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Social rebellions in France in the 1630s in historiography

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Abstract: In this article different rebellions against the policy of Cardinal Richelieu in the 1630s in France are presented. Each of them has been analysed in terms of its causes and participants. In addition, attention was paid to their connection with the Thirty Years' War. The main focus was placed on Gaston d'Orléans' revolt, the Cascaveux Revolt, and the Revolt of the va-nu-pieds. The rebellions are presented as stages of the development of absolutism.

Keywords: Social rebellions, France in the 1630s, Cardinal Richelieu, Louis XIII

In 1629, after the Peace of Alais (which ended the war between the French monarchy and the Huguenots), Louis XIII purportedly said to the First Minister of State Armand-Jean du Plessis de Richelieu that “*he would adore him till his death*”.¹ However, such a response was not valid for many Frenchmen. In the 1630s almost no region of the country was bypassed by rebellions and discontent with the cardinal's regime. They concerned practically all social groups and mainly had a financial background, although other motives also featured.²

The subject matter of the social rebellions in France in the given period has been mentioned frequently within historiography; however, it remains relevant because of the presentation of the beginning of an absolutist political system. The issue is widely discussed in French historiography. For instance, within the framework of Michel De Waele's, Hélène Fernandez's, Roland Mousnier's, Mathieu Servanton's, and Yves-Marie Bercé's articles and monographs, this matter was analysed rather within microhistory or in different temporal contexts than the one indicated in this article. The prospect of the decade makes it possible

1 Jan BASZKIEWICZ, *Richelieu*, Warsaw 1984, p. 164.

2 Edgar KISER – April LINTON, *The hinges of history: State-making and Revolt in Early Modern France*, *American Sociological Review* 67, 2002, no. 6, p. 889.

to notice a rise in conflicts as well as their incremental escalation after the commencement of the full participation of France in the Thirty Years' War and the dynamic growth of the financial burdens forced by the state's galloping expenses. The differentiation of the reasons for the revolts remains an interesting question.

According to the French historian Lucien Bély, the huge expenses of the monarchy after 1630 were related to the fact that "*Richelieu was able to pursue his policy more at ease and redirect it towards military inventions in Europe. The war against Spain, and in fact against the House of Habsburg, would have been inevitable by this time. He had to fight against the Queen Mother's intrigue as well as versus Gaston, Duke of Orléans, who remained an heir to the throne even until 1638.*"³ The financial burden was indicated in many cases as a significant spark causing the revolts; however, the first rebellions in the 1630 were caused by conflicts within the royal family.

The king's brother Gaston d'Orléans can be considered as one of the most powerful opponents among the cardinal's enemies. In a letter to Louis XIII, he listed his accusations as a manifesto towards Richelieu and underlined the reasons for his mistrust. He wrote about the great misery and famine affecting many of the inhabitants of France. He also mentioned the extremely miserable food products which were a daily meal for many of them.⁴ He blamed the cardinal's ambition for this situation, described by him as "*oppression of the people*".⁵ In his response to his brother, the king explicitly wrote that in fact Gaston d'Orléans has motivated by his own interests.⁶ Probably, Louis XIII aptly and quite honestly recognised the motives for Henri IV's younger son's behaviour. He even referred to his own grievances caused by the cardinal in official letters.⁷

In a letter from March 1631 to his brother Gaston d'Orléans primarily raised the argument of the expulsion of their mother Marie de' Medici from the country by the cardinal, but he underlined his attachment to the king at the same time.⁸ His letters to the king can be considered as an attempt to justify his own behaviour, but it is undeniable that Gaston d'Orléans indicated in the manifesto real problems and the reasons for the

3 Lucien BÉLY, *La France moderne, 1498–1789*, Paris 2013, p. 295.

4 Gaston d'ORLÉANS, *Lettre écrite au Roy par Monsieur (Nancy, 30 mai 1631), et par luy envoyée à Messieurs du Parlement pour la presenter à Sa Majesté*, ed. Antoine VITRAY, Paris 1631, pp. 53–54.

5 Ibidem.

6 LOUIS XIII, *Response du Roi, Paryž, 19.07.1631, Lettre écrite au Roy par Monsieur (Nancy, 30 mai 1631), et par luy envoyée à Messieurs du Parlement pour la presenter à Sa Majesté*, ed. Antoine VITRAY, Paris 1631, p. 59.

7 Ibidem.

8 Gaston D'ORLÉANS, *Lettre écrite au Roy par Monsieur (Bellegarde, 23 mars 1631), et apporté par le Sieur de Briançon. Avec la reponse de sa Majesté (Champseaux, 26 mars 1631)*, Champseaux 1631, pp. 5–7.

widespread social discontent. As a part of his letters to the parliament he mentioned, furthermore, the issue of his mother's grievance⁹ and demanded Richelieu's trial as well.¹⁰

Ultimately, his royal brother did not seize the opportunity to attack (although he could have taken advantage when the situation was tense and the Prince of Condé pacified the revolts in Provence,¹¹ and mass protests against the abolition of tax privileges also took place in Languedoc).¹² In this region located in the southwest of France the background to the revolt was significant; discontent had started there in 1628, when the fiscal burdens imposed in this province increased by 200,000 livres.¹³

In addition, military expenses were constantly growing in the country, which meant fiscal burdens in the future. According to the Polish historian Jan Baszkiewicz, the formula accepted in a document from 21st January 1632, “*to combine negotiations with using the army*”, implied the connection of these two goals. French diplomacy in 1633 and 1634 aimed to maintain using subsidies or promises of the military fervour of all who fought against the House of Habsburg.¹⁴ In consequence, even though France was not yet militarily involved in this conflict, the inhabitants of France were, according to the above-mentioned document, bearing the costs of the progressing financial involvement in it.

Gaston d'Orléans, during his feud with Cardinal Richelieu in 1631, was looking for helpers outside France, particularly by trying to ally with Philip IV of Spain and Charles I of England.¹⁵ Ultimately, the younger brother of Louis XIII, after numerous warnings, proceeded to attack in June 1632, when he attempted to march into Dijon with an army of mercenaries.¹⁶ He penetrated Languedoc one month later, accompanied by several hundred soldiers and relying on Spanish support as well.¹⁷ During these incidents the nobility (with a few exceptions) did not want to join the rebellions.¹⁸ Ultimately, the royal army defeated Gaston d'Orléans in a skirmish at Castelnaudary.¹⁹

9 Gaston D'ORLÉANS, *Copie d'une requeste envoyée à Messieurs du Parlement*, pp. 3–4.

10 Ibidem, p. 11.

11 Sharon KETTERING, *Juridical Politics and Urban Revolt in Seventeenth-Century France. The Parliament of Aix, 1629–1659*, Princeton 1978, p. 7.

12 Charles TILLY, *Contention and peasant rebellion in Seventeenth-Century France*, CRSO Working Paper 208, 1980, pp. 1–52, here p. 52.

13 Jean-Marie CONSTANT, *Gaston d'Orléans: Prince de la liberté*, Paris 2013, p. 54.

14 J. BASZKIEWICZ, *Richelieu*, p. 293.

15 Michel DE WAELE, *Conflit civil et relations interétatiques dans la France d'Ancien Régime: La révolte de Gaston d'Orléans, 1631–1632*, French Historical Studies 37, 2014, vol. 4, pp. 565–598, here p. 565.

16 J.-M. CONSTANT, *Gaston d'Orléans. Prince de la liberté*, pp. 35–50.

17 J. BASZKIEWICZ, *Richelieu*, p. 235.

18 M. DE WAELE *Conflit civil*, p. 566.

19 G. D'ORLÉANS, *Mémoires contenant ce qui s'est passé en France de plus considérables depuis l'an 1608 jusqu'en l'année 1636*, ed. Étienne MARTIGNAC, Paris 1685, pp. 266–268.

After this battle, Louis XIII wrote in a letter to the Prince de Condé: “arriving in this city [Lyon], I received information about the defeat of military units organised by my brother in Languedoc. The commander, the Duke of Montmorency, was wounded by a few gunshots and was taken prisoner. However, Count de Moret was mortally struck by a musket, with others of their leaders being killed or taken prisoner. Therefore, there is great honour to my cousin de Schomberg, who was commanding the units [...]”.²⁰ A few weeks later, an agreement was reached the two brothers and according to the deal Gaston d’Orléans had to refrain from similar activities in the future.²¹ He had to stay in Lorraine for one year as well.²²

It was the Duke of Montmorency who primarily took responsibility for this fight and for his role in the rebellion. He paid with his life for these deeds.²³ His conduct is usually explained by his dislike of the cardinal.²⁴ According to the historian Michel de Waele, Gaston d’Orléans’ actions are considered in French historiography “as a problem between Frenchmen revealing their dissatisfaction of rising and still growing Richelieu’s influence on the governance of the state”.²⁵ This rebellion can be considered as being motivated by revenge as well as being a relatively short-lived conflict.

However, some historians, such as Victor L. Tapié and Robert J. Knecht, have paid attention to help from Spain or Lorraine for the rebellious royal brother.²⁶ According to Michel de Waale, Gaston d’Orléans’ revolt was “a sign of fight in the governmental elite that fits into the particular context, as at the time Louis XII and Anne of Austria had not had a child yet”.²⁷ According to the historian Roland Mousnier, through this fight France was threatened with Spanish occupation and the revival of civil wars.²⁸ Therefore, the conflict

20 Michel DE WAELE, *Le Prince, le duc et le ministre: conscience sociale et révolte nobiliaire sous Louis XIII*, *Revue historique* 670, 2014, vol. 2, pp. 313–341, here pp. 314–315. Author’s Own translation: “En arrivant en cette ville [de Lyon] j’y ay eu nouvelle de la deffaitte des troupes que mon frere avoit assemblées en Languedoc en laquelle le duc de Montmorancy qui les commandoit a esté faict prisonnier blessé de plusieurs coups de pistolet, et le comte de Moret blessé à mort d’une mousquetade a travers le corps, avec plusieurs autres de leurs chefs tuez ou prisonnier. En quoy mon cousin le maréchal de Schomberg qui commandoit mes troupes a acquis beaucoup d’honneur.”

21 G. D’ORLÉANS, *Mémoires contenant*, pp. 266–268.

22 Armand Jean DU PLESSIS DE RICHELIEU, *Proposition faite au Roi, 6 I 1632, Lettres, instructions diplomatiques et papiers d’états du cardinal de Richelieu, T. Quatrième, 1630–1635*, ed. M. AVENEL, Paris 1853–1877, p. 239.

23 Hélène FERNANDEZ, *Louis le Juste en Languedoc (1632): droit, justice et politique, Les procès politiques (XIVe–XVIIe siècle)*, in: Yves-Marie Bercé (ed.), *Les procès politiques (XIV–XVII siècle)*, Rome 2007, pp. 291–318, here p. 291.

24 M. DE WAELE, *Le Prince*, p. 315.

25 IDEM, *Conflit civil*, p. 567.

26 Ibidem.

27 Ibidem, p. 569.

28 R. MOUSNIER, *Fureurs paysannes: les paysans dans les révoltes du XVII siècle (France, Russie, Chine)*, Paris 1967, p. 50.

can be mainly considered as competition for power or influence within the Bourbon dynasty. However, the growing social discontent should be noted as an instrument for this rivalry.

At the beginning of the decade that is being described, it was already possible to notice social revolts on a smaller scale. They included a city and its immediate surroundings. They also did not last long (although exceptions can be perceived). In 1630 winemakers' revolts took place in Dijon, Brignolles, Draguignan, and Grasse.²⁹ The historian Paul Cunisset-Carnot described this rebellion in Dijon as "separatist movement";³⁰ however, this is the view of a nineteenth-century historian. Richelieu's decision in June 1629 to limit the state's power there enraged the inhabitants.³¹ Parliamentary delegates had to save their skins by escaping, since the crowd started to throw stones at them.³² The historian Mack Holt searched for the causes of this rebellion in Richelieu's attempts to unify the tax system in the country in the years 1630–1640.³³ He also paid attention to an alliance between winemakers and the city council.³⁴

During this period the revolt with the largest dimensions took place in Aix-en-Provence and lasted for three months under the name *Cascaveoux*.³⁵ Anger was directed towards royal officials; for instance, the intendant d'Aubray's house was plundered and burned.³⁶ At the beginning of the period under description, in February 1631, incidents involving the lower social classes took place in Paris as well and they were related to the new fiscal burdens.³⁷ According to the historian Reynold Abad, this event mostly remains forgotten, which is caused by the concentration in historiography on the Day of the Dupes or Gaston d'Orléans' fights.³⁸ It may therefore be concluded that the beginnings and dimension of the crisis during the 1630s in France are to some extent either underestimated or undervalued because of their coincidence in time with the royal brother's revolt.

29 Ibidem, p. 56.

30 Paul CUNISSET-CARNOT, *Lémeute des Lanturelus à Dijon en 1630: un mouvement séparatiste sous Louis XIII*, Dijon 1897, p. 5.

31 Ibidem, p. 14.

32 Mathieu SERVANTON, "Rétablir l'ordre". *Les parlements de province et les conséquences des émeutes urbaines des années 1630*, in: Laurent Coste – Sylvie Guillaume (eds.), *Élites et crises du XVIe au XXIe siècle*. Europe et Outre-mer, Paris 2014, pp. 47–64.

33 Mack HOLT, *Culture populaire et culture politique au XVIIe siècle: l'émeute de Lanteralu à Dijon en février 1630*, *Histoire, économie et société* 16, 1997, vol. 4, pp. 597–615, here p. 598.

34 Ibidem, p. 599.

35 R. MOUSNIER, *Fureurs paysanne*, p. 56.

36 M. SERVANTON, "Rétablir l'ordre", p. 48.

37 Reynald ABAD, *Une première Fronde au temps de Richelieu? Lémeute parisienne des 3–4 février 1631 et ses suites*, *Dix-septième siècle* 218, 2003, vol. 1, pp. 39–70, here p. 39.

38 Ibidem.

As part of the Parisian rebellion in 1631 several hundred protesters built barricades and threw stones at official buildings.³⁹ According to the historian Reynald Abad, a doubling of the amount of tax collected with wine sales can be considered a major cause of these incidents.⁴⁰ The rebellion was supported by the inhabitants of Paris from the lower social classes.⁴¹ It can be concluded that these riots had a financial background; however, their relatively small range indicated the beginnings of social dissatisfaction.

The second half of the 1630s can be considered as a turning point in terms of social revolts during the reign of Louis XIII, despite having been many earlier symptoms indicating the discontent of different social groups with Richelieu's way of conducting politics. According to the historian Jan Baszkiewicz, it was precisely in 1635, when France entered the Thirty Years' War fully, that "*the nobility revealed its reluctance to attempt to revive mass mobilisation, peasants to create rural defence, and all of them to bear fiscal burdens*".⁴² However, according to the historian Michel Carmona, at this time "*military effort, starting with 1635, can be considered as a significant part of the growing fiscal burdens in Paris*".⁴³ In addition, Richard Bonney,⁴⁴ Julian Dent,⁴⁵ Alan Guéry,⁴⁶ and Françoise Bayard,⁴⁷ among others, have paid attention to the difficult financial situation of France in the years 1635–1637.

Taxation was not the only countermeasure in the case of the state's huge military expenses; selling offices in the 1630s was also able to improve the financial situation. According to the historian Jean-Christian Petitfils, "*fiscal invention and creativity have never been developed to such an extent*".⁴⁸ At the same time, selling offices can also be considered as a measure to reinforce royal power.

According to the historian Lucien Bély, at that time "*the announcement of a new tax was enough to start a revolt. They were often initiated by a rumour and an uprising started to spread throughout the province*".⁴⁹ In 1635 a revolt took place in an extensive area in the

39 Ibidem, p. 44.

40 Ibidem.

41 Ibidem, p. 46.

42 J. BASZKIEWICZ, *Richelieu*, p. 318.

43 Michel CARMONA, *La France de Richelieu*, Bruxelles 1985, p. 43.

44 Richard BONNEY, *The King's Debts. Finance and Politics in France, 1589–1661*, Oxford 1981.

45 Julian DENT, *Crisis in Finance: Crown, financiers and society in seventeenth-century France*, New York 1973.

46 Alain GUÉRY – Youssef CASSIS – Élie COHEN, *Fondements historiques des finances de l'État*, in: Bruno Théret (ed.), *L'état, la finance et le social. Souveraineté nationale et construction sociale européenne*, Paris 1995.

47 Françoise BAYARD, *Pour une histoire économique de la France d'Ancien Régime*, in: Françoise Bayard (ed.), *Des caisses du roi aux poches des cadavres*, Grenoble 2015.

48 Jean-Christian PETITFILS, *Louis XIII*, Paris 2008, pp. 760–766.

49 L. BÉLY, *La France Moderne*, p. 300.

south-east of France when wine taxation caused many riots in bigger cities such as Bordeaux and Agen, as well as in smaller towns situated by the River Garonne.⁵⁰ The rebellious craftsmen in Bordeaux were supported by the local bourgeoisie.⁵¹ The rioters attacked the town hall there and killed some officials.⁵² This illustrates the fact that discontent with Cardinal Richelieu's policy concerned all social groups at this time. The parliament facing the revolt remained hesitant (some members proposed an appeal to the king others wanted to negotiate with the local bourgeoisie).⁵³ Ultimately, the governor, d'Épernon, decided to wait for a certain number of soldiers and not to attempt to uphold the king's authority.⁵⁴

The rebellions in Agen had the largest dimensions, as well as the most plebeian character; they were caused by epidemics and famine that lasted for a few years.⁵⁵ The rebellious crowd chanted "*Vive le roi*" because it was believed that Louis XIII would lower taxes and badly selected advisors were responsible for this situation.⁵⁶ Despite these royalist exclamations, anger was directed towards royal officials; the house of a royal prosecutor was plundered.⁵⁷ One year later, in 1636, a peasants' revolt broke out in the areas between the Garonne and the Loire (which included a quarter of the French population at that time)⁵⁸. In 1636 the rebellion was related to raising the direct tax called *taille* and took place in, inter alia, Poitou,⁵⁹ Angoumois, Aunis, Saintonge, and Limousin⁶⁰ in the western and central parts of the country.

In 1637 protests led to the escalation of this conflict. The protesters threatened to provide the *taille* tax only directly to the king.⁶¹ Initially, attempts were made to solve the problem by sending delegates to different provinces to conduct negotiations.⁶² According to the historian Jean-Christian Petitfils, the riots in the Périgord region in the spring of 1637 can be considered as important protests connected with *les révoltes des croquants*

50 J.-Ch. PETITFILS, *Louis XIII*, p. 771.

51 R. MOUSNIER *Fureurs paysannes*, p. 61.

52 M. SERVANTON, "Rétablir l'ordre", p. 6.

53 Mathieu SERVANTON, *Politiques parlementaires de l'émotion populaire: Bordeaux 1635*, in: Serge Dauchy – Hervé Leuwers et al. (eds.), *Les parlementaires, acteurs de la vie, provinciale*, Rennes 2013, pp. 184–203, here p. 202.

54 *Ibidem*, p. 203.

55 R. MOUSNIER, *Fureurs paysannes*, p. 61.

56 J.-Ch. PETITFILS, *Louis XIII*, p. 771.

57 MALEYBASSE, *Une émeute à Agen en 1635: publiée d'après le manuscrit de Maleybasse*, ed. Adolphe MAGEN, 1854, p. 23.

58 J. BASZKIEWICZ, *Richelieu*, p. 325.

59 Cliff DAVIES, *Peasant Revolt in France and England: A Comparison*, *The Agricultural History Review* 21, 1973, vol. 2, pp. 122–134, here p. 122.

60 J.-Ch. PETITFILS, *Louis XIII*, p. 771.

61 Yves Marie BERCÉ, *Revolt and Revolution in Early Modern Europe. An Essay on the History of Political Violence*, Manchester 1987, p. 31.

62 J. BASZKIEWICZ, *Richelieu*, p. 326.

in south-eastern France. They were caused by the imposition of an obligation to deliver grain for the army within the tax paid in kind.⁶³ However, the character of this revolt was not particularly egalitarian because Antoine de Puy, seigneur de la Mothe-La Forest, was chosen as the general of the province and the inhabitants invested dictatorial powers in him.⁶⁴ This fact can confirm the discontent of the upper classes as well and shows their eagerness to gain their own political influence.

According to Jan Błazkiewicz, during these protests “peasants forced the nobility to cooperation, threatening them with plans to bury their mansions or to stop paying their rent (they wanted to use the nobility’s military skills). They did not always succeed. However, the nobility liked to present themselves as the peasants’ defenders against taxes and soldiers’ rapes and they maintained their conviction that state burdens were the reason for the people’s misery. They encouraged tax strikes as well as salt smuggling. They often did not help officials to deal with protesters.”⁶⁵ During the clashes between the insurgent *Croquants* and royalists, even more than two thousand people may have died.⁶⁶ According to Michel Carmona, in the years 1635–1639 the revolts “took place in two-thirds of provinces.”⁶⁷ This indicates that from the moment of the commencement of full French involvement in the Thirty Years’ War revolts were no longer local, as well as becoming more numerous.

In addition, apart from revolts among the lower social classes, other crises which could have contributed to the discontent of different social classes also took place in France in the 1630s. In 1636 Spain launched a major offensive in the north of France within which an army commanded by Jean de Werth marched into Champagne and conquered Corbie, located 120 km from Paris.⁶⁸ According to the historian Lucien Bély, the so-called Corbie year “remains remembered in the collective memory.”⁶⁹ Apart from awareness of the threat of a destroyed capital city, three provinces (Champagne, Picardy, Burgundy) were plundered by the enemy troops.⁷⁰ There were, furthermore, demographic problems, because in the years 1628–1632 and 1636–1638 plague epidemics took place throughout France (which came from Flanders and Germany as well as England and cost two million lives).⁷¹ Therefore, Cardinal Richelieu was not completely responsible for this crisis, but the consequences of his strict fiscal policy merged with difficulties that he had no influence on.

63 J-Ch. PETITFILS, *Louis XIII*, p. 16.

64 Ibidem, p. 17.

65 Jan BASZKIEWICZ, *Historia Francji*, Wrocław 1999, pp. 228–229.

66 J-Ch. PETITFILS, *Louis XIII*, p. 17.

67 M. CARMONA, *La France de Richelieu*, p. 57.

68 *Reprise de la ville Corbie sur les Espagnols en 1636, d’après des documents inédits publiés, avec des notes par M. J. Mancel*, ed. M. J. MANCEL, Paris 1876, p. 18.

69 L. BÉLY, *La France Moderne*, p. 303.

70 Ibidem.

71 Ibidem, p. 300.

After a calmer 1638, another rebellion started in the summer of 1639, namely the *Revolt of the va-nu-pieds* in Normandy.⁷² The revolts took place on a large scale in the southern and central parts of the country. However, when they occurred, with a certain delay, north of Paris, they acquired the most radical dimension. The name “Revolt of the va-nu-pieds” originated from salt pan workers in Lower Normandy, but this movement attracted representatives of different groups from cities such as Rouen, Bayeux, or Caen. The rebellion started near Avranches, caused by rumours about the establishment of a new salt tax called the *gabelle*.⁷³ The intolerable burdens on the people can be considered as the main reason for these incidents. It should be emphasised that the example of Normandy shows how the escalation of the events in different regions was preceded by burdens related to the most important products in a given region. The poem *À la gabelle* indicated the raising of the *gabelle* as a reason for the revolt. According to the historian Madeleine Foissil, the *Revolt of the va-nu-pieds* distinguishes a dimension of the rebellion.⁷⁴

The so-called “army of soreness”, which also included representatives of the nobility as well as the bourgeoisie, consisted of 20 thousand people in the autumn of 1639.⁷⁵ The leader of the peasants was called Jean Nudspieds.⁷⁶ In addition, the situation of the nobility deteriorated as a result of inflation which reduced the real worth of money from rents.⁷⁷ The participation of craftsmen within these rebellions was considerable.⁷⁸ There were also brutal incidents such as those of 1639 in Avranches, where a few churches were robbed, many women raped, and houses plundered.⁷⁹ According to the historian Boris Porschnev, this revolt (according to the documents known to us) was not of an anti-feudal character because castles were not attacked and nor were assaults on richer people noticed.⁸⁰ In addition, when the court offered to arm the bourgeoisie, they did not want to come to the aid of the king.⁸¹

72 Pierre SÉGUIER, *Diaire ou journal du voyage du chancelier Séguier en Normandie après la sédition des Nu-pieds (1639–1640): documents relatifs à ce voyage et à la sédition publiés pour la première fois d'après les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque royale (...)*, ed. Amable FLOQUET, Rouen 1842.

73 Michel CAILLARD, *Recherches sur les soulèvements populaires en Basse-Normandie (1620–1640) et spécialement sur la révolte des Nu-pieds*, Annales de Normandie, 1963, vol. 3, p. 121.

74 *À la Normandie, Diaire, ou Journal du voyage du chancelier Segulier en Normandie, après la sédition des Nu-pieds (1639–1640)*, ed. Amable FLOQUET, Rouen 1842, p. 417.

75 J. BASZKIEWICZ, *Richelieu*, p. 368.

76 Alexandre BIGOT DE MONVILLE, *Mémoires du président Bigot de Monville sur la sédition des nu-pieds et l'interdiction du Parlement de Normandie en 1639*, ed. Charles MÉTÉRIE, Rouen 1876, p. 10.

77 M. CAILLARD, *Recherches sur les soulèvements*, p. 109.

78 M. CARMONA, *La France de Richelieu*, p. 65.

79 *Les notes issues de ce registre sont recopiées dans les Manuscrits de l'érudit avranchinain Pierre Cousin: Manuscrits de Pierre Cousin, t. VII, ms. 178, Archives Municipales d'Avranches, 1751, p. 54.*

80 M. CAILLARD, *Recherches sur les soulèvements*, pp. 79–80.

81 A. BIGOT DE MONVILLE, *Mémoires du président Bigot de Monville sur la sédition des nu-pieds et l'interdiction du Parlement de Normandie en 1639*, p. 18.

It can be concluded that the inhabitants of Normandy were punished more strictly than the participants in the previous risings in the south-east of France.⁸² The parliament of Rouen was suspended, and Parisian officials were seconded there because of the incidents.⁸³ However, the army was billeted in the inhabitants' houses.⁸⁴ In addition, from the summer of 1639 posters related to the revolt were forbidden.⁸⁵ They were appearing as a form of political communication, and they were inspired by the layout of royal orders, but they encouraged those who read them to join the rebellion.⁸⁶ From January 1640 even using words related to the revolt such as "gabelleurs" or "monnopolliers" was banned.⁸⁷ According to Jan Baszkiewicz, Richelieu was afraid of Norman separatism, and therefore the repressive measures taken by the authorities were much more ruthless in this region.⁸⁸ In addition, the cardinal could have been afraid of English activities nearby, which would not be the first time this had occurred in the history of Anglo-French conflicts.⁸⁹ According to the historian Michel Caillard, "*cancellation of taxes was the only idea connecting the members of the va-nu-pieds movement [...]*"; which might have led Richelieu to suspect the possibility of separatist activities in this region.

According to Jean-Christian Petitfils, the incidents from the 1630s had already led in the years 1639–1640 to the reinforcement of royal power by the increased specialisation of state authorities and the application of new rationalised procedures⁹⁰. The frequency of *lits de justice*, for instance, increased.⁹¹ Therefore, the above-mentioned revolts, after they had been defeated, had an impact on the reinforcement of royal power. Ultimately, the income from the direct tax *taille*, which amounted to 40% of total state income in 1639, amounted to 62% nine years later (the year of the Fronde).⁹²

Jan Baszkiewicz claimed that "*mass urban and rural rebellions in the years 1623–1648 created an endemic state of social revolt in France. The recognition of this phenomenon's relevance is common today; however, the assessments are different*".⁹³ In addition, protests took place till the death of Cardinal Richelieu in 1642. The Count of Soissons stood up

82 J-Ch. PETITFILS, *Louis XIII*, p. 11.

83 Ibidem.

84 Ibidem.

85 Brice EVAÏN, *Raconter la révolte: l'exemple des Nu-pieds de Normandie (XVIIe siècle-XVIII siècle)*, Dix-septième siècle 275, 2017, vol. 2, pp. 221–238, here p. 227.

86 *Ordonnance du général Nudpieds*, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Site Richelieu, ms. fr. 3833, August 1639, f. 214.

87 B. EVAÏN, *Raconter la révolte*, p. 228.

88 J. BASZKIEWICZ, *Richelieu*, p. 369.

89 M. CAILLARD, *Recherches sur les soulèvements*, p. 86.

90 J-Ch. PETITFILS, *Louis XIII*, Paris 2008, p. 12.

91 Ibidem.

92 L. BÉLY, *La France moderne*, p. 300.

93 J. BASZKIEWICZ, *Historia Francji*, p. 227.

against him with a small army in 1641, as well as one year later the Marquis of Cinq-Mars (who had previously belonged to the closest circle of royal friends).⁹⁴ It can therefore be concluded that the cardinal's policy constantly led to resistance by different social groups as well as French regions (however, their motives remained dissimilar). A growing number of the revolts started after France became fully involved in the Thirty Years' War.

Cardinal Richelieu partly tried to explain his policy in the work *Traité qui contient la méthode la plus facile et la plus assurée pour convertir ceux qui se sont séparés de l'Église*⁹⁵ regarding conversion to Catholicism. He wrote there "Divine Providence is gracious in that it intends a human to achieve some purpose and leads him there imperceptibly [...]"⁹⁶ According to the French historian Françoise Hildesheimer, we can interpret these words as an attempt to explain his unpopular decisions.⁹⁷

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94 Ibidem, p. 308.

95 Armand Jean DU PLESSIS DE RICHELIEU, *Œuvres théologiques. Tome II. Traité qui contient la méthode la plus facile et la plus assurée pour convertir ceux qui se sont séparés de l'Église*, Paris 1651, p. 1.

96 Ibidem.

97 Françoise HILDESHEIMER, *Les scrupules de Richelieu*, *Journal des Savants*, 2000, vol. 1, p. 122.

