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ADVISORY COMMITTEE
to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, to support inquiry in the humanities, has made this issue possible. A meeting in Rome in the summer of 1970 provided an incomparable opportunity for the exchange of views on early drafts of these articles. This is the first of two issues that we propose to publish on "Historical Studies Today."

S.R.G.

JACQUES LE GOFF

Is Politics Still the Backbone of History?

To a historian trained in what, rightly or wrongly, has been called "the Annales school," the title of this essay may in itself seem strange. The Annales historian was brought up on the idea that political history was obsolete and out of date. Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre had said so over and over again. They even invoked the great precursors of modern history. Voltaire, in the Essai sur les Moeurs et l'esprit des nations, wrote: "For the last fourteen hundred years, the only Cauls, apparently, have been kings, ministers and generals."1 Jules Michelet wrote to Charles Sainte-Beuve in 1857: "If I had included only political history in my narrative, if I had taken no account of the various other elements of history (religion, law, geography, literature, art, and so forth), my approach would have been quite different. But I needed a great sweeping movement because all these different elements gravitated together to form one whole."2 Again, referring to his History of France, Michelet said: "Here again I can only say I was on my own. Scarcely anything was ever provided but political history, acts of government, a few words about institutions. No one took any account of what accompanies, explains, and is in part the foundation of political history: social, economic and industrial conditions, the state of literature and thought."3

At the same time most historians consciously or unconsciously came under the influence of Marxism, whether to follow it, more or less rigidly, or to challenge it, more or less openly. But too hasty a reading of Marx could suggest that he ranged politics among the superstructures of society, and considered political history an epiphenomenon of the history of production relations. There is the well-known passage in the preface to the Contribution to a Critique of Political Economy: "The aggregate of production relations con-
stutes the economic structure of society, the concrete base on which there rises a legal and political superstructure, and to which certain forms of social consciousness correspond. The mode of production relating to material life determines the pattern of social, political and intellectual life in general. 4 Without necessarily seeing in Marx's attitude to politics, theoretical and practical (le politique et la politique), the fundamental pessimism ascribed to it by some—usually hostile—commentators, 4 one may still conclude that a conception like the "withering away of the state" is not likely to enhance the prestige of anything to do with politics, political history included.

This might be thought a one-sided view, to be found only in a historian misled by a specifically French tradition and an exaggerated idea of the influence of Marxism. Not at all. Frenchmen have been among political history's stoutest supporters. 9 And Johan Huizinga, neither a Frenchman nor by any means a Marxist, in the course of his work gradually moved away from political history. In The Task of Cultural History 7 he accords it no more than a declining ascendency, based chiefly on the fact that it is both easy and clear. Since Huizinga was not personally attracted by economic and social history, though he noted their "irresistible rise, 6 " he soon turned his main efforts to the establishment of a scientific cultural history.

Economics, society, and culture seem to have monopolized historians' attention for the last half-century. Political history, the insulted and injured, even seems to have been drawn into the epistemological uncertainties arising from the attempt by certain schools of sociology to blur the distinction between practical and theoretical politics. To mention only two leading figures in present-day French sociology, Alain Touraine has recently emphasized the "two-fold weakness" of political analysis in the social sciences, 10 and Edgar Morin points out the "crisis" in politics owing to the invasion of its field from all sides by the techniques and sciences. 10 Will the atomization of politics itself entail a corresponding disintegration of political history, already driven back on uncomfortable positions within its own discipline? To understand the setbacks suffered by political history in the twentieth century, we must analyze the factors that made it flourish before.

Its former ascendency was doubtless linked to the predominating form taken on, between the fourteenth and twentieth centuries, first by the society of the Ancien Régime and then by the society which emerged from the French Revolution. The rise of the monarchical state, of the Prince and his servants, brought to the forefront of the political stage a shadow-show of courtly and government marionettes which bedazzled both historians and people. Aristotelianism in various shapes and forms, especially after the thirteenth century and Aquinas, provided a vocabulary and concepts in which these new realities could be represented. But the triumph of politics and of political history was not immediate. They were adopted rapidly enough in Italy under the stimulus of the rise of the "signorie." But in France, in spite of a step forward under Charles V, the Aristotelian king, who between 1369 and 1374 had Nicole Oresme translate (from a Latin text) Aristotle's Politics and Ethics and a treatise on economics, it was not until the seventeenth century that the noun politique (politics) came into current use, consolidating that of the adjective, which had been established since the sixteenth century. The word politique itself probably benefited from the promotion of all the words belonging to the politis family. These, together with those deriving from urbain (urban), urbanité (urbanity), urbanisme (town-planning)—between them cover a large part of the semantic field of civilization. It is perhaps through police (which did not produce policé [organized, civilized] until the nineteenth century) that we arrive at politesse (politeness), which appears in the seventeenth century. The realm of le politique, la politique, and les politiques (theoretical politics, practical politics, and politicians) is thus the realm of the elite, and it is from this that political history derived its nobility. It was part of the aristocratic style. Hence the revolutionary aim of Voltaire, to write "instead of the history of kings and courts the history of men." It looked as if philosophical history would drive out political history. But in fact it usually came to terms with it. One example can be seen in the abbé Raynal's Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes. 11

The Revolution of 1789, though it ultimately led in the nineteenth century to the transmission of political power to the bourgeoisie, did not destroy the prerogatives of political history. Romanticism made it totter but did not bring it down. Chateaubriand, who could recognize modernity in history as well as in politics and ideology, though he did so only to reject it, was an isolated case. 12 François Guizot, even more than Augustin Thierry, led history further along the path toward history of civilization, 12 but since
both were primarily concerned with showing the rise of the bourgeoisie, they remained bogged down in political history. But the "conquering middle classes" not only annexed political history in all its glory—they also took as much delight as their predecessors in a historical model which was monarchical and aristocratic: a typical example of the cultural time-lag which makes a parvenu class affect traditional tastes. Michelet is a solitary peak.

To take the case of France alone, not until the beginning of the twentieth century did political history first withdraw and then succumb before the blows of a new kind of history backed up by the new social sciences—geography, and especially economics and sociology. Vidal de la Blache, François Simiand, and Emile Durkheim were, whether they realized it or not, the godparents of this new history. Its parents were Henri Berr with the *Recueil de synthèse historique* (1901), and even more decisively Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre with the *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale*.

Raymond Aron has shown in his essay on Thucydides how closely political history is linked to narrative and event. The *Annales* school loathed the trio formed by political history, narrative history, and chronic or episodic (événementelle) history. All this, for them, was mere pseudohistory, history on the cheap, a superficial affair which preferred the shadow to the substance. What had to be put in its place was history in depth—an economic, social, and mental history. In the greatest book produced by the *Annales* school, Fernand Braudel's *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (1959), political history is relegated to part III, which far from being the culmination of the work is more like the bits and pieces left over. Once the backbone of history, political history has sunk to being no more than an atrophied appendix: the parson's nose of history.

But political history was gradually to return in force by borrowing the methods, spirit, and theoretical approach of the very social sciences which had pushed it into the background. I shall try to sketch this recent comeback by taking medieval history as an example. Sociology and anthropology's first and chief contribution to political history was to establish as its central concept and aim the notion of "power" and the facts relating to power. As Raymond Aron has observed, this notion and these facts apply to all societies and all civilizations: "The problem of Power is eternal, whether the earth is worked with a pick or with a bulldozer."

It should be noted in this connection that analyses made by political historians in terms of "power" go beyond those in terms of "state" and "nation," whether these are traditional studies or attempts to approach the question from a new angle. It is also worth remembering that Marxism-Leninism, which has been accused of not showing enough interest in political history and theory, has for a long time only concerned itself in this field at the level of state and nation. Lastly, while the word politics suggested the idea of surface and the superficial, the word power evokes center and depth. Surface history having lost its charm, political history becomes history in depth by becoming the history of power. This verbal rehabilitation corresponds to a mental evolution foreshadowed by Marc Bloch, who wrote shortly before his death: "There is a lot to be said about this word 'political.' Why should it always be taken as synonymous with superficial? Is not a history which is centered, as it may quite legitimately be, on the evolution of modes of government and on the fate of the governed, bound to try to understand from the inside the facts it has chosen as the subject of its study?"

The history of political depths started off, however, from the outside, with the signs and symbols of power, as in the work of P. E. Schramm. In a number of studies culminating in the great synthesis *Herrschafstzeichen und Staatssymbolik,* he has shown that the objects which were the characteristic signs of possessors of power in the Middle Ages—crown, throne, orb, scepter, *main de justice*, and so forth—are not to be studied just in themselves. They need to be restored to the context of attitudes and ceremonies of which they formed part, and above all to be seen in the light of the political symbolism from which they derive their true significance.

This symbolism was deeply rooted in a religious semiology which made the political sphere a province of the religious. Among all the signs and insignia, one in particular lent itself to extensive development, with regard both to politico-religious symbolism and to the institutions in which that symbolism was historically embodied. The whole panorama of medieval politics, linked on one side with the hereditary kingships of antiquity and on the other with the relics of monarchy which have survived into modern times, radiated out from the crown. The symbolic field ranged from the material object itself through the coronation rites to the actual kingdom on one hand and the abstract idea of monarchy on the other. A collection of studies on this political panorama at
the end of the Middle Ages is to be found in Corona Regni: Studien über die Krone als Symbol des Staates in späten Mittelalter.²²

Quite recently Georges Duby recalled the multiple symbolism of the medieval crown in connection with the crown of thorns which St. Louis placed in the Sainte-Chapelle in Paris.²³ The reference immediately presents a problem of method. Is this appeal to “political” objects not perhaps due to the nature of the period in question, and to the fact that in the early Middle Ages texts are comparatively rare? Is this not, then, an ad hoc method rather than a really new and generally applicable way of approaching the problem?

Curiously enough, the historians most interested in these aspects of medieval political symbolism seem to accept such objections and to minimize the importance of their own approach. Thus P. E. Schramm writes: “The investigation of the insignia of power must be supplemented by investigation of the symbolism of power in general. This means that historical research, which first had to rely on chronicles, then became more precise through the use of documents, letters, deeds, and so on, still has a very long way to go in systematic development. There are more objects and evidence available than expected, and an adequate critical method has also been evolved. So the already existing picture may be filled out and enriched. For the insignia used by the ruler tell more about his expectations and claims, and tell it more definitely, than other available evidence. This applies especially to those centuries for which written sources are very limited.”²⁴

Similarly Robert Folz, who thinks he discerns through different kinds of documentation different realities, writes: “Administrative documents, figurative representations, liturgical rites, external signs such as vestments and emblems—all these, together with a few narrative texts, are our essential sources of information for the first part of the Middle Ages, when symbol clearly predominated over theory as the expression of political form. It is only from the twelfth century on, with the revival of legal studies, that argumentation and controversy start providing an increasingly large part of our documentation.”²⁵

But the new political history, like all other branches of history, must abandon the old prejudice that only faute de mieux, that is, in the absence of texts, must it turn to nonwritten documentation. History has to use all the evidence it can get, taking from every kind its own particular contribution and establishing a hierarchy among them all in terms not of the historian’s own predilections but of the system of values of the period concerned. This, needless to say, does not prevent him from going on to treat data from the past according to the standards of modern science, and with the help of all its equipment. Every period has a political ceremonial the significance of which it is the historian’s job to discern; and this significance constitutes one of the most important aspects of political history. An outstanding result of the recent orientation of political history toward symbolism and ritual has been a revaluation of the significance of kingship within the political system of feudalism. Before, the general opinion had been that monarchy as an institution and the feudal system were antithetical, and that it was out of the decay of feudalism that monarchical power, en route to absolutism, arose at the end of the Middle Ages. According to this view Charlemagne, by his policy of awarding fiefs, which tended to become hereditary estates, as rewards for public service, unconsciously brought into being the force which was to destroy the public authority he himself had tried to recreate, and which was to subdue the royal power that he, by adding to it the dignity of the imperial crown, thought to have made invulnerable. This explanation is now recognized as false in both its terms. It arose from an inability to go beyond the hollow prestige of the state to the study of power itself. But in the new context, with anachronistic concepts of the state abandoned, medieval kingship, particularly that of the Carolingian period, regained its full meaning, and the feudal king was seen to derive his power not despite but within the feudal system.²⁶

It was through the methods of comparative history, borrowed from anthropology and the history of religion, that medieval kingship came to have this new significance and that medieval political history was transformed. Various joint publications set the seal on this change. True, the Middle Ages in the West occupied only a small part of the deliberations of the Thirteenth International Conference on the History of Religion in Rome in 1955, the central theme of which was “The King-God and the Sacred Nature of Kingship.”²⁷ This is true also of the volume presented shortly afterwards to Raffaele Pettazzoni: The Sacral Kingship—La Regalità Sacra.²⁸ But a few years later the Arbeitskreis für mittelalterliche Geschichte, led by Theodor Mayer in Constance, devoted a volume of its Vortrage und Forschungen to medieval kingship. Meanwhile
the work of Ernst H. Kantorowicz was growing up parallel to that of Schramm. Kantorowicz, after depicting the greatest sovereign of the Middle Ages, Frederick II,29 went on to study medieval worship of rulers through liturgical acclamation.30 His research culminated in the masterpiece The King's Two Bodies (1957), which restored to its general historical background the conception of political theology which is an essential key to the understanding of the Middle Ages.31

Such were the results, in medieval history, of the trail blazed by Sir James George Frazer, whose research into the magical origins of kingship32 probably stimulated the historians' own researches into medieval kingship, whether or not they were conscious of the fact or prepared to admit it. One historian at least made no secret of his debt, though he did not always agree with Frazer and pursued his own studies according to specifically historical methods—Marc Bloch. His pioneer work, Les rois thaumaturges, published in 1924, is still in the forefront of its field. Bloch is not content merely with describing manifestations of the healing power ascribed to the kings of France and England, or with tracing its history from its emergence to its disappearance and explaining the theories behind it. He also tries to go back to the springs of the collective psychology involved, studies its "popularity" (book II, chapter 1), and attempts to explain "how people believed in the royal miracle" (pp. 420-430). In short, he draws up a study model of "political mental attitudes," which he puts forward simply as a special case—unique only in terms of its subject—of general forms of mental attitude and sensibility. But in the vitally important though as yet unexplored area of the history of mental attitudes, as far as mental attitudes relating to politics are concerned almost everything still remains to be done. Naturally there can be no question of applying to the men of the Middle Ages the opinion poll methods which can contribute to the study of modern political attitudes. But for the history of public opinion in the Middle Ages, as for other questions, a problematic, theoretical approach to the problem can be established.33

It may be noted at this point that political history and the sciences which have influenced its recent evolution have sometimes alternated in using one another as stepping stones. Thus, as we have seen, medieval political history was transformed and enriched by adopting methods borrowed from anthropology: new light was thrown on medieval kingship by studies in archaic or primitive kingship. Medieval political history thus seemed to leave the surface ripples of episodic history for the deep diachronic strata of proto- or para-historical societies.

Meanwhile, conversely, anthropology opened itself to historical approaches, and scholars and researchers increasingly turned to political anthropology.34 This method recognized, in societies "which have no history," structures of disequilibrium and conflict, and established the theoretical preliminaries necessary for providing them with a political history. In so doing it brought out the fact that dynamic social history is not incompatible with an anthropological view of societies and civilizations. Political history did not necessarily lose its dynamism by turning toward anthropology—it might even rediscover in it the schemas, Marxist or otherwise, of the class struggle.35 Moreover, the vocabulary and mental attitudes of the Middle Ages lend themselves to the formulation of structures and social behavior in terms which are partly political. The upper strata of society are often designated in medieval texts by the term potentest, the powerful, generally in contrast to the pauperes or poor; sometimes they are referred to as the superiores, as opposed to inferiores.36

This corroborates researches in various sectors of medieval history which have identified in the basic phenomena a political dimension, in the sense of a relationship to power. The most striking example is the theory according to which, at various dates but usually around the year a.d. 1000, the seigneuries foncières, based on dues levied on land and its economic exploitation, gave place more and more to seigneuries based on the lords' powers of leadership, organization, and justice: these were known as seigneuries banales, from ban, the name for this kind of feudal power. Thus the whole feudal structure right down to its foundations takes on a coloring which is ultimately political.37 This conception of feudalism, which does not exclude a final explanation in terms of production relations, has the virtue of emphasizing the importance of political factors, in the widest sense of the term, in the functioning of the feudal system, and the weight exerted by political forms in the dynamics of history.

The political aspect crops up again in cultural history. Education is a power and an instrument of power. The gulf between littérate and illlitterati which lay so long between clerics and laymen, whether the latter were otherwise powerful or not, shows social cleavages arising out of demarcations between possession and non-possession of different forms of power, between participation and
nonparticipation in these forms. For example, in the case of members of the university a dual relationship with power begins to emerge in the thirteenth century. On the one hand the world of the university tends to form itself into its own kind of supreme power, alongside the power of the church and the king—studium, alongside sacerdotium and regnum. All those who enjoy the privileges of studium participate in its power. At the same time, the result—if not the goal—of university studies and distinctions becomes the attainment of some post or function in lay or ecclesiastical society which leads to participation in the other kinds of power. If, in spite of the difficulties involved, a prosopography of university students and masters in the Middle Ages could be worked out, it would be possible to measure the impact of the university group on the organization of medieval society, and there is no doubt that it would emerge in the character and role of a "power elite."

New light could probably also be shed on medieval political history by studying the application, in the Middle Ages, of the Dumézil schema for Indo-European societies. We know the tripartite schema was in use from the end of the ninth century, and that in the eleventh it took on the stereotyped form of oraatores, bellatores, laboratores. If we knew how and why these ideas reappeared in the Middle Ages, and what was their mental, intellectual, and political effectiveness, we should probably be able to trace more clearly the different aspects of medieval power, their structures, relationships, and functioning. In my view, we should find that this schema was one of the ideological bases of royal power, the latter subsuming and acting as arbiter between the three functions.

Even the realm of art would be illuminated by the application of political analysis in the broad sense. It is not merely a question of measuring the influence of patronage on the form, content, and evolution of art. It is above all a matter of analyzing how the power of works of art is ordered in relation to power in general. It seems to me that Erwin Panofsky took a first step in this direction when he connected the Gothic style, through the multivalent notion of "order" (and hierarchy), with scholastic method, and then related both to a sociopolitical order embodied in the Ile de France around A.D. 1200 by the Capetian monarchy.

Above all Pierre Francastel, in Peinture et société: naissance et destruction d'un espace plastique, de la Renaissance au cubisme (1951), has shown not only that politicians—the Medici in Florence, the patriciate in Venice—understood "the power of figurative images of space" and made them instruments of their policy ("Botticelli's Venus is a policy made explicit"), but also that the new representation of space in terms of perspective is linked to a mental revolution, to a mythical thought governed by "the social and economic policy of giving."

In the realm of religious history one can cite as an example the underlying links between heretical movements and political parties, a subject in which research has scarcely begun. Similarly, in a context relating at once to geography, sociology, and culture, one could point to many modern studies in urban sociology which show the towns, and especially the town-planning, of the Middle Ages, as both an expression and a vehicle of urban power and its possessors. W. Braunsfels has made an initial study of this kind for the cities of Tuscany.

Finally, one can see coming into being—and it would be a good thing if it were hierarchized even farther—a differential political history functioning at various levels, according to what Fernand Braudel has called the "times of history." In the short term there is traditional political history: narrative, episodic, full of movement, but anxious to pave the way for a deeper approach. Every so often it proposes quantitative evaluations; it initiates social analyses; it accumulates evidence for a future study of mental attitudes. In the longer term, to be established according to the model for long-term movements proposed by François Simiand, there will be a history of the phases or trends of political history, in which no doubt, as Braudel hopes, social history in the broad sense will still predominate—political history with a sociological emphasis. In between these two types of history, as in economic history, there would be an area of common ground specially devoted to studying the relationships between secular political trends on the one hand and, on the other, short-term movements and episodic highs and lows: a history of crises, in which structures and their dynamics are revealed in their nakedness by the turmoil of events. Lastly there comes a political history which would be almost immobile if it were not linked, as political anthropology has shown it to be, to the essentially conflictual and therefore dynamic structure of societies—a political history of really long-term structures, comprising both the valid, living part of geopolitics and also analysis based on anthropological models. At every one of all these levels, particular
show against strict juridical conceptions: law, the hope of mankind, is the historian’s nightmare. It likes to dabble in the history of ideas and political thought—but often both ideas and politics are superficial. With the best will in the world it remains the most fragile form of history, and the one most likely to succumb to all the old temptations.

I conclude with a fact perhaps worth restating. However much political history may be renewed and regenerated by the other human sciences, it cannot aspire to autonomy. To divide a single branch of learning into separate compartments is more inadmissible than ever in the age of pluridisciplinarity. The comment of Lucien Febvre, cofounder of the Annales d’Histoire Economique et Sociale, is truer now than ever: “There is no such thing as economic or social history. There is just history.” But it is still true that the models of the new general history must accord the dimension of politics the same place as is occupied in society by the phenomenon of power, which is the epistemological incarnation of politics in the present. To pass from the age of anatomy to that of the atom, political history is no longer the backbone of history but its nucleus.

This article was translated from the French by Barbara Bray.

References
2. Ibid., p. 78.
4. For example, on page 4 of the introduction to the interesting volume La féodalisme à un special number of Recherches internationales à la lumière du marxisme, no. 37 (June 1963), the editors write “We have primarily included studies dealing with economic and social relations, with a few excursions into the field of institutional or cultural superstructures.”
5. For example, the particularly hostile account given by J. Freund in L’essence du politique (Paris: Editions Sirey, 1965), pp. 645ff. According to Freund, political alienation for Marx is alienation supreme, absolute, and irretrievable.
6. Charles Selgobob wrote in 1924, in the preface to his Histoire politique...
de l’Europe contemporaine, that we must “recognize the degree to which the superficial phenomena of political life dominate the fundamental phenomena of economic, intellectual, and social life” (cited by Woff, “L’étude des économies,” p. 850).

7. “The problems of political history are as a rule immediately obvious.” Johan Huizinga, The Task of Cultural History, written in 1926, published in Dutch in 1928 and in English translation in Men and Ideas (New York: Meridian Books, 1959), p. 27. Again, “The historical forms of political life are already to be found in life itself. Political history brings its own forms: a state institution, a peace treaty, a war, a dynasty, the state itself. In this fact, which is inseparable from the paramount importance of these forms themselves, lies the fundamental character of political history. It continues to enjoy a certain primacy because it is so much the morphology of society par excellence.” Ibid., pp. 58-59.

8. For example, in “The Political and Military Significance of Chivalric Ideas in the Late Middle Ages,” first published in French in Revue d’histoire diplomatique, 35 (1921), 126-138, and translated into English in Men and Ideas. Huizinga writes (pp. 196-197): “The mediævalists of our day are hardly favorable to chivalry. Combining the records, in which chivalry is, indeed, little mentioned, they have succeeded in presenting a picture of the Middle Ages in which economic and social points of view are so dominant that one tends at times to forget that, next to religious chivalry was the strongest of the ideas that filled the minds and hearts of those men of another age.”

9. A. Touraine, Sociologie de l’action (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1965), chap. VI, “The Political System,” p. 598. This two-fold fragility consists partly in the danger that the study of political relationships may be absorbed by structural analysis on the one hand and history on the other; partly in the fact that political theory may be subject either to politics or to political philosophy, itself only a part of the philosophy of history.


11. In English the emergence of two terms, “police” and “polity” (in the fourteenth century the French had tried out policer, also copied from the Greek, but it did not take), complicated the field of political science and incidentally that of political history. While the French philosophers of the eighteenth century sought, or accepted, a compromise between philosophical and political history, it may be that in England an even more radical dilemma caused an oscillation between historical and political, at once linked and opposed to each other. This possibility seems suggested by such titles as that published anonymously in London in 1708: An Historical and Political Essay, Discussing the Affinity or Resemblance of the Ancient and Modern Government. See J. A. W. Gunn, “The ‘Civil Polity’ of Peter Paxton,” Past and Present, 40 (July 1968), 50.

12. The best example is the preface to the Etudes historiques (1831).

13. This approach was set out in the Cours d’histoire moderne: histoire de la civilisation en Europe depuis la chute de l’Empire Romain jusqu’à la Révolution Française (1828), lecture I. For long passages from Chateaubriand and Guizot, see J. Ebrard and G. Palmade, L’histoire (Paris: Colin, 1969), pp. 189-193, 203-207.


15. As throughout this article, the works quoted on medieval history are meant only as references and examples, not as a bibliography or selection in terms of merit.


17. An example of a traditional but all the same very pertinent study is F. M. Powicke, “Reflections on the Medieval State,” Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, ser. 4, XIX (1936). Among new approaches are: B. Guéneau, “L’histoire de l’état en France à la fin du Moyen Age vue par les historiens français depuis cent ans,” Revue historique, 232 (1964), 331-360; “État et nation en France au Moyen Age,” ibid., 237 (1967), 17-30; “Espace et état dans la France du bas Moyen Âge,” Annales: économies, sociétés, civilisations (1968), pp. 744-758. It will be noted that the word “power” (accompanied, it is true, by an adjective) occurs in the title of the pioneer work by E. Lavisse, “Étude sur le pouvoir royal au temps de Charles V,” Revue historique (1884), pp. 233-280, which attempts to go beyond the description of institutions to mental realities, Marc Bloch noted the connection between the history of the state and the history of a nation or nations. “It seems to be difficult to separate the history of the idea of the state from the history of the idea of nation, or patriotism.” Revue historique, 128 (1918), 347.

18. The way Marxists tended to concentrate their interest on the state is apparent from the titles of their works: for example, F. Engels, Private Property and the State, V. I. Lenin, State and Revolution. On the two senses of “nation” in Marx and Engels (the modern designating “a kind of rising capitalism,” and the other the more general Latin sense of ethnic group) see A. Polletier and J. J. Cobbi, Matérialisme historique et histoire des civilisations (Paris: Editions sociales, 1969), pp. 94ff.


23. "It is not by chance that the reliq St. Louis brought to Paris and installed in the chapel of his palace is a crown of thorns, doubly symbolic of kingship and of sacrifice." Le Monde, April 29, 1970, p. 13.


29. E. H. Kantorowicz, Kaiser Friedrich der Zweite (Berlin: Bondi, 1927), and Erganzungsbnd (Berlin: Bondi, 1931).


34. "Anthropologie politique" is the title of an informative essay by Georges Bidol. He sets out systematically what E. R. Leach has observed to be "contradictory, conflictual, approximate, and externally relative" in societies, developing the theme of L. E. Evans-Pritchard in Anthropology and History, 1981.

35. Here again there is an incompatibility between the point of view of Freund, L'essence du politique, p. 538, according to which "the class struggle is only an aspect of the political struggle," and the Marxist point of view, according to which all forms of political struggle derive from the class struggle. As long as it is not applied too dogmatically and inflexibly, I think the Marxist view is the truer and more fruitful. G. Cracco's stimulating book, Societ a e Stato nel medievo veneziano (secoli XII-XIV) (Florence: Olschki, 1967), shows the class struggle functioning normally in the political history of Venice, usually thought to be a world apart. It may be thought, however, that the author is limited by an approach based too much on the idea of the state. F. C. Lane makes reservations of this kind in a generally appreciative review in Speculum (1968), pp. 497-501.


37. G. Duby's conception of seigneurie banale is set out in his thesis, La societ a aux XIe et XIIe siecles dans la region maconnoise (Paris: Colin, 1953), and in L'economie rurale et la vie des compagnes dans l'Occident medieval (Paris: Aubier, 1962), vol. II, bk. III, "XI-XIIe siecles: la seigneurie et l'economie rurale." In the legally oriented series, the Recueils de la Societé Jean Bodin, the volume: Gouvernants et Gouvernés, XXV (1965), shows a preoccupation with the themes of power which may


39. See my *Les intellectuels au Moyen Age* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1957), for an attempt to show how, between the end of the twelfth and the fourteenth century, members of the universities moved from a socioprofessional position which was corporative to one which placed them among the possessors of power.

40. The subject proposed by the French delegation to the International University Committee on History at the Thirteenth International Conference on Historical Sciences in Moscow, August 1970. I believe Professor Lawrence Stone has a similar project in mind for English universities in the modern era. This revival of interest in the prosopographical method, a method of historical study likely to favor the renewal of political history, is evident in various sectors (see the late 1970 number of *Annales: économies, sociétés, civilisations*).


42. One of the works inspired by this particular question is Joan Evans' interesting *Art in Medieval France, 957-1258: A Study in Patronage* (London: Oxford University Press, 1948).


45. See R. Manselli, *L'eresia del male* (Naples: Morano, 1963), and "Les hétérophiles dans la société italienne du XIIe siècle," in *Héroties et sociétés dans l'Europe pré-industrielle, Xle-XVe siècles*, a Royaumont symposium, presented by J. Le Goff (Paris and The Hague, 1968), pp. 199-202. This points out the "very close link between the Catharist heresy and the great political party of the Ghibellines." This study needs to be developed in the direction of a sociological comparison between religious sect and political party.


50. Ibid., p. 20 (written in 1941).