre Très-Chrétienne’ (p. 75). The ‘Politiques Hérétiques’ are slipped in at the end of a list of increasingly controversial but theoretically ethically sound categories. ‘Magistrats’ and ‘Princes du sang’ were only controversial in that magistrates were widely castigated by *Ligueurs* for supporting Henri de Navarre and arguing for his legitimacy on the grounds that he was a ‘Prince du sang’. Here, the heavily ironic approbation of a ‘Très-Chrétienne’ war in which fathers, sons, and neighbours are murdered, implies that the ‘Politiques

Hérétiques' are perhaps unfairly targeted, the result of Spanish influence rather than earthly administration of divine justice. Moreover, since the implication is that the war is the very opposite of 'Très-Chrétienne', the reader may infer that the grounds on which the *politiques* may be accused of being *hérétiques* are equally dubious.

There is a further move in the anti-*politique harangues* of the *Satyre* that in fact subtly reinforces the strength of Henri de Navarre's position via use of the term *politique*. In the first six *harangues* of the *Satyre*, the *Politiques* are established as the enemies of the *Ligueur* speakers, but crucially, they are repeatedly referred to as a large group: one of the opening descriptive passages, 'La Vertu du Catholicon', emphasises that there are more *Politiques* than partisans of the *Seize* in Paris (p. 27). Mayenne also refers to 'un taz de Politiques qui sont parmy nous' (p. 63) and discusses the pernicious impact of 'le party des Politiques', while Pellevé complains that 'quelques Politiques répandent dans le public je ne sais quel bruit' (p. 81). This sense of a threatening swarm of *Politiques* is in part a parody of paranoiac *Ligueur* sermons and pamphlets, but beneath the parody is the implication that the *Politiques* represent the greater part of popular opinion.³⁹⁴ The strategy of lacing parody with an attempt to convey an impression of the 'true' situation in Paris also occurs in the *Ligueur harangues* in relation to the frequent association of the terms *royaux* and *politique*. It does so not only to reinforce the status of Henri de Navarre as *Roi*, since his supporters are *royaux*, but also to group all opposition to the *Ligue* into the camp of the future Henri IV.

³⁹⁴ For descriptions of anti-*politique* sermons, see, for example, L'Estoile, *Mémoires-Journaux*, V, p. 141 and p. 281.

In her discussion of the term *politique*, Demonet argues that *politique* and *royaliste* more or less collapse into one another across the period 1586-96.³⁹⁵ This is partly staged in the *Satyre* (though not entirely, since d'Aubray does not make the association other than by implication), but it is not born out in the *Dialogue*, and the appearance of the term alongside nominalist gestures such as 'que vous appelez' or 'lesquels on baptizoit' indicates rather the conflict present in its use. As such, it seems that any association of *politique* and *royaliste* is less evidence of evolution in word use that reflects social processes, than a deliberate attempt to encourage the proximity of the two terms in the parodied speeches of the *Ligueurs* themselves, converting the 'bruit' bemoaned by Pellevé into actual social harmony.

In fact, in the *Satyre* it is d'Aubray, alleged *politique*, who makes the same associations as the Manant in the *Dialogue* when, discussing the threats made by the *Seize* to 'les meilleurs', he says that the latter have been treated 'comme [...] des heretiques, ou politiques' (p.130). D'Aubray also complains of the treatment of 'des habitans et des gentilhommes [...] lesquels on baptizoit du nom de politiques ou d'adherants, et fauteurs d'heretiques' (p. 154).³⁹⁶ Here the implication is that a false baptism has taken place, and indeed, the use of the word 'baptizoit' implies a critique of the preachers who accused *politiques* from the pulpit. This nominalist gesture, like the 'que vous appelez' clause in the Maheustre's speeches, emphasises and problematises the very act of naming a *politique*. As well as contesting connotations and establishing alternative associations for *politique*, these texts represent intense engagement with the

³⁹⁵ Demonet, 'Quelques avatars du mot "Politique"', p. 45.

³⁹⁶ The term 'politique' is not capitalized in d'Aubray's *harangue* – unlike in the *Ligueur harangues*, and the *Dialogue*. Perhaps this was a deliberate move on the part of the authors to make the so-called *Politiques* appear less conspicuous, on the page as in reality.

problems of meaning and communication that have haunted all the writers attempting to pin down the term *politique* and its referents in this period.

In modern criticism, as I discuss in the introduction to this thesis, the word *politique*, when used to refer to groups or ideas in the Wars of Religion, always appears with speech marks, or with the tag ‘so-called’ (as in, the so-called *politiques*). This echoes the nominalist gestures of the period, from Goulart onward (who referred to ‘le commencement des politiques qu’on appelle’). In the *Satyre ménippée* and the *Dialogue d’entre le Maheustre et le Manant*, the term *politique* is almost always accompanied by discourse verbs and verbs of naming (‘baptiser’, ‘appeller’), demonstrating the authors’ awareness of the way the term has been used in polemical writing, and their consciousness of the term’s potency as an insulting speech act; the uses in these texts respond to and either re-work or reinforce these earlier uses. A sense that misnaming was a common political strategy in the period is present in many works of the 1590s, including one by a contemporary author who imagined the *Ligueurs* boasting about the ways that they had used certain words to discredit their enemies (*politique, bigarrez, fauteurs d’hérétiques*) to shore up the strength of their ‘Union’ while betraying the notion of unity itself:

Pour agrandir notre Union nous nous sommes désunis d'avec nos voisins, nos frères, nos concitoyens, Catholiques aussi bien que nous [...] Et pour colorer les effects de nos ambitions, nous leur avons imposé des noms de Politiques, Bigarrez, fauteurs d'Hérétiques, et autres noms, que nous avons rendu odieux, par les mauvais traictemens, dont nous les avons fait remarquer.³⁹⁷

In their consistent use of naming verbs that effectively work as speech marks around terms like *politique*, the *Satyre ménippée* and the *Dialogue* alert their readers to their own

³⁹⁷ *La guide des chemins pour les desvoyez de la sainte union* (Paris: Roger, 1590), quoted in Miernowski, “‘Politique’ comme injure”, p. 339.

and other writers' strategies of naming, mis-naming, and re-naming. In this way, the meaning of terms, and of *politique* in particular, is brought to the fore. Uncertainty about the meaning and uses of words more generally is, then, a feature of both the *Dialogue* and the *Satyre ménippée*. In the *Dialogue* this leads to anxiety and threatened violence; in the *Satyre*, mutability of meaning is often more a source of comedy than of melancholy.

In the *Dialogue*, following the opening, both speakers claim to be following 'la parole de Dieu': the crisis of legitimate interpretation that results from neither speaker being prepared to surrender this claim dominates the text. Later on, the Manant declares that 'à present l'on ne croit plus en paroles' (p. 90), and eventually, as the text comes to a close, attempts to resolve their differences in words dissolve into threats of physical violence (the Maheustre offers the following warning to the Manant: 'vostre caquet ne vous sauvera de la force de nos coustelas', p. 195). The *Satyre ménippée* presents the war of words as the effect of the *Catholicon* drug (hence the subtitle of the text, 'la vertu du Catholicon'). When taken by the *Ligueur* speakers, this drug makes them reveal themselves ('unfold themselves', perhaps) as their 'true' grotesque selves. The very name *Catholicon* was probably a kind of joke on the part of the author-editors, who would surely have been familiar with the *Catholicon* that was a large monolingual Latin dictionary originally compiled in the thirteenth century. This dictionary was printed many times in the early sixteenth century but was gradually being replaced as an authority on words and their meanings by Etienne Dolet's *Commentaria Latina linguae* and Henri Estienne's *Dictionarium*. The *Catholicon* might then

have been recognised by readers as an increasingly obsolete repository of words whose meanings were being updated and replaced.³⁹⁸

The *Catholicon* of the *Satyre ménippée*, confers the ability or inclination to establish relations between words and things (badly). One of the ‘articles’ of the *Catholicon* in the *Satyre ménippée* announces that ‘pourveu qu’ayez pris dés le matin un grain de Higuiero, quiconque vous taxera sera estimé Huguenot ou fauteur d’heretique’ (p. 30). The corrosive effects of *Ligueur* language are satirized throughout the *Ligueur harangues*. In the speech of the Recteur Roze, for instance, where the satire of failed *Ligueur* eloquence reaches its peak, the speaker asserts that he has washed all his arguments in *Catholicon* soap: ‘catholicon d’espagne, qui est ung savon qui efface tout’. The writers of the *Satyre* thus push the boundary between the literal and the metaphorical by having Roze imply that he is actually foaming and frothing at the mouth. The presentation of radical Catholic speech as the product of a devilish drug recalls the description of the term *politique* in the *Karesme et moeurs du Politique* pamphlet as ‘boutique remplie de tant de sortes de drogueriers’, and thus seems to refer to, and to satirize, a context in which words have alchemical potential.³⁹⁹ D’Aubray’s *harangue* is a foil to the *Ligueur* frothing and foaming; in both main parts of the *Satyre*, the authors make use of the excessive, absurd power of language to problematise and reconstruct the meaning of various socio-political categories, of which *politique* is one.

Overall, it is clear that the connotations of the word *politique* are not fixed in these texts. The word moves between *athee*, *ennemy*, *heretique*, *fauteur*, *amis*, *royaux*, and *bourgeois*,

³⁹⁸ Ann Moss, *Renaissance Truth and the Latin Language Turn* (Oxford: OUP, 2003), pp. 15-16; p. 27; pp. 34-35.

³⁹⁹ *Le Karesme et moeurs du Politique*, p. 5. This emphasis on the alchemical power of language, with comic effect, is another way in which the authors of the *Satyre* echo Rabelais.

and its re-framing has strong moral implications. *Politique* is never found in isolation, but always alongside other words that anchor it as ‘good’ or ‘bad’, or that disrupt previous associations through use of irony. In itself, the word is a cipher, representing either civic virtue (*amis, royaux, bourgeois*) or vices that straddle religious and civic spheres (*athee* and *heretique* as crimes against God; *fauteur* and *ennemy* as crimes against civil codes) – all depending on the description.

The titles of many of the polemical pamphlets of the late-1580s include the word *description*, announcing their attempts to describe, fix, or define the referents of *politique*. In the *Satyre ménippée* and the *Dialogue*, the term *politique* is subject to re-description as a means of tipping the moral balance and so re-writing the political landscape. The associations of the term *politique* are, then, deliberately engineered by the authors. A key rhetorical tool at their disposal in this process of engineering is re-description. Important critical work has been done on rhetorical re-description. Skinner has shown how the act of re-framing terms, through the rhetorical technique referred to variously as re-description, *distinctio*, and *paradiastole*, played into a debate that had been present in moral philosophy since Plato acknowledged that judgement was only possible within defined terms.⁴⁰⁰ Following Skinner, my understanding of re-description here encompasses not only the polarizing rhetorical move of re-positioning vice as virtue, but also a broader re-writing of the terms of the conflict, staged in the very use of the word *politique*. Contemporary treatises on slander reflect a similarly comprehensive view of the operations of re-description.⁴⁰¹ Beyond the spheres of polemic and slander, sixteenth-century concern with re-description was a product of humanist reading practices and education. Cave argues that due to commonplace-ordering techniques central to the humanist education received by most wealthy and educated men in

⁴⁰⁰ Quentin Skinner, *Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), p. 140.

⁴⁰¹ Butterworth, p. 33.

France by the end of the sixteenth century, ‘la problématique de la paradiastole en vient à conditionner la manière de pensée de toute une époque’.⁴⁰²

3. Resisting Re-description in the Dialogue

The *Dialogue d’entre le Maheustre et le Manant* attempts to resist this kind of thought-conditioning. The Maheustre’s re-descriptions of *politique* give cause for suspicion rather than offering resolution. In his speeches, *politique* ‘fauteurs’ are consistently re-described as ‘amis’ (‘noz amis, que vous appelez politiques’), wherein the vice of collaboration becomes the virtue of friendship. In this case, however, the re-description is laced with irony: the author re-casts this ‘friendship’ as a move of expediency. In the Manant’s introductory passage to his history of the downfall of the *Seize*, he refers to ‘les Politiques leurs ennemis, qui ont fait tant et si exactes recherches, et avec tant d’authorité et de diligence, qu’il n’y a eu amy ou ennemy qu’ils n’ay recherché pour sçavoir si les Seize leur avoient fait tort’ (p. 130). This provides an ironic gloss on the Maheustre’s refrain about ‘noz amis, que vous appelez Politiques’, if they were prepared to seek out ‘amy ou ennemy’ in order to establish their false ‘intelligence’. The suggestion seems to be that *politique amitié*, and *intelligence*, are manipulated for reasons of expediency, or – as the Manant has it – hypocrisy. In this respect, the word *politique* emerges not only as a contested, mobile term, but the concept of mobility itself seems once again to be written into the term with negative ethical implications.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰² Cave, *Pré-histoires*, p. 102. Cave relates *paradiastole* to the problem of *mediocritas* and the Aristotelian mean, so important to the ethical status of *politique* as a middle term referring to the middle ground, and to a person in the middle. See Introduction above, p. 41. ee also Moss, *Printed Commonplace Books*.

⁴⁰³ This reprises the theme of monstrous, destructive ambivalence central to the portrayal of *politiques* in the pamphlets of Chapter Four.

The Manant's role, by contrast, is to overtly resist the re-descriptive moves attempted by his opponent. His speeches are full of binary oppositions and he opposes all reconciliation between them. The Maheustre remonstrates with him: 'vous argumentez en theologien, et à la rigueur; parlons en gens d'estat': the implication being that discussing matters as 'gens d'estat' involves greater moral flexibility (p. 57). To this, the Manant responds with a lengthy misogynistic rant about how the Manant's suggestions involve fundamentally sully virtue by bringing it into contact with vice; the 'fille pudique' in this analogy is Catholic France, the incarnation of virtue, and the 'homme desbauché' is Henri de Navarre, incarnation of vice:

MANANT: Je vous demande, voudriez-vous bailler une fille pudique, honneste, belle, vertueuse, et modeste, à un homme desbauché, verollé et abandonné à tous vices, sous ombre qu'il vous diroit qu'il s'amenderoit, et qu'il n'y retourneroit plus, et que s'il y retourneroit estant marié, que vous luy osteriez vostre fille? (p. 58).

This amounts to a diatribe against *paradiastole*, re-described itself as prostitution: the Manant utterly rejects any repositioning of vice as something closer to virtue, and denies the possibility that vice can be amended ('s'amenderoit'), repackaged, or *re-described*, as virtue. The Manant's resistance to the Maheustre's attempts to persuade him to understand events, actions, or ideas, differently is what makes the *Dialogue* so fundamentally a *dialogue de sourds*, with each character referring at various moments to the fact that each is essentially, if not speaking a different language, then using language differently, with a very different sense of the limitations and flexibility of the meaning of words. This is staged in the opening ('je n'entends point ce langage'), as I discussed in the Introduction to this chapter, and is still taking place over a hundred pages later. Towards the end of the *Dialogue*, the Maheustre makes one last attempt to get the Manant to shift, to be more flexible with language: 'vous

parlez en resolu’, he says ‘mais vous pourra bien changer de langage’ (p. 178). The Manant’s refusal, once more, at this late juncture, triggers the final aggressive spiral of the *Dialogue* in which both characters agree that their disagreements can only be resolved on the battlefield.

It is the Maheustre who re-opens hostilities, provoked by the Manant’s passive resistance:

MAHEUSTRE: Cessons nos disputes! J’espere de gagner par l’espee ce qui ne se peut avoir par douceur et raison.

MANANT: Tant que vous serez Politiques et fauteurs d’heretiques, vous n’aurez raison ny douceur.

From this, it is clear that the term *politique* is at the heart of the Manant’s refusal to engage in, or be persuaded by, re-descriptive arguments. The entire *Dialogue* can be seen as an unresolved meeting between binary opposites, which in this case amount to flexibility (the Maheustre) and resolution (the Manant), in which the dangerous ethical flexibility of the term *politique* is critiqued as a means of resisting ambiguity, middle terms and the ‘zone médiane’.⁴⁰⁴ By the end of the *Dialogue*, the Manant simply repeats the same word, ‘Dieu’, in response to the Maheustre’s interrogations: this can be read as a final explicit refusal to invest in the power-play of *paradiastole*.

4. The Politique re-described in the Satyre ménippée

The authors of the *Satyre ménippée*, as I have shown, both satirize and contest negative uses of the term *politique*, using re-description to settle the arguments staged between *Ligueurs* and d’Aubray and, implicitly, the disputes of the wider reading public. The key moment at which *politique* is subject to re-description in the *Satyre*

⁴⁰⁴ ‘Zone médiane’ is Terence Cave’s phrase, from *Pré-histoires*, p. 85. For a discussion of this idea and its connection with an Aristotelian ethical framework see above, p. 41.

ménippée occurs in d'Aubray's *harangue* when he recites a poem that begins 'Pour cognoistre les politiques' (pp. 154-7); the use of the verb 'cognoistre' here evokes earlier attempts to know, recognise, and re-cognise the *politique*. This poem parodies these earlier attempts and in doing so aims to defuse them.

The interruption of prose with verse marks the poem out within the text; it is only one of two such moments in d'Aubray's *harangue*. He introduces the verse at the end of a lengthy complaint about the way that Paris has been governed since the departure of Henri III and the deleterious impact on the 'gens de bien' who have suffered 'mille concussions, exactions, et vilenies' (p. 154). Almost as post-script, d'Aubray then makes use of *praeteritio* to suggest that he *will not* talk about the material devastation wrought on people named as *politiques*; in fact, he has a whole poem to recite on the subject:

Je laisse les pillages de plusieurs riches maisons, la vente des precieux meubles, les emprisonnemens, et ransonnemens des habitans et gentilshommes qu'on sçavoit estre pecunieux, et garnis d'argent lesquels on baptizoit du nom de politiques ou d'adherants, et fauteurs d'heretiques: et sur ce propos fut faicte de ce temps là, une plaisante rime, que j'estime digne d'estre inserée aux registres, et cayers de nos estats (p. 154).

The emphasis on people named as *politiques* simply being decent citizens with considerable personal wealth, is a consistent theme of the verse. The set of negative associations with the term *politique*, which d'Aubray characterises as an unjust baptism, are then repeated in the opening lines:

Pour cognoistre les politiques,
Adherants, fauteurs d'heretiques,
Tant soyent-ils cachez et couverts,
Il ne faut que lire ces vers (p. 154).

These lines parody the language and approach of the anti-*politique* pamphlets discussed in Chapter Four, not only in the repetition of terms like 'fauteur', but also

in the indication that the poem will provide a way to really know a *politique*, and the suggestion that they are ‘cachez et couverts’ (recalling the lines of the pamphlet *La vie et condition des Politiques*, which lambasts ‘politiques gens cachés couverts doubles en coeur et en bouche’).⁴⁰⁵ The whole poem is full of echoes of these pamphlets, announcing in line 36 (almost exactly halfway through) that somebody is an ‘adhérant’ if they express a wish for peace. This is followed by a warning that satirises those pamphlets that told readers to be on guard against *politique* argumentative strategies: ‘Combien qu’il face bonne mine / Gardez qu’il ne vous enfarine’ (p. 155). In line 4 (‘il ne faut que lire ces vers’), the suggestion is that the poem will reverse all of this by revealing exactly what is hiding at the heart of all the name-calling and the insults. Suddenly, identifying a *Politique* will be easy.

The primary purpose of the poem is to assert that *Politiques* are no more than ‘habitans et gentilhommes’ whose core characteristic, rather than *opposing* the *Ligue*, is simply *not being part of it* (so they are not a party themselves; they are just not part of another party, so to speak). The poem describes the *Politiques* by means of their refusals: to donate all personal belongings for the use of the *Ligue*; to take up arms; to participate in religious rituals associated with the *Ligue* and the *Seize* (‘devotions’, ‘processions’, p. 155); to listen to radical preachers; to accept the authority of leaders of the *Seize*; to celebrate the assassination of Henri III; and to believe printed propaganda (‘Qui lorsque Bichon, ou Nivelles / Ont imprimé quelque nouvelle / En doute, et s’enquiert de l’auteur’, pp. 156-57).⁴⁰⁶ Here, a *Politique* instead recognises and praises Henri de Navarre and ‘faict mention de concorde’ (p. 155). The

⁴⁰⁵ *La Vie et condition des politiques*, p. 9.

⁴⁰⁶ Bichon and Nivelles produced several of the pamphlets discussed in Chapter Four, see p. 174.

conclusion of the whole poem denies that this is in any way a result either of political allegiance or religious persuasion:

Ils en sont, et pourquoy? Et pour ce
Qu'ils ont de l'argent dans leur bourse. (p. 157)

By the poem's conclusion, the *Politiques* are disassociated from vices both civil and theological, and the term *politique* is emptied of its ideological charge and replaced with a 'bourse'. In this case, re-description is employed to eliminate the associated vices and normalise the *politique* stance.

The *politiques*, then, are presented as materially wealthy in d'Aubray's introduction, and at the end of the poem ('qu'ils ont de l'argent dans leur bourse'), as well as near the beginning ('Qui ne veut donner tout son bien / A ceste cause ne vaut rien', p. 154). The connection between 'biens' and the status of 'gens de bien' reflects the porous boundary between material wealth and moral reputation. Emily Butterworth has shown that there was a strong equivalent between theft and slander in the early modern period, with good reputation often figured as a kind of 'bien', and defamation figured as theft.⁴⁰⁷ In Chapter Two I showed that Bodin gave *proprium* as a Latin translation of *politique*, thus linking the vernacular term to a set of associations with property, propriety, and appropriateness. In Chapter Four, I suggested that the *Politiques* were ferociously criticised in pamphlet literature for their prioritisation of the temporal over the spiritual, and of physical comfort over the privations endured by truly committed Catholics, so putting a negative ethical charge on the connection between *politique*, property, and propriety. Throughout the wars, material desecration and the tearing down of physical symbols of opposition were hallmarks of the conflict; houses that had been abandoned by

⁴⁰⁷ Butterworth, *Poisoned Words*, pp. 38-39.

people fleeing Paris were often ransacked. Such devastation can also be understood metaphorically; the ‘pillaging’ of *Politique* houses lamented by d’Aubray in his introduction to the poem might thus be understood as an expression of the impact of the slanderous words of preachers who falsely baptised certain citizens as *politiques* from their pulpits. The end of the poem, effectively replacing *politique* with *bourse*, enacts a kind of restitution of ‘good’ moral status as well as of literal ‘goods’, with the insult written out by means of re-description.

5. Re-description/Conversion

The *Satyre ménippée*’s editorial collective was instrumental – or, at least, wanted to appear instrumental – in the wresting of power away from hard-line Catholics in order to hand power to a monarch whose religious affiliation was as mobile, if not more so, than the term *politique*. Re-description of *politique* by supporters of Henri de Navarre was part of a wider re-organisation of ethical and ideological categories as a response to the prospect, and then the fact, of Henri de Navarre’s conversion to Catholicism, which enabled him to be re-named as ‘roy’, and as ‘Henri IV’.

D’Aubray’s oratorical triumph in the *Satyre*, and by extension the success of Henri IV, depended greatly on general acceptance of the king’s conversion. In both texts, the term *politique* and the person or people to whom it sometimes referred are used as argumentative pivots in the authors’ evaluations of the ethics of conversion.

Ménager points out that the conversion of Henri IV is the principal topic of roughly the first third of the *Dialogue*.⁴⁰⁸ This is also clear from the opening of a contemporary *Ligueur* text, in which the host informs his guests at the opening of the

⁴⁰⁸ Ménager, ‘Le *Dialogue entre le Maheustre et le Manant: Mystique ou Politique?*’, p.99. On Henri IV’s conversion, see Michael Wolfe, *The Conversion of Henri IV: Politics, Power and Religious Belief in Early Modern France* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

dialogue that the purpose is to ‘faire recognoistre les pensées du Roy de Navarre, & les effets de ceste inesperee & si soudaine conversion’.⁴⁰⁹

At the moment at which the author of the *Dialogue* presumably heard the news of Navarre’s delicately negotiated and much-discussed (re)conversion (that is, the moment in the text when the conversion is presented as an event that has occurred, rather than as distasteful prospect), the Manant launches into a lengthy analysis of why exactly this conversion is not persuasive (starting with an account of Henri’s conversion and subsequent relapse in the 1570s, pp. 62-3). The sense is that Henri’s words are on trial, but that words alone are not enough: as a proof of the nullity of the conversion, the Manant points out that ‘on n’a veu aucunes larmes de ce nouveau converty’ (p. 64). He also criticises Henri for converting in Suresnes, where it is convenient, rather than making the trip to Rome: again, the lack of observed physical exertion (as well as, potentially, the perceived lack of commitment to the supra-national Catholic community) operates as a proof of the nullity of words as confirmation of true faith. The Manant predicts that Henri will as soon abjure as convert, since it is so easy for him, and concludes:

Je vous ay prouvé que sa conversion est feinte et nulle de toute nullité, au surplus, le temps et actions, les paroles et les interpellations qu’on luy a cy-devant faites ont assez démontré sa mauvaise intention et luy ont parfait son procez (p. 69).

For the Manant, here, it is a combination of ‘temps et actions, les paroles et les interpellations’ that prove a point as true.

More broadly, the text offers a lengthy critique of the flexibility of mind required to convert, or simply to change one’s mind, of which the diatribe against re-description

⁴⁰⁹ [Louis d’Orléans], *Le Banquet et apres-dinee*. NP.

(discussed above) is part. What constitutes a justified and believable conversion, and what motivates conversion, is a key point of discussion throughout the dialogue. From the very beginning, the Maheustre exhorts the Manant to accept the necessity of conversion in a general sense: ‘La charité chrestienne vous oblige d’user de douceur et remonstrance, et specialement aux Roys et princes de la terre, afin de les convertir, et non pas opinionastrer’ (p. 45). The opposition between ‘convertir’ and ‘opinionastrer’, indeed, runs parallel to the Maheustre’s insistence on the flexibility of words and their meanings, and the Manant’s refusal to accept this. By the end of the *Dialogue*, the Maheustre announces with frustration that he has finally understood that ‘il n’y a que l’espee qui vous puisse convertir’ (p. 194). In the *Dialogue* the human body is offered as both proof of the limitations of words (such as in the converted king’s lack of tears, which reveals his inner falseness), and as a tool of resistance against resolution through dialogue.

In the *Satyre ménippée*, the legitimacy of Henri de Navarre is also at the heart of the argument. In the poem ‘Pour cognoistre les politiques...’, *politiques* are identifiable because they call Henri de Navarre (soon to be officially re-named Henri IV) ‘Roy’ instead of ‘le biarnois’ (p. 155). His conversion to Catholicism is not a major focus of the text, but when it is raised in d’Aubray’s *harangue* it is presented as inviolate: conversion in order to be king is the fulfilment of moral duty rather than expediency (pp. 188-89). In this sense d’Aubray’s speech places royal duty above confessional conscience, but these different kinds of ethical obligation are not in conflict: they are shown to be inter-dependent.

Where the *Satyre* does discuss conversion at some length, it is to satirize Catholic zeal. The *Catholicon* drug that the speakers take at the beginning in order to force them to speak the truth leads to the exposure of the so-called *Sainte Ligue* as a dishonest conversion of troublemakers into supposedly pious zealots; this is explicitly stated in Monsieur de Lion's *harangue*, in his apostrophe to the *Catholicon* which echoes (and satirises) the opening of the paternoster:

Ô saint Catholicon d'Espagne, qui es cause que le prix des messes est redoublé, les chandelles benistes rencherries, les offrandes augmentées, et les saluts multiplies, qui es cause qu'il n'y a plus de perfides, de voleurs, d'incendiaires, de faulsayres, de coupegorges et brigants: puisque par ceste sainte conversion, ils ont changé de nom, et ont pris cest honorable tiltre de catholiques zelez. (p. 91)

Thus, the *Ligueurs* are re-framed as the converts to a false Catholicism corrupted by their political ideology (hence the pun 'catholigue'). The crucial work done here is to introduce conversion as a constant, linguistic process, more about re-describing than about fundamentally altering one's religious stance. The writers of the *Satyre* are demonstrating that conversion in a broader sense is a process inherent to all political stances, and thus normalising the idea of conversion, which becomes one more move in an inherently mobile ideological terrain.

6. 'Les Politiques qui detorquoyent'

So far we have seen the authors of the *Dialogue* and the *Satyre* having recourse to rhetoric, or resisting it, to gain political ground. But there is more: in the *Satyre ménippée*, the *politiques* are also found engaging in rhetorical strategies of their own. In d'Aubray's poem, key *politique* attributes ('qui ne *dict* point le Biarnois'; 'qui n'ayme point *ouyr* prescher'; 'Qui ne *parle* reveremment' pp. 154-5 [my italics]) are expressed by discourse verbs. In the opening descriptive passage of 'La Vertu du

Catholicon’ where the attendees of the *États* are described, the *politiques* appear as ‘les Politiques qui detorquoyent’ (p. 27):

Toutefois il s’y trouva de notables et signalez officiers, qui ne cedoyent rien en grandeur de barbe et de corsage aux anciens Pairs de France: et y en avoit trois pour le moins de bonne cognoissance qui portoyent calotes à la Catholique, ce que les Politiques, qui sont encores plus de seze dedans Paris, detorquoyent en mauvais sens, et disoyent que les trois calotiers estoient teigneux.

For ‘detorquoyer’, Martin gives ‘détourner du sens véritable’.⁴¹⁰ However, another potential translation would be ‘re-describe’; here, the ‘Politiques’ re-describe the cardinals’ scalps as scabrous, rather than sacred, and thus imply a lack of spiritual authority. Elsewhere, Mayenne refers to his campaign in Guyenne ‘que les politiques appellent incagade’: here, the ‘Politiques’ appear re-describing Mayenne’s military valour as aggressive posturing (‘incagade’ meaning similar to ‘rodomontade’). Here, the verb ‘appeler’ appears once again, only this time, the *politiques* are the subjects of the verb: ‘les politiques appellent’. Meanwhile, the chaotic *Ligueur* speeches are examples of poor rhetoric – exemplified by the fact that Roze’s audience start talking amongst themselves before he has finished, so that he is unable to conclude (p. 115): he is thus staged as the epitome of an unsuccessful orator, having started with such enthusiasm (‘je suis meu d’une indicible ardeur de mettre avant ma rhétorique’, p. 101). The authors of the *Satyre* engage in a cruel ventriloquism, staging anti-eloquence in the *Ligueur* speeches through which references to the power of *politique* eloquence are scattered.

Indeed, critics have read the *Satyre* as staging a ‘crisis in eloquence’, or, as Ménager and Lestringant put it, ‘une crise qui frappe alors la parole publique’.⁴¹¹ We saw in

⁴¹⁰ Martin, ‘Glossaire’, in *Satyre ménippée*, (2010), pp. 220-34 (p. 224).

⁴¹¹ See Ménager and Lestringant, ‘Introduction’, and also Ménager, ‘La crise de l’éloquence’, in *Études sur la Satyre ménippée*, pp. 19-38 (p. 16), and pp. 121-47.

Chapter One that for Salmon, the crisis of eloquence is also a question of the management of Classical inheritance, in which writers in the later sixteenth century moved towards a greater appreciation of Tacitus and a denigration of Cicero, and that the term *politique* was explicitly associated with this shift in the writings of La Noue and Montaigne.⁴¹² In the *Satyre*, not only does d'Aubray refer to Tacitus, but the failed rhetorician, Roze, refers to Cicero as a model. He opens his absurd speech by praising contemporary eloquence: one used to have to study for a long time to be considered a man of letters; but no more, with happy results: 'mieux que Ciceron maintenant ils disputent de *inventionne*' (p. 104). The editors of the *Satyre* put their knowledge of different rhetorical modes to work to mock their ideological opponents and put forward alternative models.

An investment in the power of rhetorical devices – not just re-description – to unseat powerful enemies is present throughout d'Aubray's speech, performing the *politique* work described by Mayenne and others in the preceding *harangues*. For example, in the part that argues in favour of the legitimacy of Henri de Navarre, the author introduces a critique of the way that the Duc de Mayenne exploited the power vacuum that developed after Henri III's death. D'Aubray argues that Mayenne's power is in fact legally invalid, and that 'quiconques inventa cet expedient, faillit aux termes de grammaire et d'estat' (p. 163). Just as d'Aubray later suggests that royal power and faith are coterminous, here, 'grammaire' and 'estat' are shown to be interwoven. The rules of statecraft and of language combine here to imply that the state is a linguistic construct whose very stability lies in effective definition of its terms.

⁴¹² Salmon, 'Cicero and Tacitus', p. 329.

This critique is then followed by an example of one of these rhetorical strategies shown to be so crucial in establishing what the state actually is, and to whom power ought to belong – a striking repetition of the word ‘Lieutenant’ that constructs a kind of *reductio ad absurdum* in relation to Mayenne’s lieutenancy, as well as developing ‘lieutenant’ as an extended metonym for the process of naming itself:

Quiconques est Lieutenant, est Lieutenant, d’ung autre, duquel il tient le lieu [...] et Lieutenant est Lieutenant d’ung autre homme, mais de dire qu’ung homme soit Lieutenant d’une chose inanimée, comme l’estat, ou la couronne d’ung Roy, c’est chose absurde, et qui ne peut soustenir (p. 163).

The repetition of ‘Lieutenant’ creates a sense of the absurd before d’Aubray describes it in this way, and also serves to emphasise the root of the word – ‘lieu’ and ‘tenant’. It thus drives home d’Aubray’s point, namely that Mayenne is a temporary placeholder, in the absence of ‘ung autre homme’ (who must be, d’Aubray hints, ‘ung Roy’). It is also made clear from this moment in the speech that what makes a Lieutenant, and gives him power, is the naming itself; we shall see shortly how this argument is applied to other, more powerful categories, such as ‘roy’.

The *politiques* of the *Dialogue* are also described as engaging in adversarial linguistic strategies, as the Maheustre reports:

Et vous puis asseurer que les billets jettez parmy les rues contre les Seize procedent de ceste part et de l’instruction de noz amis, que vous appelez Politiques, qui ont composé lesdits billets pour mettre en horreur les Seize au peuple et leur faire perdre leur creance. (p. 153)

This evokes both Pierre de L’Estoile’s circulation of a poem defending *politiques*, and a moment in Roze’s speech in the *Satyre*, where he complains about ‘ces impudents politiques, qui vous ont mis en figure en une belle feuille de papier’ (surely this is a self-referential wink from the creators of the *Satyre*); Roze

advocates seeking out, and punishing ‘ses meschants imprimeurs politiques’ (p. 109). In the *Dialogue*, though, the ‘Politiques’ are portrayed as writers, but they are rarely quoted directly. Instead, *politique* wordplay is reduced to ‘bruit’ and ‘brouillure’ and thus its efficacy at intervening in the ‘real’ is blocked, or called into question. In the rare instances where particular arguments are reported, the implication is that ‘Politique’ manipulation of language involves a dangerous manipulation of the truth. A quarter of all the uses of *politique* in the *Dialogue* occur within two pages (pp. 130-31) in which the Manant describes the downfall of the *Seize* and lays the blame squarely with ‘les Politiques leurs ennemis’. The history offered in this speech is that the *politiques* took advantage of their connections in the *Parlement* and the *Chambre des Comptes* in order to re-describe supporters of the *Seize* as petty criminals, and thus to persuade various magistrates to sign search and arrest warrants against members of the *Seize* and their supporters, despite all allegations being unsubstantiated and then proven false: ‘Et neantmoins les Politiques ne tireront non plus de preuve’ (p. 130).

The manipulation of language presented positively in the *Satyre* is thus written into the *Dialogue* as a more suspect flexibility in which little importance is afforded to what is actually true. Thus, the term *politique* is consistently emphasised as being subject to, and participating in, rhetorical manipulation. Moreover, the inherent mobility of the term works as a representation of these processes. The term *politique* is thus both subject to re-description, and figures as a subject who re-describes.

7. *Re-describing Borders*

I have shown that the mobility of terms in these texts, and of the term *politique* in particular, is not only a means by which the authors establish theoretical political positions. It was also connected to material contexts of deprivation and violence, as well as of shifting balances of power and belonging within individual parishes as well as in the wider Parisian community. The mobility of the term *politique* is also a means, in these texts, of negotiating boundaries of actual physical space, and of the communities who exist within and beyond those boundaries.⁴¹³ In this respect these texts make similar moves to the Huguenot pamphlets of the 1570s, which attempt to negotiate new kinds of belonging across European space; these texts, by contrast, focus on France, and particularly on Paris, the contested city.

Paris had always had a special role in the Wars of Religion, as Diefendorf explains:

Most cities were too small to influence the larger course of the wars; they played out before a local audience their bloody dramas of persecution and revenge. Paris, by its size and political importance, was an exception to this rule. Had it not been for the fierce Catholicism of the people of Paris, the wars of religion would have taken a very different course. Perhaps they would not have taken place at all.⁴¹⁴

The integrity of Paris's status as an exceptional and inviolable Catholic stronghold had been tested to the limit by the siege of 1590, but still in 1593 the people held out against the prospect of a Protestant king. At the moment of the composition of the *Dialogue* and the *Satyre*, Henri was encamped beyond the city perimeter, negotiating

⁴¹³ On the connection between national identity and literary representations of communities and their borders, see Hampton, *Literature and Nation in the Sixteenth Century*; on sixteenth-century formulations of selfhood and identity through topographical writing, see Tom Conley, *The Self-Made Map: Cartographic Writing in Early Modern France* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

⁴¹⁴ Barbara Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross*, p. 180. On the importance of Paris, see also Robert Descimon, 'L'Échevinage parisien sous Henri IV (1594-1609): Autonomie urbaine, conflits politiques et exclusives sociales', in *La ville, la bourgeoisie et la genèse de l'Etat moderne (XII^e-XVIII^e siècles)*, ed. by Neithard Bulst and Jean-Phillipe Genet (Paris: CNRS, 1988) pp. 113-50.

terms of entry. The flow of the wider population in and out of the city during the religious wars depending on who was in control was also a major feature of Parisian experience during the war years; Pierre de l'Estoile was one of the only people named by others as *politique* to remain in Paris in 1589-92.

In the *Dialogue*, the Manant claims to represent – and praises at length – ‘le peuple de Paris’. In the part of the text in which the term *politique* first appears, the context is a long speech by the Manant bemoaning the present state of the city (pp. 84-5), in which – he claims – the people have been cruelly let down and abandoned by members of all other social classes (*les princes, la noblesse, les ecclésiastiques, les magistrats*). This could be read as an account of the sociological changes that occurred in French cities, and Paris in particular, across the sixteenth century: changes made at dramatic speed in the context of the upheaval of the religious wars. Descimon in fact uses a spatial metaphor to describe the change in class structures and the rise of the magistrates and the associated *noblesse de robe* under Henri IV and into the seventeenth century: ‘Il nous paraît ainsi nécessaire, pour évoquer la politique de 1594 à 1661, d’accepter le principe d’un vrai dépaysement’.⁴¹⁵ The *Dialogue* recognises this ‘dépaysement’ in its early stages: the people taking the place of the established populace are none other than *politiques*. In the speeches of the Manant, ‘le peuple’ and ‘la ville’ have a metonymic relation that is being undermined by an influx of *politiques*. He claims that the *Seize* is the only group that represents the interests of the ‘ville’ and ‘peuple’:

J’ay recogneu par la verité que la cause, la ville, ont receu un grand secours de leur vigilance, et ne m’estonne s’ils sont envieuz, parce qu’ils se

⁴¹⁵ Robert Descimon and Christian Jouhaud, *La France du premier XVIIe siècle 1594-1661* (Paris: Belin, 1996), p. 7.

sont opposez à tous ceux du party contraire, tant heretiques, athees, Politiques, envieux qu'ambitieux (p. 85).

In the *Dialogue*, 'la ville' and the *Seize* are in one 'party' and the *politiques* are in the opposing 'party'; the author enacts the exclusion of *politiques* and their associates from 'la ville' on a lexical level; an exclusion that he could not achieve in real life (in fact, in real life, it was the reverse, if Cromé was the author: he supposedly wrote the *Dialogue* while holed up for his own safety in the house of a Spanish ambassador, and was exiled, and probably murdered by the king's agent, after the accession of Henri IV).⁴¹⁶ The integrity of 'la ville' is constantly threatened in the *Dialogue*; the Manant concludes the section that I have just been quoting with a lamentation: 'Il s'est joué dans ceste ville des tragedies d'intelligence et trahison si grandes' (p. 85). Later on, the Maheustre raises the point that the houses of 'politiques, heretiques, et absens' have been looted (pp. 184-5) – a critique of the *Ligueur* leadership is inserted into one of the Maheustre's speeches at this point, when he accuses the high-born ringleaders of keeping all the seized goods for themselves and leaving 'le peuple' deprived. The Manant's response (evoking the Pellevé character in the *Satyre*) is to accuse the *politiques* of spreading rumours ('bruit') and of colluding with *les magistrats* to allow enemies to enter Paris:

Encore que les Politiques ayent fait courir le bruit que les Seize y ont participé, ce qui s'est trouvé faux, d'autant que l'on n'en a peu trouver aucun tesmoignage contre eux, quelque diligence que l'on ait peu faire et que l'on face de jour en jour. Car je sçay que les Politiques, par le consentement et conseil des magistrats, font venir en ceste ville une infinité de personnes du party contraire, sous le benefice de la trebve (p. 185).

This recalls the Mayenne character in the *Satyre* bemoaning the fact of 'un taz de Politiques parmy nous'. The connection between the increased physical presence of *politiques* and enemies, a threatened *politique* takeover of Paris, and the 'bruit' that they bring with them, underlines the link between language use and the

⁴¹⁶ Ascoli, p. 26.

occupation of physical space. In the *Dialogue* the uncertainty expressed by the Manant about the ‘qualitez’ that the Maheustre expects him to attribute to himself in response to the watchword ‘qui vive’ at the opening of the dialogue, is mirrored by an uncertainty in the rest of the text about time and place. We can infer only that the conversation takes place in or around Paris due to references to ‘ceste ville’; the conversation seems to take place in a kind of no-man’s-land, and the actual city is not what it was, or has been betrayed, or is over-run by enemies to the extent that it is no longer recognisable. Illustrated copies of a shortened royalist version of the *Dialogue*, written in verse, circulated in Paris under Henri IV, and show the meeting taking place outside the city walls (See Fig. 4).

In this image, the personified *Ligue* is attempting to win back a Manant who is now ‘de-ligué’ (marking another intervention in the history of the words *Ligue* and *Ligueur*) and is instead doffing his cap to the heroic-looking Maheustre, whose elevated position on horseback and correspondingly higher social status indicates the way in which the royalist version made the Maheustre the master of the re-written *Dialogue*. The verse accompanying the image is a re-writing of the opening, in which the Maheustre explains in a slightly more helpful way what he means by ‘qui vive?’, and what the Manant stands to gain by pledging allegiance to Henri IV in answering ‘vive le roy’. The implication is that what is at stake is entry to the city, and thus the community, which has been so troubled and divided.

The *Satyre ménippée* is set more concretely in Paris. In his *harangue*, d'Aubray also laments the present state of the city, both in the opening of the speech (p. 127) and at another later point (p. 168) where he calls Paris a new Jerusalem beset by horrors (drawing on Josephus's history of the siege and subsequent destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70). In the first lamentation, d'Aubray apostrophises Paris:

O Paris qui n'est plus Paris, mais une spelunque de bestes farouches, une citadelle d'Espagnols, Ouallons, et Napolitains: ung asyle, et seure retraicte de voleurs, meurriers, et assacinateurs: ne veux tu jamais te ressentir de ta dignité, et te souvenir qui tu as esté, au prix de ce que tu es? Ne veux tu jamais te guerir de ceste frenesie, qui pour ung legitime et gratieux Roy, t'a engendré cinquante roytelets, et cinquante tyrans? (p. 127)

The re-description of Paris as 'une spelunque de bestes farouches', in the grip of a kind of frenzy, is accompanied by the degradation of kingship represented by the attempts made by the *Etats généraux* to put forward all sorts of unsuitable candidates as potential kings of France ('cinquante roytelets'). As a result, Paris is not what it was, and is full of wild beasts (and foreigners). D'Aubray adds that Paris is in the grip of a new Spanish inquisition, 'plus dure à supporter aux esprits nez libres et francs, comme sont les François, que les plus cruelles morts' (p. 127). The opposition between the 'true' dignity of Paris and its present state as 'spelunque' is mirrored by an opposition between true 'Frenchness' and a France overrun by Spanish influence (with Paris as 'microcosme, et abregé du monde', p. 167). D'Aubray's speech is presented as an exemplar of a particularly French form of eloquence, in contrast with the un-French babbling of the *Ligueurs*. In the 1595 *Discours de l'imprimeur*, the 'printer' notes the following about the supposed authorship of the text:

J'ay veu plusieurs doctes hommes, et moy-mesmes ay bien aysément jugé par le stile et le langage du livre, qu'un Italien ne peut avoir fait un ouvrage si françois et si poly, qui monstre une parfaite cognoissance de

toutes les affaires, et du naturel de toutes les personnes plus signalees en France.⁴¹⁷

Where the *Dialogue* is concerned with Paris as the heartland of a most Catholic ‘people’, overrun by *politiques* who threaten to compromise this, the *Satyre ménippée* paints a portrait of the city as over-run by foreign influence, where it should be the heartland of the most ‘French’ people, who are, by indirect implication, *politique*. The two texts are both fighting to claim Paris as an imaginary centre, as well as an actual place, but on different grounds: these are made clear in the authors’ marshalling, re-describing, and undermining, of different terms. Both texts are thus full of references to, or evocations of, different kinds of exile, invasion, occupation, and belonging; for instance, at the end of d’Aubray’s *harangue* (which will shortly be met by total silence from his grotesque listeners) he laments that ‘demandeurs de paix’ will be exiled as ‘heretiques or maheustres’. But the real purpose, and, indeed (according to Szabari) the effect of the *Satyre* was to force Navarre’s enemies into exile and to reclaim the contested territory for the new Henri IV.⁴¹⁸ In making this argument, Szabari particularly refers to the journeys made by the printers in the supplementary text, but reclamation of territory is also happening on a lexical level in d’Aubray’s *harangue*. And ultimately, the author-editors show faith in linguistic means to the end of re-drawing the boundaries of their communities; following his account of supposed praise of the *Satyre* as ‘françois’ and ‘poly’, the narrative ‘je’ of the ‘Discours de l’imprimeur’ notes:

Aussi l’ay-je oüy plaindre d’un Libraire, qui par avarice ou jalousie des autres, a fait imprimer cet oeuvre en petits caracteres, mal corrects et mal plaisants, et a esté si temeraire, d’y oster ce qu’il a voulu: ce que la

⁴¹⁷ *Discours de l’imprimeur*, p. 157.

⁴¹⁸ Szabari, p. 159.

Justice, ne devrait pas endurer. Toutefois l'argument est public, où chacun peut faire des additions qui servent à la matière.⁴¹⁹

The supplements and paratexts are here imagined to be endless: 'l'argument est public, où chacun peut faire des additions'. The expectation is that readers, and writers, will thus negotiate in order to establish what exactly will be considered just – and in order to do so, they will have to agree upon, or re-describe, their terms. In the *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant*, in one of the Manant's last long speeches, he concludes that:

Et suis assuré moyennant la grace de mon Dieu, que nous aurons un Roy catholique, plain de pieté et justice pour restablir le bien et chasser le mal en despit du Roy de Navarre, de ses sectaires heretiques, Politiques, schismatiques, hypocrites, ny de tous les desseings des ambitieux tyrans quels qu'ils soient, et le verrez ainsi advenir à la consolation des gens de bien et à la ruine des meschans. (p. 208)

Here, the wish to 'restablir le bien et chasser le mal' makes explicit the conflation of literal and ideological movement, and the sense that the mobility of terms, people, goods, and rulers, occurs in a moral universe that is subject to catastrophic flux. The Manant (and by extension the disappointed author of the *Dialogue*) wishes to end this catastrophe by extinguishing the mobility that, as I have shown in this chapter, is incarnated in the term *politique*. The authors of the *Satyre ménippée* prefer, ultimately, to let a public 'argument' dictate the direction of movement, and in doing so, I think, stoke the embers of the ideal of conversation evoked by Pasquier and others in the 1560s which seemed to have been lost in the violent confrontations of the civil wars.

⁴¹⁹ *Discours de l'imprimeur*, p. 157.

Conclusion

I have argued in this chapter that the authors of the *Satyre ménippée* and the *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant* use the term *politique* to attempt to engineer change in the contemporary political landscape. The most frequent associated words in these texts are discourse verbs, particularly 'appeler' – both the passive participle and present active form. I have suggested throughout this thesis that the term refers less to any stable category than to flexibility and multiplicity, and to the modulating nature of the debate itself. Uses of the term *politique* in the texts discussed here function as interventions in debate surrounding the legitimacy of Henri IV, the ethical viability of conversion, and the role and purpose of religion in politics. Incorporating or parodying uses of the term as insult can be read as attempts to realign the political landscape in 1593 and its shape in subsequent memory. Any attempt to pin it down to a particular individual or set of adjectives is only possible if the reader acknowledges the transience of any application of meaning in a particularly mobile semantic field that engendered a series of re-descriptions in which the writing and re-writing of *politique* occupies its own moment. These re-descriptions accompanied – and engineered – the re-drawing of various boundaries and identities, both spatial and ethical, from that of *catholique*, to *Ligueur*, to *françois*, to *lieutenant*, to *roy*. Within all this, the term *politique* has a unique status, referring to these processes of re-description, and to those engaged in it, rather than simply being an object thereof. In this way, we may understand the term *politique* c. 1593 to be a kind of border, or marker of belonging, in itself.

The conflicts staged around the term in the *Satyre ménippée* and the *Dialogue* hinge on who has the upper hand in the writing, and which voices will therefore dictate the

‘Argument’ evoked in the *Discours de l’imprimeur*. This is something that the author of the *Dialogue* bemoans, and which the *Satyre ménippée* not only accepts, but attempts to manipulate. L’Estoile furnishes us with a neat example of the impact of all the writing and re-writing of the term *politique* on a ‘real’ audience in 1593, describing an encounter with Senault, a leader of the *Seize*. Senault was known for writing poisonous anti-*politique* tracts, and L’Estoile observed the consequences of this in the executions of Brisson, Larcher and Tardif in 1591. On 15th June, Senault is seen writing in a corner of the *Chancellerie*, and L’Estoile records an unidentified person shouting ‘Nous sommes tous Politiques! Ecris-nous hardiment sur ton papier!’⁴²⁰ This challenge was being undertaken by the author(s) of the *Dialogue* and the *Satyre* perhaps even at the very moment of the anonymous challenge to Senault. Perhaps the success of the pro-*politique* stance offered by the *Satyre* is evident in the positive, stable definitions offered by Furetière a decade later: ‘Dans les troubles de la Ligue il y avoit les *Politiques*, qui estoient du party du Roy contre les Ligueurs’.⁴²¹ From c. 1572, the term *politique* worked as a vector for ethical controversy. The *Satyre* attempts to influence the direction of popular discourse by undoing the word’s power as a trigger for controversy and violence, while the *Dialogue* paradoxically attempts to deny the impact of the use and manipulation of language as represented by the word *politique*. It is the meaning of *politique* in the *Satyre*, however, that later readers seem to have retained, from Furetière to the present day. This remembering of the *politique* underlines the importance of acknowledging the role of rhetoric in the construction of reality. It is crucial to remember that the *politique* operates as a figure for the agents in this process, rather than simply its symptom, or its misleading ghost.

⁴²⁰ L’Estoile, *Mémoires-Journaux*, VI, p. 29.

⁴²¹ ‘Politique’, in Furetière, *Dictionnaire Universel*.

– Conclusion –

'I am a strange compound of weakness and resolution.'
- Mary Wollstonecraft

In this thesis, I have made four main arguments about the keyword *politique* as it was used during the Wars of Religion. Firstly, it is fundamentally mobile: an incarnation of shifting ideologies, of pragmatic compromise, of a composite, fragmented body politic, and of negotiation. Secondly, authors frequently invent or borrow a character called *le politique* to strengthen their arguments and to compel their reader to constitute themselves as a political subject, whether loyal to the crown, or Huguenot, or Catholic, or to nascent ideas of 'Frenchness'. The fact that it was used and associated with such a variety of groups and ideas intensified the mobility of the term and made this mobility ethically suspect in the view of many writers. These functions of the term point to my third argument, which is that authors use the term both as a means of expressing, explaining, theorising and post-rationalising socio-political experience, and as a means of intervening in it. The genres most associated with the political are generally argumentative prose texts: treatises, tracts, and polemic. However, in a way that also operates in a reciprocal causal relation to the fundamentally composite and varied referents of *politique*, I argue too, and fourthly, that the generic contexts of the term *politique* are broad, and include a range of texts, from poetry, to pamphlets, to Menippean satire. However, within this, I have tried to suggest that dialogue – or, a more loose understanding of dialogic texts that stage a kind of 'conversation politicque' (to borrow Rabelais's terms) – represents a privileged concept for the *politique* go-between.

The term *politique* as I understand it, is used by sixteenth-century writers to navigate and negotiate the boundaries between ideal (imagined, projected, theorised) and real socio-political experience. I have argued that, at the start of the Wars of Religion, this negotiation was figured in ways that emphasised the ideal, as a *politique* character sketched by Le Caron and the central figure of Pasquier's *Pourparler* participated in staged conversations that brought together conflicting ideas and led by example to resolve them in the best possible way. The term *politique* absorbed in this way the reception of Ancient Greek political thought (Plato, and Aristotle) by humanist educators who were also influenced by civic humanist positive faith in the power of education and the corrective influence of rhetoric on reality. After a decade or so of civil war, however, writers who had received that same education were using the term to articulate a more authoritarian vision of how political decisions should be made, and who could make them. It is not that Jean Bodin and Loys Le Roy were resistant to the idealistic dimension of political discourse as expressed around the term *politique*; Bodin's ideals in particular, when it came to political organisation, were simply less founded on dialogic integration of alternative visions and more on an authoritarian imposition of order that has led him to be associated with the rise of Absolutist monarchy even if his theories are much indebted to constitutionalist models. Bodin was compelled to argue for a more authoritarian *politique* in response to Huguenot texts, and in particular the widely read *Reveille-matin des françois*, that used the term – and a character called Politique – to articulate a powerful vision of an integrated Protestant Europe and a French state where freedom of conscience was more important than loyalty to the sovereign.

The power invested in the term *politique* to denote an abstract form of knowledge, a practical expertise, and the person who united the two, was, by the mid-1570s, being emphasised to conflicting ideological ends. Radical Catholic polemicists in the following decade responded both to Bodin and Le Roy's articulation of pragmatic, practical *politique* action, to the contestation of conflicting uses, and to the proximity of the term to calls for Huguenot resistance. In their writing, the term became a deadly insult, a monster; the nebulous foe of radical Catholics. At this point the term *politique*, and the masculine substantive in particular, became particularly prominent, and particularly 'key' in political writing. I have tried to show that this point at which the crisis around the term *politique* seems to have peaked was both a function of the immediate political crisis of 1589, and the product of a longer textual genealogy with roots in works written before the outbreak of civil war. The final texts I analyse, the *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant* and the *Satyre ménippée*, respond to, satirise, and attempt to memorialise polemical versions of the meaning of *politique* as the wars draw to a close. In a way, Chapters One to Three seem distinct from Chapters Four and Five in the sense that the first three articulate theories and visions that rest more on idealised or positive constructions of what *politique* could be and do, and the latter two present a degraded set of denigrated or deconstructed *politiques*, thus exposing the cavernous gulf between the ideal and the real in expressions of the political. However, I have drawn out the links between these two phases; concerns about the degradation of politics are present from Le Roy onwards, now focusing on Machiavelli, now fixed on ideological opponents in the wars. Moreover, the degraded, grotesque, monstrous, or defused *politiques* discussed in the final

chapters often appear thus in contrast with the ‘sage gouverneur’ *politique* whose absence is lamented but figured as only temporary.

What has happened since? Four and a half centuries after Loys Le Roy’s inaugural address at the *Collège royal*, Pierre Rosavallon (whose chair in *Histoire contemporaine et moderne du politique* Le Roy would surely have envied) defined a more flexible masculine substantive against a more authoritative feminine in his *leçon inaugurable*, preferring to focus on the ‘modalité’ present in the former: ‘En parlant substantivement *du politique*, je qualifie ainsi tant une modalité d’existence de la vie commune qu’une forme de l’action collective qui se distingue implicitement de l’exercice de *la politique*’.⁴²² A much longer word history would be required to discover whether Rosavallon’s distinction between the lived modality of *le politique*, and *la politique* as something to enact or impose, is a traceable inheritor of early modern distinctions between *le politique* as live agent and *la politique* as discipline or doctrine. In the centuries between ‘now’ and ‘then’, conceptions of the political and political vocabularies have experienced all manner of changes and repetitions beyond those discussed in this thesis.

But what is clear is that the constructions and deconstructions of the conceptual and concrete semantic field around *politique* that were so forceful, even frantic, during the Wars of Religion, ceased after the accession of Henri IV. As I discussed in the Introduction, after the end of the Wars of Religion definitions of *la politique* remained relatively stable, and sixteenth-century events and theories were a crucial frame of reference for later definitions. The masculine substantive

⁴²² Pierre Rosavallon, *Pour une histoire conceptuelle du politique* (Paris: Seuil, 2002), p. 14. The first chair with the term *politique* actually in the title was that of ‘Economie politique’: see Abel Lefranc, *Histoire du Collège de France depuis ses origines jusqu’à la fin du premier empire* (Paris: Hachette, 1893), p. 388.

receded from the foreground of political writing, and ideas of the *politique* figure and *Politique* party moved to the background of historical imagination; reified, half-remembered figures of a distant past. This is not to suggest, however, that socio-political experience underwent some kind of miraculous transformation in 1598; to argue that would be to believe in other myths. The first half of the seventeenth century looked a lot like the sixteenth, superficially at least; the monarch was assassinated in 1610 by a radical Catholic, and a brief series of civil wars (the Fronde) occurred in 1648-53; once again, dissatisfied nobles turned against the monarchy.⁴²³ The tension between pressure to conform to strict religious rules, and non-conforming faith and other kinds of freedom of expression and conscience was ongoing, and in 1685 the Edict of Nantes was revoked. Exactly what role the term *politique* played in seventeenth-century literary responses to political, textual, and existential questions similar to those raised by uses of *politique* in the sixteenth century could be a matter for further investigation, in English as well as French literature. However, *politique* ceased to be a keyword of political discourse as the sixteenth century drew to a close. This was partly, as I suggested at the end of Chapter Five, the product of textual efforts to resolve the conflict with the *Ligue*.

In political writing from *c.* 1593 onwards, following the effective victory of Henri IV, the term *politique* is re-habilitated and its opposing terms denigrated, particularly *Ligueur*; we saw this process staged in the *Satyre* and resisted in the *Dialogue*. In one print included towards the end of L'Estoile's *Drolleries* collection (and likely, considering its content, to have been printed after Henri IV's

⁴²³ See Robin Briggs, *Early Modern France 1560-1715* (Oxford: OUP, 1977), pp. 128-65.

coronation), the degradation of the *Ligue* is illustrated with a poem and an accompanying image personifying the *Ligue* as a figure in rags (see Fig. 5). The poem, a first-person lamentation in the voice of the defeated *Ligue*, suggests that this degradation is the result of public realisation ('ils ont enfin *cognu* [my italics]) of what the names 'sainte ligue' and 'ligueur' really means. In keeping with this reversal of fortunes, there is an echo of the poem *Description du Politique* (quoted in the Introduction and Chapter Four) which describes *politique* as 'un nom rempli d'ordures': 'je n'ay qu'un tas d'ordures'. *Ligueur*, then, is effectively re-described as the ultimate insult:

Il s'ont enfin cognu qu'un nom de Sainte ligue
N'estoit qu'un tresbuchet & un piege abuseur,
Les grands, & les petits ore me font la figue,
Et ceux me font vassant qui me faisoient honneur.
Il souffriront plustot toutes sortes d'injures
Qu'estre nommez Ligueurs, tant je suis à mespris:
Je n'ay plus de palais, je n'ay qu'un tas d'ordures
Où je gis languissante avec de vils habits.



Fig 5. ‘La Pauvreté et Lamentation de la Ligue, woodcut on paper, (Paris, Le Clerc), in Pierre de L’Estoile, *Les belles Figures et Drolleries de la ligue* (c. 1589-98). Bibliothèque nationale de France <<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148>> [accessed 15 September 2016].

This context had an impact even on those writers who had supported, and continued to support *Ligueur* principles. While the author of the *Dialogue* attempts to resist the new connotations of *Ligueur* and *Catholique*, in another text attributed to *Ligueur* political theorist Louis d’Orléans, a speaker makes an ironic attempt to re-describe a *Ligueur* as that re-habilitated sensible statesman, the *politique* (!):

Si police est la constitution d'un estat, selon laquelle chacun doit vivre, je conclus que le Ligueur qui veut vivre & mourir en la manutention de ceste police establee en France par nos Majeurs, et continuée par nos Rois unze cens ans, est non seulement un vray Politique, mais un honorable & recommandable Politique.⁴²⁴

In the 'Lamentation de la Ligue', the personified *Ligue* complains that 'les grands et les petits ores me font la figue'. The use of the expression 'faire la figue' to describe mockery evokes the *Satyre ménippée*: in the 1595 *Discours de l'imprimeur* there is a lengthy pseudo-etymological explanation of the word 'higuiero' (the alternative name for the *Catholicon* drug), which the authors assert comes from the Spanish for 'fig', which they felt appropriate because the Spanish were the source of all their problems and the 'fig' was the most problematic of trees.⁴²⁵ The *Satyre ménippée* seems to have functioned so effectively in its role of mocking (or, making a fig of...) the *Ligue* and its language, that a contemporary author was moved to attempt to re-habilitate the devastated *Ligue* by coming full circle and reclaiming the term *politique*, to re-describe the *Ligueur* as 'un honorable et recommandable Politique'.⁴²⁶

This was no neat closing off, however, of the *pépinière* – Pasquier's seedbed – that produced (in his view) a pernicious set of weed-like, divisive words during the Wars of Religion, and which might rather be seen as an inevitable feature of political discourse (Montaigne's 'champ ouvert au bransle et à la contestation'). The centre of controversy simply shifted. We have seen throughout this thesis that the term *Catholique* was contested and problematised alongside, and against, the term *politique*. In the *Dialogue d'entre le Maheustre et le Manant*, initially, the

⁴²⁴ [Louis d'Orléans], *Le Banquet et apresdinee*, NP.

⁴²⁵ 'Discours de l'imprimeur', in *Satyre ménippée* (2007), pp. 162-63. This is another moment at which the *Satyre ménippée* evokes Rabelais – in this case the *Papefigues* episode.

⁴²⁶ [Louis d'Orléans], *Le Banquet et apresdinee*, NP.

Manant does not want to describe himself as a *Ligueur*, attempting to assert that there are only two ‘partys’ (that of God and that of the devil). Thus the opening anticipates the close, when all the Manant is prepared to say is a single word, ‘Dieu’. He says to the Maheustre: ‘Je dis que je suis catholique, est-ce pas assez vous declarer ce que je suis?’ (p. 43). For the Maheustre, though, this is not enough:

Tout le monde dit qu’il est Catholique, mais les uns suyvent le Roy et luy obeissent comme vray heritier de la Couronne de France, les autres se sont liguez au contraire, et suivent les princes de Lorraine (p. 43).

In the *Satyre ménippée*, Catholicism is undermined through its *Ligueur* associations, and the word is de-stabilised and emphasised throughout (the narrator describes smelling ‘quelque mauvais vent pseudocatholique’ as people enter the meeting (p. 54); later, in the *Harangue de Monsieur de Lion* he refers to ‘cest honorable tiltre de catholiques zelez’ (p. 91)). The most obvious subversion of the term *Catholique*, of course, is in the name of the drug, the *Catholicon*, which d’Aubray glosses in his speech:

Mais la religion Catholique et Romaine est le breuvage qui nous infatue, et endort, comme une opiate bien sucrée, et qui sert de medicament narcotique, pour stupefier nos membres (p. 172).

In the pamphlets discussed in Chapter Four, as indeed in the *Dialogue d’entre le Maheustre et le Manant*, the ‘Eglise’, or ‘religion Catholique apostolique et romaine’ functions as a kind of moral password; the subversive impact of re-describing this term as ‘le breuvage qui nous infatue’ is that its power as a touchstone for an abstract good (and indeed, for God) is undermined. In the *Dialogue* the unity and inflexibility of the meaning of *Catholique* is the anchor of the Manant’s argument (he describes Catholic ‘zeal’ as manifested by total unity among the population, represented by a singular and unified body politic: ‘qu’un corps par une mesme

intelligence en toute la France' (p. 99)). The description of Catholicism in the *Satyre*, on the other hand, as an opiate that provokes 'massacres' and 'fureurs', if taken out of context, could read as a pre-figuring of the Marxist dictum about religion being the opiate of the masses. This might perhaps provide further grist to the old story about *politiques* as the vanguard of secularism, and make the interaction between the words *Catholique* and *politique* a kind of competitive struggle in which *politique* replaces *Catholique* as dominant in ideological discourse – but in fact, attention to surrounding terms reveals a different nuance. With *Catholique*, associated words or pre-fixes such as *pseudo-*, *zelez*, *ligueur*, *romain*, or *espagnole*, fix the term as morally suspect: it is not Catholicism itself that is wrong but the negative associations that have saturated its current manifestation. The conclusion of this part of d'Aubray's speech, which critiques mis-use of religion, holds up France as 'la plus forte colonne qui appuye l'Eglise Chrestienne' (p. 177).⁴²⁷

What all this shows is that the term *politique*, as well as playing its part in a history of civil war, and in arguments about what politics is, who ought to act politically, and what they ought to do, overlaps with a different *pépinière*, that of the Catholic Reformation and arguments over true faith, conformity, and the possibility of socio-political unity ('qu'un corps par une mesme intelligence'). We have already seen (in Chapters Three and Four) that *liberté* and *libertin* intersect with *politique* at different moments; Godard de Donville points out that descriptions of *libertinage*

⁴²⁷ This is the expression of a 'Gallican' relation to Christianity, referring to the upholding of the effective independence of the French Church from Rome following the Concordat of Bologna in 1516. Barnabé Brisson's *Code du roy Henri III* is described by Kelley as the 'classic, if not the official, summary of Gallican doctrine'. Kelley sees Pithou's supposed role in the creation of the *Satyre ménippée* as evidence of his continued commitment to Gallicanism, first expressed in a 1576 pamphlet entitled *Les Libertez de l'eglise gallicane*. See Kelley, *The Foundations of Historical Scholarship*, pp. 254-56. On the clash between *Ligue* and Gallican approaches, see Sophie Nicholls, 'Gallican Liberties and the Catholic League', *History of European Ideas special issue, 'Thinking about intellectual history'*, 40.7 (2014), 940-64.

developed, in part, from portrayals of ‘mauvais catholiques’, who were usually portrayed as ‘gallican, ou “politique”, ou incrédule partiel’ (these associations have seen *libertins*, too, placed in the vanguard of secularism).⁴²⁸ In this way – and without drawing any kind of grand narrative stretching from *politique* to *libertin* to *liberté, égalité, and fraternité* – we see how certain keywords (perhaps key at different moments in history) bump into each other, act on each other’s meanings, and resist anyone’s final attempt to pin them down precisely because they are in large part textual creations, sent in different directions by different readers and writers. During the period studied in this thesis, however, *politique* was a site not so much of creative difference as of unresolved conversation.

Montaigne, a marginal figure in the story I have told, offers an account of conversation in the final chapter of the *Essais* (‘De l’Experience’) that reveals much by contrast about the conversation taking place around the term *politique*:

La parole est moitié à celui qui parle, moitié à celui qui l’écoute. Cestuy-cy se doit preparer à la recevoir, selon le branle qu’elle prend. Comme entre ceux qui jouent à la paume, celui qui soustient, se desmarche et s’appreste, selon qu’il voit remuer celui qui le gette le coup, et selon la forme du coup. L’experience m’a encores appris cecy, que nous nous perdons d’impatience.⁴²⁹

Indirectly, this is about how to deal with important people, and a way to survive in the ‘bransle’ particular to politics and *politiques*. The advice is to take things as they come. Directly, Montaigne agrees with this advice when it comes to the workings, and the suffering, of his own individual body. In this respect, this point, which comes as a digression, is actually a turning point in the chapter: Montaigne turns away from the body politic and toward his own body, and his own pleasures, countering attempts in and around the word *politique* to constitute

⁴²⁸ Godard de Donville, p. 407.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1136.

the reader as subject belonging to or defined by a collective with an extensive (and indeed extended) account of his own subjectivity. But to return to the analogy of the tennis game, which articulates the art of conversation and the dangers of failure: Cave has commented that it ‘catches the dynamic of successful conversation’, and has indeed viewed Montaigne as exemplary of literature as a part of human conversation.⁴³⁰ This model of ‘successful conversation’ stands in stark contrast with what Montaigne had thus far in the chapter described as the problems, impossibilities, and endless extrapolations that characterize the use of words.

These characteristics bedevil the ‘conversation politicque’ I have traced in this thesis. Cave describes Montaigne’s tennis analogy as a perfect articulation of the way in which partners in conversation use the ‘same skills’ (words, gestures, movements) to read each other’s ‘intended meanings’ in a kind of mirror effect.⁴³¹ Many of the writers discussed in this thesis, though, draw on the same skills (vernacular French; legal training; humanist learning) but fail – deliberately and not so deliberately – to agree about their intentions and their meanings. The ‘conversation politicque’ taking place about the term *politique*, and in uses of the term, was thus a funny kind of lop-sided, sometimes excessively violent game in which the rules were in flux and the outcome uncertain, in the context of changes in language use, and intense political, ideological, and theological conflict. This recalls another evocation of a tennis match, Frere Jean’s final conversation with Gargantua about the *Enigme en prophétie*: ‘de ma part,’ (says Frere Jean) ‘je n’y pense autre sens enclous q’une description du Jeu de Paulme

⁴³⁰ Cave, *Thinking with Literature*, pp. 2-4.

⁴³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

soubz obscures parolles'.⁴³² Understood with reference to Montaigne's analogy, we might say that during the Wars of Religion, *politique* became one such 'obscure parole': a term whose uses tended to complicate and alter attempts to explain and control shared experience through language.

Language itself, in the wake of humanist practice and the Reformation, was a problem for sixteenth-century writers; across many kinds of thought, critics have shown terms, metaphors, and narrative forms in flux in response to the wider crisis of meaning that afforded creative opportunity as well as potential devastation. Within this, *politique* represents a particularly urgent problem of meaning precisely because it operates as a pivot between theory and practice, used to imagine how the world could be and how to implement those conditional possibilities. Godard de Donville argues that the figure of the *libertin* was a textual creation ('un fait *littéraire*, un procédé de polémique') distinct from 'events' and 'reality';⁴³³ my argument about the term *politique* is that, during the Wars of Religion, it *was* a kind of event, continuous with and influencing lived reality. The term was a means of exploring and negotiating collective and individual identities. This is why conversation emerges as the crucial mode and field of enquiry for the crisis of meaning acted out in uses of the term *politique* during the Wars of Religion. The 'conversation politicque', as this thesis has tried to show, contained as many pitfalls for its participants as potential rewards.

⁴³² Rabelais, p. 153.

⁴³³ Godard de Donville, p. 116 and p. 405.

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