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'Shame on him who allows them to live': The Jacquerie of 1358

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree of PhD

University of Glasgow

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## Abstract

In the eyes of the chroniclers, the Jacquerie of 1358 was the most important peasant revolt in late medieval France. Yet despite this, the uprising has not generated the quality of scholarship that other revolts from the late medieval period have encouraged, such as the Ciompi of 1378 in Florence or the English Peasants' Revolt of 1381. In popular perception, the Jacquerie remains a violent spasmodic riot typical of the so-called 'pre-industrial revolt', itself a model forwarded thirty years ago and never rigorously examined. Rather than focussing on the complexity within the uprising, recent work has concentrated on whether the rebellion was co-opted by elites (a theory that this thesis will debunk); indeed, the last substantial monograph on the subject was Siméon Luce's *Histoire de la Jacquerie* in 1896. Luce's work made use of letters of remission, paid pardons issued by the French crown, to forward a more sympathetic view of the rebels. However, Luce never exploited the documents fully and quoted only occasionally from their narratives. By surveying the remissions systematically, and returning to the full population of documents available, this thesis offers a wholly new view of the revolt — its leadership, its geographical dimensions, duration, organisation and ideology. Moreover, it challenges many old theories about the medieval 'crowd' as mindless, doomed to failure and dominated by the clergy and other elites. In their place, it constructs a new model around communal ties in the medieval village, sophisticated organisation within the revolt itself and participants' identities as the defining factor of the crowd's ideology.

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## Abbreviations

AN	Archives Nationales, Paris.
Bel, <i>Chron.</i>	<i>Chronique de Jean le Bel</i> , ed. J. Viard and E. Déprez, SHF, 317 (Paris, 1904-5), 2 vols.
Birdsall, <i>Venette</i>	<i>The Chronicle of Jean de Venette</i> , ed. R. Newhall, trans. J. Birdsall (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953).
<i>Chron. des règnes</i>	<i>La Chronique des règnes de Jean II et Charles V</i> , ed. R. Delachenal, SHF, 348 (Paris, 1919-20), 4 vols.
<i>Chron. norm.</i>	<i>La Chronique Normande du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle</i> , ed. A. and E. Molinier, SHF, 205 (Paris, 1882).
<i>Chron. premiers Valois</i>	<i>Chronique des quatre premiers Valois</i> , ed. S. Luce, SHF, 109 (Paris, 1862).
Cohn, <i>PP</i>	S. Cohn, <i>Popular Protest in Late Medieval Europe</i> (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2004).
EHR	English Historical Review.
Froissart, <i>Chron.</i>	<i>Les Chroniques de Froissart</i> , ed. S. Luce, SHF, 147 (Paris, 1874), 14 vols.
Lescot, <i>Chron.</i>	<i>La Chronique du continuateur de Richard Lescot</i> , ed. J. Lemoine, SHF (Paris, 1896).
Luce, <i>Jacquerie</i>	S. Luce, <i>Histoire de la Jacquerie d'après des documents inédits</i> , first published 1859, 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition (Paris, 1894).
SHF	<i>Société de l'histoire de France</i> , 366 vols.
Sumption, <i>Fire</i>	J. Sumption, <i>The Hundred Years War, v. 2, Trial by Fire</i> (London: Faber & Faber, 1999).
Venette, <i>Chron.</i>	<i>Chronique latine de Guillaume de Nangis de 1113 et 1300 avec les continuations de cette chronique de 1300 à 1368</i> , ed. H. Géraud, SHF, 35 (Paris, 1843), 2 vols.



## 1 – INTRODUCTION

Isolated, he may be a cultivated individual; in a crowd, he is barbarian – that is, a creature acting by instinct. He possesses the spontaneity, the violence, the ferocity and also the enthusiasm and heroism of primitive beings whom he further tends to resemble by the facility with which he allows himself to be impressed by words and images ... An individual in a crowd is a grain of sand amid other grains of sand, which the wind stirs up at will.<sup>1</sup>

So wrote Gustave Le Bon in his classic study *The Crowd, A Study of the Popular Mind* of 1896. This image of the crowd held sway over the fields of both history and psychology for a considerable time: a revolt represents spontaneous, barbaric, primitive violence. Worse, the individuals within the movement were powerless to resist – the ‘contagion’ of the barbarism within the crowd was unstoppable. Those caught up in the riot lack control over their destiny – actions are instinctive rather than planned. The crowd gives in to its primal instincts and with it loses their capacity for reason: ‘[t]he laws of logic have no action on crowds’.<sup>2</sup> Within the group, all individualism is lost and ‘impressed by words and images’ rebels possessed the same mindset.

Le Bon’s theories were attacked by social psychologists who followed on. Early challenges came from Floyd Allport and Sigmund Freud, amongst others, who sought to re-establish the importance of the individual within the movement. To them, crowd action was the product of separate individuals acting in a similar fashion : “the individual in the crowd behaves just as he would behave alone only more so”.<sup>3</sup> However, crowds are no more the product of a

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<sup>1</sup> G. Le Bon, *The Crowd, A Study of the Popular Mind* (London: Benn, 1896), p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>3</sup> See F. Allport, *Social Psychology* (Boston, Mass: Houghton Mifflin, 1924).

group of heroic individuals than they are an expression of a primitive 'group mind'. Rather, a combination of the identities of the participants come together to form the crowd's ideology. Later psychologists forwarded Emergent Norm Theory – the crowd is governed by rules that emerge during the movement.<sup>4</sup> Current trends have developed this theory into what is known as a 'social identity model', whereby the identities of the participants govern the norms that emerge.<sup>5</sup> Social psychologists now stress that crowds are melting pots of ideology from which sophisticated social agendas are formed and identities expressed.<sup>6</sup>

Historians such as George Rudé and E.P. Thompson have echoed that sentiment.<sup>7</sup> Revolts are complex organisms, propelled by the ideologies and identities of the participants who shape the agenda. In any conception of the crowd, the insurgents themselves require the focus. Rather than acting with the spontaneity of primal instincts, the identity and ideas of the mob are the crucial factors in creating the dynamics that propel the movement.

Successful challenges to assumptions that the crowd was a mindless mob have led historians to theorise that the 'complex crowd' must only be a modern innovation. Charles Tilly argued that developments in European culture, most notably urbanisation, industrialisation and the growth of the state, led to an

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<sup>4</sup> See R. Turner & L. Killian, *Collective Behaviour* (London : Prentice-Hall, 1987).

<sup>5</sup> See S. Reicher, 'The St Paul's 'riot'', *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 14 (1984), pp. 1-21.

<sup>6</sup> For an excellent discussion of various psychologists' views on the crowd and a summary of the current thinking on the subject, see S. Reicher, *The Psychology of Crowd Dynamics* (in press).

<sup>7</sup> See G. Rudé, *The Crowd in History: a Study of Popular Disturbances in France and England, 1730-1848* (New York: Wiley, 1964); and 'The London Mob of the eighteenth century', *The Historical Journal*, 2 (1959), pp. 1-18; E.P. Thompson 'The moral economy of the English crowd in the eighteenth century', in *Past and Present* 50, (1971), pp. 76-136. However, while arguing against a simple characterisation of the crowd, they still champion the food riot – the prototypical 'pre-industrial' revolt – as the major form of protest, although they do not demonstrate that this was the case.

evolution in the nature of revolts.<sup>8</sup> These ‘industrial-era’ revolts are described as more complex, distant from the spasmodic riot of the so-called ‘pre-industrial revolt’.<sup>9</sup> For Tilly, it was a given that popular movements prior to the birth of nation state were less sophisticated than their modern counterpart. For protest before the Industrial Revolution, Le Bon’s vision of mindless mobs remained largely intact.

Of course, this model has been challenged. The work of N.Z. Davis, and before her Yves-Marie Bercé, have stressed that in their respective periods the riot was in fact a far more textured and complex organism than Tilly’s typology suggests.<sup>10</sup> Each historian in turn has demonstrated that their chosen rebellion was as sophisticated as any that followed. However, instead of dismissing Tilly’s generalisation about the pre-industrial revolt from the vocabulary of the historian, each new work has served only to push the moment these ‘complex’ popular movements devolved backwards in time in the public perception. For example, Davis’s work, which stressed the importance of ‘leaders’ and ideology, have been taken as indicative of developments new to the sixteenth century. The image of the medieval revolt as spasmodic and destructive remains prevalent in the textbooks and surveys that cover the late middle ages.

The only syntheses, until recently, came to conclusions similar to Tilly – Michel Mollat and Philippe Wolff’s *Ongles, Bleues and Jacques* (translated into English

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<sup>8</sup> C. Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 990-1992* (Oxford : Basil Blackwell, 1992) and C. Tilly, ‘How Protest Modernized in France, 1845-55’, *The Dimension of Qualitative Research*, ed. B. Aydelotte *et al.* (Princeton, 1972), pp. 192-256.

<sup>9</sup> This term has found favour in many works – Rudé devotes a whole chapter to ‘The Pre-Industrial Revolt’ in *The Crowd in History*. The term itself implies a sharp shift from before industrialisation to afterwards, of which there is no evidence.

<sup>10</sup> See N.Z. Davis, ‘The Rites of Violence: Religious Riot in Sixteenth Century France’ and ‘Strikes and Salvation in Lyon’, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1975); Y.-M. Bercé, *History of Peasant Revolts*, tr. A. Whitmore (Cambridge: Polity, 1990).

as *Popular Revolutions of the Late Middle Ages*) described the medieval revolt as a violent, conservative backlash caused by poverty and misery.<sup>11</sup> Guy Fourquin's *Anatomy of Popular Rebellion* followed suit – conflicts were conservative, harking back towards a supposed golden age.<sup>12</sup> These historical works also stressed other old ideas tied to this paradigm, for instance, that crowds contained a substantial proportion of 'elites': Fourquin devotes a whole chapter to this theme.

Individually, however, there has been excellent work, particularly on the Ciompi of Florence in 1378 and the English Peasant's Revolt of 1381, that serves to give us a more textured survey of medieval violence, and challenged these images of the barbaric pre-industrial riot. Richard Trexler's studies, for example, have placed an emphasis on the establishment of identity within the crowd, while Sam Cohn has shown that the leaders came exclusively from within the rebellion, not outside.<sup>13</sup> The English Peasants' Revolt of 1381 has been studied from every angle, with interpretations ranging from high politics to localised microstudies: for example, Rodney Hilton and Chris Dyer stressed the organisation and sophistication of the peasantry.<sup>14</sup> This work has helped recreate the Great Rising as a subject worthy of further study.

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<sup>11</sup> M. Mollat and P. Wolff, *Popular Revolutions of the Late Middle Ages*, tr. A. Lyttonselle (London: Allen & Unwin, 1975).

<sup>12</sup> G. Fourquin, *The Anatomy of Popular Rebellion in the Middle Ages*, tr. A. Chesters (Oxford: North-Holland Publishing Co., 1978).

<sup>13</sup> For example, R. Trexler, 'Neighbours and Comrades: The Revolutionaries of Florence, 1378', *Social Analysis*, 14 (December 1983), pp. 53-105 and 'Follow the Flag: The Ciompi Revolt Seen from the Streets', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 46 (1984), pp. 357-92; S. Cohn, *The Labouring Classes in Renaissance Florence*, (London: Academic Press, 1980).

<sup>14</sup> See R.H. Hilton, 'Popular Movements at the end of the fourteenth century', in R. H. Hilton, *Class Conflicts and the Crisis of Feudalism* (London: Temple Press, 1985) and also R.H. Hilton, *Bond Men Made Free* (London: Temple Press, 1973); C. Dyer, 'The Social and Economic Background to the Rural Revolt of 1381', in *The English Rising of 1381*, ed. T.H. Aston and R.H. Hilton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). For an example of the range of scholarship encouraged by the Peasants' Revolt, see collected other articles in *The English Rising of 1381*. For related scholarship on the relation between lords and peasants in England, see E.B.

With the attention lavished upon the two most memorable revolts in late medieval Italy and England, the same emphasis could be expected for late medieval France's most important revolt. Taking its name from the *Jacques Bonhommes* (the slang term for the peasantry), the *Jacquerie* began on 28 May 1358, when the garrison at Saint-Leu d'Ésserent was attacked by peasants from the surrounding area, and from there spread quickly across the north of the country, stretching as far west as Rouen and as far east as the borders of Bar.<sup>15</sup> Yet within two weeks, this great revolt had collapsed: on 9 June, Parisian troops (who themselves had rebelled under the leadership of Étienne Marcel)<sup>16</sup> and men from Meaux were crushed by the crown's forces when attempting to destroy the fortress known as the Marché on the other bank of the Seine.<sup>17</sup> The victorious men-at-arms laid waste to the town that had harboured the force, before beginning on a campaign of destruction throughout the countryside. This counter-offensive effectively destroyed many villages involved in the *Jacquerie*. The next day, 10 June, a large force of Jacques, led by one Guillaume Cale, was defeated outside Clermont by the army of Charles of Navarre, whose men then also turned their attention to the peasants in the surrounding area. These great noble counter-offensives (and several on a smaller scale) swept up the remaining pockets of resistance over the next two weeks. While the *Jacquerie* may have been brief, its impact was undoubted: the chronicler Jean le Bel posited that the

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Fryde, *Peasants and Landlords in Medieval England, c. 1380-1525* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).

<sup>15</sup> The size of the *Jacquerie* has been underestimated by many historians. The revolt will be mapped extensively in Chapter 4, in the section 'Mapping the Revolt'.

<sup>16</sup> The Parisian revolt of 1358 will be discussed in 'Marcel' in Chapter 3. This thesis will argue that the two rebellions were entirely distinct.

<sup>17</sup> Most historians have accepted that Jacques were involved in the Parisian offensive against the fortress. This argument will be refuted in Chapter 3, specifically the section on 'The Attack on the Marché'.

Jacques 'would have killed and destroyed everything had God by his grace not sent help, for which each good man must give thanks'.<sup>18</sup>

Yet unlike the *Ciompi* or the Peasants' Revolt, the Jacquerie remains an unreconstructed example of the pre-industrial revolt in the historiography. For Mollat and Wolff the 'movement as a whole was as incoherent as it was spontaneous'.<sup>19</sup> By describing the movement as mindless and irrational, the Jacquerie has been dismissed as unimportant. André Leguai states that 'it is not even the most serious movement of the time which interests us'.<sup>20</sup> Having already been convinced that the Jacquerie is nothing but a messy riot, he wondered how 'a blazing fire of fifteen days' can be compared with longer struggles like the *Tuchinerie* in the Languedoc, which may have lasted over twenty years.<sup>21</sup> It is in this manner that the movement has been ignored: textbooks like R.H.C. Davis's *A History of Medieval Europe* and Martin Scott's *Medieval Europe* ignore it all together, and Georges Duby's *France in the Middle Ages* devotes only a couple of lines to the rebellion.<sup>22</sup> Yet unquestionably the Jacquerie was the most important revolt in medieval France, at least in the eyes of the contemporaries. There are over twenty accounts of the Jacquerie, by chroniclers in France, Flanders, England and Italy; no other single revolt can claim such coverage. Only eight chroniclers record the Parisian 'Revolt of the Hammermen' in 1382, and only fourteen English chroniclers reported the great English Peasants' Revolt of 1381. For the *Tuchinerie*, we only

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<sup>18</sup> Bel, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 257, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 152.

<sup>19</sup> Mollat and Wolff, *Popular Revolutions*, p. 123.

<sup>20</sup> A. Leguai, 'Les révoltes rurales dans le royaume de France, du milieu du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle à la fin du XV<sup>e</sup>', *Le Moyen Age*, 88 (1982) p. 58.

<sup>21</sup> Leguai, 'Les révoltes rurales', pp. 58-59. References to the rebel bands known as Tuchins start as early as 1363 and continue until their supposed destruction in 1384.

<sup>22</sup> R.H.C. Davis, *A History of Medieval Europe* (Harlow: Longman, 1970); M. Scott, *Medieval Europe* (London: Longmans, 1964); G. Duby, *France in the Middle Ages 980-1460*, trans. J. Vale (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p. 279.

have a short paragraph or two by the king's chronicler at St. Denis, far removed from the events and long after the revolt had been suspended.

Of course, the word jacquerie itself has survived to us as synonymous with a bloody rising of the peasantry, which offers a good indicator of how the revolt is preserved in historical memory. Napoleon was said to have responded to the request to arm the people by stating that he 'did not wish to be the leader of a jacquerie'.<sup>23</sup> Émile Zola commented that:

Always, from century to century, the same exasperation bursts forth, and a 'jacquerie' arms the labourers with their pitchforks and their scythes, in which state they remain until they die.<sup>24</sup>

This depiction of a typical 'jacquerie' is indicative of how the original rising was perceived: violent, manic and spontaneous. It is a madness that overtakes the peasantry rather than an expression of social grievances.

This is because of the chroniclers' portrayal of the Jacquerie, particularly the lingering image of the Jacques is provided to us by Jean le Bel,<sup>25</sup> and later repeated and made famous by Froissart,<sup>26</sup> which reinforces the modern prejudice:

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<sup>23</sup> Quoted in E. Littré, *Dictionnaire de la Langue Française* (Paris, 1863), reference for 'Jacquerie', pp. 155-6.

<sup>24</sup> Zola, *La Terre* (1877), Premier Partie, Chapitre V, trans. D. Parmée, *The Earth* (London: Penguin, 1980), p. 91.

<sup>25</sup> The *Chronique de Jean le Bel* was written contemporary to the revolt. Jean le Bel himself was a canon of Saint-Lambert in Liège, although he still had strong connections to secular society: in 1327, le Bel became involved in military action against the Scots, and Auguste Molinier reports that he 'was always in the entourage of nobles'. A. Molinier, *Les sources de l'histoire de France dès origines aux guerres d'Italie* (1494), vol. 4, *Les Valois, 1328-1461* (Paris, 1904), pp. 4-5. The best discussion of chronicle accounts of the Jacquerie is M.-T. de Medieros, *Jacques et Chroniqueurs, une étude comparée de récits contemporains relatant la Jacquerie de 1358* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1979). While an excellent discussion of the relevant accounts, its analysis of the Jacquerie, which uses the chronicles as its base, is necessarily limited and differs little from traditional views of the rebellion: it is intended as a study of the reportage of the revolt, rather than the revolt itself.

<sup>26</sup> Jean Froissart's account of the Jacquerie comes from his first book which, as Molinier notes, 'was copied, which Froissart honestly admits at the beginning, from Jean le Bel's *chronique*, with some additions and rehandlings'. There is only one significant difference between Froissart's account and Jean le Bel's, and that will be discussed in Chapter 3, specifically 'The Marché of Meaux'. Molinier, *Les sources de l'histoire*, vol IV, pp. 5-14.

Soon afterwards, around Pentecost, a mysterious affliction broke out in many parts of the realm of France, in the regions of Beauvais, Amiens, Brie, Perthois, the Île de France and Valois as far as Soissons. Some rural people had assembled in their villages but nowhere with a leader.... Thus these leaderless people gathered together, burnt, and robbed everything and murdered gentlemen, noble ladies and their children; they raped ladies and virgins without any mercy whatsoever.... Certainly among Christians, even Saracens, there has never been such uncontrolled, diabolical madness.<sup>27</sup>

Jean le Bel and Froissart also include stories of the atrocities to lend gravitas to their accounts: for example, a knight was roasted on a spit, before the Jacques 'wished to force feed [the noble ladies and their children] the roasted flesh of their father and husband'. Other chroniclers add to this grizzly image. The *Chronique de règnes des Jean II et Charles V* claims that the Jacques 'killed all the gentlemen they could find and did the same to gentle ladies and many of the children with madness beyond measure'.<sup>28</sup> The continuator of Richard Lescot's chronicle (the royal chronicler of Saint-Denis) is similarly scathing: '[a]s this pack of rabid dogs went about, coming and going, they single-mindedly devoted themselves to destroying Senlis, Ermenonville, Thierry and razing the castles nearby to the ground and attacking the castle of Beaumont-sur-Oize'. Lescot also places emphasis on their murder of children, even those still 'sweetly suckling'.<sup>29</sup>

Yet this is not the only impression the chroniclers give of the Jacquerie; even Richard Lescot attributes reason to the rebellion:

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<sup>27</sup> Bel, *Chron.*, v.2, p.257, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 151.

<sup>28</sup> *Chron. des règnes*, v.1, p. 180-1, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 167.

<sup>29</sup> Lescot, *Chron.*, p. 126-7, trans. S. Cohn, *PP*, p. 170. The continuator of Richard Lescot's chronicle was, like Lescot before him, a monk at St. Denis. Molinier suggests the continuation was written around 1390. Molinier, *Les sources de l'histoire*, vol IV, pp.19-20.



since the plundering was happening everywhere and no one was around to oppose the brigands and enemy troops, the fields now lay barren. As a result, on 27 May 1358 the peasants rose up ...<sup>30</sup>

Jean de Venette extends more sympathy towards the Jacques:

the peasants living near Saint-Leu-d'Ésserent and Clermont in the diocese of Beauvais, seeing the wrongs and oppression inflicted on them on every side and seeing that the nobles gave them no protection but rather oppressed them as heavily as the enemy, rose and took arms against the nobles of France.<sup>31</sup>

In addition, chroniclers saw complexity within the revolt. According to Jean de Venette, the revolt began with a certain righteousness, a 'zeal for justice', but 'since their lords were not defending them but oppressing them, [they] turned themselves to base and execrable deeds'.<sup>32</sup> The *Chronique de Quatres Premiers Valois* describes how the leadership of the Jacques convinced the followers to take a more reasoned path and introduced order into what began as chaos.<sup>33</sup> These tempered views condemned the rebels for their brutality but simultaneously accredited them with a degree of organisation and saw their cause as justifiable.

Recently, the value of chronicles to the historian has been questioned. Fourquin, for example, described them as useful primarily as a guide to class prejudices (by focussing on 'what they gloss over or alter'), and urged turning to

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<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 263, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 76. The chronicle was written sometime before 1365, and was probably the closest to the Jacquerie in terms of geography and perhaps ideology – Jean shows sympathy with the peasants, although he certainly does not approve of their actions. There is some debate over the exact identity of the author, but he certainly was a Carmelite friar from Venette, near Compiègne, in the supposed 'heartland' of the revolt. See Cohn, *PP*, p.171 for a short discussion.

<sup>32</sup> Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 263, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 77.

<sup>33</sup> *Chron. premiers Valois*, p. 72, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 159. The chronicler was an anonymous Norman cleric, at one point *familier* of Philippe d' Alençon, Archbishop of Rouen (1359-71), but composed the chronicle sometime between 1397-9. Based primarily on the *Chroniques des règnes Jean II et Charles V*, it was 'detailed and original for the wars of Normandy and also for the Parisian incidents', including the Jacquerie. Molinier, *Les sources de l'histoire*, vol. 4, p. 25.

'more reliable' data for discussion of revolts themselves.<sup>34</sup> As is evident in the passages quoted above, chroniclers did not remain objective about a movement like the Jacquerie. There can be serious contradictions between accounts on crucial information that one might expect historical accounts to be consistent upon.<sup>35</sup> Outside problems with the accuracy of their reportage, there are problems of intertextuality (as evidenced by Froissart's update of le Bel's original account): can we speak of chronicles as distinct narratives when they borrow heavily from each other? The picture is further complicated by the existence of 'un véritable laboratoire historique', the monastery of Saint-Denis, which produced not only the crown-sanctioned *Grandes Chroniques de France* but numerous other histories (like the work of Richard Lescot), and influenced many of the works that have survived to us.<sup>36</sup> Yet we should not discount chronicles simply because they are problematic. In the case of the Jacquerie, the chroniclers' personal and subjective accounts give us a sense of how the revolt was experienced by its contemporaries, and offer the only interpretations of the participants' motivations within the source material. Inconsistency between chroniclers can raise questions about the revolt, with one set of chroniclers fervently critical of the movement, and another more sympathetic to the rebels.<sup>37</sup>

However, most modern historians have simply concurred with the former group (particularly le Bel and Froissart), ignoring the more balanced accounts of the likes of Jean de Venette. As mentioned, Mollat and Wolff's

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<sup>34</sup> Fourquin, *Anatomy of Popular Rebellion*, p. 162.

<sup>35</sup> Probably the best example is the attack on the Marché of Meaux, which Froissart claims Jacques took part in, but no other chronicler does the same. This will be discussed in Chapter 3.

<sup>36</sup> Molinier, *Les sources de l'histoire*, vol. 4, p. 25. Also quoted in D. Hay, *Annalists and Historians, Western Historiography from the Eighth to the Eighteenth Centuries* (London: Methuen, 1977), which provides a good summary of the late medieval chronicle tradition and the influence of St. Denis, pp. 63-87.

<sup>37</sup> For a discussion of the usage of chronicles in the study of popular revolt, see S. Cohn, *Lust for Liberty* (London: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 14-20.

synthesis emphasises the incoherence and violence of the Jacquerie, contrasting it with sophistication of the so-called 'cluster' between 1378-82, including the Ciompi and the English Peasants' Revolt.<sup>38</sup> These latter revolts are identified as complex reactions to the change in social conditions following the Black Death; the Jacquerie instead was likened to the hysterical knee-jerk reactions of the Flagellants and the persecution of the Jews that immediately followed the first strike of the plague. This acceptance of the revolt as a violent, spasmodic mess was most stridently expressed by Jean Flammermont's influential article written in 1879.<sup>39</sup> Flammermont's model was generally in agreement with le Bel and others whose 'rabid dogs' and 'execrable deeds' paved the way for the popular meaning of the term *Jacquerie*, even if he gave some credence to the views of the sympathetic chroniclers. For example, he based his picture of Guillaume Cale on the account from the *Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois*.<sup>40</sup> Otherwise, according to Flammermont, Jacques were essentially mindless. In distinguishing between the uprising in Paris and the Jacquerie, Flammermont suggests that the peasantry were too crude to have been part of such a complex political struggle:

That supposes a plot and by consequence that the men were capable of reason, directed by intelligent leaders. We find nothing like this within the Jacquerie; the insurgents were the gross peasants, without education, without instruction.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Mollat and Wolff entitled their chapter on 1378-82 as 'The Years of Revolution', pp. 138-211, with a conscious glance forward to the 1848, the original Year of Revolutions. For a discussion of the misleading nature of this claim, and the lack of evidence suggesting these years to be a distinct 'cluster', see Cohn, *Lust for Liberty* (London: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 225-7.

<sup>39</sup> J. Flammermont, 'La Jacquerie en Beauvaisis', *Revue Historique*, 9 (1879), pp. 123-144.

<sup>40</sup> Flammermont details that 'Guillame Karle ... was a man of great stature, remarkable for his beauty and intelligence ... he recognised immediately that the Jacques were indisciplined brutes and refused to command them, but they threatened him with death and he had to accept', Flammermont, 'La Jacquerie en Beauvaisis', p. 140. The *Chronique des Quatre Premiers Valois* describes the same. Flammermont also records that Cale was aided by a Hospitaller, a detail only mentioned in that chronicle.

<sup>41</sup> Flammermont, 'La Jacquerie en Beauvaisis', p. 127.

Flammermont's article responded to an earlier attempt to present a more humanised view of the revolt, in line with these other chronicle reports. Some twenty years earlier, Siméon Luce's *Histoire de la Jacquerie* forwarded a new view of the violence, one more sympathetic to the peasants.<sup>42</sup> Concentrating on the causes of revolt, Luce portrayed the Jacques as motivated by a series of failures by the nobility to preserve order and to protect its communities. Instead of wild animals, Luce gave the peasants reason.

Although Luce provided the last thorough analysis of the Jacques, a couple of modifications to his argument have been proposed since. Building on Luce's work, Raymond Cazelles suggested that the Jacquerie was not, in fact, a peasant revolt at all.<sup>43</sup> Rather, he argued that the Jacquerie was made up of a combination of rural artisans, townsmen and the clergy. The presence of minor functionaries meant this could not be a rebellion against royal power. He also believed that the organisation and planning of some of the Jacques' assaults was such that it would require outside intervention – Cazelles drew on Luce's thesis, and suggested that the provost of merchants, Étienne Marcel, may have instigated the whole revolt. He then theorised that the revolt was set into motion before 28 May, and that the rising of the Jacques was a premeditated attack on the nobles' fortifications as part of a larger campaign for power by Marcel.

David Bessen's 'The Jacquerie: class war or co-opted rebellion?'<sup>44</sup> used Cazelles' assumptions to further another theory. Assuming Cazelles to be right about the socio-economic makeup of the Jacques, and that the revolt, to use

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<sup>42</sup> S. Luce, *Histoire de la Jacquerie d'après des documents inédits*, first published 1859, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Paris, 1894).

<sup>43</sup> See R. Cazelles, 'The Jacquerie', in *The English Rising of 1381*, ed. Aston and Hilton 'the rich found themselves side-by side with the poor, the royal official with the lord's subject', p. 77.

<sup>44</sup> D. Bessen, 'The Jacquerie: Class War or Co-Opted Rebellion?', *Journal of Medieval History*, 11 (1985), pp. 43-59.

Bessen's own term, was a co-opted rebellion, he argued that Charles of Navarre was more likely to have directed it than Étienne Marcel. The Jacquerie was instigated in an attempt to destabilise the crown's faltering control of the region, creating conditions in which Navarre could make substantial gains. The Navarrese forces crushed the Jacques only when it is clear to Charles that they could no longer be controlled.

Neither of these arguments have proved convincing, but both are at least attempts to describe complexity within the violence. However, they place emphasis on outside forces providing organisation and direction to the movement, rather than from within the rebellion itself. Their beliefs stem from a prejudicial assumption: that such organisation was beyond the peasants' abilities.

Luce used chronicles but went beyond them, building his study upon analysis of letters of remission, and on his groundwork (and his printed examples) Cazelles and Bessen built their studies. Letters of remission, paid pardons issued by the crown, detail the crimes and pleas of innocence of several hundred rebels and rebel communities from the summer of 1358, including Jacques and followers of Étienne Marcel. There are almost two hundred remissions issued for Jacques alone, containing the names, locations and actions of insurgents; when we include remissions for nobles involved in the repression and urban rebels, that number swells to well over two hundred.

Yet Luce, Cazelles and Bessen barely scratched the surface of a source that offers another layer of meaning, as well as specific evidence, concerning the revolt. Rather than use this mass of documents to find insight into the insurgents of the revolt, the narratives of scattered remissions have been used sparingly to

fill in background details of grand political conspiracies. The unsystematic use of these remissions has produced images of the Jacquerie that a more comprehensive use of them could dispel. Undoubtedly, the anecdotal evidence they provide is useful, but Luce provided full transcriptions for a small sample of these documents – a fact which subsequent historians of the Jacquerie either did not recognise or failed to point out. Without going back to the original documents, Cazelles and Bessen continued in this manner, apparently assuming that the remissions published by Luce were the entire set of such documents. The potential now remains for a wide-ranging survey of these remissions, complemented by the new emphasis upon the complexity of the crowd. After introducing the letters of remission, this thesis will undertake that task: first by deconstructing the recent arguments that the Jacquerie was a co-opted rebellion; second, we will establish the basics of the revolt and the retaliation; third, the composition of the rebels will be examined; finally, we will create a new model of how the revolt worked. The Jacquerie deserves the same level of in-depth analysis that has been conferred on other revolts like the Ciompi and the Peasants' Revolt of 1381.

## 2 – REMISSIONS: FORM AND FUNCTION

The series of the *registres du Trésor des chartes* conserved in the Archives Nationale runs from 1302, during Philippe le Bel's reign (JJ 35), until 1568 (JJ 226). Written in either French or Latin, these registers represent a broad spectrum of the documents issued by French royal chancery from the later Middle Ages. They include the highest political action, like the granting of privileges to the *bonnes villes*, alongside pardons issued to common thieves. Michel François, in his brief 'Notes sur lettres de rémission transcrites dans les registres du Trésor des chartes', identified eight categories of document contained within the registers: *ordonnances*, letters of *anoblissement*, letters of *naturalité*, *amortissements*, *concessions* or *confirmations* of *privèleges*, letters of *abolition* and letters of *remission*.<sup>45</sup> It is the last of these categories that contains the most information for the historian interested in the Jacquerie.

Of the ninety-five thousand documents contained within the *registre du Trésor des chartes*, over fifty-three thousand are letters of remission.<sup>46</sup> When we consider that there are virtually no remissions issued until 1350, then the percentage of documents that were remissions in the later registers was much higher. In the early registers, JJ 36 to 49, which cover 1302 to 1314, for example, only seventeen of the 2,850 documents are remissions (0.6%). By

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<sup>45</sup> M. François, 'Note sur les lettres de rémission transcrites dans les registres du Trésor des chartes', *Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes*, 102 (1942), pp. 317-24. For a brief discussion of fourteenth century remissions, see P. Texier, 'La rémission au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle : significations et fonctions', in *La Faute, la répression et le pardon*, v. I of *Actes du 107<sup>e</sup> Congrès national sociétés savantes, Brest 1982* (Paris: C.T.H.S., 1984), pp. 193-202, although it is only a basic typology of the types of document issued.

<sup>46</sup> Remissions can be further subdivided into three categories: 'pardons', issued when the supplicant witnessed the crime but did not participate; 'abolitions', where the legal proceedings have yet to start against the individual who obtains grace, and true 'remissions'. The distinction is not made clear by the documents themselves, and will not be used here. N.Z. Davis, *Fiction in the Archives. Pardon Tales and their Tellers* (Cambridge: Polity, 1987), p. 153.

JJ236, however, which covers the years 1523-24, 614 of 640 documents are remissions (96%).

A letter of remission is a pardon granted by the crown to an appellant. The crown either quashed or reduced the punishment originally inflicted (which may either be imprisonment or a collective punishment issued to a community, like a fine). On most occasions, the pardon contained an explanation of the events leading up to its issue: sometimes a plea for clemency on account of the age or hardship of an individual, but most often a description of how the individual was innocent (or less culpable) of the crime he had been originally punished for. A royal notary and clerk prepared a draft of the document with the supplicant or people on behalf of them. The letter was then recorded on parchment, and then transcribed into the royal chancery records (the *JJ series*).<sup>47</sup> Remissions had to be paid for. Chancery letters were categorised, and the cost was dependent on which particular category they fell into; a letter of remission was recorded as a *charte*. The cost of remissions was theoretically constant between the fourteenth century and the early seventeenth century: 3 *livres* (60 *sous*), split between the crown and the notary and wax-melter involved in the document's creation.<sup>48</sup> In reality, however, the price would be higher: references to additional taxes upon remissions suggest that there were hefty surcharges payable to the crown.<sup>49</sup> By the 1550s, the average remission would cost two months wages of an unskilled labourer, although in certain cases the fees were

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<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid.*, p. 153.

<sup>49</sup> B. Geremek, *The Margins of Society in Late Medieval Paris*, trans J. Birrell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 240. Geremek makes reference to a document issued in 1400 where the king complains he has not been receiving the six *sous* tax on remissions, because it had been withheld by local officials.



waived for those who could not afford it.<sup>50</sup> Luce's sample of remissions represents a particularly expensive brand of remission: to have the remission recorded in the royal chancery – the JJ series – incurred an additional charge.<sup>51</sup>

All letters of remission within the *registres du Trésor des chartes* were issued in the name of the crown.<sup>52</sup> The invocation of the king or regent's name was formalised and appears the same in all the documents; in the majority of the examples used in thesis they begin 'Charles, eldest son of the King of France, regent of the realm, duke of Normandy and dauphin of Vienne'.<sup>53</sup> Often this was shortened to just 'Charles aisne etc.'. From here, the documents had a standard opening clause, 'Let it be known to all present and future...'<sup>54</sup> before giving the name of the supplicant or supplicants and detailing the actual pardon itself. The end of the remissions were also formalised, giving the place of issue and the date; for example: 'Issued in Paris, the year of grace 1358 in the month of September'.<sup>55</sup> The document was then finished with 'par le monsieur le regent' (and often 'et son conseil'), and the signature of the notary who created the document.

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<sup>50</sup> Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*, p. 154.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*, p. 145.

<sup>52</sup> Remissions were not solely the preserve of the Valois monarchs in this period. We do see examples issued by the dukes of Brittany and the vicomtes of Turenne, amongst others, over the course of the late middle ages. See M. Naisset, 'Brittany and the French Monarchy in the Sixteenth Century: The Evidence of the Letters of Remission', *French History*, 17, n.4, p. 425-439 (2004) and P. Flandin-Blety, 'Lettres de remission des vicomtes de Turenne aux XIV<sup>ème</sup> et XV<sup>ème</sup> siècles', *Mémoires de la société pour l'histoire du droit et des institutions des anciens pays bourguignons, comtois et romands* (1988), pp. 124-143.

<sup>53</sup> In the French remissions, this is 'Charles, aisne filz du roy de France, regent le royaume, duc de Normandie et dalphin de Viennois'. In the infrequent Latin remissions, this is written 'Karolus, regis Francorum primogenitus, regnum regens, dux Normannie et dalphinus Viennois'

<sup>54</sup> Again, in the Latin texts 'notum facimus universis, presentibus et futuris....'.

<sup>55</sup> In French, the clause is worded 'Donné à Paris, l'an grace de mil CCCLVIII, ou moys de septembre'. In Latin documents, the equivalent is 'Datum Parisius, anno domino MCCCLVII, mense marcii'.

These notaries held responsibility over the final form of these documents.<sup>56</sup> Both the supplicant's story and the crown's offer of grace needed transcription in a form acceptable to the courts. That meant changing the dictated version from dialect to standardised French or Latin, but more importantly, selecting appropriate formulas and phrases to describe the crime, and the grace the supplicant received. These formulas identified the whole range of 'criminal behaviour' from murder or theft to grand political conspiracies and treason.<sup>57</sup> With variations dependent on the individual notary, we would expect remissions of the same period that referred to a particular type of offense to appear broadly similar in the final documents.<sup>58</sup> In applying the crown's vocabulary onto these narratives, the notaries exercised considerable power on the form which the pardon took.

Rather than simply rubber-stamping successful pardons, the crown often set the agenda for the production of these documents. Remissions were regularly issued as part of a royal entry into a town, publically demonstrating the crown's mercy;<sup>59</sup> in the case of the Jacquerie and Marcel's revolt, a general amnesty was proclaimed in the first instance, and remissions issued to those who felt excluded

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<sup>56</sup> For a discussion of the role of the notary in the production of these documents, see Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*, pp. 18-23. While Davis does find the notary to be important, she argues that remissions have 'a variety about them that seems impossible to attribute merely to the talents of a limited number of notarial hands'; instead, Davis argues that the supplicant is a major factor in shaping the wording of the pardon.

<sup>57</sup> For a discussion of the importance of stereotypes, see C. Gauvard, *'De grace especial': crime, état et société en France à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Paris, : Publications de la Sorbonne, 1991), pg. 198-209. Gauvard's conclusion is that these stereotypes of *grand criminalité* were far removed from the reality of crime; this thesis will argue that the stereotypes themselves can actually help us get closer to the reality of how revolts were viewed.

<sup>58</sup> There were many different notaries whose signatures appeared at the bottom of these documents, but for the Jacquerie, all use the same vocabulary that will be described later in this chapter. There are only minor differences in style between notaries, and the terminology remains consistent: for example, G. de Montagu preferred variations on 'les effroiz, commocions, assemblées estoient des genz du plat pais contre les nobles' (for example, AN, JJ86, f. 147, nos. 421, 422), whereas J. Douhen used 'les genz du plat pais se esmeurent et firent plusiers effroiz et commocions contre les nobles' (for examples, AN, JJ90, f. 151, no. 294).

<sup>59</sup> For discussion, see L. Bryant, *The King and the City in the Parisian Royal Entry Ceremony: Politics, Art and Ritual in the Renaissance* (Geneva: Librairie Droz S.A., 1986), pp. 24-6.

from it. Indeed, the very process of issuing a pardon was an active intrusion on the part of the crown into the administration of justice. Through these documents, loyal subjects could be rewarded and errant subjects punished (through fines and confiscations of property). Remissions could be granted provisionally on payment of a charge or completion of a pilgrimage. While granting a remission, the crown could set policy – it was in a remission that the town of Meaux was banned from having communal government.

If the pardoning agenda was set by the crown, and the wording was set by the notary based on the crown's distinctions, then it was the supplicant who provided the narrative on which the pardon would be based.<sup>60</sup> Natalie Davis's work on remissions in the sixteenth century emphasises the creative aspect of the pardon.<sup>61</sup> Rather than the final contract between crown and defendant, the remission was part of the pardoning process itself. These remissions, if they were to be accepted, would either explain the participant's activities or at least place them in a context that makes them pardonable. They also offered testimony to the individual's previous reputation, and his good name and renown. Often, it was the only input that a 'defendant' might have in the criminal procedure – the remission narrative would be read at the start of the judicial process, like an opening statement.<sup>62</sup> Thus, the onus was on the supplicant to create a narrative that convinced the crown of their innocence and informed them of any mitigating circumstances.

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<sup>60</sup> Davis describes the supplicant as the 'first author'. Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*, p. 18.

<sup>61</sup> Although Davis' book is rather sensationally titled, it does not claim remissions to be entirely fictitious, rather that the storytelling represents a distinct literary style in which numerous voices can be heard. However, others have questioned the validity of these documents, describing them as 'a tissue of counter-truths', Pierre Braun, 'La valeur documentaire des lettres de rémission', in *La faute, la répression et le pardon*, v. 1 of *Actes du 107e Congrès national sociétés savantes, Brest 1982* (Paris: C.T.H.S., 1984), quoted in Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*, p. 10.

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*, p. 10.

Those involved in the rebellions of 1358 were as concerned to prove their suitability for a pardon as the petty criminals who form the backbone of Davis' studies. This remission for a Jacque, Gillebart Colas, indicates the form that these pleas could take:

Let it be known to all present and future that Gillebart Colas, living at Acy in Meucien (Oise)<sup>63</sup>, poor small trader of chicken, cheese, eggs and other small merchandise to make a living and to support his wife and children, who had previously under constraint and against his will and wishes with other Jacques of the said village and men of the land from Mucien, La Ferte and other places nearby ... [was] taken and imprisoned in the castle of Dammartin ... he is a man of good life and honest.<sup>64</sup>

In this case, it is clear why Gillebart sought forgiveness: at the time of his supplication he was imprisoned. Gillebart based his plea for clemency on his social status: he was a poor merchant and must provide for his wife and children. The remission also features two popular excuses that appellants used to argue for their personal worthiness to be granted a remission. One we have already mentioned: he claimed to have led a good life up to this point (although this remission does not claim that the subject was of good renown). The other was a defence repeated in many of the Jacques' remissions: that they had been forced into action by others. Davis' caricature of these remissions as 'fiction' helps us remain vigilant regarding the nature of the document. Claims of non-involvement, for example, should be treated with caution. Perhaps Gillebart was better off financially than his plea suggests. For the historian, however, the document provides more than just story-telling. Any sense of fiction is kept brief

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<sup>63</sup> Where a location is not commonly known, and there is no map or table nearby for reference, I have included the modern *department* in parentheses.

<sup>64</sup> 'Savoir faisons à tous presenz et à venir comme Gillebart Colas demourans à Acy en Meucien petit et pouvre marchand de pouillaie, de fourmage et oeux et autres petites marchandises pour gaegner sa vie et de sa femme et enfans, ait esté n'a gaires par contrainte autre son gré et sa volenté avec plusieurs des Jacques de la dicte ville et les gens du pais de moncien, de la Ferte et d'ailleurs environs ... prendre et emprisonnes au chastel de Dammartin... il est un homme de bonne vie et honeste', AN, JJ86, f. 151, no. 430.

– there was no great narrative to prove Gillebart’s innocence. They offer new information concerning the rebellion – Gillebart did not deny that the men of Acy did rise up. Although Gillebart may have been exaggerating his financial difficulties, his occupation as a sometime merchant of dairy goods is useful to surmise exactly who the Jacques were. Though the language of the remission was intended to portray the appellant’s reduced culpability, the basic facts of the case – the defendant’s status and location, the crime itself and the punishment – are undisputed.

The useful data that these documents provide about individuals and their transgressions against the crown have been the basis for several excellent studies of criminality and social status. Bronislaw Geremek’s study of the *marginiaux* of Paris was based on a variety of documents, including remission letters for the inhabitants. Although he culls numerous stories from these remissions, Geremek admits ‘it is clear that the costs necessarily incurred in obtaining a letter of remission were such that marginal people rarely appear in the documents’.<sup>65</sup> The most comprehensive study of the remission is Claude Gauvard’s two volume *De Grace Especial*. Built upon remissions, criminal and judicial records and other documents, she concentrates on the reign of Charles VI and seeks to build a typology of crime between 1380 and 1420.<sup>66</sup> Although remissions were not her only source, they undoubtedly make up the vast majority of the documents she covers. Yet even in this exhaustive work, Gauvard avoids discussing popular protest: group violence appears, characterised by the term *rixe*, but this was

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<sup>65</sup> Geremek, *The Margins of Society*, p. 310.

<sup>66</sup> Gauvard, *De grace especial*. Also see C. Gauvard, ‘L’image du roi justicier en France à la fin du Moyen Age d’après les lettres de rémission’, in *La faute*, v. I of *Actes du 107e Congrès*, pp. 165-192.

mainly bar fights or small scuffles, not collective action.<sup>67</sup> The exclusion of remissions concerning rebellion or revolt (notably the *harelle* in Rouen and the tax revolts in Paris of the 1380s) in such an exhaustive study tells us something about the position that popular violence occupies: it was connected to the world of criminality and justice, but somehow set apart from it.

As mentioned, Luce used remissions to give a more human side to the Jacquerie, more in line with the sympathetic chroniclers like Jean de Venette than the scolding fury of Jean le Bel, whom Flammermont would champion. Yet he did not exploit the source to its fullest. His *Pièces Justificatives* contained sixty-two documents, of which fifty-four are remissions, and formed the core of his analysis.<sup>68</sup> This sample is skewed: for instance, Luce reprinted every document that mentions the attack on Meaux (of which there are nineteen, representing almost a third of his *Pièces Justificatives*). These incidents had only weak connections to the Jacquerie, (as we will discuss in ‘The Attack on the Marché’ in Chapter III). Further considering that these remissions were for scattered individuals rather than for settlements and groups, in real numbers there were very few individuals from Meaux pardoned compared with the Jacques in the countryside. Because the attack on Meaux was spearheaded by Parisiens, not Jacques, Luce’s analysis heavily weighted Étienne Marcel’s perceived involvement, yet Luce did not supplement this with analysis of the remissions issued for his followers.

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<sup>67</sup> Gauvard states that over 51% of group crimes within the remissions can be classified as ‘rixo-homicide’ (which Gauvard uses to refer to bar-fights and similar attacks), and another 23% is thefts or burglaries (p. 275). Collective crimes makes up only 1.6% of Gauvard’s remissions (p. 242). Even in a two-volume study like Gauvard’s, there is little attention played to popular revolts, which Gauvard suggests there is no evidence of in the remissions. Gauvard, *De grace especial*.

<sup>68</sup> Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 217-350. Luce’s selection includes some other royal documents and all the relevant chronicle descriptions of the events of 1358. Only fifty-two of these documents are actual transcriptions – two of these documents are just short descriptions of what the remission contains.

Raymond Cazelles and David Bessen both turned to Luce's summary to write articles about the Jacquerie but neither returned to the original registers. These later studies feature the same shortcomings seen in Luce's book: they sample from Luce's already skewed *Pièces Justificatives* as though they were the full collection of documents. Further, the data available on the majority of the Jacques was marginalized in favour of a focus on those with the most interesting narratives surrounding their participation. With these in hand, Cazelles and Bessen constructed histories of the rebellion that place an emphasis on the Parisian-led attack on Meaux rather than the greater group of remissions, as though those from Meaux were typical Jacques. The misunderstanding of the sources led both to deeply flawed arguments, as will be discussed in Chapter 3, 'The Theory of Co-opted Rebellion'.

A thorough analysis of the Jacquerie requires equal focus to be placed on all the documents. Broadly speaking, there are four types of remission issued for subjects involved in the rebellions of 1358 clearly defined within the source material: (1) those individuals and settlements that rose up in the countryside, (2) remissions for those nobles involved in the vengeance upon the peasantry in the wake of the Jacques, (3) remissions for those involved in the Parisian uprising and (4) for those involved with the King of Navarre.

The remissions that exist make up an unusual sample. They do not represent all those the crown forgave for their part in the uprisings. The masses of rebels had received grace for their crimes in general amnesties issued directly after the revolt, supposedly pardoned as a group on the 10 August in a general remission issued in Paris. On that same day, the Parisian rebels were pardoned:

A great number of the good people and loyal commoners of this city of Paris conceived and intended to act against our lord, and the royal

majesty ... our loyal friends Gentian Tristan, presently provost, the aldermen, bourgeois and inhabitants of this city have humbly beseeched us to show pity and mercy and to find a gracious remedy. Thus considering the good love and loyalty which the provost, bourgeois, and inhabitants of this city have always had towards our lord and to us and which has been demonstrated by the capture and destruction of these traitors, rebels and enemies of the crown of France, we are inclined to grant this supplication.<sup>69</sup>

Yet this document did not represent the end of the pardons for the Parisians: rather, it triggered the start of numerous remissions for people connected to Marcel's revolt. Other remissions were issued on the very day that the general pardon was sent out. Our sample consists of individuals who required specific pardons not covered by the general pardon. The remissions for individuals and distinct communities thus represent the exceptions, not the main contingent of those forgiven.

Luce's centrepiece, the attack on the Marché of Meaux, represents a microcosm of the bigger picture. A general remission was issued to those of the town, stating that the residents are given grace for their participation, updated to include a clause that does not allow the city to have a communal government. In effect, the remission itself confirmed this punishment and stripped Meaux of its communal privileges:

Let it be known to all present and future that we have heard the supplication made by our loyal friend Jehan Maillart, bourgeois of Paris containing matters concerning the misdeeds in the town of Meaux the Saturday past, the eve of the feast of Saint Barnabas (10 June) ... [the enemies] entered the town of Meaux by the gate of Saint-Remi for attacking the Marché of the said town of Meaux and damaging the houses of the nobles and non-nobles ... we have acquitted, remitted and pardoned and re-established the peace, and their good reputation and name and also their goods, excepting that the said town cannot have a

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<sup>69</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 80, no. 240, reprinted in *Ordonnances des Roys de France de la troisième race*, ed. D.-F. Secousse, vol. 4 (Paris, 1734), trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 179-81.



communal government. (*n'aura corps ne commune*) ... Issued in Paris, the year of grace 1358 in the month of August.<sup>70</sup>

However, this remission did not include all the inhabitants, as further remissions, like this one for Guillaume de Chavenoil, indicated:

recently we have forgiven and pardoned generally all the inhabitants of the town, city and Marché of Meaux ... except a number of certain persons, including the said Guillaume de Chavenoil, priest and canon of Meaux.<sup>71</sup>

So when we consider individuals like Guillaume de Chavenoil, and how they relate to the group that attacked the Marché, we must bear in mind that crown consciously rejected them from the initial grace.

The JJ series contains 214 remissions that were linked to members of the Jacquerie. Of these, 188 of them are issued between JJ 86 and JJ 90 inclusive, with 139 alone in JJ 86, the main register for the Jacquerie, running from July 1358 until early January 1359. I will turn to statistical analysis later, but below is an example of a remission issued to a rebel in the wake of the rebellion:

Charles, eldest son of the King of France (etc.), Let us make known to all those now and in the future that Jean des Hayes, of Rhuis in Verberie (Oise), at the time of the terror (*effrois*) and uprising (*commocion*) that reigned and was recently caused by the men of the countryside (*genz du plat pais*) against the nobles of the realm, was made, against his will and wishes and by constraint of the people, captain of the said village (*ville*<sup>72</sup>)

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<sup>70</sup> 'Savoir faisons à tous presenz et à venir, comme oye la supplication a nous faite par nostre amé et feal Jehan Maillart, bourgeois de Paris, contenant que, comme pour cause du meffait qui advint en la ville de Meaulx le samedi veille de feste saint Barnabé apostre dernier passé ... entrèrent en la dicte ville de Meulx par la porte Saint Remi, pour assaillir le Marchie de Meaulx, dommager en ville et villener nobles et non-nobles qui dedans estoit ... nous avons quieté, remis et pardonné et restabliz au pais, à leur bonne fame, renommée et à leur biens, excepté que la dicte ville n'aura corps de commune', AN, JJ86, f. 75, no. 288. This document is included in Luce's *Pieces Justicatives*, but rather than transcribing a section of it there is only a short description of the content.

<sup>71</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 91, no. 274, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 228-9, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 183.

<sup>72</sup> The term *ville* is used in almost every remission to refer to settlements of any size, from villages like Rhuis here to even the city of Paris. While the word may have originally meant 'a group of rural houses', it also came to be applied to any important settlements, rural or urban.

of Rhuis, who otherwise feared they might kill him, burn down his house and destroy or distribute his goods, and because of that he was present at the said revolt against the nobles, but the said Jean did not burn or knock down houses of the said nobles; nor did he take or hand out their goods; nor did he make a profit or pillage more than the sum of three escus .... on the Sunday after the feast day of the Holy Sacrament (3 June) that had past, the said Jehan and a esquire, with many others, had come to the said town (*ville*) of Verberie ... [Jehan cried out] 'For God's sake, good lords, watch what you are doing for your actions are very bad', and despite this and against his will, wishes and consent, the said esquire was killed, and for this reason the said nobles would hate him and have hostility towards the said Jehan ... Issued in Paris, the year of grace 1358, in the month of October.<sup>73</sup>

This document stresses that Jehan des Hayes was less involved with the rebellion than he had been accused of. Although he was a *capitaine*, he had not taken part in the most terrible of the outrages, neither had he made a profit above 3 *escuz*. Not only does Jehan excuse himself from the worst of the violence, he also claimed he warned the other Jacques not to kill the squire in Verberie. Yet Jehan felt forced to seek a remission because of the nobility's hatred of him and the grudge they bore were likely to have held towards him.

The vocabulary of these remissions from the Jacques remained constant from document to document. First, the Jacques were referred to the *genz du plat-pays*: men of the countryside. This was the language the crown used to describe

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On each occasion that *ville* is used, I have given my best approximation to the type of settlement (for example, I have translated it as village in the case of Rhuis, town in the case of Senlis and city in the case of Paris).

<sup>73</sup> 'Charles ainsné fils du roy de France .... Savoir faisons à tous presenz et à venir, que, comme Jehan des Hayes, de Ruys, lez Verberie, ou temps des effroiz et commociens qui derrainement et n'a gaires ont esté faiz par les genz du plat pais contre les nobles du royaume, eust esté contre son gré et volenté et par contrainte du peuple, esleu capitaine de la dicte ville de Ruys, ou autrement il eust esté en doute d'avoir esté mis à mort, sa maison arse, et gastez et dessipés ses biens, et avec ce ait esté aus dictes commociens faites contre les diz nobles, sanz ce que le dit Jehan ait esté à ardoir ou abatre aucuns maisons des diz nobles, ne en ycelles prendre ou dissipier leurs biens, ne en aucun prouffit de pillage qui monte à plus de la somme de trois escuz ... le dymanche après le Saint Sacrement derrainement passé, le dit Jehan et un escuier, avec plusieurs autres, s'en venoient en la dicte ville de Verberie ... 'Pour Dieu, beaux seigneurs, gardés que vous faites, car c'est trop mal fait', et tout ce non obstant, ils mistrent, contre son gré, sa volenté et consentement, le dit escuier à mort, et pour ce aucuns des diz nobles pourroient avoir malivolence et hayne au dit Jehan ... Donné à Paris, l'an de grace mil CCCLVIII, ou mois d'octobre', AN, JJ86, f. 156, no. 444, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 280-1.

these insurgents, directly opposed to the ‘nobles of the realm’.<sup>74</sup> The greater violence was described as a ‘terror’ (*effrois*) or a ‘movement’ (*commocion*). The Jacques were specifically accused of having ‘sent [nobles] to death, burnt their homes, and destroyed and distributed their goods’.<sup>75</sup> Unlike the inhabitants of the town, the Jacques were described sparingly: we are often given little information about the appellant’s occupation or status within a community.

The remission above was for an individual, but remissions were also issued for village communities or collections of local peasants who were accused of participation in the Jacquerie:

Let it be known to all present and future that the inhabitants resident in the villages of Bettancourt and Vroil in Perthois (Marne), along with many other men of the countryside have been involved in the terror that the men of the countryside recently inflicted with great speed upon the nobles of the realm. They conspired and assembled with other men of the countryside many times without burning or knocking down houses, killing people or mistreating anyone ... Our friend, loyal counsellor and lieutenant in these parts, the count of Vaudemont, summoned them before him at a certain time and place ... without knowing anything about them, he condemned them to pay a fine of two-thousand ecus.<sup>76</sup>

As with the vocabulary of remissions for individuals, the Jacquerie was described as ‘the terror’, the Jacques were the ‘men of the countryside’ engaged in ‘burning or knocking down houses, killing people’ (although the men of Bettancourt and Vroil claim not to have been involved). This remission does not list any of the individuals who appealed; they were described only as ‘inhabitants’. This remission also gives a clear indication of what could be gained from receiving a pardon. The reduction of a fine imposed earlier upon the villagers raises

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<sup>74</sup> The phrase ‘non-nobles’ or ‘gens du plat pays contre nobles’ or ‘nobles de royaume’ is fairly ubiquitous in the remissions, but has been the subject of some debate. Bessen, who does not show familiarity with remissions outwith Luce, claims that they are infrequently referred to as ‘non-nobles’, but it is very rare to find a document that does not make reference to the non-noble status of the supplicant(s) somewhere in the document.

<sup>75</sup> This phrase, with variations, appears in almost all the remissions concerning the Jacquerie.

<sup>76</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 117, no. 346, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 266-8, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 187.

important questions about the nature of the punishment, which we will return to in the 'Retaliation' section of Chapter 6, but also reminds us of the failings of our sources: we have only records of those who successfully quashed their conviction, and no record of the nature of any original punishments. References to any fine or punishments issued to other settlements indicate this was a fairly typical treatment of rebellious villages involved in the Jacquerie .

These collective remissions for the Jacquerie were different from those considered typical in the studies of Davis and Gauvard. As the document above demonstrates, these were issued to communities, villages, parishes and collections of peasants who acted in concert against the crown during the uprising. There is less of an emphasis on paid remuneration: Bettancourt and Vroil had their fines alleviated, but some of these supplicants make their pleas based on their extreme poverty. While pardons could be issued to those without the finances to hire an advocate on their behalf, usually through the generosity of the court, this was unusual.<sup>77</sup> Pardons could be issued by the crown as part of a celebration, such as the king's entry to a city. However, neither of these events could account for the number of individuals who had no occupation recorded. The traditional crux of the remission seen in criminal cases – the importance of an individual's good name and renown – is often missing. Most supplicants were unknown to the court, nor could they have afforded the advocacy or support that the traditional supplicant would have had.

The majority of these remissions were issued seemingly in bulk, a short time after the end of the Jacquerie. By contrast, in Gauvard's study of the reign

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<sup>77</sup> Geremek describes such an event as 'exceptional', Geremek, *The Margins of Society*, p. 63.

of Charles VI, the majority of remissions were issued a long time after the crime was committed, with the greatest proportion coming after one year.<sup>78</sup>

**Table I. Time taken to issue a remission.**

<b>Time after crime</b>	<b>Proportion</b>
'peu de temps'	3.5%
Less than 15 days	5%
Less than 1 month	8.5%
A month	18%
Between 1 and six months	20%
Six months to a year	8%
Over a year	28%
'il y a longtemps'	9%

Gauvard's sample shows that obtaining a remission was a drawn-out process; over 45% of Gauvard's remissions are issued after at least six months. For some Jacques, the process also took 'a long time', but the vast majority received grace promptly after the rebellion. The majority of the Jacques' remissions were issued within 'between one and six months': 78% compared with only 20% in Gauvard's sample. Rather than the time-consuming criminal cases that compose the majority of cases in Gauvard's study, remissions for the Jacquerie are issued quickly to a mass of appellants. Remissions, at least as regards their widespread use, were relatively new, but the nature of the Jacquerie itself created an unprecedented administrative burden.

<sup>78</sup> The following table is taken from Gauvard, *De grace especial*, p. 71.

The first remissions issued in the direct aftermath of the rebellion connected to the Jacques are not for the '*genz du plat-pays*'. Rather, in July 1358, only a month after the revolt's conclusion, the crown started dispensing justice and, more accurately, grace to its own loyal followers. The first individuals to receive remissions were members of the nobility pardoned for the excess they committed in their counter-offensive against the peasants. These remissions give us information surrounding the movements of the Jacques. The lord of Saint-Dizier first attacked against rebels closest to him in Saint-Livière.<sup>79</sup> Two later remissions confirm that the men of Saint-Livière were involved with the Jacques, specifically on their lord's lands.<sup>80</sup>

Other remissions for individuals and settlements were granted to those who defended themselves against the attacks of the nobles:

We have heard the supplication of the said *ville* of Saint Lumier in Champagne (Marne)... [they] assembled, armed and made plans together there to guard and defend against certain nobles ... especially against our loyal friend the Lord of Saint-Dizier.... Issued in Paris in the year of grace 1358 in the month of November.<sup>81</sup>

The remission above refers us to an attack on rebels in a village where we have no record of activity in the Jacquerie. Not only do we get a sense of the geography of the repression, but we gain some insight into its scale. For example, we have a remission for a group of brigands hired by the crown to help bring an end to the violence in the region.<sup>82</sup> This obviously indicates the lengths

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<sup>79</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 210, no. 578.

<sup>80</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 129, no. 377 and AN, JJ86, f. 210, no. 578.

<sup>81</sup> 'oye la supplication habitants des dictes ville de Saint-Lumier en Champagne ... [the supplicants] assemblez armes et fait conspiracies ensemble à garder et deffendre contres aucuns nobles ... especialement contre nostre amé feal le Seigneur de Saint Dizier ... Donné a Paris l'an de grace mil CCCLVIII ou mois de Novembre', AN, JJ86, f. 210, no. 578.

<sup>82</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 225, no. 444, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 303-4.

the crown was willing to go to put down the rebellion. The remission dates the brigands' violent repression of the villagers to 10 September, almost three months after the initial revolt. Perhaps this gives a new depth to Jean de Venette's depiction of the repression as the equivalent of a scorched earth policy: 'Verberie, La Croix-Saint-Ouen near Compiègne, Ressons (Oise), and many other country towns lying in the open fields which I have not seen and do not note here, mourned their destruction by fire'.<sup>83</sup> If this repressive violence was continuing so long after the event, while the crown was simultaneously dispensing its grace to hundreds of individuals and communities across the region, then it creates a new context in which to place the whole body of remissions: the crown's definition of its role in the remissions as 're-establishing the peace' was not simply a rhetorical flourish, but rather confirmation that these remissions were intended to end the continuing violence between nobles and peasants in the countryside.<sup>84</sup>

Of course, the rebellion in the countryside was just one uprising that the crown faced in 1358. The rebellion in Paris, spearheaded by an aggressive *Estates-General* and Étienne Marcel, was also documented by thirty-three documents (not including duplicates) within the *registres des Trésor des chartes*. Again, like the Jacques, many individuals involved in the dissent received pardons from the crown for their participation. These remissions, while sharing much of the basic form of those issued for the Jacques, used a different vocabulary to describe events:

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<sup>83</sup> Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 263, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 77.

<sup>84</sup> This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, during the section on 'Retaliation'.

Charles eldest son of the King of France, regent of the realm and duke of Normandy and dauphin of Viennois, let it be known to all present and future.... Nicolas le Flamenc, draper and bourgeois of Paris, by the false encouragement and evil inducement of the late Étienne Marcel, provost of merchants of the said city (*ville*) of Paris, and of Charles Toussac,<sup>85</sup> Gilles Marcel,<sup>86</sup> Jehan de Lille and any other of the traitors of the said city who were false traitors and rebels to the crown of France who had executed justices in our said city (*ville*), at several times had taken arms with those against us... we pardon and graciously remit ... the said Nicolas who to this day has a good life and renown and an honest standing and also good relations with our good and loyal subjects ... issued in Paris in the year of grace 1358 in the month of August.<sup>87</sup>

The form of these documents was similar to those issued for the Jacques. They started with the king's name, described the individual's reduced culpability for the crime originally accused of, and pardoned the appellant of all the criminal charges but did not exclude the possibility of future civil charges. Excepting pardons for Paris, Meaux and Amiens, these documents were issued for individuals. The crown handled Marcel's partisans promptly after the rebellion. All of these remissions were issued directly after the trouble in August of 1358, most in August but a couple as late as December. If the Jacques' pleas of clemency were dealt with quickly in comparison to the average criminal, then the partisans of Marcel were dealt with even quicker – all were issued within four months of the rebellion. Unlike the Jacques, 1358 represented the end of the matter within the courts; no documents were issued after December for

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<sup>85</sup> Charles Toussac was a Parisian money-changer, one of the 'Council of Eighty' organised by the *Estates-General* to draw up a list of concessions the Estates wished to extract from the Dauphin. J. Sumption, *The Hundred Years War*, v. 2, *Trial by Fire* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), p. 254.

<sup>86</sup> Gilles Marcel was Étienne's cousin, and also part of the 'Council of Eighty', *ibid*, p. 254.

<sup>87</sup> 'Charles aîné fils du Roy de France regent le royaume et duc de normande et dauphin de viennois, savoir faisons à tous presenz et à venir comme Nicolas le Flamenc drappier et bourgeois de paris par les faux enortement et malaises inducien de feu Estienne Marcel provost des marchans de nostre ville de Paris de Charles Toussac, Gilles Marcel, Jehan de Lille et aucunes autres de nostre ville noz traitres qui comme faux traitres et rebelles de mons de nous de la couronne de France aus esté mis à mort justices en nostre dicte ville se soit par plusieurs fois amnes avec eulx contre nous ... nous pardonnons et remettons gracieux ... qui le dit Nicolas a tous jours este de bonne vie et renomée et de honeste vie oy aussi la bonne relation de nos bon et loyal sujet de mons', AN, JJ86, f. 68, n. 209.



individuals involved in the Parisian uprising. On the other hand, documents for the Jacques continued to trickle from the chancery until the end of the 1370s.<sup>88</sup>

Several other notable differences separate the Parisians' pardons from those of the Jacques. The Parisian supplicants cited Étienne Marcel and his deputies like Gilles Marcel and Jehan de Lille as responsible for the revolt. While the individuals pardoned for involvement in the Jacquerie were acting 'under constraint and against their will and wishes', the supplicants involved in the Parisian uprising were 'persuaded' by the heads of the movement into action. The 'commotion' or 'terror' in which the men of the countryside 'knocked down, destroyed and burned' the property of the nobles and 'sent them to death' was replaced for the city with a different crime: being 'a false traitor and rebel towards the King of France'. These insurgents were the 'men of Paris', not 'men of the countryside'.

The rebellion of Charles of Navarre, and his followers, also produced a substantial number of remissions on the troubles of 1358. Although the rebellion was as much a dynastic conflict as a true uprising, the remissions indicate that a variety of 'normal' people were caught up in it. Fish merchants, moneychangers and furriers all were forced to seek the crown's grace in the wake of the events.<sup>89</sup> The remissions themselves followed the same basic principles as those we have seen already: they were written in the name of the regent, detailed the crimes of the burghers involved and the grounds for reduced culpability:

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<sup>88</sup> The latest remission we have connected to the Jacquerie is JJ145, n. 498, which is in early 1394. This remission, however, is for the murder of a brigand who was active during the *commocion*. The latest remission issued specifically for members of the Jacquerie (and not, for example, nobles who had killed Jacques) is JJ107, n.186 where the inhabitants of Hangest receive their remission after a long process, in July 1375.

<sup>89</sup> For example, in AN, JJ90, f. 12-15, nos. 26 and 29 are issued to fish merchants, nos. 21, 22 and 27 are issued to money-changers, and no. 30 was issued to a furrier.

Let it be known to all present and future ... for many rebellions, treason and unpleasantness committed and perpetrated against the crown of France... Jean de Maours, Collart de Lille and Jacques de Rue bourgeois and habitants of Amiens who offended and committed the crime of *lèse-majesté* and treason ... in the company of the King of Navarre and the English enemies of the said realm ... issued at Paris in the year of grace 1358 on 20 August.<sup>90</sup>

There are sixty remissions for supporters of Navarre, all of which come from JJ86, 87 or 90. The earliest fully dated remission was issued on 20 August 1358, ten days after the general amnesty. This first batch of remissions was issued for the Jacques and Marcel's followers. There is another batch released in November and December after a second wave of strikes by the forces of the crown on suspected Navarrese partisans, this time brought on by rumours of a second conspiracy. Communities like Amiens were issued remissions, but pardons were intended mainly for individuals. These remissions, like those before, were issued swiftly, certainly in comparison to Gauvard's analysis of criminal remissions.

These remissions also used a distinct vocabulary to describe allegiance to the Navarrese cause. It was a 'rebellion' against the rightful king. More importantly, the rebels were 'traitors' who committed the crimes of 'treason' and 'lèse-majesté'. Much has been made of the crimes that could not be pardoned which, according to Gauvard, included *lèse-majesté*, yet here were men indicted for that very offence, and gained reduced sentences. Mentions of *lèse-majesté*

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<sup>90</sup> 'Savoir faisons à tous presenz et à venir ... pour plusiers rebellions prodicions et malnaistres commettant et perpetrant contre la couronne de France ... Jean de Maours, Collart et Lille et Jacques de Rue bourgeois et habitants d'amiens qui en offendant et commettant crime de lese-majeste royal et traizon ... de la compangie du roy de navarre et des englois ennemis du dit royaume' AN, JJ86, f. 72, no. 219.

were only found in remissions to the followers of Navarre and a scattering of references among Parisiens who aided the 'enemies of the crown'.<sup>91</sup>

Another type of document within the *registre du Trésor des chartes* that can help shed further light on the events of 1358 are donations of property. Several are made to those who served the crown against the uprisings, and several of the donations themselves consist of property confiscated from rebels, who supported Navarre or Marcel. In this famous example, the Marshal Boucicaut received the property of Robert, Bishop of Laon:

Since Robert le Coq, bishop of Laon has been and is a rebel, disobedient to our lord, to us and the realm ... we confiscate all the temporalities of his bishopric ... Lord Jean le Meingre, called Boucicaut, marshal of France, has performed for us during the present wars and which he continues to offer day after day ... [and] we have given, authorised and delivered the house which the said bishop had in Paris... Issued at the Louvre in Paris, the year of grace 1358 on 11 August.<sup>92</sup>

These documents help us discover yet more 'rebels' within the *registres du Trésor des chartes*.<sup>93</sup> It is not only the highest political movers like le Coq who have their property confiscated; nor is it only royal marshals that receive them: a Norman knight Jehan De Muisenit and his sister Blanche were rewarded for loyal service with land taken from some of the lesser Navarrese soliders. We can also estimate their wealth and their holdings, perhaps including their political power. It informs us about the geography of the rebellions, as well as an indication of

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<sup>91</sup> Phillip IV's reign sees the beginning of widespread usage of the concept of treason, but it is Charles the Dauphin's reign that encourages the concept of the 'crown' as the offended party, see S.H. Cutler, *The Laws of Treason and Treason Trials in Later Medieval France* (CUP: Cambridge, 1981). For general discussion of the uses of treason during Charles's regency and reign see also pp. 4-20, 28-54, 163-180.

<sup>92</sup> AN, JJ89, f.280, no. 525, ed. D.-F. Secousse, *Recueil*, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 194-5.

<sup>93</sup> Donations of property will be used sparingly in this thesis; they will not be included in any tables concerning the Jacquerie, although examples of them will be used to illustrate general points.

where the crown's loyal servants were found. They also give us some idea of how the crown administered punishment.

They also confirmed the fixed vocabulary used to describe different rebellions. In the document that grants Boucicaut ownership of Robert le Coq's house, the bishop is described as a 'rebel' and aiding the 'enemies of the crown'. In the document issued to Sir Jehan de Musenit, the rebels have committed the crime of 'treason and rebellion', and Charles of Navarre is described as the mortal enemy of the crown.<sup>94</sup> Again, this parallels the language used in the remissions for the Parisian rebels. Political rebellion was treated differently in the sources from the rural popular movement.

Donations were issued for partisans of both Navarre and Marcel, but no documents show property being taken from an individual or group involved with the Jacquerie, although two remissions were issued in which property is granted specifically for good service against the Jacques. In all, thirty donations of property were either made to those who served the crown against the rebellions, or confiscated property owned by rebels. As one would expect, considering that these were issued primarily for those who were connected to the Navarre or the Parisian rebellion, they are all issued in the wake of August 1358.

As stated, there were several distinct types of remission concerning the rebels of 1358. In the rush to produce several hundred of these documents within a couple of months, a distinct vocabulary for each type of remission emerged. This vocabulary even transferred to other documents, like donations and confiscations

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<sup>94</sup> 'confisques à nostre dit seigneur à nous pour la trahison et rebellion des dessus dictes matieres qui se sont renduz ennemis et rebelles de nostre dit seigneur ... avec le roy de navarre nostre ennemi mortel. Donné au Louvre des Paris l'an de grace 1358 ou moys de mais ....', AN, JJ90, f. 30, no. 65.

of property. When Bessen attempted to explain why no remissions suggested Navarrese forces worked with the Jacques, he claimed 'the occasionally vague descriptions of disloyal deeds'<sup>95</sup> made these hard to find. Yet, of the 307 remissions for men involved in the three rebellions combined, only five suggest any doubt whatsoever as to which of the three distinct challenges to the crown they belonged. These are issued late in 1358, and refer to settlements to the far south of the Dauphin's lands. These are the exceptions and, as I will argue later, were probably distinct revolts other than those of the Jacques, the Parisian revolt and the aristocratic disobedience of Navarre.<sup>96</sup> Instead, what characterises the series is the clarity with which the different rebels can be identified, be they 'conspiring with the men of Paris' and Étienne Marcel, 'rebels and traitors with the King of Navarre' who had committed 'lèse-majesté', or 'men of the countryside' who were caught up in the revolt against the 'nobles'.

The tumult of 1358 also represented a change in the administration of justice. Not only did the Jacques and others speed up the normal channels of chancery remissions, the sheer mass of remissions is even more in the context of the number normally issued in the year. This is especially true when considering that although the remission is not a new document, by 1358 it had only just begun to be issued regularly. Previously, no more than two hundred had been issued annually with any regularity.

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<sup>95</sup> Bessen, 'The Jacquerie', p. 53.

<sup>96</sup> These remissions will be discussed in Chapter 6, 'Peasant Resistance'.

**Table II. Comparison of remissions issued.**

<b>Average remissions issued per year, 1350-7 (JJ80-84)</b>	<b>174</b>
<b>Remissions issued within 6 months between late 1358 and early 1359 for the Jacques, Marcel's partisans and the Navarrese</b>	<b>271</b>
<b>Remissions issued per year, 1361-3 (JJ91-2)</b>	<b>123</b>

The number of remissions that had to be issued by the French crown, and the volume of individuals who needed pardons, was of an unprecedented scale. Gauvard claims that remission production was at its height between 1380 and 1400, but the output for 1358 was greater than any year in her period. There were more than twice as many documents issued in six months than would be expected in an entire year during the early 1360s. What differences to the normal practice of the granting remissions did such a huge turnover of documents cause? What role did the rebellions have in stimulating new turnover in terms of remissions?

Below is a table showing the remissions issued in the JJ series. I have included only volumes that contain over 400 documents within them.<sup>97</sup> Note that volumes are not issued strictly chronologically: one does not necessarily start where the previous volume ends. Several volumes consist of a collection of documents brought together that were missed out in other collections, spanning as much as two decades. There can be no guarantee that a remission from JJ58 was issued earlier than JJ59, for example:

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<sup>97</sup> Data taken from François, 'Note sur les lettres de rémission'.

**Table III. Remissions issued per series.**

Series (JJ)	Years	Number of documents	Number of remissions	%age of remissions
35-49	1302-14	2850	17	0.6
54	1317	701	2	0.3
56	1317-19	620	6	1.0
58	1317-20	487	0	0.0
59	1318-21	611	1	0.2
61	1322-3	493	2	0.4
62	1323-5	531	5	0.9
64	1342-8	756	8	1.1
66	1329-34	1502	9	0.6
68	1322-49	429	80	18.6
71	1337-40	427	6	1.4
72	1329-45	568	11	1.9
74	1340-6	756	18	2.4
75	1342-6	609	38	6.2
76	1340-8	406	110	27.1
77	1345-9	443	113	25.5
80	1350-1	780	290	37.2
81	1351-3	959	348	36.3
82	1352-5	695	300	43.2
84	1352-7	823	427	51.9
86	1357-9	620	437	70.5
87	1357-60	758	440	58.0
90	1356-61	638	363	56.9
91	1361-3	510	243	47.6
92	1361-3	523	127	24.3
96	1364-5	434	166	38.2

The importance of the rebellions of 1358 within the production of pardons is stressed by this table. Remission remained a small minority within the *registres du Trésor des chartes* until 1358. There is one exception in JJ68, a series that has 18% of remissions, however this series is a conglomerate of documents issued between 1322 and 1348 and is not necessarily a good representation of early-fourteenth century administration. The general trend is clear: remissions were present in the registers from the beginning of the fourteenth century, but it is the late 1340s that see a massive growth in the production of remissions, which continues into the 1350s. The increase in remissions was not a product solely of the rebellions of 1358. Yet 1358 gives the production of remissions another massive boost, so that almost 75% of JJ86 (1357-9) consists of remissions. If we are to understand these documents as indicative of the French crown's focus, then its primary concern was the punishment and pardon of the rebels. Following 1358, the number of remissions returned back to the levels of the earlier 1350s, before growing again in the 1370s. The level of remissions issued in the wake of rebellion is a substantial, even if momentary, change in previous practice for the French crown.

Another change is the language of these documents: they shift from entirely in Latin at the beginning of the fourteenth century to almost universally French by the end. Thus, during Gauvard's time period, the reign of Charles VI, remissions were nearly always written in the vernacular. By JJ138, for example, only three of the two hundred and fifteen remissions in the collection are in Latin. In the context of the 1350s however, this is exceptional: remissions were still primarily written in Latin. François collated the numbers of remissions recorded in French



and Latin.<sup>98</sup> These figures place particular focus upon the years around 1358 as a watershed:

**Table IV. The language of remissions in the registers.**

JJ Series	Number of Remissions	Number in Latin	Percentage Latin	Percentage French
80 (1350-1)	290	280	97%	3%
81 (1351-3)	348	340	98%	2%
84 (1352-7)	417	400	96%	4%
85 (1357)	138	50	36%	64%
<b>86 (1357-59)</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>73%</b>
92 (1361-3)	127	0	0%	100%

François attributes this switch from Latin to French as a product of the switch in administrations from Jean II to the dauphin Charles.<sup>99</sup> This change can be seen in all forms of administration.<sup>100</sup> For example, of the sixty-four documents that were issued for Saint-Quentin in Jean II's reign, fifty-one were issued in Latin and thirteen in French; of the thirteen issued by Charles in his regency to the same *bonne ville*, only three were in Latin and ten were in French.<sup>101</sup> The return of Jean II to power sees a shift back towards Latin, used in 79% of royal administrative documents, indicating the exceptional nature of Charles V's

<sup>98</sup> François, 'Note sur les lettres de rémission', pp. 321-4. François only offers figures for a scattered collection of series. After JJ92, almost all remissions are written in French.

<sup>99</sup> For François, 'the registers correspond to particular moments in the history of our language and royal chancellerie'. This is no doubt true, but he does not suggest any reason why this change occurs. p. 322.

<sup>100</sup> See S. Lusignan, *La langue des rois au Moyen Âge, le français en France et en Angleterre* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2004), pp. 116-126, for details of language used in Charles's reign as both Dauphin and Charles V.

<sup>101</sup> Lusignan, *La langue des rois*, p. 91.

selection of the vernacular as his language of choice.<sup>102</sup> In this context, JJ86, with the remissions for the Jacques, Navarrese and followers of Marcel, looks like just an extension of the Dauphin's new policy. However, if we take a look at the remissions issued for the rebels, there is something new in JJ86:

**Table V. The language of remissions in JJ86.**

JJ86	Number of Remissions	Number in Latin	Percentage Latin	Percentage French
Jacques	136	7	5%	95%
Marcel	33	0	0%	100%
Navarre	26	4	15%	85%
<b>Total</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>95%</b>
Unrelated Remissions	242	109	45%	55%

Remissions for crimes not related to rebellion were almost as likely to be written in Latin as they were in French throughout JJ86, the register consisting of documents issued in the wake of the summer of 1358. Documents relating to the rebellion however, are almost exclusively in the vernacular. If we exclude the Navarrese documents, then only 4% of the remissions for the Jacquerie and the followers of Marcel were written in Latin. Meanwhile, 45% of remissions for standard criminals were written in Latin. The continuing shift towards French is supported entirely by remissions issued for the rebellions of 1358, particularly the Jacquerie.

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<sup>102</sup> *ibid.*, p. 125.

It would be useful for our purposes to presume this is connected to the lower economic class of the Jacques; after all, Lusignan argues that the selection of French was 'intended to bring the King's word closer to that of his subjects'.<sup>103</sup> When we consider how an individual might seek to use his remission – to present to his local lord, to give him immunity from criminal prosecution, to obtain release from imprisonment – we could see how the peasantry would favour a document in the vernacular easily understood by local officials. Operating outside the world of advocates, paid counsels and long-established reputations that remissions were normally issued, these individuals required pardons that could be used within their society. This would explain why we see more Latin pardons for the followers of Navarre, who tended to be of higher status.

The complete absence of Latin from any of the remissions issued for those of Marcel suggests this might not be the only reason. These Parisians were often men with professional occupations and were granted their pardons based on their 'good name and renown'. What links them is that they were granted their remissions during the same administrative frenzy. The rebellions of 1358 not only represented the first crisis in the rule of the regent, they represented the first administrative challenge: how does the crown administer grace and re-establish the peace in the countryside, where private violence between nobles and peasants had raged from May to August? With the courts having begun the process of switching from Latin to French for the remission letters, the massive number of pardons – more issued in a couple of months than were normally issued in two years – issued in the wake of these events were processed quickly. Hence we see

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<sup>103</sup> Lusignan, *La langue des rois*, p. 121.

the same vocabulary repeating itself from document to document, the same phrases to describe action and the same claims of non-involvement or being forced into action repeated in the vast majority of the remissions. It is not surprising that they should also be produced in the same language. This was mass justice, issued quickly and efficiently to hundreds of appellants.

The remissions issued in the wake of the Jacquerie did not represent a revolution in the French administration of pardons. Remissions had become common in the preceding years, and within the previous twelve months there seems to have been a shift from Latin to French. Most likely, this was an innovation of the new regime of the dauphin Charles. Yet the Jacquerie represented a watershed in these new forms of administration. Suddenly, not only were the vast majority of documents being issued in the vernacular, but the administrative centre issued more remissions than ever before, at almost four times the monthly rate. The formation of a distinct vocabulary to describe each revolt, the issuing to communities as well as individuals, even the form that these letters took: all of these are indicative of an embryonic document finding rigidity through usage. Letters of remission were not historic documents with a long history of re-establishing peace after violence: rather, their form and function were suddenly forged through being processed for hundreds of rebels in the Île de France.

### 3 – THE THEORY OF CO-OPTED REBELLION

A People's War in civilised Europe is a phenomenon of the nineteenth century. It has its advocates and opponents ... In the generality of cases, the people who make judicious use of this means will gain a proportionate superiority over those who despise its use ...we ask 'what is the effect which such a resistance can produce? What are its conditions, and how is it to be used?'<sup>104</sup>

In *On War*, Carl von Clausewitz wondered whether nineteenth-century armies could take advantage of the phenomenon of revolution, and suggested that public fervour would be an excellent weapon for generals to marshal against opposing forces. This idea of a political group using popular movements to further their own aims has proved attractive to historians, even though the concept of an army influencing the mob has long been rejected by social psychologists: ideology cannot be 'simply imposed on mindless subjects', indeed, historically '[c]rowd members certainly neither needed, nor had, leaders standing over them telling them what to do'.<sup>105</sup> The image of a workers' revolt manipulated by powerful elites has affected the entire conception of the medieval revolt in the eyes of modern historians<sup>106</sup>.

As an example, when David Bessen examined whether the Jacquerie was a 'Class-War or Co-Opted rebellion?'<sup>107</sup> in his 1988 article, he strongly favoured the latter – the 'Jacquerie' was simply Charles of Navarre's attempt to employ a peasant army against the French crown. By either usurping the leadership of the

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<sup>104</sup> Gen. C. von Clausewitz, *On War*, tr. Col. J.J. Graham (London: Truber, 1940), v. II, pp. 341-2.

<sup>105</sup> S. Reicher, *The Challenge of the Crowd* (forthcoming).

<sup>106</sup> This is demonstrable in case of the revolt of the Ciompi, where Mollat and Wolff focussed upon 'cliques around men like Salvestro de Medici, Giorgio Scali and Alberto Strozzi' rather than the numerous leaders from the artisan class, Mollat and Wolff, *Popular Revolutions*, p. 154. For a discussion of leadership within the Ciompi, see Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, pp. 120-9, and for a short discussion of the historiography on that revolt, see Cohn, *PP*, pp. 201-5.

<sup>107</sup> Bessen, 'The Jacquerie'.

Jacques, or by instigating the entire rebellion, Charles the Bad had simply arrived at Von Clausewitz's conclusions several centuries earlier: that elites can utilise peasants to destabilise opposing forces.

Bessen was not the first to emphasise the importance elite groups played in organising rebellion. Guy Fourquin devoted a whole chapter to '[t]he preponderance of elites in rebellion'.<sup>108</sup> Neither was Bessen even the first to suggest that elites had led the Jacquerie. Raymond Cazelles made the same argument for the Jacquerie ten years earlier, but claimed that it was Étienne Marcel who had marshalled the rural forces to aid his rebellion in the capital;<sup>109</sup> Siméon Luce himself made a similar argument in 1897.<sup>110</sup> For both Cazelles and Luce, the attack on the Marché of Meaux represented the centrepiece of their theories, when the Parisians and the rural rebels joined together to destroy the fortress. The idea of the Jacquerie as a 'co-opted' rebellion has, in several works, become accepted.<sup>111</sup>

Letters of remissions tell a very different story. There is no evidence to suggest that Marcel or Navarre were behind the Jacquerie; indeed, the remissions suggest that the peasants were often openly hostile to both townsmen and Navarrese forces. Surprisingly, given the importance that the attack on Meaux has been granted in the historiography, there is no evidence to suggest that Jacques were involved in any meaningful way in the assault. To begin rebuilding the image of the Jacques as an important historical movement, we must first

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<sup>108</sup> Fourquin, *Anatomy of Popular Rebellion*, pp. 63-80.

<sup>109</sup> Cazelles, 'The Jacquerie', in *The English Rising of 1381*, pp. 74-84.

<sup>110</sup> Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 99-104.

<sup>111</sup> For example, see F. Autrand, *Charles V, le Sage* (Paris: Fayard, 1994), and the chapter on 'La Jacquerie' pp. 318-330, which includes a section on the role of 'Les Commandos Parisiens' in the rebellion. In the article on the Jacquerie in the *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, ed. J. Strayer (Scribner: New York, 1986), J.B. Henneman describes Cazelles's article as 'the authoritative work', and states that 'only in the Beauvaisis, where the worst atrocities occurred, does the Jacquerie seem to have pursued an independent course', vol. 6, pp. 35-6.

dismantle accusations that it was simply an extension of elite groups' political ambitions. The following chapter seeks to challenge theories that Navarre or Marcel co-opted the Jacquerie for their own purposes, or that Meaux represented the great unification of urban and rural rebels; the Jacquerie was undoubtedly a distinct rural movement which was not controlled from outside.

## NAVARRE

The peasants were quite happy to recognise their lords as leader both in revolts and .. in nationalistic movements ...It is precisely in real Jacqueries that the presence of noble leaders is conspicuous.<sup>112</sup>

Guy Fourquin's *Anatomy of a Popular Rebellion* confidently declared that medieval popular revolt was dominated by aristocratic leaders, subverting the will of the rebels to further their own ends. Peasant rebels were 'manipulated tactical force[s]': 'the leading roles remain, directly or indirectly, with the elites in many types of disturbances'.<sup>113</sup> Fourquin's model has been relentlessly applied to almost every popular movement of the Middle Ages. The search for nobles within a rebellion has become so common that it is no longer necessary to identify them within the crowd; rather, it can be assumed they are there, even if chronicles or documentary sources offer no or little evidence of this.<sup>114</sup>

Fourquin's views on the Jacquerie have been echoed by other historians, the best example being Raymond Cazelles' two-pronged attack on previous scholarship; first, he maintained that the insurgents were rural artisans; and

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<sup>112</sup> Fourquin, *Anatomy of Popular Rebellion*, pp. 76-7.

<sup>113</sup> *ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>114</sup> Mollat and Wolff, for example, while accepting the importance of non-elite leaders, talk of the 'sacred union' between the upper bourgeoisie and the people' in this period. Mollat and Wolff, *Popular Revolutions*, p. 299.

second, that the Jacquerie was organised by Étienne Marcel. Following that came another theory from David Bessen<sup>115</sup> that the mastermind behind the Jacquerie was none other than its eventual vanquisher, Charles of Navarre, Count of Evreux and son-in-law of King Jean II (or Charles the Bad, as history has remembered him):

The Navarrese were sympathetic or tolerant<sup>116</sup> of the Jacques, as long as their actions were directed against Navarre's enemies. Once the violence of the Jacques could not be controlled and threatened the position of the Navarrese and the Parisians, the rebellion was quickly crushed. The opportunity to use the initial rural revolt as a means of expressing political dissent and forcing concrete reform within the government brought disparate groups together, not in a social war but in an act of political expediency

Charles of Navarre was a significant thorn in the crown's side over the period. He represented a real dynastic rival to the regent Charles, being the grandson of Louis X, and commanded large numbers of followers in the north of France and had a history of dealings with the English crown. During the years before and after the Jacquerie, his forces took control of many of the key fortifications of the Île de France, and later that summer he would be welcomed into Paris as the city's captain. Remissions for Navarrese supporters refer to Charles the Bad as an '*ennemi mortel*'.<sup>117</sup> Yet nowhere is it suggested in any records that Navarre may have controlled the rural revolt or that the two rebellions were linked together to further distinctly Navarrese aims. Rather, Bessen constructed a narrative grounded solely on the presumption that peasant rebellions need nobles

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<sup>115</sup> 'Class War or Co-Opted Rebellion?' is a bold title, but one that Bessen shies away from in his actual argument (at least until the conclusion). Bessen's argues '[i]t seems quite likely that nobles who can be classed as supporters of Charles of Navarre were *sympathetic to and tolerant of* the non-noble rioters' (my emphasis). Bessen, 'The Jacquerie', pp. 43-59.

<sup>116</sup> This phrase, 'sympathetic and tolerant', appears several times in the article. We are asked to make the logical leap from some Navarrese being 'sympathetic and tolerant' of the Jacques to them having been in charge of it. Bessen, 'The Jacquerie' pp. 46, 48, 51, 56.

<sup>117</sup> For example, see AN, JJ90, f. 98, no. 178.



at the helm, and those nobles could have supported Navarre. There is no evidence of any peasant activity that was ‘co-opted’, but given the prevailing scholarship, this was an acceptable thesis.

When Fourquin originally argued that the nobility had a role in the Jacquerie, he encouraged historians to disregard the majority of the chronicle evidence: ‘Must we follow Froissart blindly in his repeated insistence on the hostility of the Jacques to the nobles in 1358?’<sup>118</sup> To propose that the Navarrese controlled these revolts requires the same approach: the chronicles display contempt for both the Jacques and the King of Navarre, but never once suggest that the two rebellions were interlinked. Bessen turned to the documents that show quite clearly that the Jacques were hostile to the nobles, at least in the eye of the crown: the remissions.

Yet within this supposedly supportive dataset of remissions, as Bessen admits, ‘there is no single document’ within remissions issued to both Navarrese individuals and Jacques that indicates a link between the two.<sup>119</sup> He describes a ‘sparseness of source materials describing the event’,<sup>120</sup> which is simply wrong – the vast databank of remissions provide ample evidence of the character of the violence. Many remissions give us clear descriptions of many of the rebels on either side.

We have already discussed the distinctive language that is used to describe the Jacques. They are referred to the *genz du plat-pays*: men of the countryside, described primarily as being ‘against the nobles’. There are several variations on this theme; they can also be described as ‘non-nobles against the

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<sup>118</sup> Fourquin, *Anatomy of Popular Rebellion*, p. 76.

<sup>119</sup> Bessen, ‘The Jacquerie’ p. 49.

<sup>120</sup> *ibid*, p. 53.

nobles of the realm'.<sup>121</sup> Occasionally, we see them described as 'communs' or 'people', but even Bessen concedes that this group is 'almost always counterpoised with *les nobles*'.<sup>122</sup> The revolt itself was referred to as the *commocion* or the *effroi*, giving a sense of the chaos that ensued in its wake. This language remains constant throughout all the remissions, making it simple to spot a remission for the Jacques even when surrounded by the mass of general remissions that make up the rest of the registers.

As mentioned, particular terms were used in conjunction with Navarrese pardons that we do not find in the remissions for the Jacques. The Jacquerie itself was identified as the 'time of the commotion between the men of the countryside and the nobles', and the Navarrese rebellion was identified as a separate temporal entity ('at the time that the Navarrese and other enemies of ours ... [came together] for wounding and damaging our subjects and the realm').<sup>123</sup> For example, Navarrese partisan Jehan Bugdenet and his aides were described as 'rebels against us and the crown of France';<sup>124</sup> a change of emphasis to the sole target being the regent, not the 'nobility' and 'good men' of France.<sup>125</sup> There is even a clearer example of this distinctive text in a document donating land confiscated from a Navarrese partisan:

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<sup>121</sup> Bessen argues that only a portion of the thirty-four remissions in the *Pièces Justificatives* that refer to the Jacques (again, making reference only to those fully reprinted in Luce) specifically say 'non-nobles': 'Any explanation of the usage must first note that the phrase was not always used in the precise form of *les nobles contre les nonnobles*. More frequently, the terms used instead of *nonnobles* were *les gens du plat pays*, *les habitanz* or *les peuple* of a specific region, or *les communes* of an area'. However, while it is true that some do not, they do all describe it as someone against the nobles, be that the 'people', the 'rustics' or the 'gens du play pays' *ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>122</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> 'Que comme ou temps que le navarrois et autres ennemies de mons ... pour grever et domagier noz subgies et le royaume cest assavoir au mois d'aoust dernier passe', AN, JJ90, f. 98, no. 178.

<sup>124</sup> 'rebelle de mons de nous et de la couronne de France', AN, JJ90, f. 30, no. 65.

<sup>125</sup> It should be noted, of course, that the Jacques are accused (if not as frequently) of having acted against the crown of France, but they are always indicted of actions against the nobles, whereas the Navarrese are never accused of this but only in their opposition to the crown.

for the treason and rebellion of these said matters that they had given to enemies.... and rebels against our said lord and to us with our mortal enemy the King of Navarre.<sup>126</sup>

Treason (*trahison*) is a term not used in any of the remissions for the Jacques, and has its own implications: this was an assault upon the monarch. This distinction defines the differences between these two outbreaks of unrest: the Navarrese uprising was a treasonous attack aimed at the regent, while the Jacquerie was targeted only against the nobility as a whole. Perhaps more important was the description of the Navarrese interest as a 'rebellion'. The whole nature of what constitutes a 'rebellion', and how a rebellion is defined, has coloured many debates on what constitutes popular action. Fourquin, for example, prefers rebellion to revolt in cases where the 'movements were started either by a new social group which wishes to belong to the elites, or by elites who are not satisfied with their lot'.<sup>127</sup> This distinction is not simply one for modern historians either. Cohn makes clear that this is also a distinction of contemporaries:

Statutes, criminal records, town council proceedings, and chronicles often restricted the use of the word rebellion for aristocratic challenges to the dominant power, be it a king, count or city-state, or the 'rebellion' of a subject village or city.<sup>128</sup>

Cohn contrasts this use of 'rebellion' with the *commocions* of the lower classes in France and Flanders, and indeed the Jacquerie is referred to in almost all the remissions as a *commocion*.<sup>129</sup> The French crown made a deliberate contrast

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<sup>126</sup> 'pour la traison et rebellion des dessus diz matieres qui se sont renduz ennemis.... et rebelles de nostre dit seigneur et de nous avec le roy de navarre nostre ennemi mortel' AN, JJ90, f. 198, no. 178.

<sup>127</sup> Fourquin, *Anatomy of a Popular Rebellion*, p. 116.

<sup>128</sup> Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, pp. 3-13.

<sup>129</sup> *ibid.*

between the organised *lèse-majesté* of the ‘rebellion’ and the *commocion* or *effrois* of the Jacquerie.

The whole sample of remissions tied to Navarre’s rebellion is substantial, and it is hard to make any generalisations on the exact makeup of the Navarrese force. I have found sixty remissions that specifically refer to Navarre’s rebellion using the phrases above, but there are many more documents (like confiscations of property) within the chancery series. They include actual lieutenants of Navarre, like Adam de Prusieux, a knight who had spent a ‘long time in the company and audience of the King of Navarre, our enemy’.<sup>130</sup> Also, towns that had sided with Navarre, like Paris, were pardoned, along with individual townsmen accused in complicity in the treason, like Jehan de Maours, Colart de Lille and Jacques de Rue of Amiens. All of these groups of remissions used the same vocabulary, described above. The most interesting sub-bracket of these remissions are local villagers who, in August, either took up arms and committed crimes against the allied troops of the Navarrese and English, or in fear for their lives acceded to whatever these enemies of the crown demanded. This sample includes priests like Jehan Bugnedit<sup>131</sup> and Jehan de Pris (who was also the curé of his village),<sup>132</sup> carpenters like Jehan Magneut<sup>133</sup> and even butchers<sup>134</sup>. The remissions for these individuals, rural men who were involved in fighting in the summer of 1358, make no mention of the Jacquerie whatsoever – peasants resisting or joining the Navarrese rebellion were considered distinct from their neighbours who had rampaged against the nobility two months earlier.

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<sup>130</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 129, no. 376.

<sup>131</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 71, no. 133, ‘Jehan Bugnedet, prestre esperant’.

<sup>132</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 98, no. 177 ‘Jehan de Pris, prestre cure de la ville de Foilloy’.

<sup>133</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 100, no. 187.

<sup>134</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 82, no. 149.

Faced with remissions that clearly show the two revolts to be distinct, Bessen based his argument on scant threads within individual remissions: in this case, the remissions for urban centres, and two documents issued to individuals within the centre of the rural revolt. However, neither of these groups suggest anything conclusive. Bessen first argued that the involvement of towns loyal to Navarre within the revolt proved that Navarrese partisans controlled the revolt. Although these towns may have risen up, there is nothing to suggest they were directly linked to the Jacquerie. For example, Bessen lists Paris as one of the towns that had Navarrese support, and that took part in the Jacquerie. Yet, against Cazelles's argument that the two were the same,<sup>135</sup> every chronicle and remission states that the Parisian revolt and the Jacquerie were entirely separate, as we will discuss presently. There is absolutely no evidence that towns like Rouen or Laon were involved in the Jacquerie from either the chronicles or the remissions, and as will be argued later, neither is there much evidence of involvement at Meaux. Only three of Bessen's pro-Navarrese towns are linked by remissions to the Jacquerie: Amiens, Montdidier and Senlis. In the case of Amiens, it is problematic to describe the town as having supported the Jacques:

Charles, etc., Let it be known to all present and future that in times past the aldermen [*esquevins*] and commune of the city of Amiens have been and, (we continue to hope) always will be good, loyal, and true in their obedience as subjects to my lord, to us, and to the crown of France. And they have realised that they have incurred our indignation for what has happened at several assemblies of the people of the three estates, which we found offensive, even if they were encouraged and advised by some who claimed at the time to be members of our council. ... In addition, during this present year, when we left Compiègne for Corbie, accompanied by many armed guards, we wrote to the mayor, many leaders of the guild and others of the city, ordering them to come to Corbie to talk with us. They did not obey or heed our command but sent us envoys, suggesting that we should go to the city of Amiens and that our men should go there unarmed. They said they feared the noblemen in

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<sup>135</sup> See Cazelles, 'The Jacquerie', pp. 74-84.

our troops, because they heard some of these persons make certain threats ... At the request of the common people of the Beauvaisis and without our permission, the mayor, aldermen and the commune [of Amiens] sent their own people out [to join] the common people of the Beauvaisis, who had just begun to assemble. In addition, many individuals of Amiens went by their own will, although it was said that those who were sent only went four, five or six leagues outside the city and its environs and then immediately returned... Moreover, in all the assemblies with the other *bonnes villes* of the realm, they requested the King of Navarre to be freed, hoping, it is said, that he would be good and loyal to my lord, to us, and to the crown of France ... Also, they put on the hoods, part blue and red, as a sign of their unity and alliance with the city of Paris... Moreover, after the treaty made between us and the said King of Navarre, when we were with our troops at the bridge of Charenton, they agreed that this King should be the leader, because the city of Paris had written to them that it had been among the things agreed to and negotiated between us and this King.<sup>136</sup>

Whatever rebellion the Amienois may have been involved in, they were part of a general backdrop of sedition and confusion against the crown, rather than as some orchestrated master-plan to unite townsmen and peasants in the Navarrese cause. All the allegations of rebellion were treated distinctly; refusing the crown's demands, sending men to the Jacques, pledging allegiance to Navarre and showing unity with the Parisians were all different crimes. Clearly, there is confusion about the involvement with the Jacques: men were sent out to the countryside, then called back, and others joined of their own accord. Cohn links this account to that of the *Chronique Normande*, which records that 'the mayor of Amiens also sent forth a hundred men of the commune, but the town council disapproved and recalled them. They returned without more or less doing any harm to the nobles'<sup>137</sup>. Amiens cannot be used as an example of a Navarrese

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<sup>136</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 79, no. 239, reprinted in Secousse, pp. 97-9, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 197-8.

<sup>137</sup> *La Chronique normande du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, ed A. and E. Molinier *SHF* (Paris, 1882), p.181, and, for discussion, Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, p. 169. This chronicle, written by a Norman noble, was composed sometime after 1372, although whether the work is original or a compilation of other chronicles is still disputed. In the case of the Jacquerie, the account is almost exactly the same as Jean de Noyal's Flemish chronicle, the so-called 'Version non normande', ed. J. Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Istore et croniques de Flandres* (Brussels, 1896) vol. 2, pp.85-6. See Molinier, *Les sources de l'histoire*, vol. 4, pp. 23-5.

town's control of the Jacquerie; the municipal elite could not agree whether a relatively minor force of 100 men should go or not, and the general uproar only led to instability within the town. This small force, that did not reach six leagues from their home city before being recalled, could not have dictated the Jacques' agenda. Perhaps Amiens was indicative of how confusing politics was in the rebellions in northern France, with the city attempting to increase its power through involvement in all three great rebellions; it was certainly not indicative of strong links between the peasants and the municipal elites.

The same can be seen in Montdidier. Despite the inhabitants receiving a remission for participation, their mayor simultaneously sought grace for having hung a thieving cleric during the rebellion.<sup>138</sup> He was not involved in the rest of the revolt. Others of the urban elite seemed to be at odds with the rebels; the inhabitants attacked the nobles of Montdidier, and long past the revolt these knights held a grudge against the townsmen.<sup>139</sup> In Senlis, townsmen evicted the nobles from their houses.<sup>140</sup> If the top-ranks of the urban society were pro-Navarrese, but those involved with the Jacques were fighting against those top ranks, then surely the insurgents were anti-Navarrese?

None of these remissions mentioned Navarre, and more importantly, the agency is granted not to townsmen, but rather to the 'men of the countryside'. A ragtag collection of burghers joined the mass of peasantry in their uprising; they did not orchestrate a revolt that the peasantry then joined. All the chronicle and

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<sup>138</sup> AN, JJ106, f. 121, no. 393.

<sup>139</sup> The remission for the habitants recorded that 'aucuns des diz nobles pourroient avoir malivolence ou hayne aux dessus diz [habitants]', AN, JJ86, f. 154, no. 437.

<sup>140</sup> See AN, JJ86, f. 127, no. 421.

remission evidence indicates that urban support was, at most, ancillary to the real insurgents, the men of the countryside.<sup>141</sup>

Apart from these towns, Bessen alleges that two remissions show a link between Navarre and the Jacquerie, but neither shows any definitive connection. The first was issued to a Jacque, Jehan Bernier. After the defeat at Clermont, he was offered 'letters of commission' from the King of Navarre:

'this [Jehan] Bernier of Villers Saint Pol (Oise), acting in fear and on pain of death, was with those [men of the countryside] through the said terror and was for many days in their company, until this Guillaume Cale, calling himself captain of the Beauvoisis, and many others of his adherents and accomplices were executed at Clermont thus putting an end to their mad enterprise, and so it happened that, because these certain nobles of our realm, enemies of the said countryside, for the stated causes, were running amock and causing destruction for a time to this said land and the goods of the fields, some people from the said land, of Senlis and of Villiers, and of the neighbouring surroundings of Clermont and Beauvoisin, came before to the King of Navarre (then captain, rebellious and hostile to the said realm, to our Lord the King<sup>142</sup> and to us<sup>143</sup>) and obtained from him certain letters of commission by which the said Jehan Bernier, of Villers, was made captain there and guard of the countryside in [Navarre's] absence so that the people and commons could work there and cultivate the lands and reap and secure the goods of the fields. The said Bernier refused this said commission for the space of around a week, and finally, against his will and wishes and by constraint, he accepted it and went to stay in the said town (*ville*) of Senlis, without leaving it and without making use of the said commission, saving that he wrote to many villages (*villes*) of the countryside asking that they would come to him in the said town (*ville*) to see and plan how they could begin resisting the said [nobles'] rampage ...'<sup>144</sup>

<sup>141</sup> This will be expanded upon in the Chapter IV, 'Mapping the Revolt'.

<sup>142</sup> This refers to King Jean II.

<sup>143</sup> This refers to the Dauphin Charles.

<sup>144</sup> 'le quel Bernier de Villers Saint Pol, aient horreur, doubte et paour de mort, demoura avec eulx aus diz effrois et fu par plusieurs jours en leur compaignie, jusque à ce que Guillaume Cale, soi portant capitaine du dit pais de Beauvoisin et plusieurs autres ses adherens et complices furent mis à mort à Clermont et descheirent de leur fole emprise, et il soit ainsi que, pour ce aucuns nobles du dit royaume, malveillans et ennemis du dit plat pais, pour les causes dessus dictes, courroient et gastoeint pour le temps de lors icelui pais, et les biens des champs, plusieurs personnes du dit pais, tant de Senlis comme de Villiers, voisins d'environs Clermont en Beauvoisin, venissent a present par devers le Roy de Navarre, a donc capitaine d'icellui et nostre rebelle et malveillant du dit royaume, de monseigneur et de nous, et obtenissent de li certaines lettres de comission par lesquelles le dit Jehan Bernier, de Villers, fu commis de par lui capitaine et garde du dit pais, lui absent, afin que le peuple et common d'icelui peust labourrer et cultiver les terres et ouster et mettre à sauveté les biens des champs, laquelle commission le dit Bernier



First, it is important to note that Bernier was not a Navarrese agent; rather, he was a Jacques who refused a commission to protect the countryside against the nobles' rampage. The key example of Bessen's argument never accepted the commission from Navarre, even under duress. It was, of course, in Bernier's best interests to downplay the relationship with Navarre; perhaps he had been eager to help at the time but there is no evidence in the remission to suggest this was the case. Moreover, Bessen argued that Navarre was instrumental in the organisation of the Jacques, selecting targets and driving the programme of destruction from the very start. Yet the only example Bessen has, even if we believe that Bernier accepted the commission willingly, happened *after Clermont*, once the Jacques had been defeated and the emphasis had shifted to the nobles' *chevauchée* of the countryside. Far from being involved in turning the Jacques to a Navarrese agenda, Bernier abandoned the Navarrese only once the Jacques had been defeated. Navarre was approached by the peasantry who wanted calm restored to the countryside in the wake of his retaliatory attack; this was an attempted truce between peasants and their enemy, not an indication of a long-agreed pact.

Bessen refers to just one other remission, and this one makes no reference to collusion with Navarre. Rather, Bessen believes the man to have been linked previously to the Navarrese cause:

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refusa par l'espace de huit jours ou environ, et finalement, contre son gré et volenté et par contrainte, la receut et s'en a la demourer en la dicte ville de Senlis, sens soi partir ne sens executier ou user en aucune manière de la dicte commission, fors tant seulement qu'il escript à plusieurs villes du dit plat pais que il venissent à lui en la dicte ville pour veoir et orderener comment on pourroit mettre remède et resister aus diz courreux ...' AN, JJ86, f. 133, no. 387, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 276-8.

Charles, ...let it be known to all that Germain de Reveillon, inhabitant of Sachy-le-Grant in the Beauvoisin (Oise), waged retainer<sup>145</sup> of the Count of Montfort, during the commotion or terror of the men of the countryside of the Beauvais against the nobles of the land and by constraint of the said people and their captain, rode out with them for three days or so in their company to Mello, Pont-Saint Maxence and Montataire, and that on the last of these three days, when the said people were in arms and fired up, on the hill of Montataire, they requested of that said Germain that he be their captain in the absence of their general captain, who was then in Ermenonville. The said Germain excused himself several times for many causes and reasons. Finally, because he did not wish to obey their request and to their wishes, they seized his hood injuriously, and said that he must be their captain for half-a-day and one night, whether he like it or not, and they intended to pull him off his horse, and with that pulled out several swords with the intention of cutting off his head if he did not obey them. In fear and to avoid the threat of death, he became their captain for half-a-day and a night only, at the said place of Mello<sup>146</sup>, where they encountered the men of the King of Navarre, who at the time were forcing themselves upon the said land of the Beauvaisis to destroy and pillage there. There, at the said Mello, Germain left and returned to his house as quickly as he could, and he did so without having caused any damage, nor in any other manner setting fires, robbing nor killing anyone, nor doing anything else that was wrong. However, what is worse, the said nobles went on to burn, steal, ravage and assaulted all the said supplicant and all his movable and inherited goods, and he suffered losses to the value of three thousand *moutons*, or thereabouts, and he has nothing left but his wife and his children ... he was a *homme de labour* who cultivated and sent his goods to safety.<sup>147</sup>

<sup>145</sup> I have translated *familier* as a waged retainer of the Count. Germain was listed as a *homme de labour*, and he had 3,000 *moutons* worth of property, so this would suggest he was a landowner of some standing. Yet a *familier* would not be a courtier or a high-ranking associate of the Count of Montfort; there is no reason to believe he was part of the Count's inner circle, or shared the Count's political views.

<sup>146</sup> Mello was the hometown of Guillaume Cale, the alleged 'leader' of the Jacquerie.

<sup>147</sup> 'Charles, ainsné fils du roy de France, regent le royaume, duc de Normandie et dalphin de Viennois, savoir faisons à tous, presenz et à venir, à nous avoir esté exposé par Germain de Reveillon, demourant à Sachy-le-Grant en Beauvoisin, familier du conte de Montfort, que, comme, en la commocion ou esmeute du peuple du plait pais de Beauvoisins n'a gaires faite contre les nobles dudit pais, ledit Germain, par contrainte dudit peuple et de leur capitaine, lors eust chevauchié par trois jours ou environ en leur compagnie à Mello, à Pont-Saint Maxence, et à Montataire, à la derreine des quelz trois journées, ledit peuple estant en armes et esmeu, sur la montaigne de Montatiare, eust requis audit Germain qu'il vousist pour lors estre leur capitaine en l'absence de leur capitaine général, qui lors estoit devant Ermenonville, lequel Germain s'en excusa par plusiers fois et pour plusieurs causes et raisons. Et finablement, pour ce qu'il ne vouloit obéir à leur requeste et à leur volenté, le pristrent par son chaperon injurieusement, en disant qu'il seroit leur capitaine pour demi jour et une nuit, vousist ou non, et le voudrent sachier jus dessus son cheval, et avec ce sachèrent plusieurs espées sur lui pour li coper la teste s'il n'eust obéy à eulx. Lequel, pour doute et pour eschever au péril de la mort, fu leur capitaine demi jour et une nuit tant seullement, au dit lieu Mello, encontre les gens du roy de Navarre, qui lors s'efforcoient d'entre ou dit pais de Beauvoisins pour icellui grever et gaster, duquel liey de Mellou le dit Germain se departi et s'en reppaira en sa maison si tost comme il post eschaper, senz ce qu'il ait autrement chevauchi'e, ne en aucune manière bouté feu, pillé ne occis personne, ne meffait en aucune manière autrement; mais, qui pis est, depuis, les dis nobles ont ars, pillé,

Obviously, this was a complex remission with many sections worthy of comment, from Germain de Reveillon claiming around 3,000 *moutons* of damage, to his appointment as captain (if only for half a day and night!) in the absence of the *general capitaine*.<sup>148</sup> Germain was linked to nobility, but was also a *homme de labour* with substantial holdings. Yet most interestingly for us is the reference to Navarre: the encounter with the Navarrese who were pillaging the land seems to be the turning point for Germain. Presumably after his force was defeated, he escaped home.

This remission suggests antagonism between Navarre and the peasants, but Bessen does not mention this. Rather, Bessen only remarks that Germain de Reveillon was a *familiar* of the count of Montfort, Jean de Boulogne, who Bessen claims had supported the Navarrese cause in 1355. He supplies no evidence that Jean of Boulogne was still allied to the Navarrese cause, or that he showed anything but loyalty to the crown in this period after receiving grace. To make the logical leap that it was ‘very likely’ that Germain ‘adhered to the rebel’s cause’ is stretched.<sup>149</sup> Bessen argued that had he not supported Navarre, he would have left Boulogne’s service, yet if anything the fact he stayed in his service once Boulogne had re-pledged himself to the crown indicates the

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gasté et essillé audit suppliant tous ses biens meubles et héritages, et li ont fait dommage jusques à la value de trois mille moutons, ou environ, et ne li est rienz demouré fors sa femme et sa enfanz ... comme il soit homme de labour qui a à cueillir et mettre à sauveté ses biens’, AN, JJ86, f. 102, no. 308, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 261-3.

<sup>148</sup> This will be discussed in more depth later, but there is reason to believe that this *general capitaine* might be Guillaume Cale, the captain made famous by the chroniclers. The three villages mentioned here that Germain takes control of – Mello, Pont-Saint-Maxence and Montataire – are all contained within the very small region in which we find other evidence of Cale (Mello is in fact Cale’s home village, and one other remission mentions Cale being in Montataire). Others have taken the reference to mean that Germain took control of the whole force of the Jacques; but there is no evidence to suggest he led any other than the three villages.

<sup>149</sup> Bessen, ‘The Jacquerie’, p. 52.

opposite.<sup>150</sup> Even then, one wonders what his master's loyalty mattered anyway, considering that Germain was involved in a bloody battle against the nobility. Yet most importantly, the remission details exactly how the peasants and the Navarrese met – as enemies, not as friends. At the end of Germain's time as a Jacque, he, along with his comrades, faced vengeance at the hands of their supposed organiser, Charles of Navarre.

These two remissions offer scant evidence of a link between Navarre and the Jacques: the remissions combined indicate one individual who was offered a commission by Navarre once the Jacquerie had ended, the other for an individual related to a Count who had once showed loyalty to Charles the Bad, three or more years before the Jacquerie. Neither suggests any link during the rebellion itself, and neither indicates that the crown considered these individuals Navarrese supporters. The only time either individual came into contact with Navarre during their stay with the Jacques was on the fields at Clermont, where they faced first-hand a crushing defeat at the hands of Navarre and his companions, or afterwards, when Navarre's men were ravaging the countryside in retaliation.

No other document for either the Jacques or the Navarrese pardoned in the wake of 1358 mentions any link between the two rebellions. Bessen only used remissions for the Jacques taken from Luce's *Pièces Justificatives*,<sup>151</sup> but there is a large sample available especially as regards Navarrese partisans. For example,

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<sup>150</sup> After initially stating that Germain 'was at least uncommitted to the Navarrese cause', Bessen then transmutes this into 'the evidence strongly suggests that a Navarrese supporter participated in the Jacquerie', *ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>151</sup> Bessen does not reference Luce's *Pièces Justificatives* as the source of his data. This in itself might not be a problem, but not recognising this in turn does not recognise the slightly idiosyncratic nature of Luce's collection, obviously in its skewed sample, as mentioned earlier, but also in its tendency to only extract certain sections of the remission, and occasionally to change from straight transcription to a summary by Luce himself.

rather than give a sense of the scale of the documentation, Bessen misrepresents the sample:

Other cases of Pro-Navarrese individuals who took an active role in the Jacquerie have not yet been identified... This paucity of evidence can be attributed to the fact that most Navarrese were pardoned by means of a blanket pardon, issued either by a treaty or by a letter, covering all of their unspecified crimes and rebellion.<sup>152</sup>

Of course, not only were the Navarrese pardoned by a blanket pardon, but so were the followers of Étienne Marcel and the Jacques themselves.<sup>153</sup> Moreover, Navarre's men also received individual pardons, exactly the same as with the Parisians and Jacques. Bessen cannot find any individuals with links to the Jacques in the remissions referring to the Navarrese, and his only examples, the two quoted above, come from the Jacques themselves, wrong-headed as they may be. Yet chroniclers and remissions do testify to animosity between the peasants and Navarre.

First, the viciousness of the Navarrese retaliation in itself indicates substantial animosity between the two groups. Good examples are the remissions that Bessen uses, both of which describe the execution of Cale and many of the rebels at Clermont by Navarre and his troops. It was undoubtedly bloody – many were executed at Clermont, where the *Chronique Normande* estimates 800 were beheaded. Bessen argued that the Navarrese had stepped in only because of 'the bourgeois-Navarrese abhorrence at the use of vicious brutality'<sup>154</sup> by the peasants, yet the remissions and chronicles both testify that

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<sup>152</sup> Bessen, 'The Jacquerie', p. 53.

<sup>153</sup> For the Parisians, see AN, JJ86, f. 80, n. 240, reprinted in Cohn, *PP*, p. 179-81. There is no specific general pardon for the Jacques, but many remissions make reference to a general amnesty: for example, 'we [the crown] desired and decreed that all the nobles give remission to and pardon the men of the countryside as well as to those of the nobility', JJ98, f. 84, n. 252, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, p. 224, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 191-2.

<sup>154</sup> *ibid.*, p. 56.

the viciousness of Navarrese retaliation was even more brutal than the Jacquerie that came before it.<sup>155</sup>

Second, there is evidence that even before the battle at Clermont the Jacques would have considered conspiracy with Navarre an offence. The remission to Mathieu de Leurel, issued for his part in the execution of Jean Bernier (a different Bernier than Bessen's example who refused the Navarrese commission<sup>156</sup>), has been discussed already, but it does again provide insight into the animosity held towards Navarre:

Around the time of this feast day [of Corpus Christi], Jean Bernier, a non-noble, was allegedly accused of treason, for letters from the King of Navarre were found on him, and he was commonly known for such deeds in the region. For this, he was led to Guillaume Cale ... Guillaume handed him over to Étienne du Wes, the captain of the village of Montataire, to be put to death, if he and the villagers judged that he deserved it. Informed about [Bernier's] life and reputation and in the presence of two or three hundred people of this village and the surrounding countryside, this Étienne had him led barefoot in his shirt to the cross in front of the palace of these monks of Montataire (Oise), where he commanded Jehan le Charon to execute and put him to death; the command was obeyed.<sup>157</sup>

Thus, the Jacques meted out punishment for collusion with Navarre, and their sentence was death. The description of the execution – which is as detailed an image of an execution that we find in the sources – indicates that it was a brutal and public spectacle. There was dramatic capital to be gained in the ceremonial murder of a Navarrese agent.

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<sup>155</sup> See the Chapter 4, section on 'Retaliation'.

<sup>156</sup> Notably, the previous remission that Bessen relies upon also concerned a Jehan Bernier of Montataire who was suspected of being a Navarrese partisan. However, the Bernier referred to here was executed before Cale's death at Clermont, while the former clearly lived long past Clermont (which even mentions Cale's death) and only had relationship with Navarre after the Jacquerie. Although it seems like an unlikely coincidence, Jehan Bernier was a common enough name within the remission sample for us to assume that these two individuals were different.

<sup>157</sup> AN, JJ98, f. 84, no. 252, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 333-5, tr. Cohn in *PP*, pp. 191-2.

Secondly, the premise of the trial may have centred around Jehan's possession of the letters, but emphasis was also placed on Jehan's previous character. Much like the remissions, which took into account a supplicant's previous good name and renown when passing judgement, Bernier's execution was because he was commonly known for associating with Navarre in this region. In the trial itself, it was '[Bernier's] life and reputation' that convinced the villagers of his guilt. The importance placed on the fact that Bernier was a known Navarrese sympathiser strongly suggests that the Jacques were well aware of those within their midst who had ties to the King of Navarre.

It was the people of Montataire who passed judgement on Bernier. Two to three hundred came out for the execution, and Cale placed Bernier's fate in the hands of the villagers, not just their captain. There was great public antipathy towards those who sympathised with Navarre – collusion with Navarre was not just considered a crime by Étienne du Wes, but also by the villagers in the Île de France.

Considering that Bessen believed that Navarrese followers had infiltrated the higher echelons of Jacques high-command, and pressured the leaders into following a Navarrese agenda, it is telling that Guillaume Cale himself, the fabled 'leader' of the movement, clearly considered Bernier's crime worthy of execution. This antipathy towards the Navarrese within the movement gainsays Bessen's suggestion that the 'heads' of the Jacquerie favoured Navarre. At every level of the Jacquerie – Guillaume Cale, the local village leader and the villagers themselves – conspiracy with Navarre was considered a capital crime.

One remission is not representative of an entire sample, nor do we know if the reaction of the villagers of Montataire to this Navarrese agent would have

been replicated across the north of France. Yet one remission that explicitly mentions Navarre (and that read wrongly) is all that Bessen has suggested to link the two groups. This remission indicates a strong anti-Navarre feeling before the attack in Clermont, and demonstrates that opinion within the Jacques' high-command and the countryside was largely hostile.

While negative evidence is usually not the best way to proceed, the almost complete absence of evidence within over 250 remissions issued to either the Jacques or the Navarrese partisans that suggests complicity between the two, is impressive. All evidence indicates the two movements were considered entirely distinct: different language is used to describe the 'rebellion' and the 'commotion' respectively, different clusters of remissions, and different descriptions of the individuals involved. The only remission that mentions a link between Navarre and the Jacques prior to Navarre's slaughter of the peasantry at Clermont indicates that conspiracy with Navarre was punishable by death!

So, if there is no evidence, where does this assertion come from? First, Bessen's studies focussed on Navarre, who was undoubtedly aided by the chaos of 1358. Navarre's eagerness to end the rebellion shows he certainly did not approve of the actions of the Jacques. Idle speculation apart, the theory is born from the same roots that all such theories of the nobility manipulating the peasantry: that peasants in the Middle Ages were incapable of organising themselves and achieving the successes they did in the initial stages of the uprising. As I will show in Chapter 6, the remissions shows in great depth that the peasants did organise themselves, appointed their own leaders and selecting



their own objectives. The evidence from the letters of remission is incontrovertable, and their silence is weighty: the Navarrese rebellion and the peasantry's commotion were distinct phenomena in the eyes of the French crown.

## MARCEL

It can still be called doubtful, in spite of the arguments and the evidence produced here for the first time, that Marcel was the instigator of the Jacquerie; it is certain however that, once the first impulse began, the provost of merchants assisted the movement in the most active manner.<sup>158</sup>

The idea that Étienne Marcel was behind the rising of the Jacques is not new. Siméon Luce first put it forward at the end of the nineteenth century, and made it central to his thesis on the *Jacquerie*. Yet Luce admitted that the evidence was sketchy. He had only snippets of chronicle evidence for support: for example, one chronicle's statement that Guillaume Cale 'sent some of his wisest and most notable men to see the provost of merchants in Paris and wrote to him that he was at his service ... this filled the leader of the three estates with joy ... and they were all ready to give him help'.<sup>159</sup> Yet this report certainly does not suggest that Étienne Marcel instigated the Jacquerie, and rather suggests that any contact came after the start of the Jacquerie and just before the Navarrese attack.<sup>160</sup> Luce's argument did not hold well: two years later, Flammermont

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<sup>158</sup> Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 105.

<sup>159</sup> *Chron. premiers Valois*, p. 72, tr. Cohn, *PP* (2005), p. 160.

<sup>160</sup> Luce's other example is equally inconclusive: it is a quote from an anonymous fragment of chronicle reprinted by Secousse, which states 'the Parisians, as said, in the absence of the Regent, began an incursion against the fortified castle the Louvre; they then pillaged and stole all that they found in the Hotel de Ville de Paris, and they invited, by letter and order, all the villes, all the burghs and villages of the realm, to revolt and to take arms against the nobles: this is what made the men of the people, in the Beauvaisis and in many other places in France, rise up where

launched a stinging rebuke. Luce's interest in the attack on Meaux clearly affected the rest of his analysis, from the argument itself, to the composition of his *Pièces Justificatives*: nineteen of the documents are not issued to Jacques at all, but instead to Parisians and men of Meaux involved in the attack on the Marché.

One notable historian, Raymond Cazelles, took up Luce's emphasis although he fails to credit Luce's work. Nonetheless, all Cazelles's references come from documents that Luce published in his *Pièces Justificatives*, and his general thesis follows Luce's:

Coming immediately after the affair at Saint-Leu, this coalition of towns against their neighbouring castles must have required some planning and it is impossible to believe they happened by chance. In his famous letter to the people of Ypres, written two months after the Jacquerie, Étienne Marcel only disassociated himself from the excesses of these actions in the Beauvaisis. He did not deny a previous understanding with the *échevinages* to weaken the nobility by destroying their castles. I am even inclined to think that the planning by towns must have been some time before 28 May and the fighting at Saint-Leu.<sup>161</sup>

Not only does this passage indicate that Cazelles believed the revolt to have been led by Marcel and planned in advance, but it also grants prime agency in the Jacquerie to the 'towns'.<sup>162</sup> It is a 'coalition' of urban centres that forms the core of the revolt. In this new reading of events, townsmen of Senlis 'accepted the help of the Jacques' in attacking castles, rather than townsmen of Senlis joining

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a great number of nobles were executed'. This may well be suggestive, if taken in isolation from the many chronicles that suggest no link, but similarly, it is certainly not 'incontrovertible fact', as Luce calls it. There is no other evidence to support this fragment. More importantly than disagreeing with other chroniclers, it disagrees with the mass of remissions that indicate that the Parisian revolt and the Jacquerie were distinct. Luce, *Jacquerie*, p. 103.

<sup>161</sup> Cazelles, 'The Jacquerie', pp. 79-80.

<sup>162</sup> In *Société politique, noblesse et couronne*, Cazelles' section on the Jacquerie is almost exactly the same as his article in the English Rising, but he includes a map with arrows spreading outwards from towns to show the revolt 'spreading' from urban centres, yet there is no evidence at all to support these assertions; rather, it is simply a visualisation of Cazelles' theories on the revolt. R. Cazelles, *Société politique, noblesse et couronne sous les règnes de Jean II le Bon et Charles V* (Paris: Genève-Paris, 1982).

the Jacques in their offensive.<sup>163</sup> As innovative as this reading might be, it is also unfounded, and contradicts the entire body of remissions that Cazelles claimed to have studied. Cazelles must even admit that other ‘coalition’ members like Amiens and Montdidier only ‘helped’ the Jacques in destroying the targets.<sup>164</sup> Cazelles argues that these towns led the assaults, yet must concede that they only offered occasional support – as mentioned earlier, the Amienois’s paltry force of one hundred men were recalled before they got four leagues from the city due to an internal dispute. Moreover, the odd instances where the townsmen were involved are outnumbered by the numerous remissions where village communities committed attacks.<sup>165</sup>

The idea that the Jacquerie was composed of townsmen will be disproved later in this thesis,<sup>166</sup> where it will be shown that instead the rebels were predominantly men of the countryside and the insurgent unit was the local village. It will also be shown that rather than being manipulated by elites, it was led by peasant leaders who had clear ideas of objectives.<sup>167</sup> Rather, this chapter will deal with the one specific allegation that Cazelles made which has gained some credence – that the Jacquerie was organised and manipulated by the Parisian provost of merchants, Étienne Marcel.

When we look at the remissions issued to Parisian rebels who had taken part in the revolt of 1358, we see with clarity that this uprising and the Jacquerie were

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<sup>163</sup> *ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>164</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>165</sup> Urban involvement in the revolt will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, ‘Mapping the Revolt’.

<sup>166</sup> Antagonism towards towns will be dealt with in Chapter 4 (‘Mapping the Revolt’), and the rural makeup of the rebels will be dealt with in Chapter 5 (‘The Composition of the Jacquerie’). The village as the focal point of the insurgency will be discussed in Chapter 6 (‘Peasant Communities’).

<sup>167</sup> See ‘Leadership’, in Chapter 6.

not linked.<sup>168</sup> The remissions for those involved in Marcel's revolt can be separated into two distinct groups. First, general remissions were issued (and reissued) to the Parisians for their part in the rebellion. A second set were then issued for those who were excluded from the general pardon. These individuals seem to have missed the opportunity, generally by not having reported to court within three days of the original amnesty. In many of these cases, the individuals had fled. These men therefore represent an exception to the vast majority who were forgiven in the general amnesty. That said, there is nothing to suggest that these individuals' stories are not representative, and they serve to give a flavour of the Parisian revolt.

Apart from the general remission to the Parisians, and several pardons issued multiple times to the same individual,<sup>169</sup> there are twenty-two Parisiens granted pardons by the crown in the wake of the revolt.<sup>170</sup> Eighteen of these were issued in August 1358, in the wake of the rebellion and directly after the original general pardons were transcribed. Three more were issued in October of the same year, and one more in November. Despite the vast literature on Étienne Marcel, no-one has ever attempted to catalogue these documents.<sup>171</sup> They do, however, point to a new understanding of the Parisian revolt.

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<sup>168</sup> For the purposes of this table I have separated those Parisians pardoned for involvement in the revolt of 1358 with those pardoned for being part of Parisian-Navarrese alliance between June and July. These are pardoned in November 1358 at the start of the register JJ90, specifically between no. 1 and no. 32. Other historians, notably S.H. Cuttler, combined these two groups for analysing Parisian treason; however, my intention here is to discuss the initial revolt, not the political machinations that followed it. See S.H. Cuttler, *The Law of Treason and Treason Trials in Later Medieval France* (CUP: Cambridge, 1981), p. 166.

<sup>169</sup> For example, AN, JJ86, no. 196 and no. 209 are both pardons issued to Nicholas le Flament. There is also examples when substantially different pardons are issued, one for rebelling against the crown in 1358, and secondly for treason with Navarre in the months that followed, as for Nicolas de la Court Nemie, AN, JJ86, f. 72, no. 220 and JJ90, f. 38, no. 78.

<sup>170</sup> Not included in this sample is Jean Marcel, Étienne's brother, who was accepted by the crown as having no part in the rebellion. AN, JJ86, f. 65, no. 194.

<sup>171</sup> Cuttler includes a list of 'those pardoned individually' for being 'adherents' to Étienne Marcel, including those who were pardoned for the later conspiracy between Marcel and Navarre. However, this list seems confused: there are several individuals missing (specifically Étienne de

Table VI. Names and occupations of Parisian rebels

REMISSION	INDIVIDUAL	OCCUPATION
86, 206	Pierre de Lagny	
86, 209	Nicolas le Flament	Draper
86, 214	Guillaume le Fèvre	Fish-seller
86, 216	Jacques du Chatel	
86, 220	Nicolas de la Court Nemie	<i>garde de la monnaies de Rouen</i>
86, 230	Jean Hersent	
86, 233	Laurens de Veullettes	<i>Lingier</i>
86, 238	Jehan de Monteux	Knight
86, 248	Henry de Chastillon	Knight
86, 252	Guillot Bonnachet	Man at arms
86, 253	Jehan Fagnet	Merchant
86, 271	Gieffron le Flament	
86, 272	Thomas Gascogne	
86, 278	Étienne de la Fontaine	Argentier du roy (Royal Master of the Robes)
86, 282	Étienne de Resnie	Captain of many soldiers <sup>172</sup>
86, 285	Phillipe de Jeurre	Especier
86, 289	Jehan Pisdoe	
86, 292	Maron Pisdoe	
86, 371	Jehan de Lyon	Sergeant of Arms
86, 390	Guillaume d'Augeuil	
86, 519	Salemon de la Tour	poor archer and miserable person
86, 527	Jehan de Saint-Leu	curé of Ste Genevieve

As with Navarrese sympathisers, each of these remissions issued to Marcel's supporters used distinctive language to identify the Parisian rebellion. For example, this is the remission issued to Guillaume le Fevre:<sup>173</sup>

Charles... let it be known to all present and future that at the instigation, prompting and encouragement of the late Étienne Marcel former provost

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Resnie, Jehan de Monteux, Salemon de la Tour and Jehan Hersent). It could be that Cuttler was using a different definition of 'adherents' rather than just anyone involved in the revolt, but he does not make this clear. *The Law of Treason*, p. 166.

<sup>172</sup> The following remission (AN, JJ86, f. 93, no. 283) is for a number of men who 'venuz en armes' to the Marché of Meaux: it is possible that these were the soldiers who Étienne du Resnie was captain of. However, as these men were not involved in the Parisian revolt, they are not included in this table.

<sup>173</sup> Interestingly, this remission is issued twice in the same month. Exactly why is unclear, although the second remission does start off by making reference to the previous remission before repeating it word for word. Secousse references this second version (AN, JJ86, f. 85, no. 255) but the text he uses is in fact identical to the first version (AN, JJ86, f. 69, no. 214).

of merchants of the city of Paris, many of his allies, followers, collaborators and accomplices said and maintained that during the whole time they governed the good city of Paris and its surrounding countryside, all that they did was for a good end – the ransom and deliverance of our above mentioned lord (King Jean II) – for the public good, and for the great number of good people and faithful commoners of this city of Paris. Without the authority of our lord or of us and unaware of the great acts of treason and plotting, conspiracies, and other crimes which this provost and his accomplices did in secret, they resolved and strove to go against our lord, ourselves and his royal majesty, agreeing to rebel and take as their leader the King of Navarre, to make alliances with him and the English and other enemies of the crown of France. They wore a silver buckle enamelled half in vermillion, half in blue, with ‘to a good end’ written underneath it. And they wore parti-coloured hoods as a sign to live or die with this provost, against all others, and took up arms against us to take away our royal prerogatives, that is, [they decided] to be rebels [*rebelles*] against our lord and us, and to say abusive words against us personally and commit many other crimes, misdemeanours and felonies against the royal majesty. By these means, they wished the people to believe that we would order our soldiers to destroy and rob them, that we would abandon the city along with other cities and surrounding districts within the realm of France to these soldiers, and that we had absolutely no intention of delivering and paying the ransom for our lord, although these things are self-evidently false. For these crimes and felonies or some of them, Guillaume le Fèvre, fishmonger at Les Halles in Paris and bourgeois of the city, who, it is said, recently fled and is now absent [had been charged].<sup>174</sup>

This example indicates the precise language that the remissions used to describe Marcel’s revolt. One distinguishing characteristic of this rebellion was the parti-coloured hoods (recorded in another remission as half red, half blue)<sup>175</sup> worn by the rebels, which was repeated in several remissions and represented an important symbol of what was understood as the Parisian revolt. It even appears in remissions for other *bonnes villes*, like Meaux and Amiens.<sup>176</sup> Crucially, however, it does not appear in any remissions for the Jacques.

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<sup>174</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 85, no. 255, reprinted in Secousse, *Ordonnances*, pp. 83-5, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 192-4.

<sup>175</sup> See AN, JJ86, f. 78, no. 239.

<sup>176</sup> *ibid.*

These same stock phrases that are in this remission are repeated, with a few variations, for every Parisian rebel.<sup>177</sup> First, every remission made reference to the instigation of the rebellion by Étienne Marcel, and sometimes other individuals, normally at the beginning of the remission. A typical example is ‘that this Nicolas le Flamenc, draper and bourgeois of Paris, by the false promises and wickedly induced by the late Étienne Marcel former provost of merchants of our city (*ville*) of Paris, by Charles Toussac, Gilles Marcel, Jehan de Lille and also others of our said (*ville*)’.<sup>178</sup> These references to being misled by wicked demagogues are important – they provide the context for which the crown could offer amnesty to the Parisians, as these traitorous leaders had misled them. They also marked a sharp contrast with the remissions for the Jacquerie, where individuals most often are described as having acted out of fear for their own safety. Whether this distinction is valid or not is unimportant; the basis for justifying participation in each rebellion is different.

Secondly, like the Navarrese example, there is a specific vocabulary to the Parisian rebellion. Unlike the ‘temps du commotion’, the Parisian rebellion is described as ‘des grans traïsons, rebellions, conspiracions armées chevauchées invasions et desobessiances’.<sup>179</sup> The Parisian rebellion is not the ‘men of the countryside against the nobles’, rather it is the ‘crime of *lèse-majesté* .. against our said lord, us and the crown of France’.<sup>180</sup> Again, the substance of these remarks are important, but they are not the turn of phrase of a single chronicler;

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<sup>177</sup> This template has several minor variations, but the clauses listed below appear in each document tabulated above.

<sup>178</sup> ‘Que comme Nicolas le Flamenc drappier et bourgeois de Paix par les faux enhortements et mauvaises inducion de feu Etienne Marcel, jadis provost des marchans de nostre ville de Paris, de Charles Toussac, Gilles Marcel, Jehan de Lille et aucuns autres de nostre dicte ville’. AN, JJ86, f. 68, no. 209.

<sup>179</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 70, no. 216.

<sup>180</sup> For example, AN, JJ86, f. 99, no. 298.

these terms were used in every pardon the crown issues to the Parisian rebels, and was the crown's judicial definition of the violence.<sup>181</sup>

Moreover, no remissions for the Jacquerie mentioned any links between the two revolts, and only one mentions Marcel, but it does not suggest cooperation. Hue de Sailleville initially was forced to join the Jacquerie, before having second thoughts:

because of the great fear that he had of the excesses and outrages which the men of the countryside committed against his will, and which he was powerless to prevent, he went to the Provost of Merchants, who was then in Paris ... to reveal these matters to him and to seek advice so that the aforesaid things should stop<sup>182</sup>

Étienne Marcel was not part of the Jacquerie; to Hue de Sailleville, he represented an opportunity to stop it. This concurs with Étienne Marcel's letter to the communes of Picardy and Flanders, which stated that the Parisians 'would rather have died than have approved these deeds and the manner in which they were committed by some of those people', and that they 'sent three hundred troops from our people and confidential letters to stop the great evil'.<sup>183</sup> Marcel considered himself an enemy to the Jacques, and Hue de Sailleville concurred.

Even uprisings that occurred within the surroundings of Paris, like Montmorency, make no reference to Étienne Marcel's insurgency. The same goes for those remissions for the Parisians: they do occasionally refer to the 'countryside of Paris' but not further – indeed, this could be seen as an area defined to contrast with the rest of the countryside that the Jacquerie represented.

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<sup>181</sup> This distinction was also made by pamphleteers some four centuries later, by those from Champagne in 1790, who in the wake of the Revolution made the case that they had shown loyalty to the crown in 1358 when its deputies left Paris for Provins in the wake of Marcel's *coup*. The Parisian rebellion was essentially treasonous; the Champenois felt no reason to mention the Jacquerie, which their neighbours certainly were involved in. *Les Champenois au roi, ou parallèle des événements de 1358 et 1789*, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 1790.

<sup>182</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 96, n. 288; reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 253-4.

<sup>183</sup> Letter of Étienne Marcel to the Communes of Picardy and Flanders, in *Oeuvres de Froissart* ed. de Lettenhove (Bruxelles, 1868), vol. 6, pp. 470-1, reprinted and trans. in Cohn, *PP*, p. 177.



If uprisings in Montmorency, Montdidier, Senlis and others were engineered by Parisian infiltrators of the Jacquerie, then the crown was unaware of this. If the Jacques aided the Parisians in their rebellion, then there is no word in either set of remissions to indicate this.

Moreover, even when Cazelles implied unity, for example Étienne Marcel's attempt to stir up the countryside around Paris to his cause, the documents provided clear distinctions. Marcel sent Jean Hersent to the village of Châtres (Essonne) to organise resistance against the crown ('by virtue of the command given him to the late Étienne Marcel, then provost of merchants').<sup>184</sup> However, this remission detailed events outside during the traditional timeframe of the Jacquerie, it concerned 'a certain Sunday' after 24 June, two weeks after Clermont and the end of the peasants' rising. It could be an exception, a late outbreak of peasant violence, but far more likely Marcel was preparing the countryside for the Dauphin's attempts to regain Paris, and the inevitable siege. By 29 June, the Dauphin and 12,000 troops would be encamped on the other side of the Seine.<sup>185</sup> The crown is unequivocal: this action was part of the Parisian uprising, not the Jacquerie, and the remission makes no mention of the 'time of commotion and terror', the 'men of the countryside' or the conflict of the 'non-nobles against the nobles'. Just as with the remissions of Navarre, the crown had a very clear sense of which rebellion each individual belongs to.

If the Parisian remissions do not mention any links between the Jacques and Marcel, what do they say about the Parisian revolt itself? First, there are far

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<sup>184</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 75, no. 230, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 263-4. The inclusion of this remission in Luce's *Pièces Justificatives* has led some to see a link with the Jacquerie that was not there; although this document sheds light on the Parisian attempts to secure the outlying countryside prior to the Dauphin's seige, it makes no mention of the 'men of the countryside', the 'terror and commotion' or anything else connected to the rural revolt.

<sup>185</sup> Sumption, *Fire*, p. 338.

fewer remissions issued for the Parisian rebellion than the Jacquerie. All nineteen were issued quickly – barring a few, almost all these remissions were issued within a month of the end of the Parisian rebellion. By contrast, for the Jacques, some individuals still received pardons seven years after the revolt. Virtually all of Paris was granted grace by August 1358, yet the nobles were simultaneously still pillaging the countryside. Of course, all remissions are exceptions issued to those who missed the initial general pardon. Nonetheless, it hints at the logistical differences between pardoning those of a city and trying to administer grace, and upholding the peace, to the countryside of the north of France. Long after the Parisians had all received pardons, the repression in the countryside was still continuing, and remissions attest to nobles holding grudges against their peasants into the 1370s. While the exceptions to the general pardons of Paris could be dealt with in a couple of weeks, the process of restoring the peace to the countryside took years. For the crown, Paris could be dealt with quickly; the Jacquerie required more effort.

Excepting the general pardon, the Parisian remissions are granted to individuals, not communities of rebels, as they were in the case of the Jacquerie. All but one individual<sup>186</sup> hailed from Paris, and most were introduced as ‘bourgeois of Paris’. This strong sense of local identity – all these men are Parisian at least in residence – can be contrasted with the pan-regional Jacquerie, spread out across the whole of the Île de France and beyond to the borders of Bar and into Normandy. These individuals were for the mostly part of a strikingly different social class than the Jacques, for example, the King’s ‘argentier’ and a

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<sup>186</sup> Jehan de Monteux of Courtenay stayed in Sens but was in Paris during the revolt. AN, JJ86, f. 78, no. 238.

knight.<sup>187</sup> Every remission made reference to the individual's good name and reputation. Only Salemon de Tour's remission made reference to poverty, yet even he was employed: he was 'a poor archer and a miserable person', and he was also listed as a 'soldoier'.<sup>188</sup>

There are others who had military roles as well. For example, Jehan de Lyon was a 'Sergent d'armes' and Étienne de Resnie was the captain of a party of foot soldiers based within the city. The remissions for Marcel's supporters emphasise the military aspects of the revolt in Paris, which contrasts with the remissions for the Jacquerie. The narratives express a military sophistication to the Parisian revolt, and one testifies to the level of armament of these rebels: one individual 'took a great quantity of siege engines, war-cannons, crossbows with windlasses and other artillery' from the Louvre.<sup>189</sup>

The Parisians were well organised, had access to the King's arsenal, and were armed with siege equipment. While the peasants of the Île de France may also have been well organised, there is no sense that they possessed the same level of military armament. This was a *coup d'état* by the burghers and the city's militia: as one remission described it, the insurgents were 'many knights, counsellors and others'.<sup>190</sup> Within the remissions, it was the wrong-doing of the *gens d'armes*, not just of the habitants of the city, that caught the eye of the authorities. The taking of the Castle of the Palaisel, where one Guillaume Bonachet drank wine and stole a little piece of metalwork, was clearly achieved by skilled military men, not enraged locals.<sup>191</sup> This emphasis on skilled

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<sup>187</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 78, no. 238 and AN, JJ86, f. 93, no. 279.

<sup>188</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 187, no. 519.

<sup>189</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 126, no. 371.

<sup>190</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 92, no. 275.

<sup>191</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 83, no. 252.

soldiering implies that the Parisian revolt was centred on specific attacks by groups of soldiers on key military targets.

The Parisian revolt was not necessarily tied to the walls of Paris, and most of the confusion on this issue has come from a willingness to describe all rural violence as part of the Jacquerie, and all the urban violence coming from Paris and Marcel. A medieval city could not be independent of its countryside. The Parisian revolt did extend beyond its walls, as one might expect, into the dependent countryside that surrounded the main city (like Tremblay and Chartres),<sup>192</sup> and most famously north to Meaux, where the King's palace stood. However, the crown distinguished these events as directly connected to Paris, not the 'men of the countryside'. The confusion was only created when Luce and Cazelles attempted to create their own definitions of what made a Jacque and what made a Parisian rebel.

The cornerstone of Cazelles's argument has already been summarised; when we think of the attacks of the Jacques, 'it is impossible to believe they happened by chance'. They did not happen by chance – local communities selected their own objectives. What Cazelles meant is that he, like Flammermont, considered it impossible to believe that these attacks were organised by peasants. Perhaps the lack of historical data left to us by rural communities, or even prejudice against the peasantry that can be seen in Marxist literature going back to Marx himself, has convinced historians that they cannot be considered sophisticated enough to plan anything, and certainly not be serious historical actors, unlike their urban counterparts. Even when the remission

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<sup>192</sup> See AN, JJ86, f. 93, no. 278 and JJ86, f. 75, no. 230 respectively.

record offered numerous narratives indicating exactly how villagers could stand up against the local nobility, organise themselves, elect leaders and hold assemblies, it was easier to grant agency to the *bonnes villes*. That Marcel and his Parisian rebels were behind the Jacquerie is a notion completely unsupported by the remissions and the chroniclers. The image painted by the two selections of documents, and thus the crown, is entirely different – the Parisian remissions conjure an image of a technically advanced, well-armed military take-over of the centre of Paris, at the heart of which were soldiers and members of the army who quickly mobilised an organised resistance to the crown. Paris's armed resistance and the peasants' uprising in the countryside were distinct phenomena, in the eyes of contemporaries.

## THE ATTACK ON THE MARCHÉ

When the Jacques and Parisians arrived [at Meaux] the mayor of Meaux, who had never made any secret of his hostility to the Dauphin, threw open the gates of the city [to them] and laid out food and drink for them on tables in the streets. The people of the town overwhelmingly supported him ... When they had eaten their fill, the Jacques, the Parisians and a crowd of men of Meaux formed themselves up in units on the north side of the Marne bridge opposite the fortress, and prepared to storm it.<sup>193</sup>

In the second volume of Sumption's *The Hundred Years War*, the attack on Meaux represents the apogee of the great rebellions of 1358, where the Parisians and the Jacques came together for a final doomed assault upon the great fortress across the Marne. This is no surprise; Meaux represented this same centrepiece for Luce's study of the Jacquerie. Almost every work on this period makes

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<sup>193</sup> Sumption, *Fire*, pp. 333-4.

some reference to the combination of the two rebellions at Meaux. It has been assumed that the attack on Meaux was part of the Jacquerie, and yet, barring one passage in Jean Froissart's chronicle, there is no evidence whatsoever for this assertion.

This topic requires some clarity. First, I am not claiming that there was no link between Meaux and the peasantry; rather, evidence suggests that the some of the repression afterwards was initiated at the Marché. Jean de Venette is clear that the *plat-pays* took the brunt of the nobles' vengeance, stating '[a]fterwards they went ravaging over the adjacent countryside, killing all the men they have found and setting fire to various villages'.<sup>194</sup> Neither am I suggesting that no peasants took part in the assault; rather, I think it is very likely that some did, especially in the case of the village of Tremblay, and the 'countryside' around Paris and Meaux. However, no evidence, barring the second-hand story of Froissart and received wisdom of the last 150 years of historiography, suggests that the Jacques as a separate force attacked Meaux. In fact, contemporary chroniclers, and the crown through letters of remission, describe the attack on Meaux as a Parisian offensive, and whatever 'Jacques' who were involved were not recorded in these documents. They make no suggestion that the two joined together to mount an attack on the fortress.

Siméon Luce devoted a whole chapter – over a tenth of his book – to Meaux, entitled 'The Paris expedition reunites with the Jacques against the Marché of Meaux, and the nobles of Senlis':<sup>195</sup>

The attack on the Marché of Meaux is undoubtedly one of the most interesting episodes of the 'Jacquerie'; it is also one of best known. The three principal chroniclers of the time, Froissart, Jean de Venette and

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<sup>194</sup> Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 264, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 78.

<sup>195</sup> Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 129-147.

Pierre d' Orgemont, transmitted to us with the greatest detail the memory of this event.<sup>196</sup>

Yet only Froissart suggests that there were any rustics at all involved in the attack on Meaux, and the entire chapter is devoid of any other evidence. Luce only cited a few remissions, and barring the remission for Tremblay which will be discussed later, none of them refer to rural rebels. All his evidence came from documents relating to either Parisians or men from Meaux. However, Meaux proved an attractive centre-point for Luce's thesis that Marcel's rebellion and the Jacquerie were closely tied, and thus it came to form the crux of his book.

Crucially, the emphasis that Luce placed on the attack on the Marché of Meaux is transferred directly into the documents that he selected for his *Pièces Justificatives*. He reprints every document that mentions Meaux (of which there are nineteen), which was unrepresentative of the nature of the Jacques, as the men receiving these pardons were all either from Meaux or Paris. His selection of these documents concerning Meaux suggested they represented over 35% of all documents concerning the rebellions of 1358, but rather, amount to less than 7% of the pardons for rebellions issued in 1358 and 1359 alone. Considering that these remissions are for scattered individuals rather than for settlements and groups, in real numbers there are very few men from Meaux pardoned compared with other Jacques. Yet because of the *Pièces Justificatives*' emphasis, coupled with assumptions by historians like Cazelles and Bessen that Luce's selection was representative of the whole body of remissions for the revolt (which Luce himself made clear it was not),<sup>197</sup> Meaux has assumed a very important role in discussions of the revolt. Having accepted that Jacques were involved in Meaux,

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<sup>196</sup> *ibid*, p. 129.

<sup>197</sup> Luce referenced documents within his text not included in his *Pièces Justificatives*.

Raymond Cazelles began speculating on the makeup of the Jacquerie, based entirely on Luce's collection and thus also on the remissions for the attack on the Marché.<sup>198</sup> Cazelles finishes a short discussion of the makeup of the Jacquerie declaring that the 'rich found themselves side by side with the poor'. These are hardly 'insights into rural society': many of Cazelles's examples hail from the towns of Meaux or Paris.<sup>199</sup> Yet this is the influence that Luce's unexplained and previously unexamined sampling has had: the assumption that the Jacques fought at Meaux has in turn meant that historians assumed that those involved in the attack on the Marché were representative of the Jacquerie.<sup>200</sup>

As mentioned, Jean Froissart is the only chronicler to mention the Jacques' involvement in the attack on Meaux. Froissart was writing considerably later (his first book has been described as 'riddled with errors'),<sup>201</sup> and that the great 'admirer and chronicler of heroism' was writing about his personal hero, the Count of Foix.<sup>202</sup> His account was mostly cribbed from Jean le Bel. Indeed, his account of Meaux is the only area where the two chroniclers differ:

[The Count of Foix and the Captal of Buch] rode until they reached Meaux and went immediately to the duchess [of Normandy] and the other ladies, who were very happy to see them, since for days the Jacques and the rustics of Brie as well as those of the city had harrassed them, as had become apparent. When these wicked people began to hear that there was such a great gathering of ladies and maidens with their young children, they gathered and with those from the country of Valois made their way to Meaux. From the other direction, those of Paris, well aware of the assembly, left Paris in herds and flocks to join others. All together

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<sup>198</sup> Cazelles, 'The Jacquerie' pp. 76-77.

<sup>199</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>200</sup> For an example, see the previous chapter on Navarre, and David Bessen's 'The Jacquerie' which assumed Cazelles's theories on the makeup of the Jacques were correct.

<sup>201</sup> J.B. Henneman, 'The Age of Charles V', in *Froissart: Historian*, ed. J.J.N. Palmer (1981), p. 38.

<sup>202</sup> *ibid.* p. 42. According to Pierre Tucoo-Chala, 'Froissart wished to see in the Count of Foix the typical hero which he would follow through the years: a valiant knight, lover of the arts, generous and fastious, but at the same time, cruel', in 'Froissart dans le Midi Pyrénéen', *Froissart: Historian*, ed. Palmer, p. 128.



at least nine thousand were acting violent and with mischief. All day, their numbers increased with people from various places coming along many roads to converge on Meaux, and they came as far as the city's gates. And the wicked people in the town did not try to block them but opened their gates to them. They entered in a horde so great that all the streets were filled up to the Marché. Now God's great grace was seen to be bestowed on the ladies and maidens. They would have been violated, raped and killed as nobles, which they were, if these gentlemen and especially the count of Foix and the captal of Buch had not been there. These two knights devised the plans to defeat the *vilains*.<sup>203</sup>

This account is certainly evocative, as the enemies filled the city of Meaux to begin a devilish assault upon the fortress. Only two brave knights, one of whom was Froissart's champion, and God's grace won the day. Froissart even uses the word 'vilains', which implies rustic. Yet even this account does not clearly grant agency to the rural rebels: the men from Brie and Valois may have harassed the women, but it is the arrival of the Parisians that leads to the gates being opened. In that reading, the arrival of the Jacques was ancillary to the more important arrival of the Parisians. But as we have said, Froissart's second-hand account differs from every contemporary chronicler.

As mentioned earlier, Froissart took his lead, and many of his tales, from Jean le Bel. Le Bel's account of Meaux differs greatly from that of Froissart at this critical juncture, making no mention of the involvement of peasants. Instead, le Bel states that it was simply a joint enterprise between the townsmen of Paris and of Meaux :

When news reached Paris that these great ladies and gentlemen were at Meaux and did not dare to leave, people left Paris with malicious motives and gathered at a certain place until at least six thousand of them had arrived ... The wicked people of the town did not want to block the entrance to those of Paris, so they opened the gates and let these wicked people enter freely, who like crazed men charged the Marché to kill all in sight.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Froissart, *Chron.*, v. 5, pp. 104-5, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 156-7.

<sup>204</sup> Bel, *Chron.*, v.2, p. 261, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 154.

Jean de Venette, whom Luce claims is one of the sources of his theory about the attack, saw no links whatsoever between the rustics and the attack on Meaux. Rather, Jean de Venette was quite clear that the attack was triggered by animosity between the inhabitants of Meaux and the Marché, then bolstered by the Parisian troops:

In the same year, 1358, the duke of Normandy, regent of the kingdom, still retained his indignation against the citizens of Paris, and the strength and numbers of the nobles at Meaux increased. While the duchess and the nobles were residing in the fortress of Meaux and the duke was away at some distance, a conflict broke out between the nobles shut up in the fortress and the mayor and the citizens of Meaux. It was said at Paris that the citizens of Meaux hated the nobles because of their exactions and would gladly make war on them, if they were to receive any substantial aid from Paris. Therefore, some armed men came from Paris to Meaux and, in point of fact, the citizens attacked the nobles and the duchess in the fortress, and there was fighting in the gateway on the bridge. The nobles, skilled in arms as they were, overcame the citizens with their swords and were victorious.<sup>205</sup>

According to Venette, who was closest geographically to the revolt, the men attacking the Marché were from Paris and Meaux and nowhere else. The *Chronique Normande* agreed:

Because the men of Meaux became frightened, they sent for help to the Parisians, and the provost of merchants sent them thirteen hundred armed men of the Commune of Paris, whom they received joyously. Thus they went to the bridge to attack the fortress of the Marché, but the nobles put up a strong defence ... But the nobles steadily held on to the fortress of the Marché and forced the Parisians to retreat.<sup>206</sup>

The *Chronique des Quatre Premiers Valois* concurs. In fact, it describes the events not with the discussion of the Jacquerie, but in a separate part of the chronicle with the revolt in Paris:

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<sup>205</sup> Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 265-6, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 77-8.

<sup>206</sup> *Chron. norm.*, p. 131, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 164.

After the duke had left Paris, the provost of the merchants and the men of Paris took over the Louvre ... Then Pierre Toussac, Pierre Gilles, Pierres Guiffart, Joscien de Mascon and many other armed men, all from Paris, left Paris for Meaux desiring to capture the fortress of the Marché of Meaux.<sup>207</sup>

The *Chronique de règnes de Jean II et Charles V* also separated the events at Meaux from the Jacquerie, giving it its own chapter heading, 'How those of Paris and Cilly were defeated at Meaux':

On the same, Saturday 11 June 1358, many left Paris and went to Meaux, about three hundred, under the command of Pierre Gilles, a grocer, and around five hundred, who gathered at Cilly-en-Meucian under the command of one named Jehan Vaillant, the provost of the royal mint ... Afterwards, they went straight into battle going straight for the Marché of Meaux ... And those of Paris, Cilly, and many of Meaux, who fought alongside them, were defeated.<sup>208</sup>

Curiously, the least authoritative of these narrative sources – Froissart's version – has gained an emphasis far above that of the rest of the chronicle records. Yet, the other chronicle accounts are quite clear; the attack on Meaux was an enterprise between the townsmen there and the Parisian forces, not part of the Jacquerie.

The remissions give the same impression as the chroniclers. Despite the emphasis placed on the remissions for Meaux by Luce, which has transferred directly into the works of Raymond Cazelles and David Bessen, none of these remissions show that the Jacques were linked to the attack on the Meaux:<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> *Chron. premiers Valois*, p. 72, tr. Cohn, *PP*, p. 158-60.

<sup>208</sup> *Chron. des règnes*, v.2, pp. 181-4, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 166.

<sup>209</sup> Not included in this list are remissions issued to citizens of Meaux not involved in the attack; for example, Simon Rose, who was pardoned for having joined the King of Navarre, not for involvement with the attack on the Marché, and a party of *brigands*, who were involved in attacks on the peasantry in the months after the tumult, are not included in this table.

Table VII. Names and occupations of those involved at Meaux.

REMISSION	ISSUED TO	OCCUPATION	FROM?
86, n. 148	Jehan de Congi	Bourgeois	Meaux
86, n. 211	Jehan Chandelier	Draper	Meaux
86, n. 213	Jehan le Ladre	Mounted Sergeant of the 'Gate'	Paris
86, n. 236	Raoul d'Aucamps	Bourgeois	Paris
86, n. 240	Parisians	N/A	Paris
86, n. 274	Guillaume de Chavenoil	Priest, Canon	Meaux
86, n. 288	Meaux	N/A	Meaux
86, n. 290	Thibaud Farcault	Bourgeois	Meaux
86, n. 300	Jehan de la Ramee		Meaux
86, n. 312	Jehan Rose	<i>Maitre, conseiller 'du roy', avocat du parlement</i>	Paris
86, n. 340	Jeannin des Champs	Bourgeois	Paris
86, n. 341	Regnault Blouart		Meaux

There are twelve remissions issued for the attack on the Marché of Meaux, and as said before, five other documents like *arrets du parlement* and two remissions to citizens of Meaux not connected to the attack. Considering the rest of Luce's sample (remissions and chronicle extracts about the violence in the countryside

and the peasants' struggle against the nobles) it is clear they have little to do with the Jacquerie itself.

First of all, all twelve of these remissions are issued to townsmen, rather than the *genz du plat-pais*. Secondly, the remissions clearly state that the agents of this attack were the citizens of Meaux and Paris. For example, the remission for Jehan de Ladre, mounted sergeant of the gate of Paris,<sup>210</sup> begins:

Let it be known to all those present and future that we have heard the supplication of our very dear and loyal cousin Jehan de Chalon, lord of Arlay and Cusieaux, contending that during the time of the late Étienne Marcel, previously provost of merchants of Paris, Jean de Ladre, mounted sergeant of the gate of the said city of Paris, was retained with wages by the said city of Paris, and there certain Parisians, among them Pierre Gille and Pierre des Barres, had been appointed captains and instructed to go from the said city of Paris to Meaux, and many of these men who were in the company of the captains attacked the Marché and the men who were in there.<sup>211</sup>

According to the remissions, the insurgents were sent from Paris and attacked under the command of Pierre Gilles and Pierre des Barres. The Parisians were the leaders of the attack, while those of Meaux were depicted as having joined their enterprise. Other remissions suggest that instead it was the men of Meaux who spearheaded the effort. Jehan de Congi, for example, was 'charged with being in the company of and aiding those of the city of Meaux and those of Paris who came to their aid to assail the said Marché'.<sup>212</sup> But none of the remissions

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<sup>210</sup> This is one individual that Cazelles uses to suggest that the Jacquerie was made up of 'royal officials'. Yet this individual had nothing to do with the Jacquerie, and was under the charge of Pierre Gilles and Étienne Marcel; this Parisian rebel was involved solely in the attack on Meaux. The only link he had to the *commotion* was the inclusion of this remission in Luce's *Pièces Justificatives*.

<sup>211</sup> 'Savoir faisons à tous presentz et à venir que nous oye la supplicacion de nostre très chier et feal cousin Jehan de Chalon, seigneur d'Arlay et Cusieaux contenant que n'a gaires ou temps que Étienne Marcel mort estoit prevost des marchanz de Paris, Jean de Ladre, sergent à cheval de gaît de la dicte ville de Paris, feust retenuz aus gaiges de la dicte ville de Paris, et lors certaines personnes de la dicte ville de Paris entre les quelles Pierre Gilles et Pierre des Barres furent establiz capitaines et ordonnez pour aler à Meaux, dont plusieurs des dictes genz qui estoient en la compaignie des diz capitaines ou ordenez combattirent le Marchié et les genz qui dedanz estoient', AN, JJ86, f. 69, no. 213.

<sup>212</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 50, no. 148.

transcribed or cited by Luce and used later by historians mention peasants as leaders or followers at Meaux.

Oddly, the only indication of ‘peasant support’ in the attack on Meaux has passed unnoticed. A letter pardoning individuals from around the town of Tremblay (Seine-Saint-Denis) suggests they may have taken part in the assault:

Let it be known to all those present and future that we have heard the supplication of Jean de Quincy, Guillot le Charpentier, Beli du Four and Jeannin Coulon who live in Tremblay contending that they had been with many others of the surrounding lands, during the terror, commotions and assemblies that had recently been caused by the men of the countryside against the nobles of the realm, that had attacked and burnt many houses of gentlemen and pillaged and stole their goods and executed others of the said nobles ...and when Pierre Gilles and his accomplices went to Meaux, he ordered that these said individuals should go with them when [he was] passing through the said Tremblay and [Gilles’ men] threatened to burn their town [*ville*] and houses... the supplicants, ignorant of the wishes of the said Pierre Gilles and his accomplices, went with them to Meaux, and entered in the gate of the town [*ville*] without any violence or force.<sup>213</sup>

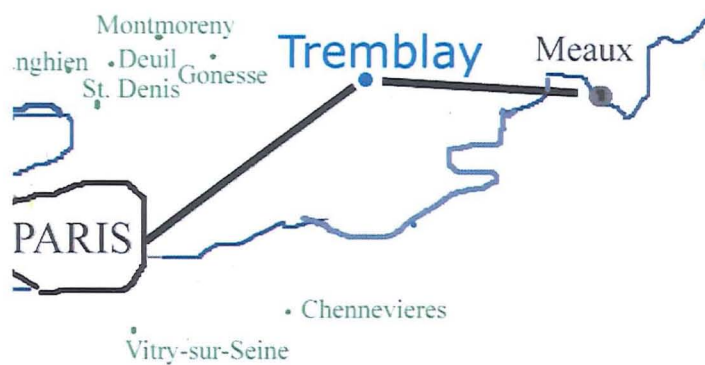
This remission for the four individuals (not the settlement as a whole) does at least indicate that some of the ‘*genz du plat pais*’ may have been involved in the attack, even though these men claimed they only entered the town, and were acting under duress. This is not, however, an example of widespread participation: rather, it is a specific incident where Gilles demanded support of four peasants on his way to Meaux. Tremblay is not a representative settlement of the Jacquerie; lying on the path between the capital and Meaux, the Parisians

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<sup>213</sup> ‘Savoir faisons a tous presenz et a venir que oye la supplication de Jean de Quincy, Guillot le Charpentier, Beli du Four and Jeannin Coulon demouranz a Tremblay contenu que comme il aient este avec plusieurs autres du pais d’environs au effrois commotions et assemblees qui deux et n’a gaires ont este faist par les gens du plat pais contre les nobles du royaume et a ardoir et abatre plusieurs maisons de gentils hommes et a pillier de gaster leurs biens et aucuns des diz nobles mis a mort et avecques ce quant Pierre Gilles et ses complices alerent a meaux il commanda aus dessus diz en passant par le dit Tremblay qu’il allassent avecques lui en les menassent d’ardoir leur ville et maisons ... les supplicants ignorans que le dit Pierre Gilles et ses diz complices vouloient faire alerent avecques eulz a meaux et entrerent de dans la porte de la ville sans aucune voulente en force.’ AN, JJ86, f. 96, no. 286, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie* pp. 258-9.

passed it on their way to Meaux. It is also the only settlement mentioned by the remissions in what seems to be a relatively quiet area of Jacques' activity (the green dots represent other settlements listed as part of the Jacquerie, the black line is a potential path that Gilles might have taken):<sup>214</sup>

**Map 1. Tremblay and the attack on Meaux.**



Gilles's army, it appears, may have coerced local rebels as it moved on. Most importantly, it was not as Jacques that these men were involved in the attack on the Marché; rather, their involvement was the product of becoming involved with Pierre Gilles, the Parisian insurgent. The trip to Meaux was listed as an additional wrongdoing alongside the general damage done by these Jacques. The agency for the attack on the Marché of Meaux was granted to the Parisians; any 'Jacques' who may have been involved were merely foot soldiers in a predominantly Parisian army.

Even considering Tremblay, these remissions are clear on who was involved: the townsmen of Meaux and Paris. The actors were not 'men of the countryside', but rather the heads of the Parisian rebellion, who with the people

<sup>214</sup> Although there are no remissions for Jacques in this corridor, there are remissions that attest to the destruction of some property in this area. This will be discussed in Chapter 3, on 'Mapping the Revolt'. The scale of this map is 1 / 450,000.

of Meaux engineered an attack on the Marché. Only one remission for the attack mentioned any sort of peasant or made any reference to the *gens du plat pays* the *temps du commotion* or *effrois*. If these remissions are any judge, the crown did not consider the peasantry to have been involved at all in the attack on Meaux. Every single record the crown issued concerning the attack on the Marché emphasises that the participants were urban-based. The assumption that this attack featured members of the peasantry is completely unsupported by the remission record.

Finally, these documents indicate how historians have been influenced by the inclusion of remissions about Meaux within the *Pièces Justificatives* of Luce's work. As mentioned earlier, Cazelles's analysis of the occupations of the Jacques is actually more a quick survey of that said selection:

Research into the occupations of those involved in their terror springs other surprises ... these are clerks...even a Canon of Meaux ... some royal officials...: a gate-keeper, and a fair number of royal sergeants, mounted sergeants from the Chatelet and from the Paris watch...<sup>215</sup>

Despite a little exaggeration, the emphasis on Meaux is clear. These people were not involved in the *effrois*, only in the attack of the Marché. They were not rural Jacques, but were rebellious townsmen. Yet Luce's inclusion of them within a sample supposedly concerning the rural revolt has served to confuse historians like Cazelles into thinking that Meaux was part of the Jacques' offensive.

The attack on the Marché was undoubtedly important, where the citizens of Paris and Meaux joined forces to try to undermine the crown's position. Luce's theory that it also involved the Jacques became historical fact in almost every textbook

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<sup>215</sup> Cazelles, 'The Jacquerie', pp. 76-7.



on the Hundred Years' War. While it may be that a few rustics took part in the attack on Meaux, there is no evidence to suggest they did so in large numbers. Luce's collection, and the remissions for Meaux, have become the cornerstone of theories about not just about the actions of the Jacques, but also the makeup of the insurgents and how the rebellion itself was controlled by urban counterparts, despite the fact there is little evidence of Jacques' involvement in the attack on Meaux. All the evidence, excepting Froissart, points the other way: that the attack on the Marché was an enterprise of the Parisians and those of Meaux, with no substantial aid from the Jacquerie.

## 4 – THE JACQUERIE AND THE COUNTER- JACQUERIE

For a revolt that has attracted much recognition from both historians and the general public as the Jacquerie, one would imagine there would be a clear and well-developed sense of the exact events of the uprising and its aftermath. Yet many historians remain confused about the exact scale of the *commocions*. Was the violence localised around Paris, or was it much larger? The repression, recognised to be among the most bloody and destructive retaliation against any medieval revolt, has received very little attention.<sup>216</sup> Historians have not attempted to map the retaliation, create a timeline or even explain who exactly was responsible for it. Rather, historians have repeated generalised chronicle statements about the Jacquerie being a revolt of the ‘Beauvaisis’ and the retaliation having ‘destroyed all the countryside’.

Yet the one piece of information which remissions constantly provide is geography: most detail the location of the insurgents and in some cases the nobility involved in the repression. The remissions are not comprehensive; by their nature, they deal with only exceptions to general pardons. Yet there are enough of them to map out a large number of insurgent settlements. By doing this, we can see the Jacquerie was a problem that affected a large portion of northern France. We can establish the Jacques’ attitude towards the *bonnes villes*, and identify targets they selected. By studying the repression, we can see two distinct movements: the bloody scourge of the countryside by the nobles, and the more measured policy of reconciliation emphasised by the crown.

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<sup>216</sup> For example, see R.-H. Bautier, *The Economic Development of Medieval Europe*, trans. H. Karoly (London : Thames and Hudson, 1971), p. 231.

The actions of every rebel within the Jacquerie of 1358 will never be fully known. The remissions only offer snapshots of the rebellion, but these snapshots can be illustrative. The documents may only offer a small sample of the villages involved, but that sample is large enough to obtain a proper sense of the uprising and the retaliation that followed.

## MAPPING THE JACQUERIE

[T]he Jacquerie which broke out on 28 May 1358 in areas to the north and east of Paris stands out as the nearest thing to coherent social protest ... [t]here was more or less disorganised insurrection in other districts... A host of peasant rebels could not withstand even a small company of trained soldiers. When the upper classes, against whom the revolt was directed, had had time to gather their wits and their troops, popular protest was easily dealt with. Peasant movements were not, in the later Middle Ages, serious political things.<sup>217</sup>

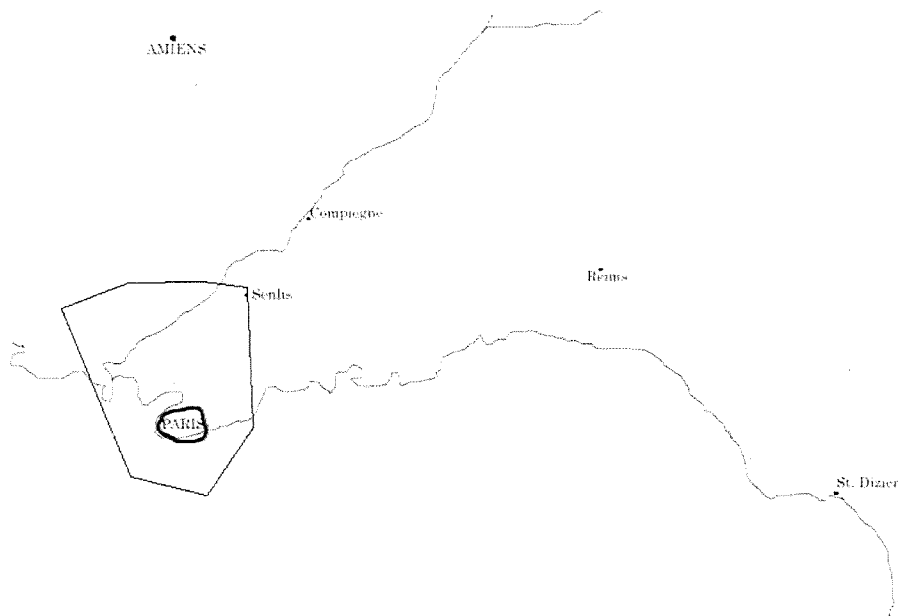
Peter Lewis, in his seminal *Later Medieval France*, did not consider the Jacquerie to represent a 'serious political' issue. Part of his reasoning was concentrated on the revolt's lack of organisation, but another reason was its geography. In Lewis's description, the Jacquerie sounds like a Parisian issue, which spread to a few towns or regions (Lewis mentions only Amiens). It is not surprising that Lewis arrived at that conclusion, considering the confusion of the revolt's geography in the literature. There is a central contradiction at the heart of many historians' descriptions of the violence; they describe the revolt as a Parisian phenomenon, before mentioning attacks in Champagne, near Amiens and even into Normandy. Philippe Contamine described the Jacquerie as

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<sup>217</sup> P. Lewis, *Later Medieval France* (London: MacMillan, 1968), p. 283.

occurring in ‘the rich grain-growing plains in the region round Paris’;<sup>218</sup> for Edouard Perroy, the rebels were the ‘peasants of Beauvaisis and Soissonnais’.<sup>219</sup> Mollat and Wolff described the revolt as covering the ‘Île de France and the Beauvaisis ... east and south of Paris, northward over the whole of Picardy, and from there into Normandy .... Champagne and Lorraine’.<sup>220</sup> While that area sounds extensive, they included a map which suggests a far smaller area (marked on this map by the polygon):<sup>221</sup>

**Map II. Recreation of *Popular Revolutions*’ map of the Jacquerie.**



This small region encircled in black has, following Mollat and Wolff’s example, been taken to represent the entire area covered by the revolt. Historians have stressed that the area between Paris and Senlis was the heartland of the revolt. Mollat and Wolff selected this rather narrow passage for their map based on the

<sup>218</sup> P. Contamine, ‘The French Nobility and War’, in *The Hundred Years War*, ed. K. Fowler (London: MacMillan, 1971), p. 154.

<sup>219</sup> E. Perroy, *The Hundred Years War* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1965), p. 135.

<sup>220</sup> Mollat and Wolff, *Popular Revolutions*, p. 126. The map was included on p. 125.

<sup>221</sup> The scale of this map is 1 / 1,900,000.

testimony of chroniclers, only three of whom mentioned it spreading much further than the Beauvaisis.<sup>222</sup> Ironically, the chroniclers who claimed the rebels had the least organisation, Jean le Bel and Jean Froissart, also granted the rebellion the most extensive space, including the Île de France, the area around Beauvais and Amiens, the territory as far east as Soissons and even to the Perthois. Yet historians seemed to have ignored le Bel and Froissart on these points. Ever since Luce's work, historians have had access to a large selection of places where the Jacquerie occurred, and these were not limited to the narrow region suggested in Mollat and Wolff's map.

Why is this important? Generalisations like Lewis's rely on the fact that the Jacquerie did not have an impact on the political landscape of France. However, the sheer size and scale of the Jacquerie meant that it was a 'serious political' event. Foreign troops and mercenaries were drafted in to contain the revolt.<sup>223</sup> Potentially, it crossed borders into neighbouring countries. More importantly, it severely damaged and destroyed many key military installations across the region. This short section is not intended to be a definitive timeline of exactly which villages rose up and when, because that data is simply not available; most remissions do not give dates or offer more than a general indication of a community's actions. Many were issued to individuals who acted with 'the men of the area', and give us little sense of what the others did. The remissions represent only a sample of the villagers involved, and in most cases, to gain their pardon they claim not to be involved. Nonetheless, it is possible to

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<sup>222</sup> In addition to the le Bel and Froissart, the *Chronique de règnes de Jean II et Charles V* mentioned the regions of Morency and Mucien. *Chron. des règnes*, v.1, p. 180, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 166-7.

<sup>223</sup> Jean le Bel records how 'foreign troops' were important in defeating the rural rebels; Bel, *Chron.*, v.2, p. 259, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 153. In 'Retaliation', an incident involving troops paid to stop the rebels pillaging the countryside will be discussed.

locate at least some of the rebels who were involved, establish some of their targets, and draw connections between urban and rural settlements.

Insurgent action recorded in the remissions can be broadly classified into three 'types'. The first, and least numerous, of these actions are individual wrongdoings under the umbrella of the Jacquerie. Several individuals committed transgressions loosely tied to the Jacquerie, but whose actions were not part of a general offensive by villagers. As an example, in Doue (Seine-et-Marne), Colin François and Nicaise Fremy the younger took advantage of the rebellion to break into the local nobleman's garden and steal 80 carps and chicken-heads. Because they had not sold them afterwards or made any sort of profit on their crime, they were pardoned.<sup>224</sup> However, not all individual acts were trivial. Pierre le Macon, in Saint-Germain (Oise), murdered Robert L'Escrivain,<sup>225</sup> in what the supplicant assured the crown was not an act of rebellion, because the people did not rise nor join the other men of the countryside. Nonetheless, this action took place during the time of the Jacquerie, and thus in the eyes of those that issued the remission was part of the rebellion. These incidents are relatively rare within the sample.

The second type of 'action' is when individuals or communities were pardoned for acting as part of the Jacquerie, but their exact actions were not stated, or they were accused of having simply joined 'the other men of the countryside'. The precise groups they joined are most often left unspecified. Perhaps some joined the main force who were defeated at Clermont, but

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<sup>224</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 96, no. 291, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 256-7.

<sup>225</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 218, no. 591.

considering that the remissions occasionally list rebels who joined Cale and the main force,<sup>226</sup> it seems unlikely this would have gone unnoticed.

The third, and most useful for this chapter's purposes, are remissions when the insurgents acted clearly as part of the rebellion, and occasionally the narrative also detailed exactly *how* and *who* they attacked. Several remissions list communities along with the properties they attacked. These help us to create an accurate picture of the rebellion and the movements of individual violence.

For classification, the green places on the map indicate where an entire community of rebels rose up according to the remissions.<sup>227</sup> This includes villages which sought remissions as a single unit, and also when a remission for an individual specifies that 'other men of the *ville*' or 'surrounding area' took part. The red dots specify places where the remissions identify a rebel but do not specify that the rest of the community took part: for example, Jean Bruyant of Saint-Fargeau was involved in an attack on a castle at Villers-aux-Nonnaines, but we do not know if the rest of his neighbours joined in. Left off this map are instances when a rebel's hometown is not indicative of the revolt's location: for example, Jehan de la Basse came from Marseilles originally, but became involved in the Jacquerie in Gerberoy (Oise).<sup>228</sup> Of course, Marseilles is not marked as a location on this map.<sup>229</sup>

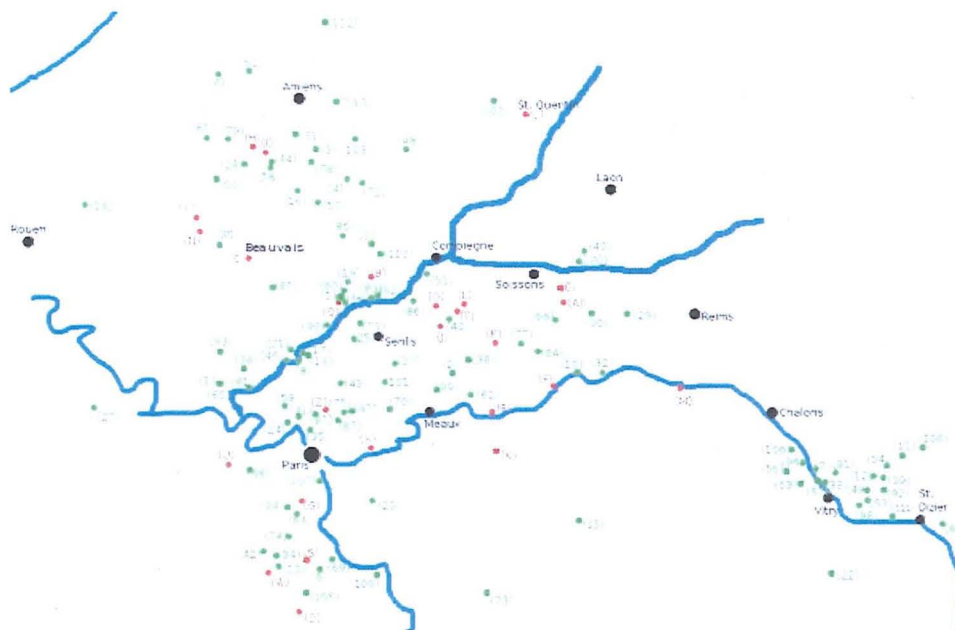
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<sup>226</sup> See, for example, AN, JJ86, f. 102, nos. 308, 309 and f. 136, no. 391; JJ90, f. 84, no. 252.

<sup>227</sup> Communities that appeared in remissions without the suggestion that they rebelled have not been included on this map. For example, the villages around Saint-Thierry and Reims indicated in AN, JJ86, f. 130, no. 380, who were targets of the repression but were never explicitly linked to the revolt, have not been included.

<sup>228</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 175, no. 495.

<sup>229</sup> The place-names on this map, where unclear in the remission, have been cross-referenced with the *Archives Nationales* index, which includes the 'modern' version of place-name. However, there are a few places not included on this map because they could not be located, like 'Vignoel' (AN, JJ86, f. 145, no. 425) or because neither the remission nor the index was clear as to the name of the settlement ('Pont (or Port)-Rouy', in AN, JJ86, f. 86, no. 256). The scale of this map is 1 / 1,900,000.



Map III. The Jacquerie of 1358.

- |                          |                                 |                            |                          |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| (1) Ablieges             | (39) Etrepy                     | (77) Neuilly-Saint-Fronte  | (A) Arcy-Saint-Restitue  |
| (2) Acy                  | (40) Feigneux                   | (78) La Falaise            | (B) Avrigny              |
| (3) Ailly-sur-Noye       | (41) Fontaine-sous-Montdidier   | (79) Poix                  | (C) Beauvais             |
| (4) Airanes              | (42) Fontenay-les-Bris          | (80) Ponchon               | (D) Bonvilliers          |
| (5) Angicourt            | (43) Fontenay-en-Paris          | (81) Pontoise              | (E) Chacrise             |
| (6) Ballancourt          | (44) Fransures                  | (82) Pont-Point            | (F) Chateau-Thierry      |
| (7) Bayame               | (45) Givry                      | (83) Pont-Saint-Maxence    | (G) Chilly-Mazarin       |
| (8) Beaumont             | (46) Champagne-sur-Oise         | (84) Precy-Sur-Oise        | (H) Contre               |
| (9) Beaupuits            | (47) Gonesse                    | (85) Ravenal               | (I) Conty                |
| (10) Belleau             | (48) Goyencourt                 | (86) Rhuis                 | (J) Crepy-en-Valois      |
| (11) Bettancourt         | (49) Favresse                   | (87) Saint-Denis           | (K) Doue                 |
| (12) Bignicourt          | (50) Grandvilliers              | (88) Sainte-Liviere        | (L) Ermeville            |
| (13) Boissy-sous-St-Yvon | (51) Grattepanche               | (89) Saint-Fargeau         | (M) Epernay              |
| (14) Boran               | (52) Hangest                    | (90) Saint-Leu             | (N) Gerberoy             |
| (15) Buchy               | (53) Heiltz-le-Hutier           | (91) Saint-Lumier          | (O) Gilocourt            |
| (16) Bretueil            | (54) Heiltz-le-Maurupt          | (92) Saint-Vrain           | (P) La-Ferte-Millon      |
| (17) Bruyeres            | (55) Jaux                       | (93) Santeuil              | (Q) Laignevillle         |
| (18) Buchy               | (56) La Chapelle-sur-Colle      | (94) Saulx                 | (R) Le Limon             |
| (19) Catenoy             | (57) La Herelle                 | (95) Savignies             | (S) Marolles-en-Hurapois |
| (20) Catheux             | (58) La Warde Mauger            | (96) Songy                 | (T) Pondron              |
| (21) Chambly             | (59) Le Plessis-Bouchard        | (97) Taverney              | (U) Saint-Germain        |
| (22) Chavanges           | (60) Liancourt                  | (98) Thieblemont           | (V) Saint-Quentin        |
| (23) Chennevières        | (61) Lignieres                  | (99) Trocy                 | (W) Saint-Sulpice        |
| (24) Cormelles-en-Paris  | (62) Liessiz (Liszy-sur-Durocq) | (100) Vailly-sur-Aisne     | (X) Saint-Thiebaut       |
| (25) Courteuil           | (63) Loisy-sur-Marne            | (101) Vemars               | (Y) Songeons             |
| (26) Couvrot             | (64) Longjumeau                 | (102) Vermandois           | (Z) Tavemy               |
| (27) Cravent             | (65) Louveciennes               | (103) Villers-aux-Erables  |                          |
| (28) Thaix               | (66) Lucy-les-Bocage            | (104) Villers-Saint-Paul   |                          |
| (29) Crugny              | (67) Maisons                    | (105) Villers-aux-Tonnains |                          |
| (30) Curry-Housse        | (68) Marly-le-Roi               | (106) Vitry-la-ville       |                          |
| (31) Deuil               | (69) Mennecy                    | (107) Vitry-sur-Seine      |                          |
| (32) Dormans             | (70) Tremblay                   | (108) Vroil                |                          |
| (33) Drouilly            | (71) Montataire                 | (109) Perthes              |                          |
| (34) Egly                | (72) Montdidier                 | (110) Remy                 |                          |
| (35) Enghien             | (73) Montigny-Lencoup           | (111) Hauteville           |                          |
| (36) Epiais              | (74) Monthery                   | (112) Orville              |                          |
| (37) Ermenoville         | (75) Montmorency                | (113) Vaux-sur-selles      |                          |
| (38) Etavigny            | (76) Mouchy-le-Chatel           |                            |                          |





Map IV. Enlarged version of previous map.

2cm:25km

The maps illustrate several interesting clusters. First, if the remissions are a representative sample, the area around the Île de France does appear to be the heartland of the revolt. Yet it was not simply the corridor between Paris and Senlis. Rather, the 'heartland' extended further north and east than traditional surveys have suggested.

The map shows other clusters of revolt. First, a large congregation of incidents were recorded around Amiens and Beauvais, including villages like Grandvilliers, La Warde-Mauger and Breteuil (all Oise). Secondly, a cluster of attacks were recognised to the south of Paris: the Arpajon region. Thirdly, there are several attacks around Soissons. Fourthly, a large-cluster formed around St. Dizier and Vitry-le-Francois, ignored by the chroniclers and later historians. This area, well over one hundred kilometres to the east of Paris, was virtually across the border with Bar. Beyond this border any attacks would have fallen under the jurisdiction of the Duke of Bar, and rebels may have sought grace from him, so this cluster may have been even more extensive, crossing into foreign territory.

There were several settlements which received pardons but were not included on this map to the south, namely Orléans, Lorris (Loiret), Gien (Loiret) and Vermenton (Yonne). Their remissions did not specify that these towns participated in the Jacquerie, or with the 'gens du plat pays'. Of these, Gien seems to have the strongest links to the Jacquerie; the remission describes the 'time of the commotions between the non-nobles and the nobles' although the pardon was issued some years later.<sup>230</sup> The men of Lorris and Vermenton were pardoned in the wake of the Jacquerie, but are described as having charged with

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<sup>230</sup> 'temps que les commocions durent entre les non nobles et nobles', AN, JJ115, f. 120, no. 297.

the ‘enemies of the crown’. These cannot definitively be described as part of the Jacquerie, although the case of Gien seems convincing: they were rebellions against the crown by the lower sorts in the summer of 1358.<sup>231</sup>

A few outliers were so distant they do not fit on this map. We will later discuss Pierre de Montfort, who appeared in Caen trying to stir up the peasantry around that area to revolt.<sup>232</sup> Suffice it for now to say that the Jacques’ influence could reach as far as the Normandy coast. Indeed, a Jacque who had joined in Paillard (Oise), near Clermont, was later murdered in Plainville (close to Caen) by an inhabitant of La Falaise (Somme), partly because of his involvement in the Jacquerie; the effects of the rebellion clearly stretched deep into the outlying regions. There were other outliers too: a man from Saint-Omer (Pas-de-Calais) was pardoned for having risen up, seemingly around that region. According to the document, violence also characterised this region, and it appears to have been connected to the Jacquerie: ‘with many others of the surrounding land in the terror ... [they acted] with the said men of the countryside against the nobles of the realm and attacked many of their fortresses and stole their goods’.<sup>233</sup> Other remissions for outlying Jacque settlements also imply there may have been clusters of violence in those regions. For example, Montigny-Lencoup (Seine-et-Marne), which is around 30km east of the nearest other rebel settlement, is not recorded as an exception, but rather as just another area of rebellion: ‘with many other people of the surrounding land...for the men of the countryside against the nobles of the realm’.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> Lorris and Vermenton will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6, in ‘Peasant Resistance’, along with similar insurgencies in Givry, Vitteaux and Orleans.

<sup>232</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 76, no. 231, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 291-2, see also the sub-section on ‘Peasant Communication’ in Chapter 6.

<sup>233</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 194, no. 534.

<sup>234</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 92, no. 275.

Surrounding the major towns of the period – Senlis, Amiens, Paris and Meaux, for example – insurgent settlements are not so frequent. Rather, we find the biggest conglomeration of rebel settlements in the spaces between towns, like between Amiens and Compiègne, or between Compiègne and Senlis. It is from the areas of vacuum where the towns did not have direct control that the Jacques rose up.

Although based on a small sample, an absence of insurgent settlements (barring Tremblay which was involved on the attack on the Marché and one individual from Saint-Thiébaud)<sup>235</sup> is notable between Paris and Meaux. Following the Marne up from the capital to the fortress, only two villages became involved in this well-populated area, and only one of them was involved in the attack on the Meaux. Indeed, this relative silence suggests again that whatever happened in this ‘corridor’ came from the instigation of Étienne Marcel, and his lieutenant Pierre Gilles, not from the Jacquerie.

Considering the data, the Jacquerie was not simply a revolt of the Beauvaisis; rather, it affected virtually the whole of the royal domains in the north-east of France. Spreading out perhaps beyond the crown’s administrative boundaries, villages rebelled in clusters between the *bonnes villes*, and although the exact frequency of revolt can be hard to trace, rebels could be found heading north almost to Flanders, east to the extreme of the realm, south towards Orléans and even west to Normandy and Rouen. The Jacquerie, far from being an isolated outburst to the north of Paris, spread across all the northern lands in the Dauphin’s control.

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<sup>235</sup> See the section on ‘The Attack on the Marché’ in Chapter 3 for more discussion of this.

Sadly, the remissions often do not list the exact targets of each particular group, but on occasion they do tell us something about who the insurgents attacked. Overwhelmingly, the insurgents focussed upon the *châteaux*, *maisons* and sometimes the *fortresses* of the nobility. While individuals are pardoned occasionally for their parts in the murder of a noble, rebels more often went after fortified locales and property, and in most cases these were burnt to the ground. Even when individual targets are not listed, often a blanket statement is made about the 'houses and forts'<sup>236</sup> that the rebels destroyed. We cannot know how fortified or well-defended these settlements were (although *fortresses* presumably were military installations), and some may have been simple farm-houses. Yet this nonetheless testifies to the success of the rebels. Much of the discussion, from Flammermont to Cazelles, has concentrated on peasants' inability to organise successfully, and to destroy such fortified places, without outside influence.<sup>237</sup> Yet these remissions testify to the ability of individual villagers to unite and achieve victories over these bastions of the nobility. They also indicate the boldness of the rebel assault.<sup>238</sup>

The rebel settlements we know about represent only a small proportion of the Jacquerie's victims. When a target is mentioned, it is normally described after the general violence habitants may have committed, with 'especially the *châteaux*' added afterwards.<sup>239</sup> Locations specified by name may have represented the most important attack of the group, but they were not necessarily the only ones. The repetition of general phrases suggests that the destruction was

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<sup>236</sup> 'abatre, gaster et ardoir leurs maisons, fortresses et biens'. See for example AN, JJ86, f. 133, n. 387, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 276-8.

<sup>237</sup> See Flammermont 'La Jacquerie en Beauvaisis'; Cazelles, 'The Jacquerie', in *The English Rising*, ed. Aston and Hilton.

<sup>238</sup> The insurgent's targets will be discussed in 'Peasant Resistance'.

<sup>239</sup> For example, the villagers of Mennecy had noted in the remisison they had attacked many houses and fortresses especially 'the *chastel* of Villers-aux-Nonnains'. AN, JJ86, f. 123, n. 363.

large-scale: a single peasant unit would normally have attacked numerous buildings, if phrases like *'leurs maisons'* were accurate. The sheer scale of these attacks decimated the property of the Île de France, which concurs with the accounts of the chronicles. *La Chronique des règnes des Jean II et Charles V* records that the Jacques 'knocked down all the fortresses of the region'.<sup>240</sup> Jean le Bel gives us a numerical estimate: 'they destroyed and burnt more than sixty beautiful homes (*bonne maisons*) and castles (*chateaulx*) in the Beauvaisis', and another eighty in Normandy and 'between Paris and Soissons'.<sup>241</sup> The remissions even suggest this may have been a conservative estimate.

Unfortunately, the majority of pardons do not give us such a clear idea of specific objectives. Several houses mentioned cannot be found on modern maps. While it may be tempting to assume that, for example, the men of Couvrot attacked the castle in their village, or that the men of Le Plessis-Bouchard assaulted either the small local fort or even the grand tower of Bazoges-en-Pareds nearby, there is no explicit evidence in the documents.<sup>242</sup> What is specified can be divided into two categories: first, those rebels who attacked a specified target outside their village (the target is marked in red), and second, those rebels who attacked a target that the crown considered to be within their own settlement, like the local noble's house (the settlement is marked in orange). The map below represents the Jacques' objectives as identified by the remissions:

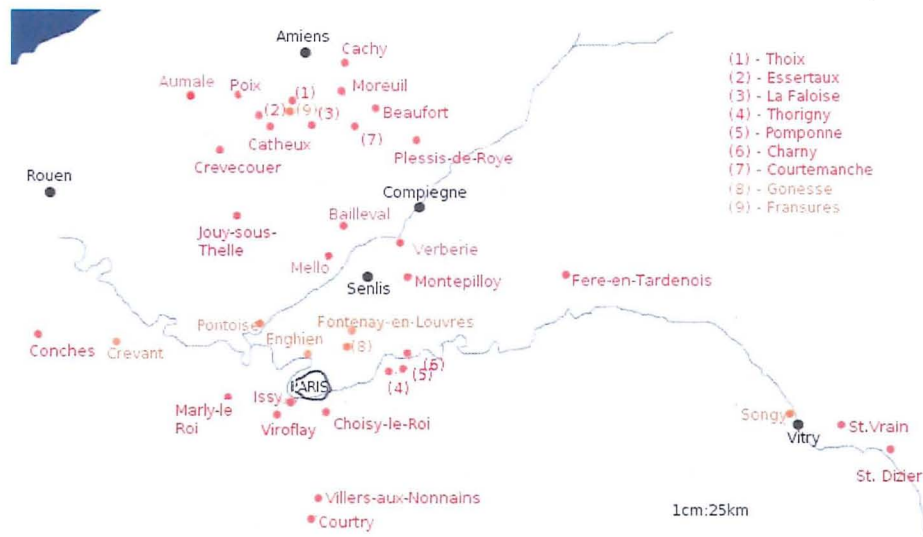
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<sup>240</sup> *Chron. des règnes*, v.1, p. 178, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 166.

<sup>241</sup> Bel, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 256, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 152.

<sup>242</sup> The two remissions referring to these settlements (AN, JJ86, f. 115, no. 337 and JJ90, f. 211, n. 419) do not specify a precise target; the fortifications nearby are mentioned in the *Dictionnaire des châteaux et des fortifications du Moyen Age en France*, ed. C.-L. Dalch (Strasbourg: Editions Publitotal Strasbourg, 1979), p. 382 and p. 116 respectively.

**Map V. The targets of the Jacquerie.**



These records specify far more rebels than targets (only forty can be identified). Many of these targets are in fact multiple objectives – in Crevecouer seven houses were burned, for example<sup>243</sup> - but the majority of remissions are vague about actual damage caused.

Was there any programme to the attacks? Jonathan Sumption believed he had found one: ‘[t]he reasons are obvious when one looks at a map. These places were disposed in a ring around Senlis. In the wrong hands, they were in a position to block every road leading to the city’.<sup>244</sup> Yet the map tells a different story: virtually all areas in the north-east of France were targeted. Senlis’ experience was not unique; many other towns witnessed the neighbouring fortifications burnt to the ground. The bottom two towns of the ring around Senlis are closer to Compiègne. A cluster around Montdidier could be as easily described as a cluster to the south of Amiens, or even a cluster to the north of

<sup>243</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 56, no. 173.

<sup>244</sup> Sumption, *Fire*, pp. 329-30.

Beauvais. Indeed, this cluster contains the greatest conglomeration of violence, along with the area between Paris and Beauvais.

In the previous paragraphs, I discussed the seeming absence of Jacques between Paris and Meaux. Included on this map were three ‘targets’ within this area, but they may not have been objectives of the ‘men of the countryside’. The attacks on Pomponne, Charny and Thorigny (all Seine-et-Marne), are all detailed in the same donation of property, to Jeanne de Charny, wife of the late Jean de Charny.<sup>245</sup> This document is at best unclear as to who attacked these properties, and although they were damaged during the time of the *effrois*, it is not clear whether the insurgents were peasants or townsmen. It seems a reasonable supposition that it was the latter, that these attacks were committed by burghers on the march to Meaux. Given the ambiguity, once again there is no specific evidence of Jacques activity between Paris and Meaux.<sup>246</sup>

The Jacques were successful in destroying property and fortified installations across the length and breadth of north-eastern France, with significant victories for the Jacques. For example, the ‘palatial domain’<sup>247</sup> of Robert de Lorris at Ermenonville, worth over 25,000 *livres* according to one document, was burnt to the ground by the Jacques.<sup>248</sup> There were successes against other military fortifications: for example, those against the castles at La-Celle-en-Brie,<sup>249</sup> Jouy-sous-Thelle (Oise)<sup>250</sup> and Villers-aux-Nonnains

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<sup>245</sup> X1a 14, ff. 391, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 306-9.

<sup>246</sup> Also from the above register, one document (X2a, 1, fol 212) mentions an attack on a house on Messy, which also does falls around Meaux. In my opinion, this document offers no data as to who committed the damage (the document is a donation of property to the noble), but my belief is that it was more likely to be the townsmen.

<sup>247</sup> Sumption, *Fire*, p.70.

<sup>248</sup> AN, JJ86, f. no. 308, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 260.

<sup>249</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 225, f. 102, no. 444, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 303-4.

<sup>250</sup> AN, JJ100, f. 220, no. 478.



(Aisne).<sup>251</sup> Indeed, the habitants of Crugny even destroyed the great fortress at La Fere-en-Tardenois.<sup>252</sup> One rebel group alone was responsible for the destruction of four *châteaux*: Mesnil, Aufay, Thoïs and Catheux (Somme).<sup>253</sup>

The Jacques' victories, and their destruction of several key military positions, emphasize that the rebellion was very much a serious political issue. Including reparations for the *château* at Ermenonville (Oise), Robert de Lorris claimed over 75,000 *livres* in damages caused by the Jacques.<sup>254</sup> The great castle at Poix (Somme) was burnt to the ground. We know that several castles destroyed by the Jacques were rebuilt, for example at Moreuil, while others were left ruined, like Verberie.<sup>255</sup> It was not just an issue about recompensing the nobility for the loss of their property, but the Jacquerie weakened the military infrastructure of the French crown. That same fortress at Poix, no doubt weakened after being looted by the Jacques, would be occupied by the English in September 1358.<sup>256</sup> Lagny (Seine-et-Marne), one of the main garrisons of the Dauphin's troops, was attacked by the Jacques and acted as an assembly point of the retaliatory force, but fell quickly to the English in 1359.<sup>257</sup> In fact, over sixty fortified places in the Île de France were occupied by Anglo-Navarrese companies in the August and September 1358, just a few months after the Jacquerie.<sup>258</sup> While perhaps we cannot draw a direct correlation between the Jacques' attacks and the victories of the Dauphin's enemies in this region in

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<sup>251</sup> AN, JJ108, f. 20, no. 60.

<sup>252</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 125, no. 368.

<sup>253</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 98, no. 294, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 296-7.

<sup>254</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 102, no. 308, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, p. 260.

<sup>255</sup> Salch, *Dictionnaire*, pp. 815, 1208.

<sup>256</sup> Sumption, *Fire*, p. 372.

<sup>257</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>258</sup> *ibid.* For details of Lagny and the Jacques, see AN, JJ91, f. 173, no. 333.

following years, the area certainly provided little resistance against enemy troops in the wake of the Jacquerie.

The bulk of the Jacques were peasants or rural villagers. Yet townsmen were involved, often in events ancillary to the main revolt. The chroniclers did report the involvement of townsmen, but did not specify the nature of their participation. For example, the chronicles charge that the Jacques attacked the city of Senlis. The *Chronique des Règnes des Jean II et Charles V* describes how the Jacques ‘forced many of the town to flee into the countryside’.<sup>259</sup> Richard Lescot also describes a great antagonism towards certain towns: ‘as this pack of rabid dogs went about, coming and going, they single-mindedly devoted themselves to destroying Senlis, Ermenonville, Thierry...’.<sup>260</sup> Yet the remissions suggest something else: it was the townsmen of Senlis themselves who were complicit in removing the nobles from the city. As reported earlier, a great cry within the city inspired the burghers to evict the lords. This confusion continued in towns like Beauvais, for which the *Chronique Normande* describes the following:

The other peasants reassembled ... including even some of the [town of] Beauvais, who [also] were against the nobles. They sent many to Beauvais, where they were killed with the consent of the town’s commune ...at the time the peasants went into the Beauvaisis around Compiègne and ordered that all nobles be sent and handed over to them, but the bourgeois refused and gave guarantees to the noblemen, who stayed in the town of Compiègne.<sup>261</sup>

The remissions confirm that Compiègne was a place that offered safety to the nobles: the priest and curate Jean Rose moved his family there when the Jacquerie tried to use him as a pawn in forging an alliance between the Jacques

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<sup>259</sup> *Chron. des règnes*, v.1, p. 178, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 166.

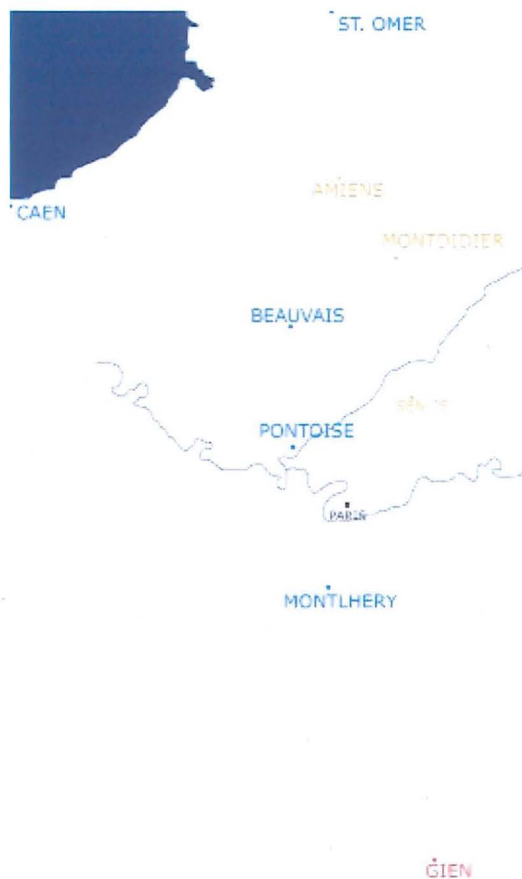
<sup>260</sup> Lescot, *Chron.*, p. 126, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 170.

<sup>261</sup> *Chron. norm.*, p. 128, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 163-4.

and the town.<sup>262</sup> However, the above quotation indicates the confusion: the townsmen of Beauvais were involved in their own attack upon their town.

The remissions show that whenever the townsmen were involved in the Jacquerie, there was little clarity of purpose. Classifying 'urban settlements' is also problematic, but several large towns are mentioned in remissions for the Jacquerie. This map indicates each urban settlement, and whether the remissions indicate the whole town took part (red), one townsmen joined the 'men of the countryside' (blue) or whether there was confusion within the townspeople around joining the revolt (orange).<sup>263</sup>

#### Map VI. Urban centres and the Jacquerie



<sup>262</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 124, no. 365, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 272-4.

<sup>263</sup> The scale of this map is 1 / 1,800,000.

**Table VIII. Urban involvement in the Jacquerie**

REMISSIONS	TOWN	PARTICIPATION
JJ86, n. 239	Amiens	Confusion; townsmen leave then are recalled; some join of their own free will.
JJ86, nos. 510, 511	Senlis	Confusion; townsmen attacking townsmen
JJ86, n. 584	Beauvais	One individual joins 'men of the countryside'
JJ86, n. 297	Monthèry	One individual joins 'men of the countryside'
JJ86, n. 534	Saint-Omer	One individual joins 'men of the lands'
JJ87, n. 231	Caen	One individual spreading propaganda
JJ86, nos. 437, 456	Montdidier	Confusion; townsmen revolt while mayor disapproves
JJ115, n. 297	Gien	Inhabitants attack nobles' houses
JJ86, n. 313	Pontoise	Men from the plat-pays around took part

Of these, Monthèry, Saint Omer, Beauvais and Caen seem to have only involved one man from each settlement who had joined the 'men of the countryside'.<sup>264</sup>

This tallies with the chronicle accounts concerning Beauvais – the few townsmen who did join the violence were acting against public opinion in the town. As we

<sup>264</sup> Those individuals are Gauchier Lore (Monthèry, AN, JJ86, n.297), Regnaut Corbel (Beauvais, AN, JJ86, f. 211, no. 584), Jean Michelet (Saint-Omer, AN, JJ86, f. 194, no. 534) and Pierre Montfort (Caen, AN, JJ87, f. 136, no. 231).

discussed earlier in ‘Marcel’, confusion clouds the involvement of Senlis, Montdidier and Amiens.<sup>265</sup> None had much to do with the Jacquerie itself. Even in the case of Pontoise, the remission specifically mentioned that peasants from the outskirts of the town were involved in the riot.<sup>266</sup>

Only in Gien is it clear that the burghers were the main insurgents, rather than joining the men of the countryside. A ‘great party of those’ from the town attacked the gardens and the houses of two knights, the brothers Jehan and Jehannot du Martroy.<sup>267</sup> Nonetheless, these houses were seven leagues (somewhere in the region of twenty-five to thirty miles) from the settlement. This seems a long way for burghers to travel – perhaps the reports were incorrect and the villagers from the outlying countryside were the men responsible, although there is nothing to support that thesis. Gien itself is hardly representative of the Jacques, situated one hundred kilometres south of the nearest settlement that can be positively linked to the Jacquerie.<sup>268</sup>

The examples of urban-rural interaction suggest conflict, not co-operation. Jean Rose was sent with letters proposing an alliance with the men of Compiègne, which the town rejected.<sup>269</sup> This animosity towards the Jacques from townsmen can be found elsewhere in the sources. In Caen, the remissions for Pierre de Monfort shows that the town authorities arrested suspected Jacques.<sup>270</sup> The individual from ‘the countryside around Pontoise’ fled *into the town* to escape the rebels, just as did Jean Rose in Compiègne. Even beyond the

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<sup>265</sup> See ‘Marcel’, in Chapter III.

<sup>266</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 111, no. 313.

<sup>267</sup> AN, JJ115, f. 140, no. 297.

<sup>268</sup> It seems possible, perhaps likely, that Gien was not part of the Jacquerie at all, and rather was part of the wave of violence that took in other southern settlements like Vitteaux and Vermenton which will be discussed in the chapter on ‘Peasant Resistance’. However, the remission does claim the men of Gien to be involved in the revolt of the ‘gens du plat pays’.

<sup>269</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 124, no. 365, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 272-4.

<sup>270</sup> AN, JJ87, f. 76, no. 231, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 291-2.

safety they provided and the efforts of officials to arrest Jacques, towns aided the nobility over their rural brethren: the remission for Corbeil shows the townsmen joined forces with the nobles to put down the revolt.<sup>271</sup> When rebel peasants interacted with men from the towns, the consequences were generally negative, not positive; they were centres of conflict as much as co-operation.

Do we get any indication about how the revolt ended? The defeat of Guillaume Cale's force at Clermont was certainly a pivotal moment in the Jacquerie according to the chroniclers. For example, *La Chronique Normande* records:

And at the time the King of Navarre assembled a great army, consisting of men-at-arms from England, Normandy and Navarre. They marched to the castle of Clermont, and sent for one of the captains of rustics to talk with him, promising that he wanted to be on their side. Thus, he [Cale] went there, but as soon as he arrived, the King chopped off his head. Then with all his men he attacked the villains, who thought that they were coming to aid them as had been promised, but they were mistaken. The King's men killed more than eight hundred of them.<sup>272</sup>

The *Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois* account was more detailed,<sup>273</sup> but other chroniclers remarked that the Jacques were tricked by the Navarrese.<sup>274</sup> What exactly happened was unclear: was Cale really beheaded? What is clear is that the remissions confirm that Clermont was a substantial defeat for the Jacques. As recorded elsewhere, one remission recorded that 'Guillaume Cale, calling himself captain of the Beauvoisin, and many others of his adherents and

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<sup>271</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 127, no. 372.

<sup>272</sup> *Chron. norm.*, p. 130, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 164.

<sup>273</sup> Although its account of Cale's personal demise is brief ('[Navarre] beheaded the captain of the Jacques'), the description of the battle gives figures for the Jacques' force (four thousand troops and six hundred horsemen organised in three batallions), lists thirty-six nobles that took part in the battle, and details the nobles' movements on the field. Yet this is the only account that goes into such detail, and is written some forty years after the event – no contemporary chronicle offers any corroboration. *Chron. premiers Valois*, p. 73-4, tr. Cohn, *PP*, p. 160-1.

<sup>274</sup> See for example Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 265, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 77: 'the king of Navarre summoned some of the unsuspecting peasant captains to him with smooth words and slew them'.

accomplices were executed at Clermont thus putting an end to their mad enterprise'.<sup>275</sup> The reference to execution apart, the remissions do not mention betrayal by Navarre. Nonetheless, the crown considered Clermont to mark the end of Cale's participation.

But did the Jacquerie continue even after Clermont? Sadly, the majority of remissions only give us a very rough impression of time. Events are most often recorded as having vaguely taken place in the 'time of commotion and terror', specific dates are very rare. Only occasionally does a remission specify a date, but even these dates were approximations (such as 'around the feast of Saint-John the Baptist just passed').<sup>276</sup> The date is used mainly as an indication of the context of the event, and that it took place within the confines of the Jacquerie. Only a few remissions are more specific; on the 3 June, the men of Rhuis attacked the nobles at Verberie, for example.<sup>277</sup> There is not much specific evidence to suggest that the majority of the revolt did not fall within the 'blazing fire of fifteen days'.<sup>278</sup>

Yet on occasion remissions hint that the revolt actually continued for a period considerably after the defeat and betrayal at Clermont. For instance, the men of Louveciennes (Yvelines), with 'many others' who were 'Jacques Bonhommes', attacked a house at Marly-en-Roy (Yvelines) on the Feast of the Magdalene, on the 22 July.<sup>279</sup> Another document, concerning a castle destroyed by the non-nobles at Jouy-sous-Thelle (Oise), near Beauvais, mentioned that the 'terror began' against them around the 'feast of Saint Christopher', on 24 July.<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> See the section on Navarre in Chapter 3, and AN, JJ86, f. 208, no. 571.

<sup>276</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 76, no. 231, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 291-2.

<sup>277</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 256, no. 444, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 280-1.

<sup>278</sup> Leguai, 'Les révoltes rurales', p. 58.

<sup>279</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 130, no. 380.

<sup>280</sup> AN, JJ100, f. 230, n. 478.

Located in the heart of the Île de France as much as six weeks after the alleged 'end' of the violence, these two remissions suggest that the Jacquerie may not have been crushed in the short amount of time previously believed. Yet, only these documents suggest an alternative timeline.

What do the remissions tell us then about the revolt itself? It covered a greater area than the historiography now suggests. It may have continued later into the summer than historians now believe and longer than the chroniclers reported it. Urban sites were far from instrumental in the revolt; instead, they were sites of confusion, where participation was never clear cut. Only on two occasions, in Gien and Montdidier, did the town populace as a whole appear to have taken part in the rebellion. The bulk of examples suggest that townsmen were often opposed and antagonistic towards the peasants. Except from the area between Paris and Meaux which was considered part of Marcel's revolt, virtually the whole of the north of France was covered by the insurgency. Finally, Jacques were remarkably successful when it came to destroying property and military installations, even against the considerable obstacles of attacking nobles, who certainly possessed superior arms and experience.

Thus, our conclusion contradicts the traditional picture of the Jacques as 'unimportant'. How could such a large-scale revolt which caused such damage be anything other than catastrophic? If nothing else, the swift collapse of the realm's defences in this area to the English and the Navarrese in the months following the Jacquerie indicates that the French crown's military strength in this central region was weakened. What reports we do have suggest that the property damaged alone may have exceeded many of the ransoms due after Poitiers. The



Jacquerie may have been brief, but its size and scale brought severe problems for the Dauphin and the defence of the realm.

## RETALIATION

The roughness of the repression corresponded with the ease first encountered by the rebels. Case after case could be examined. Hangings, spectacular beheadings of the persons most deeply involved, even drawing and quartering, make up a dismal story. Sanctions were founded often enough on the principle of collective responsibility; penalties, whether physical or pecuniary, affected in an arbitrary fashion a whole group – or some elements of a group – which was presumed guilty, if not of the deeds, at least of not having prevented them. Everything took place as if government wished to intimidate even more than punish.<sup>281</sup>

Mollat and Wolff's characterisation of the inevitable failure of medieval popular violence and resulting repression by vengeful authorities concurs with Emile Zola's vision of the end of a jacquerie: 'the same exasperation bursts forth ... in which state they remain until death'.<sup>282</sup> Historians like Guy Fourquin presumed that all medieval revolts ended in this kind of bloody defeat.<sup>283</sup> As for the Jacquerie, R.-H. Bautier devotes more sentences to the 'butchery' of the repression than the rebellion.<sup>284</sup> It was also assumed that this failure came at the hands of an authority or 'state' which wished to inflict terror arbitrarily on the lower orders, rather than resolve the situation judicially.

Repressive measures are enacted by authorities for two reasons. First, repression performed a retaliatory function, enabling the transgressors to be punished for their involvement. Second, looking forward, repression could be

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<sup>281</sup> Mollat and Wolff, *Popular Revolutions*, p. 310.

<sup>282</sup> Zola, *The Earth*, trans. Parmée, p. 91.

<sup>283</sup> Fourquin, *Anatomy of Popular Rebellion*, p. 25, 'even in these closing years of the fourteenth century ... revolt led only to repression and not to revolution'.

<sup>284</sup> Bautier, *The Economic Development of Medieval Europe*, p. 231.

intended to prevent future revolts, by indicating the kind of response future rebels might expect. Both of these have been traditionally considered to be effective, even in the case of medieval revolts; for example, E. Kiser and A. Linton suggested that the repression of English Peasants' Revolt quelled popular protest over the next century,<sup>285</sup> a claim that is questionable at best.<sup>286</sup> Because repression was considered to produce positive results for central government, it was presumed that retaliation would always be carried out by the 'state'. However, in recent studies the power of the retaliation has been challenged, and with it the notion that states automatically represses their subjects after a disturbance.<sup>287</sup> This is not a modern phenomenon: in fact, there are numerous examples from the medieval period. Even in Paris, the French crown showed in 1382 it was willing to forgive its subjects without much bloodshed: after the revolt of the Hammer men, the crown pardoned all but seven of the citizens involved, but even this proved too harsh and the agreement to pay their taxes

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<sup>285</sup> Kiser and Linton's generalisation is based on work done on popular revolt in Guyenne, which they conclude by saying was deeply affected by the repression of Le Fronde of 1648-53. Yet, although they declare this to be a qualitative survey, their results are not backed up by an adequate sample. They are only concerned with twelve revolts between 1515 and 1789: for example, statements like 'Prior to the Fronde, tax increases tended to generate revolt, after the Fronde, they rarely did' are based on seven revolts between 1515 and 1645 and four revolts between 1652 and 1789. The ascription of whatever changes may have occurred (and within a sample of only twelve it is doubtful that these can be accurately tracked) to the repression of one revolt alone disregards a century-and-a-half of social change that may also have brought pressure on revolt. Moreover, the concept that the repression after Le Fronde, however bloody, would have affected at all several generations distant to the original rebels cannot be taken for granted. E. Kiser and A. Linton, 'The Hinges of History: State-Making and Revolt in Early Modern France', *American Sociological Review*, 67, n. 6 (Dec, 2002), pp. 889-910.

<sup>286</sup> There are great rebellions after 1381, and there are minor flare-ups in the years after 1381; Thomas Walsingham reported a conspiracy in September 1382 in Norwich, and an abortive rising in Kent in 1390 for example. See *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381*, ed. R.B. Dobson (London, 1991) pp. 334-335.

<sup>287</sup> Repression does not necessarily result in a reduction in the level of popular political protest. Sociologists and political scientists concur that repression of revolts can lead to a variety of responses from participants, including an unwillingness to participate in the future, but also an increased belief in the necessity of violence for future rebels to achieve their goals as well as radicalising the populace that had previously been uninvolved. Whatever tangible effects repression has, and whatever correlation there might be types of repression and its effects on popular violence seems impossible to spot. For example, Karl-Dieter Opp and Wolfgang Roehl describe 'disparate effects of repression ... [that] sometimes deters and sometimes radicalises the participants of political protests'. K.-D. Opp and W. Roehl, 'Repression, micromobilization, and political protest', *Social Forces*, 69, n. 2 (Dec, 1990), p. 523.

immediately broke down.<sup>288</sup> Indeed, only two years before the Jacquerie, the Count of Armagnac (and by extension, the French crown) discussed concessions with rebels, not punishing them, when the people of Toulouse rose to dispute a new tax.<sup>289</sup> In the negotiations that followed, in return for safe passage for the Count, it was declared that no new tax would be levied and the inhabitants would not be punished for their actions.

The conception of repression by the 'state' in the Middle Ages is strongly influenced by an acceptance of the preponderance of violence in medieval society, specifically Huizinga's depiction of the 'Violent Tenor of Life'.<sup>290</sup> In Pieter Spierenburg's study of the development of repression, he theorised that repressive forces were very rarely punished for taking action against those who attacked them:

we note an acceptance of forms of private violence and the predominance of a reconciliatory stand instead of serious punishment ... in such a climate of acceptance of violence no particular sensitivity prevailed towards the suffering of its convicts.<sup>291</sup>

Thus, a lack of proper social institutions, like an accepted criminal justice system, promoted vengeance and violence that was ultimately sanctioned by the authorities.<sup>292</sup> Lacking effective and accepted mechanisms of state control, medieval society tolerated private violence by victims against those who

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<sup>288</sup> Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, p. 153.

<sup>289</sup> *ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>290</sup> J. Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, trans. F. Hopman (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972).

<sup>291</sup> P. Spierenburg, *The Spectacle of Suffering, Executions and the Evolution of Repression: From A Pre-industrial Metropolis to the European Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 7-8.

<sup>292</sup> In other cases, a lack of solid institutions has been linked to an increase in what we might call chaotic violence, particularly in the case of the medieval Inquisition; R. Kieckhefer argues that 'in certain contexts complex institutions can serve as checks upon the arbitrary will of individuals'. Yet Kieckhefer stresses that we should not consider medieval retaliation to be any more chaotic than its modern counterpart: 'forms of repression ... have become more common which are far more brutal and systematic than their medieval counterparts'. R. Kieckhefer, *Repression of Heresy in Medieval Germany* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1979), p. 112, p. ix.

committed crimes against them, and retaliation went unpunished. In these models, the society of the Middle Ages actively encouraged repression and private violence.

However, Sam Cohn has shown that this vision of the failure of the medieval uprising and its inevitable bloody repression was not representative of the actual results of rebellion in this period. Not only were revolts frequently successful, but even failure did not necessarily result in bloody recriminations: '[i]n 70 percent of cases found in chronicles (726 of 1012), either the chronicler did not mention any repression or the rebels won their demands'.<sup>293</sup>

Of course, in the case of the Jacques, the chroniclers and contemporaries do mention repression. Even Étienne Marcel noted the extreme reaction of the nobility, and the excessive bloodshed of the retaliation, in a letter written to the towns of Picardy and Flanders:

The gentlemen of the Beauvaisis and the Vexin assembled and destroyed and pillaged all the country of the Beauvaisis. Under the excuse of the deeds done in the Beauvaisis, the nobles in many and diverse places held large assemblies and raided many places in the region on this side of the Somme and the River Oise. They overwhelmed those who had nothing to do with these deeds in the Beauvaisis, who were guiltless and innocent, invading, robbing, sacking, burning, killing and destroying all the country, just as they are doing day after day.<sup>294</sup>

The chroniclers echoed Marcel's words, and their description of the repression is often clearer than descriptions of the revolt itself. Jean Froissart described a scene of carnage as the nobles at Meaux exacted a bloody revenge on both the townsmen who attacked them and the peasants in the neighbouring countryside:

When these wicked people saw them so well-ordered and that they were not such a great number to face them, they were no longer so bold as before... Thus, those [Jacques] in front, now feeling the blows they had

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<sup>293</sup> Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, p.152.

<sup>294</sup> Letter of Étienne Marcel to the Communes of Picardy and Flanders, in *Oeuvres de Froissart* ed. de Lettenhove, (Brussels, 1868), VI, pp. 470-1, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 177-8.

dreaded, retreated in horror, all at once, one falling on top of the other ... Thus all sorts of men-at-arms then came out of the barricades and quickly won over the square, striking down these wicked people. And they beat them senseless, butchering them like animals ... And the gentlemen had killed so many they became completely exhausted and worn out. They dumped the bodies in heaps into the river Marne.<sup>295</sup>

Froissart's expression of joy at the destruction of the wicked Jacques was not the only opinion on the issue given by the chroniclers. If the exceptional violence of the Jacquerie was demonstrated by descriptions of behaviour towards women, then many chroniclers descriptions of the repression indicated that the nobles' violence too was exceptional. By highlighting these extremes, they considered it both unnecessary and also disproportionate in its nature. Jean de Venette, for example, records:

Overrunning many country villages, they set most of them on fire and slew miserably all the peasants, not merely those whom they believed to have done them harm, but all they found, whether in their houses or digging in the vineyards or in the fields. Verberie, La Croix-Saint-Ouen near Compiègne, Ressons, and many other country towns lying in open fields which I have not seen and do not note here, mourned their destruction by fire.<sup>296</sup>

Others concurred. *La Chronique normande du XIVe siècle* hinted that the nobles not only wrought destruction but also made a hefty profit off their retaliatory attacks: 'they burned everything in many places, killing and hunting down the people and carrying off their wealth, of which much was to be had'.<sup>297</sup>

Moreover, when compared to their often scant coverage of the rebels' actions, the chronicles reported detailed information concerning the retaliation. In the passage above, Jean de Venette gives a clear indication of some villages attacked, while he only mentions one target as representative of the Jacques'

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<sup>295</sup> Froissart, *Chron.*, v. 5, pp. 105-6, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 156-7.

<sup>296</sup> Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 264, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 77.

<sup>297</sup> *Chron. norm.*, p. 133, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 165.

rampage.<sup>298</sup> The *Chronique des Quatre Premiers Valois* describes the battle at Clermont where the Jacques were defeated, as well as the resulting retaliation by Charles of Navarre and a collection of nobles from Amiens and Bray.<sup>299</sup> The chronicles' sympathies naturally lay with the nobility, and the exploits of nobles and their retaliatory attacks would have been easier to compile than the uprising of faceless peasants. Yet there was obviously something appealing about including these tales.

This large amount of detail does not mean that the chronicle accounts always concurred. When looked at together, the reports of the regent's location are confusing. *La Chronique normande du XIVe siècle* placed him in Compiègne, assembling knights and nobles for the attack on Meaux, whereas *La Chronique des règnes de Jean II et Charles V* described him as heading first for la Ferté-Milon, then back towards Paris.<sup>300</sup> Almost every chronicle suggests a different noble whose role in the defeat of the Jacques was particularly important; for example, Jean de Venette mentions the Count of Montdidier, whereas the *Chronique des Quatre Premiers Valois* focusses on the Count of Roucy. The only two accounts that agree are unsurprisingly Jean le Bel and Froissart, whose account was based on le Bel's chronicle. No other source gives a prominent role to the Lord of Coucy, and each chronicler details their own particular counter-offensive, and it is worth noting that the Count of Foix was Jean Froissart's

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<sup>298</sup> Jean de Venette mentions the castle of Ermenonville because it was 'then the strongest in France', rather than to give any sense of the geography of the revolt as he did with his description of the retaliation. Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 265, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 77.

<sup>299</sup> *Chron. premiers Valois*, p. 73-4, tr. Cohn, *PP*, p. 161-2.

<sup>300</sup> *Chron. des règnes*, v.1, p. 186, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 169.

personal hero.<sup>301</sup> This table indicates the major acts of vengeance committed by nobles against the peasants as recorded by the chroniclers.<sup>302</sup>

**Table IX. Retaliatory attacks listed by the chroniclers.**

LEADER	CHRONICLE	DEPARTED FROM	ATTACKED	SIZE OF FORCE
Lord of Coucy, Enguerrand VI	Jean le Bel Jean Froissart	Coucy-le-Château (Aisne)	'all around'	'great many nobles'
Count of Foix	Jean le Bel Jean Froissart	Meaux	Area around Meaux	
'Troop of gentlemen' <sup>303</sup>	<i>Chroniques des Quatres Premiers Valois</i>	Amiens, Bray	Poix, Roye, Gerberoy, Gaillefountaines (Somme)	1000 swordsmen, 90 archers <sup>304</sup>
Robert, Count of Roucy	<i>Chroniques des Quatres Premiers Valois</i>	Roucy (Aisne)	Brie	
Charles of Navarre	<i>La Chronique de règnes de Jean II et Charles V, Jean de Venette</i>	Clermont ?	Beauvaisis, Verberie, La Croix-Saint-Ouen near Compiègne, Ressons (Oise)	
The Regent	<i>La Chronique de règnes de Jean II et Charles V</i>	Meaux	Chateau-Thierry, la Férte-Millon and the surrounding area (Aisne)	
Count of Saint-Pol, Montdidier	<i>Jean de Venette</i>	Montdidier	Verberie, La Croix-Saint-Ouen near Compiègne, Ressons (Oise)	

Like the chronicle accounts of the initial revolt, the focus falls firmly on the Île de France. Again, this is the area that has been recognised as the heartland of

<sup>301</sup> This was discussed in 'The Attack on the Marché'.

<sup>302</sup> This definition is not always clear-cut. For example, Mahieu Raoul de Coucy's defence of the castle of le Plassie, as detailed by *La Chronique Normande*, is not included because it is unclear whether the violence continued after the end of the battle instigated by the Jacques. On the other hand, the 'troop of gentlemen' described by *La Chronique des Quatre Premiers Valois* is included despite the fact they attacked a 'troop of Jacques' for two reasons: first, this is noted as being after the point that 'the Jacques had been defeated', and that the spectacle of 'burning at least three hundred' sounds more like retaliatory violence than the result of a military engagement.

<sup>303</sup> The chronicle lists 'Le Baudrain de la Heuse, Monsignor Guillaume Martel, Monsignor Jehan Sonnain, Monsignore Jehan le Bigot and the chief officers of Caux'. After Poix, they were joined by 'the monsignor de Beasant, monsignor the castellan of Beauvais, [and] monsignor de Boulainvilliers'.

<sup>304</sup> The initial force was listed by the chronicler as 300 swordsmen, but after Poix the three monsignors added 700 swordsmen and 90 archers to the force.

the Jacquerie by later historians. The chroniclers were chiefly concerned with the violence taking place in the region around Paris. When the chroniclers noted a place from which the retaliation started, it is marked in red; when they noted a target of the retaliation, it is marked in blue.<sup>305</sup>

**Map VII. The repression as detailed by the chroniclers.**



The repression took many forms. For example, after the attack on Meaux, if we can trust the chroniclers, two noble offensives took place. First, the localised and bloody burning of the region by the Count of Foix that caught the chroniclers' eyes. Secondly, the regent rode out with a force fifty kilometres to

<sup>305</sup> This map is to a scale of 1 / 900,000.



the East to the area around Château-Thierry. Localised repression existed, like that committed by the Count of Roucy around his lands, but so did great armed campaigns across the countryside by groups of nobles. The force that departed from Amiens originally headed west to Bray, before turning back east and then south into the Île de France itself, for example. Of course, localised repression could have resulted in as many casualties as large movements.

There is little doubt that the retaliation was bloody and widespread, and many historians have been content to record this as the complete explanation of the violence. Yet these chronicle accounts do not answer all the questions. What happened outside the Île de France? Did the repression end tension, or create more? Social historians have challenged the assumption that retaliation quashes violence rather than encourages other actions. Who actually were these nobles? Were they acting with the support of the regent?

The chronicles are not our only accounts of the retaliation. The crown did not only pardon rebels, but also errant nobles for the excesses they committed in the wake of the initial revolt. Moreover, some peasants were also pardoned for acts they committed under the pressure of assault, and gave details regarding their assailants. The remissions record previously unknown counter-offensives against the rural and urban rebels.<sup>306</sup> The remissions are a valuable tool for tracking the activities of the forces that put down the rebellion. This table represents the remissions that suggested large-scale chevauchées of nobles, rather than instances of private violence:

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<sup>306</sup> Charles of Navarre's offensive against the rebels was not mentioned in any remissions for the Navarrese, but only mentioned in the narratives of remissions for the Jacques. The remission of Jehan Bernier, who later refused a commission to serve under Navarre, mentions the damage done by the Navarrese to the countryside, as does the remission for the people of Mello, see AN, JJ86, f. 133, no. 387 and JJ86, f. 102, no. 309 respectively.

Table X. Retaliatory attacks listed by the remissions.

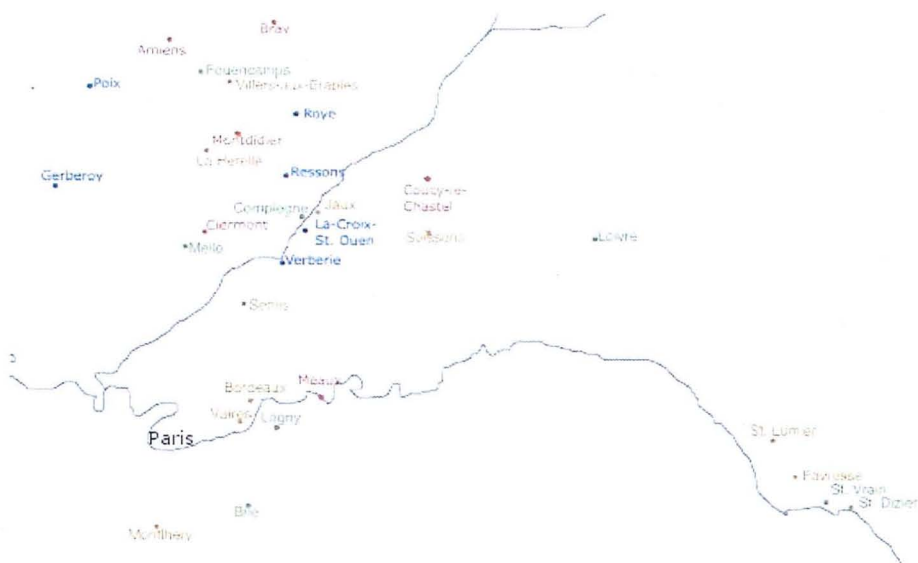
JJ	Nobles from...	Description of Assailants	Attack....
86, 142	Saint-Dizier, Grancy	'Our good lord and friend', Nobles	Pertois, lowlands of Champagne
86, 309	Mello	Nobles, Navarre's troops	Mello
86, 356	Unclear	Nobles	Soissons
86, 365	Compiègne	'Nobles, Officers of the crown and citizens of Compiègne	Jaux, trying to cross the river Oise
86,380	Loivre, at Reims	Nobles	Villages around Brie
86,420	Meaux	Brigands	Montlhéry
86,421	Unclear	Nobles	Senlis <sup>307</sup>
86, 578	Saint-Dizier, Saint-Vrain	Nobles	Saint-Lumier
90, 292	Saint-Dizier	Nobles	Favresse
90,444	Brie	Brigands	La-Celle in Brie
91,333	Lagny	Nobles	Bordellis, Vaires
108,60	Beauvaisis, Fouencamps	Nobles, Robert of Rogois	Herelle, Villers-aux-Erables
115, 297	Seven leagues outside Gien	Knights	Gien

The striking contrast with the chroniclers is again that of the geography: as with the rebellion itself, the remissions highlight a great diversity of action occurring outside the Île de France. Whereas the chronicles concentrated on the 'supposed' heartland of the revolt, the remissions indicate that the repression spread across the north of France. The heartland is still well represented, but there were numerous centres that the repression spread from, especially to the south and east. The map belows adds information from the remissions: when they indicate a centre from which retaliation spread, the location is marked in green; targets are marked orange.<sup>308</sup>

<sup>307</sup> Several remissions mention the attack on Senlis, but only this one details the actual attack by the nobles.

<sup>308</sup> The scale of this map is 1 / 1,900,000.

**Map VIII. The repression as detailed by the chroniclers and remissions.**



Of all the counter-insurgency movements, the most powerful originated from Saint-Dizier. While the chronicles place the centre of the nobles' counter-offensive in the Île de France, the remissions make numerous mentions of the damage caused by the lord of Saint-Dizier and his push west; for this, he and the lord of Grancy were pardoned in early 1358:

At the supplication of our friends and loyal knights and advisors, Eudes, lord of Grancy, Jean, lord of Saint Dizier and of Vignorry ... to oppose and resist the disloyal and hateful companies and disorderly wishes of the people of the country of Perthois and the lowland parts of Champagne, who had imprisoned, conspired against and ordered executions of the said lords of Grancy and Saint-Dizier and those other nobles of the land, together with their wives and children, and for making false and bad remarks ... [and also] had assembled with weapons with the sound of the bells of the countryside... The said supplicants and many other nobles and non-nobles had then assembled, both in arms and on horses as well, and used their royal office, setting fires in the houses and in these villages (*villes*), communities and the countryside, and they took, pillaged and scattered many of their goods of the said communities, along with many goods belonging to the nobles and non-nobles not guilty and not implicated with these said communities through ignorance. They cut off the heads of several of those responsible, and also executed others ... In consideration of the said acts of the said communities and the countryside and others who had acted against the said nobles ... we wish to remit,

quit and pardon the said seigneurs of Grancy and of Saint-Dizier and with all the other nobles and non nobles, their consorts, accomplices and aides.<sup>309</sup>

According to the remissions, the Lord of Saint-Dizier appears as the main force in the retaliation against the Jacques. For example, the men of Saint-Lumier (Marne) had formed together to protect themselves against Saint Dizier :

Let it be known to all those present and future that we have heard the supplication of the inhabitants of Saint-Lumier in the Champagne ... The said supplicants had for many acts assembled, armed and made conspiracies together there to guard and defend against any nobles and any others of the land and others [as well] and also against the armies of Champagne ... especially against our loyal friend the lord of Saint Dizier *queux* of France and other nobles of the said land and in the town of Saint-Verain.<sup>310</sup>

The charge by Saint-Dizier's men also could enrage passions. The remission for Jean Favresse, leader of villagers around Favresse (Marne), states:

the lord of Saint-Dizier with a great number of soldiers rode towards Vitry in Perthois, This greatly enraged the people of the region. In many villages, they rang their bells and assembled to attack this lord of Saint-Dizier, fearing that he wished to harm them.<sup>311</sup>

While these two extracts do not mention the damage done by the counter movement, the news of the repression travelled very fast, and created enough fear that villages assembled in defence against Saint-Dizier's repression. Saint-Dizier was situated in the eastern extreme of the region affected by the Jacquerie, and the details of this push westward suggest as much destruction as the chroniclers described around the Île de France. Of course, the number of

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<sup>309</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 49, no. 142, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 247-8.

<sup>310</sup> "Savoir faisons à tous presenz et à venir que nous oye la supplication des habitans de la ville de Saint Lumier en Champaigne .... iceulx supplicants se soient par plusieurs fois assemblez armez et fair conspiracies ensemble deulx garder et deffendre contre aucuns nobles et aucuns autres du pais et d'ailleurs et aussi armez aus champaigne ... especialement contre nostre amé et feal le seigneur de Saint Dizier queux de France et aucuns autres nobles et autres du dit pais en la ville de Saint-Verain"; AN, JJ86, f. 210, no. 578.

<sup>311</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 149, no. 292, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 293-4, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 190-191.

remissions does not necessarily correlate with the importance of any given event, but the excesses committed by St. Dizier's forces were considered important by the crowd, and were feared by the peasants.

As described above, fear of the nobles' attacks could cause peasants to act. In the village of Jaux (Oise), news that the nobles, officers of the crown and the people of Compiègne were coming forced the habitants, and their captain Jehan le Grant, into action:

Since the said commotions, at the time when the nobles raided, along with our officers and many others of the town (*ville*) of Compiègne came to the bank of the river Oise at the forest of Compiègne and they wished to cross over the said river to the said village (*ville*) of Jaux on the other bank where this Jehan was. He had said to them that he would go to bring the boat that was set up for crossing, (but) the said Jehan feared that they were accompanied by nobles and thus refused to bring the boat, and then many habitants from the said village (*ville*) of Jaux appeared and fired (arrows) again at those who wished to pass, without wounding or harming them in any manner ... And for this these nobles and officers have had and demonstrated hate and ill feelings to the said Jehan for these said causes ...<sup>312</sup>

The nobles' *chevauchée* should not be read as the end of rebellion, but rather the beginning of new narratives. In this example, the villagers of Jaux attacked the men of Compiègne because they thought they were aiding the nobles. The retaliation marked the continuation of old battles started by the Jacques, as well as new feuds started during the repression.

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<sup>312</sup> 'et depuis les dictes commocions ou temps qui les nobles chevauchoient et aucuns officers de mons seigneur de nous et plusiers autres de la ville de Compaigne feussent a lez sur la Riviere d'Oise du coste divers la forest de compaigne et eussent voulu passer outre la dicte riviere en la dicte ville de Jaux qui est de l'autre coste divers dicelle ou estoit lors le dit Jehan au qu'il dirent qu'il leur amenost ou feist amener la nacelle qui la estoit ordene pour passer le quel Jehan doubtans qu'il ne feussent accompaignez de nobles leur reffusa du toute amener la dicte nacelle et lors plusiers habitans de la dicte ville de Jaux se avanturent et retraierunt ayceulx qui vouloient passer sans ce qui aucuns d'iceulx sussent blaciez ou naures en aucune maniere du dit trait ... Et pour ce que les diz nobles ou officers pourroient avoir et porter haine et malivolence au dit Jehan pour les causes dessus dictes...' AN, JJ86, f. 123, no. 362.

It is worth noting too that that the peasants did not passively receive their punishment. While the chronicles and the remissions agree that the bloodshed was mostly on the part of the nobility, these examples of peasants taking up arms against the noble contingent shows that they still rose up even after the repression. Resistance to the nobles' retaliation was not the only example of peasants organising in defence against attack in the wake of the revolt in the region, a topic which we will discuss in more depth in Chapter 6. For example, in 1359, at Longueil-Saint-Marie (Oise), near Compiègne, Guillaume l'Aloue rallied 300 local peasants against the English cavalry, later in the year, the men of Châtres fortified their church unsuccessfully against the same foe, and then in 1360, in Thouri-en-Beauce, peasants again organised against English troops.<sup>313</sup>

The remission that recorded the most damage caused in the retaliation was issued to a number of communities pardoned for defending themselves from attack by the nobles in the region of Reims. Their campaign seems to have been a long, drawn-out offensive against the region's communities:

Let it be known to all present and future that the inhabitants of the villages (*villes*) of Marne de Saint Thierry, that is to say Saint Thierry, Thil, Merly le Grant and le Petit, Pouillon, Villers-Sainte-Anne, Chenai, Chalon sur Veslee and of Villers-Franqueux have humbly begged us [for grace] ... News reached the said habitants and many other villages (*villes*) that the said nobles were trying once again pillage the said countryside ... The said nobles were at Loivre near Reimz, and had come to assault many of the said habitants and were shouting 'Death to the rustics!', and it was said they had executed fifty or more of them ... [The nobles] worked and strove day after day, raiding these said villages (*villes*) and attacking them continually these said villages (*villes*), executing and terrifying men and workhorses and putting towns and men to ransom.<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> These will be discussed in more detail in 'Peasant Resistance', Chapter VI.

<sup>314</sup> 'Savoir faisons à tous presenz et à venir que a nous ont fait humblement supplier les habitants des villes de la Marne de Saint Thierry c'est assavoient de Saint Thierry, Thil, Merly le Grant et le Petit, Pouillon, Villers-Sainte-Anne, Chenai, Chalon sur Veslee et de Villers-Franqueux... Et pour ce que aus diz habitans et a plusiers autres villes fut rapporte que les dis nobles reffercerent

The execution of these villagers was represented as exceptional. Although this remission highlights the violence of these repressive attacks, not least the likelihood of mass executions, it also indicates several other types of oppression that the nobles inflicted on the peasantry: destruction and theft of property, ransoming of both towns and individuals, and arson. Certainly in the eyes of the villagers making the appeal, the repression by the nobles was just as bloody as anything that went before it.

The nobles' focus does fall mostly on the peasants, but urban dwellers were not safe from the counter-offensive. According to the chroniclers, the city of Senlis was the scene of much violence at the end of the Jacquerie. According to the *Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois*:

I am told that after the defeat of the Jacques, a troop of gentleman sought to take the city of Senlis, took one of its gates, and entered inside. But the townsmen fought them with such force that they poured boiling water on top of the gentlemen. The fittest and best equipped of the town courageously met them with carts, which they rolled onto the gentlemen with such force and power that they were chased out of town.<sup>315</sup>

The attack on the town, by the same forces who attacked the rebels, resulted in more deaths for both nobles and inhabitants. We find a similar emphasis within the remissions – the assault on Senlis was the cause of confusion and violence:

Let it be known to all present and future that we have heard the supplication of Jehan Charuel, which contends that, on the day of the Benediction (3 June) that has just passed, during the time of the terror, commotions, rebellions and assemblies the men of the plat pays had held against the nobles of the realms, many gentleman had made efforts to

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de pillier ou dit pais ... D'iceulx nobles les quieux estoient à Loivre devant Reimz et lors iceulx nobles feussent venuz assailir plusieurs des diz habitans en crient a la mort au villains et la en eussent mis a mort jusques au nombre de cinquante et plus ... [les nobles] se soient depuis efforcies et s'efforcent en de jour en jour de chevauchier et chevauchent continuellement es dictes villes de mettre à mort et peurs gens et chevaux de harnous et autres à ranconner villes et gens.<sup>315</sup>  
AN, JJ86, f. 130, no. 380.

<sup>315</sup> *Chron. premiers Valois*, pp. 76-7, tr. Cohn, *PP*, p. 162.

enter into the town (*ville*) of Senlis and to take it, and because of this they declared in the said town (*ville*) that all those gentlemen that [the townsmen] had in their houses must be sent and forced out. Because of this said declaration someone who lived in the said town (*ville*), who hosted in his house the lord of Hardencourt and two of his squires, one of whom was named Jehan des Prez, sent out the said knight and his squires from the said house; the said squires, we do not know for what cause, then killed the said knight, for which reason the cry of 'Ho, murder!' was raised against these squires. Because of that and this cry there then assembled a great number of habitants of the said town (*ville*) of Senlis, and the said Jehan de Prez was executed by this said assembly of which the said supplicant was part. We have quitted, remitted and pardoned [them], and especially the said habitants of the town (*ville*) of Senlis...<sup>316</sup>

The noble offensive against urban settlements could be just as troublesome as those against the peasants. The tale may well be fictitious: there is no way of knowing who exactly killed the master, and whether Jehan Charuel really was attempting to avenge the noble's death. This remission, however, records the confusion that resulted from these nobles' revenge. First, the inhabitants of Senlis had lived with nobles in their midst throughout the Jacquerie, yet it is the repression that causes civil strife between townsman and their betters. Second, in these towns, where the line between lord and servant were less clear, the borders became blurred between aggressor and defender. The Lord of Hardencourt and his squire were not the only high profile casualties: Henri de Murat was killed in the assault, and his property was given to one of the nobles

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<sup>316</sup> 'Savoir faisons à tous presenz et a venir que, si comme avons veu par la supplicacion Jehan Charuel, contenant que, comme le jour de la Benediction derrainement passée, pour le temps que les effroiz, commocions, rebellions et assemblées estoient des genz du plat pais contre les nobles du royaume, plusieurs gentilz hommes se feussent efforciez d'entrer en la ville de Senlis et prendre ycelle, et pour ce fu lors crié en la dicte ville que tous ceulx qui aroient gentilz hommes en leurs maissons les meissent et boutassent hors, pour le quel cry un hoste ou habitant de la dicte ville, qui avoit en sa maison herbergiez ou hostellez les seigneur de Hardencourt et deux de ses escuiers, dont l'un estoit appelé Jehan des Prez, mist et bouta hors de sa maison les dessus diz chevalier et escuiers, les quelx escuiers, l'en ne scet pour quelle cause, tuèrent tantost les dit chevalier, pour la quelle cause l'en cria lors sur yceulx escuiers 'Haro, le murtre!' au quel cri et pour le quel fait s'assemblèrent grant foison des habitanz de la dicte ville de Senliz, par les quelx le dit Jehan des Prez fu mis a mort, en la quelle assemblée et fait feri le dit suppliant. Et comme nous, depuis que nous venismes derrainement en nostre bonne ville de Paris, aiens quitté, remis et pardonné, et especialement aus habitans de la ville de Senlis dessus dictes...', AN, JJ86, f. 147, no. 421.



involved.<sup>317</sup> In Soissons, there were two more casualties in the nobles' counter-offensive.<sup>318</sup> The attacks by the nobles upon urban areas supposedly favourable to the Jacques were more problematic for the crown than the conflicts with villages, and the blurring of lines is clear in these remissions: the nobles killed other well-heeled individuals, not faceless peasants.

There were other assemblies of nobles from which the counter-offensive originated. In the remission for Jean Bonilis, nobles were reported to have gathered together at Lagny (Seine-et-Marne). Along with general misdeeds towards the men of the countryside, Jean's party were accused of three specific crimes: the murder of a man in Bordeaux (Seine-et-Marne), the burning of a house in Tromi, and the rape of a woman named Tassone in Vaires near Lagny. The nobles were pardoned, yet four years after the fact, specific crimes were mentioned. The crown obviously considered that these four specific allegations required inclusion within the remission narrative. The authorities did not forget the acts of the nobles quickly.

Vengeance was not just carried out by lords: two remissions detail how employees of the crown had been involved in violent transgressions. On two occasions, it is brigands, acting in the employ of the crown to guard the areas which it could not itself guard, who brought vengeance across the countryside:

For the party of Regnier de Sala, Philip de Florencia, Nicholas Becque, John de Navare and many other *brigands*, on horse and on foot, garrisoned at Cella in Brie, set forth from their position, where, by themselves, from the tenth day of September in the year 1358 up until to the present, they were able to serve our said lord and in the present wars

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<sup>317</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 56, no. 171.

<sup>318</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 120, no. 352 and f. 121, no. 356.

against enemies on behalf the said King, and especially in stabilizing and holding the said place and in the place Crécy in Brie. In that place and other said neighbouring places they patrolled, for protecting and defending the said location and the inhabitants there, day and night, frequently against many and diverse dangerous opponents, and they vanquished the said hostile enemies, and killing and wounding the said enemies ... And during the said time the *brigands* did not have sufficient provisions and other necessary things, and those nearby failed to make their payments, [so they took] more goods, provisions, garments, animals, horses and captured other goods of our subjects, and applied their property to their own uses, against the will of the persons who previously had the goods and indeed the many said subjects. And they often accidentally wounded or killed men, and they raped women against their will, and committed many other crimes, degradations, bad acts, oppressions, and burdens ... unduly and unjustly they increasingly suppressed, injured and burdened our subjects, both clergy and laity.<sup>319</sup>

Acting in the King's service, these soldiers began stealing from the local inhabitants, which led to far more heinous activities. In another document, some of the inevitable violence of the Meaux counter-offensive comes to light. Five brigands, described as archers of the garrison at the Marché of Meaux, headed south to Montlhéry (Essonne) after the offensive, and pillaged the countryside and the port, coming into contact with the knight Bensin de Merregny, guard of the gate :

Let it be known to all present and future that we have heard the supplication of Bensin de Marresny, *esquire*, guard of the port of Montlhéry, contending that on Friday before the feast of Saint Martin last, five brigands, archers of the garrison of the Marché of Meaux as they claimed, had come to the said town (*ville*) of Montlhéry and its environs and committed many acts of pillage and bad deeds. At around four o'clock that night they had come to the said port of Montlhéry where there was much merchandise and goods belonging to many merchants and other good men. These things, merchandise and goods were under the guard of the said supplicant. The brigands had brought three wagons, all harnessed, one of which was loaded with oats and the two others were empty. The carts were loaded with the said things, goods and merchandise that were in the keeping of the said supplicant and were carted off to wherever they wished to take them. The people at the mill at Lierry came to tell him immediately, and because it was his duty to protect the said goods he went off without delay to try and recover them, and with him

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<sup>319</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 156, no. 444, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 303-4.

went the men of justice of the said place and some of the merchants ....  
For having guarded and defended the said goods which were in his  
keeping ...against the said brigands that had come to pillage .....we  
pardon, remit and quit.<sup>320</sup>

The gatekeeper of Montlhéry, who had not been involved in the Jacquerie, was caught up in the retaliation, and was pardoned for his aggressive methods of reinstating the peace. In this case, the behaviour of the brigands made his actions acceptable, while in the former remission, the brigands themselves needed to seek grace. Both of these indicate that forces of the crown acted in an unacceptable manner. The former case details rape and murder, and the latter case, theft of possessions, indicating that the retaliatory forces were not only nobles seeking vengeance, but also privateers seeking to profit from their positions as arbitrators of justice.

Along with great campaigns, the remissions indicate repression on a much smaller scale. Individual royal officials often took it into their own hands to punish rebels.<sup>321</sup> Jean Rose, who carried letters to Compiègne, was executed by the *bailli* who 'with a heart full of anger' had mistaken him for one of the leaders

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<sup>320</sup> 'Savoir faisons à tous presenz et à venir oye sicome nous entendu par la supplicaiton de Bensin de Marrengy escuier garde du port de Montery contenu qui comme venredi avant la feste Saint Martin derrier passe, cinq brigands archers de la garnison du Marchie de Meaulx si comme l'on disoit fussent venus en la dicte ville de Montery et environ le terroir d'icelle et la eussent faites plusiers pilleries et malefacones et environ quatre heures de nuit fussent venus au dit port de montery ou qu'il avoit plusiers marchandises et biens appertenu à plusiers marchans et autres bonnes gens et les quelles dannres et marchandises et biens estoient en la garde du dit suppliant et la eussent iceulx brigans amené trois charretes toutes attelées dont l'une estoit chargée d'avoine et les deux autres vuides, les quelles ils chargèrent des dictres danrees biens et marchandises estands en la garde du dit suppliant comme dit est et ycelles mistrent en voie et à chemin pour les rober piller emporter ou emener hors ou il vouloient la quelle chose les gens qui estoient ou Moulin de Lierry et pour ce le vindrent tantost dire au dit suppliant le qu'il tantost er sans delai pour ce qui la garde d'iceulx biens le appartenoit comme du est et a la tantost pour garder defendre et recouvrir iceulx biens sicomme devoit et tenus y estoit et avecques li alerent la justice du dit leue et aucuns de marchans .... Pour garder et defendre les diz biens dont la garde ... especialment contres les diz brigands qui la estoient venus pour piller ... nous avons pardonné, remis et quicté' AN, JJ86, f. 146, no. 420.

<sup>321</sup> These incidents have not been included within the table, as they do not represent organised attempts at repression by groups of nobles.

of the Jacques.<sup>322</sup> Ancel la Pippe, a knight from Chalence, who had seen his house at Dhuizy (Aisne) pillaged by the habitants of Acy near Soissons (Oise), responded by seizing the horses and beasts of inhabitants.<sup>323</sup> Most remissions hint at an underlying mistreatment of the peasantry by the nobles: almost all remissions issued to peasants testify to the 'ill-feeling and hostility' held towards them by their noble lords. Whether this hate manifested itself physically in violence against persons or property, or whether it simply was indicative of tension that remained in the North of the France after the rebellion, it shows the strained relationship that the remissions were intended to heal.

One of the crucial aspects of the Jacquerie to commentators was the speed of its rise and fall. Leguai called it a 'blazing fire of fifteen days'.<sup>324</sup> Yet the Jacquerie did not pass so quickly. The repression that followed continued deep into the year and, as noted earlier, was not always passively received by the peasants. Certain attacks were relatively close to the end of the initial revolt. For example, the brigands' attack on Montlhéry (Essonne) happened ten days after the assault on the Marché of Meaux, on 20 June (the Wednesday before the Feast of Saint Martin of Tongres).<sup>325</sup> The counter-offensive from Saint-Dizier (Haute-Marne) started on 24 June (the Feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist).<sup>326</sup> However, the brigands who had ravaged the surrounding countryside in Brie did not begin their violence until 10 September (ninety-two days after the Jacques' defeat at Clermont) and that their attacks had continued for a long time after that.<sup>327</sup> The

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<sup>322</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 130, no. 380.

<sup>323</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 192, no. 530.

<sup>324</sup> Leguai, 'Les révoltes rurales' p. 58.

<sup>325</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 147, no. 420.

<sup>326</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 49, no. 142, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 247-8.

<sup>327</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 156, no. 444, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 303-4.

repression of the towns and the countryside lasted far longer than the initial burst of rebellion. Differences in scale and speed of responses varied, but this repression did not disappear quickly – it continued deep into the year, and instability was still reigning while these remissions were being issued.

It should be noted that we only hear of the violence that the crown granted pardons for, so this certainly does not represent the whole story. Moreover, the crown was willing to forgive its subjects for violence in excess of what the peasants committed. *Brigands* in its own charge were forgiven for bloodying the countryside for little reason other than their own financial benefit.<sup>328</sup> Nobles were forgiven for rape, murder and arson. By contrast, the peasantry were forced to justify their actions, and, most often, insist upon their innocence of the most heinous of charges against them. For brigands to simply list their crimes and receive a pardon does suggest that the context of the Jacquerie was enough for most sins to be forgiven.

However, nobles and brigands still needed to seek grace, and used the same apparatus as the peasants to gain forgiveness for their actions. Neither peasant nor noble violence was sanctioned by the state, and even the Lord of Saint-Dizier had to appeal for forgiveness from the Regent for his actions, which were at least ostensibly an attempt to stop a peasant offensive that was still ongoing in his region. The crown certainly did not wash its hands of the deeds of their more senior subjects, as it could have.

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<sup>328</sup> I have used the word in the documents, ‘brigands’, even though the modern connotations may be misleading. It is unclear how these *brigands* were in the crown’s employ, in one case garrisoned at Meaux, but it seems more likely that the usage of ‘brigand’ is closer to the original meaning: ‘the word initially indicated, until the end of fourteenth century, a foot-soldier who made up part of a company’. *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française*, ed. A. Rey (Paris: Dictionnaires le Robert, 1998).

Those issuing the remissions make two important concessions. First, they recognised that in many cases villagers who had not participated in the Jacquerie had suffered equally with the guilty in the retaliation. This was unacceptable; violence committed against innocent individuals was no better than the actions of the Jacques. Secondly, they conceded that even when the peasants had been involved in the uprising, certain levels of violence were unacceptable. Retaliation could be understandable, but perpetrators had to seek legal grace from the crown on account of their actions.

Moreover, the crown could administer punishment, even within the act of granting grace. Conditions could be added to remissions; for example, specifying a pilgrimage that had to be undertaken before grace would be granted. Havet de Hangest had demanded repayment from a certain Jean de Blagny, from Cachi, who was known for having attacked the house of his cousin and her husband. The argument resulted in Havet killing Jean with his lance. For this crime, and taking into consideration Havet's previous good service against the crown's enemies at the battle of Poitiers and Malconseil, Havet received a letter of remission, on the condition that he go on pilgrimage to Notre-Dame de Boulogne-sur-Mer (Nord),<sup>329</sup> roughly 90km to the north.<sup>330</sup> For Thomas Cousterel, a similar punishment was issued:

On behalf of the present friends of Thomas Cousterel who at the time of terror and commotion recently past between the nobles and the men of the plat pays the said Thomas who at the time was 'familier' and guard of the house of Messire Walle de Montingy, knight, and who went with others

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<sup>329</sup> It was not only Havet de Hangest who had to go to Boulogne-sur-Mer. One of the Jacques, Jean Bignet, 'electus capitainus' of Remy, was ordered to complete a pilgrimage there as well for his part in the uprising. AN, JJ89, f. 281, no. 609.

<sup>330</sup> According to Gérard Jugnot, Notre-Dame de Boulogne-sur-Mer was the most common pilgrimage site in letters of remission issued between 1352 and 1363. G. Jugnot, 'Le pèlerinage et le droit pénal d'après les lettres de rémission accordées par le Roi de France', in *Le pèlerinage, Cahiers de Fanjeux 15* (Toulouse: E. Privat, 1980), pp. 191-206.

of the said nobles to attack the men of the countryside and took, defiled and scattered their goods and also executed some of them. The baillif of our said cousin (the Bishop of Beauvais) had then placed him for a long time in prison of our said cousin and had him tortured most cruelly ... He confessed to the crimes mentioned above ... in particular that, at the time of the said terror, he had executed Soybert Ponquet who had .... stolen and carried off the goods of the house of the said knight, his master, and had started the fire ... Before the next Feast of Saint Jehan the Baptist the said Thomas [must make] a pilgrimage to Notre-Dame of Rocamadour and on the completion (*perfection*) of the said pilgrimage he must bring back trustworthy letters (*lettres creables*) of proof to the baillif of Senlis.<sup>331</sup>

Pilgrimage as punishment drew some criticism from Siméon Luce, who considered this 'illusory punishment' to be representative of a 'prince who had been inclined never to appear to have the strength at heart to enforce' the law. When considered from a modern viewpoint, pilgrimage could sound like a soft option. However, pilgrimages were still relatively common as punishments laid down by both ecclesiastical and civil courts.<sup>332</sup> They were often added to letters of remission as conditional clauses.<sup>333</sup> Gérard Jugnot records ninety instances of pilgrimages added to remissions between 1354 and 1368. That these two individuals only needed to complete pilgrimages to relatively local sites is not surprising either; after 1328, the vast majority of pilgrimages ordered by the king

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<sup>331</sup> 'Comme les amis charnelz de Thomas Cousterel ou temps de effrois et commocion, qui deux et n'a gaires ont est contre les nobles et les gens du dit plat pais icelui Thomas qui pour le temps estent familier de messier Walle de Montigny chevalier et garde de son hostel à esté avecque plusieurs es diz nobles contre les dictes gens du dit plat pais à prendre gaster dissiper leurs biens a aucune mis à mort. Le baillif de nostre dit cousin la fait prendre à tenu longuement en prison de nostre dit cousin et fait gehenne tres cruellement. ... il a confess les choses dessus dictes ... especial a temps des diz effrois avoir mis a mort Soybert Ponquet qui avoit pille et en porte les biens de hotel du dit chevalier son maistre et y mis le feu .... icelui Thomas dedans la Feste de la Nativitie de Saint Jehan Baptiste prochain (unreadable word) en pelegrinage à Nostre-Dame du Rocamadour et de la perfection du dit pelegrinage apporte lettres creables au bailli de Senlis'. AN, JJ86, f. 146, no. 419.

<sup>332</sup> For example, the Inquisitor Bernard Gui categorised sites as 'major' or 'minor' pilgrimages for punishing heretics. Flemish cities drew up a list of pilgrimages to shrines which related them to the crime that had been committed. D. Webb, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in the Medieval West* (London: J.B. Tauris, 1999), pp. 51-63.

<sup>333</sup> Oddly, there is no mention of pilgrimage in remission letters in Diana Webb's two survey works, *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage* and *Medieval European Pilgrimage, c. 700-1500* (New York: Palgrave, 2002). J. Sumption does mention them very briefly in his section of 'Penitential Pilgrimages', *Pilgrimage: an Image of Mediaeval Religion* (London: Faber, 1975), pp. 98-113.

were restricted to the north.<sup>334</sup> For nobles, pilgrimage still had resonance.<sup>335</sup> These pardons were conditional on the supplicant completing this task and was perhaps indicative of the seriousness with which the crown considered the crimes they had committed. The whole process of the pilgrimage was similar to the grace that these same nobles were forced to seek from the crown itself, based on restoring the reputation of the individual.

Moreover, pilgrimage was not the only form of punishment. Prior to receiving his remission and presumably completing his pilgrimage, Thomas Cousterel was imprisoned before the remission had been granted, and was tortured into confessing.<sup>336</sup> While it was in Cousterel's interests to exaggerate the hardships he had suffered, this is clear evidence that the justices were interested in finding and prosecuting errant nobles, even if their methods crossed the line into 'great cruelty'.

So if the crown did not approve of the methods of the nobility, at least not beyond a certain point, and punished errant nobles, how did the crown believe the rising should have been policed? The crown had its own punishments to mete out to the peasants, but did not involve the same level of bloodshed. Many

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<sup>334</sup> Jugnot, 'Le pèlerinage', p. 199.

<sup>335</sup> Geoffrey de Charny (whose property is destroyed during 1358, perhaps by Pierre Gille's men on the way to Meaux) mentions pilgrimages as a way of improving one's worth as a knight, although he is specifically talking about foreign pilgrimages, in *The Book of Chivalry*, trans. R. Kaeuper and E. Kennedy (University of Pennsylvania, 1996), pp. 91-3. Webb stresses that even a local pilgrimage issued as punishment could have serious social implications: 'a short local pilgrimage was a form of public penance which exposed the offender to the scrutiny of people that mentioned them'. Webb, *Medieval European Pilgrimage*, p. 90.

<sup>336</sup> As an aside, this is the only remission describing the Jacquerie that I have found which mentions torture. In this case, the choice of the word 'confessu' may be important; the court may have recognised that a confession under torture was unreliable. That said, it is worth noting that the remission does not dispute the central fact of the case, that Cousterel murdered Soybert Ponquet, but only gives an explanation of why Cousterel killed him. The evidence presumably given through confession (pertaining to Cousterel's responsibility) is still recorded as fact in the remission narrative.



of the villages were levied with what seems to be a standard fine of 1,000 *ecuz* each for their involvement:

...our friend, loyal counsellor and lieutenant in these parts the Count of Vaudemont summoned [the villagers of Betancourt and Vroil (Marne)] before him at a certain time and place. On the day and place these inhabitants did not dare appear in person out of fear of the great and cruel executions that our lieutenant had carried out and was continuing day after day against the people of the country. Instead they sent certain *procureurs* on their behalf to our lieutenant. Without knowing any more about these inhabitants, he condemned them to pay a fine of two thousand *ecuz* [between them].<sup>337</sup>

The villagers would appear before the King's lieutenant, who would then issue a fine, in this case without hearing their case. Even amidst the 'great and cruel executions' being committed throughout the countryside, the crown was simultaneously exacting its own punishment on the villages that rebelled. Two thousand *ecuz* was a huge sum – for example, this would be equivalent to the yearly wages of ten well-off ploughmen, if we were to generously estimate that they would make 20 *ecuz* a year each.<sup>338</sup> Six penalties of this sum would have paid the ransom required for the Earl of Warwick to vacate the nine fortresses he had occupied after Poitiers.<sup>339</sup> This was not the only example of fines being issued. Villages that assembled in Champagne were issued with similar fines.<sup>340</sup> The village of Bucy-le-Repost (Marne) paid a sum of 200 *florins* d'or, and the village of Chavanges (Aube) was forced to pay a fine of five hundred *escuz* d'or

<sup>337</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 117, no. 346, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 266-8, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 187.

<sup>338</sup> These numbers are suggested by K. Fowler, *The Age of Plantagenet and Valois* (London: Ferndale Editions, 1980), p.11. Fowler estimates that a 'ploughman doing well' would make between 40-60 shillings a year (although the Statute of Labourers of 1351 supposedly limited the amount to only 10 shillings per year), worth approximately between 14 and 20 *ecuz*; Spufford suggests by this period the *ecuz* was worth about 23 sous, or just more than 3 shillings, in P. Spufford, *Handbook of Medieval Exchange* (London: Offices of the Royal Historical Society, 1986), pp. 189-203. I have attempted to select the most appropriate exchange rates dependent on when the remission was issued, but it is worth nothing that coinage in this period was exceptionally unstable; Spufford reports that 'between 1 February 1337 and 5 December 1360, there were no less than 85 changes in the coinage', and describes 'wild oscillations in the silver content of the tournois', *ibid.*, p. 176.

<sup>339</sup> On 13 May 1360, the Earl of Warwick was paid twelve thousand *francs*. The *ecuz* (23 sous) was worth a little more than the *franc* (20 sous) at that time. Spufford, *Handbook*, pp. 189-193.

<sup>340</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 121-122, nos. 356, 358, 359, 360.

in two instalments: three hundred before the feast of Saint André, and another two hundred before Christmas of that year.<sup>341</sup> These villages appealed for grace specifically to avoid these fines, and were considered worthy by the crown. Considering that presumably many were not pardoned, and that the fine was the stimulus for the villagers to seek grace, it is clear that these must have been issued widely to numerous settlements. We have no evidence of how these fines were administered, but their existence indicates that the crown, apart from the pardoning process, did take a proactive role in punishing the peasants.<sup>342</sup> By demanding financial reparations, the crown could bolster its coffers, but also could reward loyal subjects and pay reparations to those whose properties had been destroyed.<sup>343</sup> For example, later documents specify that Robert de Lorris needed 25,000 *livres* in compensation for the destruction of the chateau at Ermenonville (Oise), amongst other expenses, or around 140,000 *escuz*: the crown would have needed to successfully collect the fines of 140 villages to have paid for the reconstruction of the château.

Of course, by specifying a particular manner in which the rebels should be treated, they set a precedent for punishment that was financial but also peaceful. The violent transgressions of the nobles had to be punished because they clashed with the measured approach of the crown.

The example of the Jacquerie shows us something very different to Spierenburg's model mentioned earlier, where the crown sanctioned private vengeance because it could not effectively punish insurgents: in 1358, nobles had

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<sup>341</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 91, no. 271 and JJ86, f. 217, no. 596.

<sup>342</sup> Charles V, in both his regency and as king, punished noble rebels by stripping them of their land and wealth: 'one cannot help but notice that in the years of crisis – 1358-9, 1364, 1369-72, 1378 – he made the widest use of forfeitures as an instrument of policy, as a means of punishment, reward and incentive'. Cuttler, *The Laws of Treason*, p. 180.

<sup>343</sup> For examples, see AN, JJ90, f. 139, n.271 and JJ102, f. 40, no.96.

to seek forgiveness from the crown for the damage they had done to the rebels and their property. The state did act as a reconciliatory power, but not by accepting private violence without question. Nobles were not immune from prosecution, but rather reconciliation was achieved through exactly the same system which the peasants used for their appeals.

Of course, most generalised models on the effects of retaliation have necessarily assumed that the 'state' was the organ of repression, and legitimate violence in quelling revolt becomes 'domestic state violence' once it crosses an acceptable threshold.<sup>344</sup> Yet again, the Jacquerie represents something different: there were two distinct responses to the revolt. The first was initiated by the crown – fines, confiscations of property and imprisonment of individuals; the second by the enraged nobility – violent executions, destruction and theft of property and ransoming. This violence took a variety of forms, from drawn-out ransacking of the countryside to quick pillages of certain sites.<sup>345</sup>

This could be the reason for the different tenor of retaliation from other medieval revolts, where the participants are treated with leniency. In the vast majority of revolts of the fourteenth century, where repression was rare and often non-existent, the insurgents fell under the jurisdiction of a central authority

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<sup>344</sup> Howard Brown discusses the distinction between appropriate, legitimate violence in ending a revolt and 'domestic' state violence, which is generally considered to be excessive. In many cases, this distinction seems artificial: violence, when it begins, is always judged to be appropriate, and the degeneration into illegitimacy may be unconnected to the state, but rather through inappropriate behaviour of its agents. Moreover, in this period, the links between repressive violence and the 'state' are far from clear. The crown does not, in the case of the Jacquerie, orchestrate the repression, but guidance is coming from several different individuals, like Charles of Navarre and the lord of Saint-Dizier. Yet Brown's distinction can be considered important: there is a point whereby repressive violence outstrips its utility and is viewed by many to be excessive. H. Brown, 'Repression from the Croquants to the Commune', *The Historical Journal* 42 (Sept, 1999), pp. 597-622.

<sup>345</sup> Two different responses from the 'state' and the nobility have also been noted in reference to the English Peasants' Revolt of 1381, although in that case the reactions are reversed: '[the nobles'] reaction seems to have been considerably cooler than that of the Commons'. See J.A. Tuck, 'Nobles, Commons and the Great Revolt of 1381', in *The English Rising*, ed Aston and Hilton, p. 212.

equipped to deal with them, such as the local civic oligarchy. The revolt of the Jacquerie was too big, too great a social phenomenon, for the central powers of lordship to contain it. This is evident in the way in which the revolt is finally quelled: it was an outside force, Charles of Navarre's army, which eventually put down one large Jacques' force, and at Meaux the nobles were assisted by men from outside the borders of France. The crown needed to employ brigands at Montlhéry and at Meaux; both these groups later turned on the peasantry and their excesses were mentioned in remissions issued by the crown. Remissions were intended to paper over the cracks in the fractious relationship between nobles and peasant and to re-establish the 'good peace' across the countryside. They could also be used to excuse nobles who had acted improperly, but more than that, the very fact that these nobles had to seek pardons for their actions shows that the crown considered them to have acted wrongfully. In some cases, nobles were imprisoned. Pilgrimages were issued to rehabilitate knights who had strayed from their moral duties. The remissions give the clear impression that the crown did not approve of the ransacking of the countryside after the Jacquerie; by that token, the remissions also imply that the crown had little control over the retaliation.

## 5. IDENTIFYING THE JACQUES

In any protest, the identity of its participants shapes the ideology of the crowd. The 'social category' that the insurgents define themselves as, be that peasant, worker or something else, defines the very nature of the rebellion: the crowd does not act as a collection of individuals, rather, 'the beliefs that guide them are the collective beliefs of the associated groups' to which they belong. Indeed, perceptions of identity are the basis on which revolts work: '[l]arge numbers of people can act together in the crowd ...to the extent that they share a common sense of identity'. Thus, the 'identity' of the Jacques is the key to understanding the revolt itself.<sup>346</sup>

When attempting to identify the Jacques, remissions provide important information about the recipients, including occupations. Remissions were expensive, and issued on the renown or status of the supplicant, and thus we should expect that only Jacques with substantial reserves of money, land or prestige would have been able to obtain one. Yet if this bias is accounted for, some assessment of the social character of the insurgent rank-and-file might be possible.

A systematic study of these remissions can counter many of the arguments made about the Jacques in the historiography. When Raymond Cazelles described the Jacquerie as a mixture of royal officials, clergy and artisans, and featured as many burghers as peasants, he based his theory partly on a few scattered examples from the remissions. The overriding influence on his judgement must have been the historiography, which emphasised elite participation in revolts. Cazelles specifically acknowledges Yves-Marie Bercé's

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<sup>346</sup> S. Reicher, *Social Identity and Leadership Dynamics* (forthcoming).

work, which suggested that early modern revolts relied upon the participation of women and on the instigation of the clergy. By studying the remissions, even with their bias towards the wealthy and privileged, can we confirm that the Jacques were townsmen, artisans or elites, mainly women or led by churchmen? Were the Jacques really not the 'men of the countryside' the chroniclers described?

## THE COMPOSITION OF THE JACQUERIE

It was at this time that the nobles in derision called peasants and simple folk Jacques Bonhommes. That year men sent to the wars who bore arms in rustic fashion of peasants were given the name Jacques Bonhommes by those who mocked and despised them, and thus lost the name of peasant. Both French and English called peasants this for a long time afterward. But woe is me! Many who then derided peasants with this name were later made mortal sport of by them.<sup>347</sup>

As Jean de Venette indicates, the term Jacques Bonhommes had become such a common description for rural folk that the word 'peasant' was almost redundant. When Jean le Bel and the *Anonimale Chronicle* both created a leader supposedly representative of the 1358 revolt of these rebels, they named him 'Jak Bonhomme',<sup>348</sup> and when choosing a title for the rebellion, the contemporaries drew directly from the name given to the 'rustics'. Since then, the term 'jacquerie' has become synonymous with the rural rampage of desperate peasants.<sup>349</sup> Normally triggered by the onset of famine or bad crop yields, villagers rose up in a seasonal madness.

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<sup>347</sup> Venette, *Chron.*, v. 1, p. 240, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 63.

<sup>348</sup> Bel, *Chron.*, v.2, p. 261, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 153; *The Anonimale Chronicle*, ed. V.H. Galbraith (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1927), pp. 42-3, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 172-3.

<sup>349</sup> Zola, *The Earth*, trans. D. Parnée, p. 91.

Even when the chroniclers used more specific identifiers for the rebels than just the ‘Jacques’, they are identifiably rural. For le Bel, they were ‘gens de villes champestres’,<sup>350</sup> for the *Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois*, *Chronique Normande* and Jean de Venette, they were ‘paysans’ or ‘paisans’.<sup>351</sup> For the continuator of *Richard Lescot*, they were ‘rusticos’<sup>352</sup> and the *Chronique des règnes de Jean II et Charles V* considered them to be ‘menu gens’ and ‘communes’.<sup>353</sup> Even though this chronicler conceded that ‘rich men, bourgeois and others filled their ranks’, he insisted that the Jacques were largely rural peasants: ‘assemblies were compromised mostly of *gens de labour* (labourers<sup>354</sup>)’.<sup>355</sup>

Yet in recent years, the notion that the peasantry was at the heart of the Jacquerie has progressively come under attack. The social and economic historians of the 1960s stressed that the Île de France was the richest region in France for the rural worker in the 1350s, and they were far from the most desperate peasants in the country.<sup>356</sup> The idea that revolts are made up of the most desperate peasants is demonstrably false. Social scientists and historians have thoroughly rejected the notion that people rebel only at their lowest ebb;<sup>357</sup> Cohn has shown from a sample of 1,112 revolts that bread riots and other form of

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<sup>350</sup> Bel, *Chron.*, v.2, p. 261.

<sup>351</sup> *Chron. premiers Valois*, p. 71; *Chron. norm.*, p. 127; Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 263, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 71.

<sup>352</sup> Lescot, *Chron.*, p. 126.

<sup>353</sup> *Chron. des règnes*. v.1, p. 188.

<sup>354</sup> The term ‘gens de labour’ will be discussed in detail later, as it appears with regularity in the remissions for the Jacques, but it is intrinsically linked to the notion of the rural landworker.

<sup>355</sup> *ibid.*, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 166-7.

<sup>356</sup> See R. Fossier, *Histoire sociale de l'occident médiéval* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1970), G. Fourquin, *Les campagnes de la région parisienne à la fin du Moyen Age* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1964) and G. Duby, *Rural Economy and Country Life in the Medieval West*, trans. C. Postan (London: Edward Arnold, 1968), p. 309.

<sup>357</sup> Mollat and Wolff recognised that revolts could only happen ‘when a calamity has not become a total scourge’, *Popular Revolutions*, p. 93.

revolts involving the most desperate elements of society were extremely rare.<sup>358</sup> Nonetheless, Raymond Cazelles has claimed that the Jacques was not made up of peasants at all.<sup>359</sup> Suggesting that ‘cultivators’ would never revolt at the end of May or the beginning of June, because it would damage their crops, Cazelles insisted that peasant revolts would only take place in the autumn. But this makes little sense: first, we have historical examples of peasant revolts at this time of year. In France, there were other peasant revolts during May and June, even in the Beauvaisis: in May 1338, for example, the villagers of Brissy and Remies rebelled against the bishop of Laon and the crown’s troops.<sup>360</sup> Indeed, the most famous rising of all, the English Peasants’ Revolt, took place in June 1381.<sup>361</sup> Second, at this time, agricultural workers have little to do but watch the crops grow, while in late summer, harvest-time, they are at their busiest. The peasants preserved their crops, specifically targeting houses, castles and goods belonging to the nobility. There is no suggestion that they targeted the fields or the countryside around these properties, or did anything that might have been counter-productive towards their own goods; remissions even discussed the participants’ wishes to secure their crop yields: ‘[the supplicant] will reap and send to safety his goods which are of the fields, work and cultivate his lands and vineyards’.<sup>362</sup> Instead, the nobility chose to destroy their fields during the

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<sup>358</sup> Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, pp. 70-75.

<sup>359</sup> Cazelles, ‘The Jacquerie’, pp. 75-6.

<sup>360</sup> See Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, p. 31. The rest of the chapter on ‘Peasant Revolts’, p. 25-52, details several peasant revolts that occurred in May or June, for example, two revolts in 1355 involving the peasantry of Lucca and Rimini. In 1422, a rebellion in Forez (perhaps closer to rural brigandage than a true revolt) broke out in May, as did most famously the Peasants Revolt of 1381.

<sup>361</sup> Indeed, both rebellions covered roughly the same period, with Guillaume Cale and Wat Tyler being executed on 10 June and 15 June respectively. The feast of Corpus Christi fell between both revolts; for discussion of its relevance to the Great Rising, see M. Aston, ‘Corpus Christi and Corpus Regni: heresy and the Peasants’ Revolt’, *Past and Present*, v. 143 (1994), pp. 3-47.

<sup>362</sup> This phrase appears in sixty remissions. It will be discussed later in this chapter in more depth.



retaliation; as the *Chronique de règnes des Jean II et Charles V* recorded, the nobles ‘burnt and destroyed all the countryside between the Seine and the Mame rivers’.<sup>363</sup>

Nonetheless, Cazelles went back to the remissions (at least Luce’s sample of them), and proclaimed that the Jacques were ‘more rural artisans than peasants’.<sup>364</sup> In his analysis, the revolt crossed social barriers and included officers of the crown, churchmen, peasants and burghers; ‘the rich found themselves side by side with the poor, the royal official with the lord’s subject’.<sup>365</sup> Although the numbers were not tallied, Cazelles gave the impression that Luce’s sample strongly suggested this to be the case. But as discussed above, Luce’s sample does not represent the full range of remissions concerning the Jacquerie. By returning to the documents, the range of the Jacques’ occupations can be compiled, even if focus on these occupations recorded in the remissions may be misleading, because these letters were not available to all.

Three factors may cause us to question the representativeness of a sample compiled from the remissions. First, remissions were expensive. As discussed in Chapter 2, the charge was at least 3 *livres*, but potentially much more with additional taxes and surcharges. Sixteenth-century costings suggest two months wages for a waged labourer.<sup>366</sup> Apart from communities who appealed for a pardon together to avoid a fine, there was little financial imperative for an

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<sup>363</sup> *Chron. des règnes*, v.1, p. 188. Crops could not only be destroyed, but also stolen. Phillipe de Bauencourt stole horses and ‘goods of the field’ from the villagers of Sompuis to compensate him for damage caused by the Jacques. AN, JJ86, f. 87, no. 258.

<sup>364</sup> Cazelles, ‘The Jacquerie’, p. 76.

<sup>365</sup> *ibid.* Going even further, in the entry on the Jacquerie in the *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*. Hennehan states that ‘contemporary sources do not offer much evidence that the Jacquerie of 1358 was an uprising of peasants’, and argues the remissions ‘identify most of the participants as artisans, stonecutters, petty functionaries, and even clergy, but rarely as cultivators of the soil’, p. 36. As this chapter will demonstrate, that assertion is simply wrong.

<sup>366</sup> For a discussion of remissions and their cost, see ‘Remissions: Form and Function’. Also see Geremek, *The Margins of Society in Late Medieval Paris* and Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*, p. 154.

individual to seek grace. The remissions do not record fines for individual rebels; therefore, we can assume that the cost of obtaining a remission was not balanced with the reduction of a levy. The remissions for the Jacquerie were even more exclusive than the common pardon; recorded in the royal chancery, these remissions were intended to be kept permanently in the crown's own records, and subsequently cost more for that privilege. Individuals needed to be willing, not only to spend significant sums of money on a remission, but also to pay more to have it included permanently in the chancery.

Secondly, as we have said, remissions were as much a judgement on a supplicant's past as the crime itself. The crucial clause turned on the participants 'good name and renown', his loyal service to the crown, and how he was perceived in his community. In this manner, supplicants who had proven loyalty in the past, often through military service, had the best claim to grace, and those who had high-standing in the community had the best testimonies on their behalf. These individuals would also be most concerned to regain their good standing within the community; the consequences of having a stained character in the eyes of the law would be more important for a citizen of some status than for a peasant of low-standing.

Thirdly, the supplicants who received individual remissions were exceptions from those who received the general pardon. Neither were these men receiving pardons as part of the community – these supplicants received grace without the company of neighbours or villagers. In many cases, they were only interested in their own culpability, not their communities. For example, Jehan Fillon's remission was only concerned with proving he had not been involved with the murder of a man-at-arms in Conches (Seine-et-Marne), not that the rest

of the inhabitants were innocent.<sup>367</sup> It is understandable that a royal sergeant of Paris, for example, would not expect the grace received for the village of Jaux (consciously referred to as ‘gens de labour’) to cover him.<sup>368</sup>

Any sample of occupations based on remissions thus covers only the Jacques who possessed the social standing to obtain a remission, and who considered their reputation important enough to petition the court to have it reinstated. These rebels were also the only Jacques who could afford it, and certainly the only ones who wished it recorded in the royal chancery. Any sample suggesting a strong influence of elites within the Jacquerie could therefore be attributed to the nature of the sources.

Nonetheless, the sample suggests that the Jacques consisted more of agricultural workers than townsmen, royal officials or even rural artisans, as Cazelles asserted without supplying any quantitative evidence:

**Table XI. Occupations of the Jacques.**

OCCUPATION	NUMBER
‘Sergeant à Cheval’ or ‘Royal Sergeant’	3
Curates or Priests	4
Familier	1
Butcher	3
Carpenter	1
Draper	1
Mason	1
Carpenter	1
Fish Merchant	1
Impoverished	8
‘Labourer’	2
‘Homme de labour’	9
Communities described as ‘gens de labour’	8

<sup>367</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 81, no. 244.

<sup>368</sup> Jehan Leber, ‘mounted sergeant of Paris’, received a remission in AN, JJ86, f. 73, no. 223; the participants of Jaux and their two *capitaines* received remissions in AN, JJ86, f. 123, nos. 361 and 362.

Below the data is organised into the subgroups (excluding the communities described as ‘gens du labour’):

**Table XII. Occupations of the Jacques organised into sub-groups.**

Sub-group	
Royal officials	3 (1.8%)
Religious figures	4 (2.4%)
Rural artisans	8 (4.8%)
Rural <i>Laboureur</i>	11 (8.6%)
Impoverished	4 (2.4%) / 10 (7.2%)
No occupation given	132 (82.5%)

Of the first of these occupational groups, only three royal officials were involved in the Jacquerie.<sup>369</sup> One of the three hailed who from Montdidier, a town which had links with the Jacquerie – although the inhabitants’ opinions were divided – and was one of the exceptions to the rule, a townsman who joined the rural rebels.<sup>370</sup> The second was a ‘mounted sergeant of the Chatelet of Paris’, who found himself in Jaux (Oise), near Compiègne, where he joined the rebellion.<sup>371</sup> His role in Jaux was unclear, considering there were two captains of Jaux mentioned in other remissions; he seems to have been just a rank-and-file member of the rebellion.<sup>372</sup> The last royal official is a sergeant from Noailles

<sup>369</sup> A fourth royal sergeant is involved in the uprising in town of Lorris against the local fortress in 1358, which is never explicitly linked to the Jacquerie; AN, JJ90, f. 24, no. 48.

<sup>370</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 161, no. 456.

<sup>371</sup> Jehan Leber, ‘mounted sergeant of Paris’, received a remission in AN, JJ86, f. 73, n. 223.

<sup>372</sup> The inhabitants of Jaux and their two *capitaines* received remissions in AN, JJ86, f. 123, nos. 361 and 362.

who became leader of four villages in the region.<sup>373</sup> Thus, all three rebels were townsmen who became involved with the peasants in their struggles. These men were very different from the standard *Jacque Bonhomme* who rose up with his village.

Turning to the artisans, we fail to see the large proportions of craftsmen that Cazelles suggested filled the *Jacques'* rank and file. The above table includes only those who had their occupation specifically listed, not individuals with surnames which hints at an occupation. In one instance, for example, Raoul le Boucher is described as a 'homme de labour'; this document does not indicate he was a butcher as well.<sup>374</sup> This has meant the exclusion of three 'le Bouchers', one 'le Macon', one 'le Cordier', and one 'le Pontonnier'. Although the number of artisans would have increased by another six, the sample still does not lend credence to Cazelles' claims. Because of the nature of the remissions, we would expect rural artisans to receive a disproportionately large percentage of remissions, yet less than 5% of the individuals could be so identified, and no other evidence from chronicles or other sources suggests any large contingent of rural artisans within the revolt.

We cannot be sure what being a 'rural artisan' actually meant in this period, at least in comparison with the urban artisan. Georges Duby reports that these professions 'gave many a man frustrated by his insufficient resources ... the means of existence', rather than prestigious occupations in themselves.<sup>375</sup> Rural artisans were not an emergent middle-class; their skills were often learnt to

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<sup>373</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 81, no. 148.

<sup>374</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 88, no. 262.

<sup>375</sup> Duby, *Rural Economy and Country Life*, p. 154.

compensate small land holdings that were insufficient to provide sustenance<sup>376</sup>. Nor were these individuals comparable with their urban counterparts: they tended to be entirely dependent on their landlords, and the local economy was not subject to the same freedom as a Parisian artisan. There is no suggestion in the limited literature that these individuals possessed greater wealth or social standing than the average land-holding peasant<sup>377</sup>. Moreover, were the comparative roles of a rural artisan similar to that of an urban artisan: was a village mason as skilled as a guild member from Paris? Was a village butcher anymore than a slaughterman?

The third group – those involved in *labour* – provides another interesting case. There are two types of ‘labourer’ included within the group.<sup>378</sup> The first are those described as agricultural labourers within the early part of the remissions, such as *labourer de bras*. The second is slightly more complicated: individuals (and communities) who were described as ‘homme (or *gens*) de labour’ immediately before or after the section of the remission that dealt with their good name and reputation. This term – *homme de labour* – has been the subject of some debate. Raymond Cazelles declares that this does not

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<sup>376</sup> To look at the English example, according to A. Everitt, in the sixteenth century the majority of rural artisans were labourers who ‘naturally took up these employments’ during the ‘slack months’: A. Everitt, ‘Farm Labourers’, *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, Vol. 4, 1500-1640, ed. J. Thirsk (Cambridge: CUP, 1967), p. 429. Even those who have disputed this characterisation agree that unskilled labourers readily practised trades and that their ‘standard of life was little removed from labourers’, B. Sharp, *In Contempt of All Authority: Rural Artisans and Riot in the West of England 1586-1660* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 174.

<sup>377</sup> It is worth noting that the *Statute of Labourers* issued in England in 1351 limited the wages of a mower to 5d a day and a reaper to 3d a day, while limiting the wages of a standard mason to 3d and a standard carpenter to 2d. For discussion of wages, see D. Farmer, ‘Prices and Wages 1350-1400’, *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, vol. 8, 1348-1500, ed. E. Miller (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), pp. 431-95. Duby uses the example of a thatcher in Winchester, who at the end of the thirteenth century could expect to earn three times as much as a reaper, but by the first half of the fifteenth century only earned a third more. Of course, the French experience may have been different, although Duby demonstrates that rural labourers’ wages doubled between 1349 and 1370 around St. Denis. Duby, *Rural Economy and Country Life*, pp. 304-5.

<sup>378</sup> For discussion of rural labour in medieval France, see G. Small, *Later Medieval France* (forthcoming).

necessarily mean an agricultural worker: ‘they could well be labourers using the hoe, or the spade – working the land – but they could also be carters ... or labourers unloading wine ... or workers on the riverside’.<sup>379</sup> However, *labour* most definitely means agricultural work. Robert’s *Dictionnaire Historique* describes *labour* as ‘agricultural’, the ‘way in which one loosens and turns land’, and the verb *labourer* meant ‘to loosen and turn over (the ground) with a ploughing implement, or with a tool by hand (shovel, spade, hoe)’.<sup>380</sup> Gauvard believed them to represent the ‘superior level of the rural world’ (as compared to the inferior *labourer de bras*), yet accepted that the technical definition was simply a man with the means to own his plough.<sup>381</sup> Despite confusion about the status of an *homme de labour*, there was very little doubt that these men were involved in agriculture. Perhaps they were more representative of the middling-sort of petty landowner than the traditional peasant farmer, yet they are undisputedly men of the countryside. While Cazelles is right to say that the term is not ubiquitous, 18.6% (eight of forty-three) of all communities pardoned were described as ‘*hommes de labour*’, communities of small-scale rural workers. Of those individual rebels or groups of rebels ascribed an occupation, 58.4% of them was described as rural *labourer*, or *homme du labour*.

The final group is the impoverished, and I have recorded two categories for this category. The first proportion is individuals where the remission *exclusively* refers to the individual as poor (*pauvre*), miserable (*miserable*) or begging (*mendiant*). Not included in this group are those who also have other

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<sup>379</sup> Cazelles, ‘The Jacquerie’, p. 76.

<sup>380</sup> *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française*, ed. Rey. See also Cohn, *PP*, p. 149, where he finds that ‘specialists in agricultural history and the historical dictionaries define the term as a substantial peasant who possessed a plough and might have had enough property to supplement his labour by employing others’.

<sup>381</sup> Gauvard, *De grace especial*, vol. 1, pp. 402-6.

professions specified. The second figure were individuals described as poor, even if the remissions also specified an occupation. For example, Gillebart Colas of Acy (Oise) is described as a 'small-scale and poor seller of eggs, fish and cheese',<sup>382</sup> and thus included in the figure in parentheses, as is Jean Chacon of Montataire (Oise), a 'poor labourer'.<sup>383</sup> This number is presented separately so that proportions can be tallied to 100%, but also to indicate the regularity of rebel's low-standing. The remissions described more supplicants as impoverished than identified as rural artisans, which is remarkable giving the cost of obtaining a remissions.

Remissions that ascribe no occupation whatsoever to supplicants were the most common. Normally, a supplicant, if he had an occupation worthy of listing, would probably have wished to include it for his good name and reputation. Thus the relative rarity of Jacques with occupations listed was probably indicative that they had no 'trade' worth recording, and therefore were common Jacques or peasants. The remissions, biased heavily in favour of the upper classes or skilled artisans, indicate strongly that even the better-off rebels were still, at their heart, connected to the rural world. Of course, the Jacques may not have been the lowest of peasants. Claims of poverty are relative, and that individuals were destitute yet still able to pay for the remission appears contradictory. But even where occupations were indicated, pardoned rebels were in fact listed as 'most often *gens du labour*', as the chroniclers would have us believe.

But we can go beyond specified occupations in the remission to perceive the rural origins of the revolt. In addition to the remissions constantly using the term

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<sup>382</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 166, no. 470, 'petit et pouvre marchand de poulaille, de fourmage, oeux et autres petites marchandises'.

<sup>383</sup> AN, JJ100, f. 220, no. 643.



‘genz du plat-pais’ to describe the rebels, the crown’s scribes used another phrase regularly (especially in JJ86 and in the immediate aftermath of the Jacquerie). Sixty remissions have the following phrase near the end of the pardon, concerning the supplicant’s intentions after receiving his pardon:

He might reap his goods which are in the fields and send them to safety, and will work and cultivate his lands and vineyards.<sup>384</sup>

To be sure, this was not just a stock phrase: it does not appear in any remissions for urban rebels. Nor does the second clause appear for the ‘artisans’ within the sample. It is fair to assume that this phrase indicates that the supplicant worked or owned land. There is no information to help us estimate how much land – these men may be have been working their own field or rural landlords who possessed many fields. Although not all rural remissions have this phrase (in later years, the emphasis of the latter lines of the document are on preserving the supplicant’s ‘body and goods’ from further attack), the relative frequency of this line along with the ubiquitous ‘genz du plat pays’ indicates the rural roots of the rebellion.

Claude Gauvard’s *De Grace Especial* tallied occupations of supplicants in remission letters overall from 1380 to 1422.<sup>385</sup> The proportions and percentages that go into the calculations are not always transparent. She does not indicate the numbers, only the percentages, so it is difficult to get a sense of sample size. Supplicants often were specified by ‘more than one occupation’; it is, however, unclear whether these occupations were double-counted in the original survey.

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<sup>384</sup> ‘Il soit cuiller et mettre a sauvete ses biens qui sont aus champs, labourer et cultiver ses terres et vignes’.

<sup>385</sup> Gauvard, *De grace especial*, v.1, p. 403.

Moreover, individuals without occupations were not listed. Nor has she included poverty or begging as an occupation in her tallies.

**Table XIII. Frequency of occupations in Gauvard's sample and the Jacquerie.**

	GAUVARD'S SAMPLE	JACQUES
Royal Officials	5.4%	2.4%
Clergy	0.4%	2.4%
Artisans	15%	4.8%
Labourers	19%	8.6%
Others	3.2%	2.4%
Unknown	57%	82.5%

Other factors make such comparisons somewhat questionable. Gauvard's remissions were issued in the reign of Charles VI, and the full sample includes such matters as boundary disputes, tax evasion, theft, pillaging and blasphemy. Her sample covers between 1380 and 1422, incorporating areas the size of the Languedoc and regions as distant as Toulouse and La Rochelle. There are more remissions in Gauvard's sample from Mâcon or the Cotentin than there is from Vitry or Melun, two regions important in the Jacquerie. As mentioned, the sample includes records not kept in the chancery, like the registers of the *Parlement*, but it is unclear whether these are included in all tables.

A comparison does highlight a few key points: first, rural *labourers*, or land workers as we might call them, appear frequently (the vast majority of potential supplicants lived in the countryside, after all); in fact, if we remove

those who specify no occupation, the proportions of *laboureurs* within the two samples are relatively close (41.19% in Gauvard's sample compared with 49.14% of the Jacques). However, in Gauvard's general sample the proportion of artisans is three times higher. Only 17.5% of Jacques specify an occupation, compared with 43% of Gauvard's sample.<sup>386</sup> From this comparison, the Jacques appear exceptional compared to the standard recipients of the remission.

A better comparison can be made if we look at other revolts from this area, and this period; for example, here is the tallied occupations of the Parisian revolt and the attack on the Marché of Meaux in 1358:

**Table XIV. Occupations of the Parisians and the men of Meaux.**

REMISSIONS	SUPPLICANT	OCCUPATION
86, 206	Pierre de Lagny	
86, 209	Nicolas le Flamenc	Draper
86, 214	Guillaume le Fevre	Fish-merchant
86, 216	Jacques du Chastel	
86, 220	Nicolas de la Court-Demie	
86, 230	Jean Hersent	
86, 233	Laurens de Veullettes	<i>Lingier</i>
86, 238	Jehan de Monteux	Knight
86, 248	Henry de Chastillon	Knight
86, 252	Guillot Bonnachet	Man at arms
86, 253	Jehan Fagnet	Merchant

<sup>386</sup> Although the sample would probably be large enough, as Gauvard does not give us integers, it is impossible to run t-tests or other tests for statistical significance.

86, 271	Gieffron le Flamenc	
86, 272	Thomas Gascogne	
86, 278	Étienne de la Fontaine	Argentier du roy (Royal Master of the Robes)
86, 282	Étienne de Resnie	Captain of many soldiers
86, 285	Phillipe de Jeurre	<i>Espicier</i>
86, 289	Jehan Pardoe	
86, 292	Maron Pardoe	Young man
86, 371	Jehan de Lyon	Sergeant of Arms
86, 390	Guillaume d'Augueil	
86, 519	Salemon de la Tour	poor archer and miserable person
86, 527	Jehan de Saint-Leu	curé of Ste Genevieve
90, 078	Nicolas de la Court Nemie	
86, n. 148	Jehan de Congi	
86, n. 211	Jehan Chandelier	Draper
86, n. 213	Jehan le Ladre	Mounted Sergeant of the 'Gate'
86, n. 236	Raoul d'Aucamps	
86, n. 274	Guillaume de Chavenoil	Priest, Canon
86, n. 290	Thibaud Farcault	
86, n. 300	Jehan de la Ramee	
86, n. 312	Jehan Rose	<i>Maitre, conseiller 'du roy', avocat du parlement</i>

86, n. 340	Jeannin des Champs	
86, n. 341	Regnault Blouart	

Of the thirty-three remissions for individuals who were pardoned for their participation in either the Parisian rebellion or the attack on Meaux, eighteen of these individuals had occupations identified; of these, two were churchmen, five were ‘artisans’ (a draper and two merchants), while the other eleven were royal officials or soldiers (of various ranks). Although one of these was listed as poor, the other eight were probably important members of the local political community.

Below these numbers are broken up into the categories we used earlier:

**Table XV. Occupations of Parisians and men of Meaux, in subgroups.**

Group	Number (Percentage)
Royal Officials / Military men	11 (32.4%)
Churchmen	2 (5.9%)
Artisans	5 (14.7%)
Rural Laboueurs	0 (0%)
Poor or Impoverished	1 (2.9%)
No Occupation given	15 (44.1%)

Here the social configuration is radically different from the remissions granted to the Jacques. There are no *laboueurs* within this urban sample.

Before we compare the rebellions, there is another point of comparison available for how insurgents were represented in the remissions. Leon Mirot collected the remissions of the Revolt of the Hammermen and the *Harelle* in

1382,<sup>387</sup> when the '[c]raftsmen came forth from all parts, raising a standard of white cloth', according to Cousinot le Chancelier.<sup>388</sup> Mirot's sampling was problematic. For example, in one section Mirot offered a short list of supplicants' occupations, but a few pages later, he detailed some additional rebel craftsmen. With this in mind, it is possible that Mirot does not record everything. Yet only fourteen of the sixty-four individuals named within the text have no occupation directly attributable to them, implying that professions was something that Mirot did note when relevant:

**Table XVI. Occupations of *Maillotins* and those of the *Harelle*.**

Group	Number (Percentage)
Royal Officials <sup>389</sup>	4 (6.3%)
Religious Officials <sup>390</sup>	1 (1.6%)
Artisans or middling sort <sup>391</sup>	43 (67%)
Laboureur	0
Poor or impoverished <sup>392</sup>	3 (4.8%)
No occupation <sup>393</sup>	14 (21.9%)

<sup>387</sup> L. Mirot, *Les insurrections urbaines au debut du regne de Charles VI (1380-1383)* (Paris: Fontemoing, 1905), particularly p. 114, but also pp. 114-140.

<sup>388</sup> Guillaume Cousinot I, *Geste de nobles*, ed. Vallet de Viriville (Paris, 1859), ed. and trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 300.

<sup>389</sup> There are two royal *valets*, one *mareschal* and one *maire*.

<sup>390</sup> There is one *cleric* in the sample.

<sup>391</sup> Included in this category are bankers (1), leathersmakers (2), *pioneers* (1), *marchands* (1), drapers (3), shoemakers (3), potmakers (2), innkeepers (1), winesellers (1), notaries (1), *ouvrier d'images* (1), goldsmiths (3), beermakers (1), drapes-sellers (3), bakers (1), knifemakers (3), skimmers (1), barrel-makers (1), vinegar-vendors (1), money-changers (1), hoodmakers (2), *hommes de mestiers* (1), candlemakers (1), engravers of seals (1), minstrels (1), *formiers* (1), embroiderers (1) and *doubletters* (1).

<sup>392</sup> Included in the 'poor and impoverished' are two individuals described as 'pauvre et miserable personnes' and one as a 'manservant'. Rather than leave the latter out of the sample, he has been included in this column, although one could argue he should have his own category.

<sup>393</sup> Not included in the 'no occupations' is one individual described as a 'young man', who has no occupation described for him but may not have been old enough to have developed a trade. This is why the proportions do not add up to 100%.

In the case of 1382, remissions are primarily issued to the urban artisan. There are no labourers or menial workers within this sample, although two are issued to ‘poor’ supplicants and one for a young man. These three examples confirm that while remissions were issued to insolvent supplicants, they were very much the exceptions. This sample also shows us what an artisan revolt (how Cazelles described the Jacquerie) would appear in the remission record: almost two-thirds of the individuals in 1382 were artisans, and a wide range of trades were represented, ranging from shoemakers and drapers to money-changers and goldsmiths.

Comparing the Jacquerie with the two Parisian revolts, then we see a definitive difference between the rural rising and its urban counterparts:

#### XVII. Comparison of occupations.

	Jacquerie	Paris 1358	Paris 1382
Royal Officials	2.4%	32.4%	6.3%
Clergymen	2.4%	5.9%	1.6%
Artisans/Middling sort	4.8%	14.7%	67%
<i>Labourer</i>	8.6%	0%	0
Impoverished	7.2%	2.9%	4.8%
No occupation given	80.1%	44.1%	21.9%

Compared to Étienne Marcel’s rebellion, only a very small percentage of royal officials appear in the Jacquerie; Marcel and his troops were clearly the political

and military elite of Paris. Noticeably fewer artisans and more impoverished supplicants staffed the Jacquerie than appear in either of the Parisian revolts; again, the Jacques were undoubtedly of lower status than the Parisian rebels. The two most significant differences, however, were first that fewer rebels among the Jacquerie possessed an occupation listed at all, and second that men who worked or owned land compose the bulk of Jacques (*homme de labourer*). Such identification does not appear once within the two Parisian revolts. The first observation indicates that the Jacques were poorer than urban rebels; the latter shows the Jacquerie to be what the chroniclers said: it was a rural rebellion by the men of the countryside. Where occupations were listed, which was rare, the insurgents were most often rural figures who wished to be allowed back to 'cultivate their lands'. Sadly, we cannot glean any information as to how well-off (or otherwise) these individuals were. What we can say is that even within a dataset that heavily favoured the richest of urban society, the evidence is overwhelming that the rebels were agricultural toilers. When they had no occupation specified, which was most often, we can hardly presume that they were higher up the village hierarchy than the *homme de labour*. The Jacques were notably different from those of the Parisian rebellions of 1358 and 1382, and from the general population who received pardons for common crimes and reasons other than popular protest.

## THE CLERGY AND THE JACQUERIE

The ascendancy of the parish priest over his parishioners often had the effect of placing him at the head of a revolt, either as its instigator or even as its leader ... They were tailor-made spokesmen for their parishioners



who could articulate their local grievances ... Knowing the misery and the hopes of his parishioners better than anyone else, he could establish himself as the defender – both tactical and passionate – of the interests of his community.<sup>394</sup>

Yves-Marié Bercé's model of early modern revolt placed the rural clergy at the centre of rural protest. The quote above indicates the two-fold importance that Bercé considered the clergy to possess in uprisings. First, their position in the heart of village society and their understanding of peasant concerns placed them at the centre of any uprising. Secondly, the clergy's role at the head of village society translated directly into a leadership role within the rebellion.<sup>395</sup> These twin roles supposedly enabled the clergy to assume leadership roles in the 'pre-industrial riot'.

The little that has been written on the Jacques has stressed the surprising silence of the clergy in the records of the crown and the chroniclers. Michel Dommanget made the point that 'if the clergy had taken part [in the revolt], the Church is not once blamed'.<sup>396</sup> The chroniclers were not hesitant to blame churchmen for their part in other revolts, most famously Robert le Coq, bishop of Laon, whom Jean le Bel described as 'spiteful' for his part in the uprising in Paris of 1358.<sup>397</sup> Yet there is nothing recorded in the chronicle accounts that would imply other churchmen were involved in the Jacquerie of 1358. Systematic study of the chronicles in this period suggests the same is true for many medieval revolts; Cohn argues that 'civil revolts that were led by clerics or that even mentioned them were extremely rare'.<sup>398</sup>

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<sup>394</sup> Bercé, *Revolt and revolution in early modern Europe*, tr. Bergin, pp. 67-70.

<sup>395</sup> 'The clergy of the parish, being themselves of local origin, took part in local life and could easily come to hold a decisive position in their village', Bercé, *Revolt and revolution*, p. 70.

<sup>396</sup> M. Dommanget, *La Jacquerie* (Paris: F. Maspero, 1971), p.85.

<sup>397</sup> Bel, *Chron.*, v.2, p. 264, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 154

<sup>398</sup> Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, p. 112.

Yet others have emphasised that Bercé's vision can be applied to the Jacques. Raymond Cazelles declares that '[t]here are clerks, priests, incumbents of rural parishes and even a canon from Meaux'.<sup>399</sup> As the chronicle accounts make no mention of the clergy (barring Robert le Coq's involvement with the rebellion in Paris), Cazelles's only source of reference for this statement is the remissions catalogued by Luce. Once again, however, Cazelles at best has allowed Luce's skewed sample to mislead him, but even here, he does not supply numbers or even examples, other than the urban canon of Meaux, who was not involved in the rural Jacquerie. If we turn to the whole population of remissions, only four churchmen appear:

**Table XVIII. The clergy and the Jacquerie.**

REMISSION	NAME	LOCATION	TITLE
JJ86, 265	Jean Morel	Blacy (Marne)	'prestre, curé'
JJ86, 365	Jean Rose	Angicourt (Oise)	'clerc, tonsurée'
JJ86, 386	Jehan Nerenget	Gilocourt (Oise)	'prestre, curé'
JJ86, 465	Colin le Barbier	Ballilleo (Oise)	'clerici tonsuri'

The rarity of the clergy is striking. The remissions count as many rural butchers recorded as rural clerics. Cazelles' assertion that clerics composed a substantial part of the revolt is sheer conjecture. Even the four exceptions do not clearly fit Bercé's vision of the rural clergyman involved in the pre-industrial riot. While the curates were obviously important figures in their rural parishes, the roles of

<sup>399</sup> Cazelles, 'The Jacquerie', p. 75.

the clerics, Jean Rose and Colin le Barbier, within their village is unclear (Rose in particular becomes involved through his links to the *bonne ville* of Compiègne).

To be more generous, Cazelles's claim may derive directly from Luce's *Pièces Justificatives*, where three of these four were recorded. As Luce reprints only thirty-three remissions issued to individuals, it may give the impression that religious men make up a more sizeable number than the whole collection of remissions attest to (still, it would only be around 9%). Yet, only one other remission outside Luce's collection is issued to a clergyman, and they make up just 2.4% of the individual Jacques pardoned.<sup>400</sup> Considering clerics are one of the groups whom would be expected to apply for remissions, both in terms of ability to afford them and also necessity of preserving their 'good name and reputation', this seems surprisingly low, and contradicts traditional understandings of pre-modern revolts, in particular Berce's emphasis on transferral of the priest's central role in rural life directly into rural rebellion.

Some may have suspected the clergy of playing a role within a rebellion, but not the crown. Jean Morel's remission starts with this interesting statement:

It is said, and we believe, that the curates of the villages of these plains [around Blacy], and especially the said supplicant, were favourably disposed and obedient to these lords in the region. [Yet] they [the nobles] considered them all traitors, and especially the said curate ... as a result of which many of the said curates ... were several times put in great danger.<sup>401</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> See the previous section on 'The Composition of the Jacquerie' for the calculation of this percentage.

<sup>401</sup> AN, JJ86, n. 265, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 270-2, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 188.

The nobles around Blacy jumped to the same conclusion as Bercé: that the curates must be involved in their parishioners' rebellion.<sup>402</sup> With there being a definite benefit to playing down one's involvement in any given remission, no doubt the curates would claim their innocence anyway. Yet the acceptance of the crown of the innocence of the local curates, not just the petitioner, indicates that the crown did consider the rural clergy to be blameless in this incident, and the comparative absence of other churchmen in the remissions suggests the same across the north of France.

This is supported when we consider the individual stories contained within the remissions. Jean Rose came from Angicourt, but sent his family to safety in Compiègne because he feared the rebels. When he did join the Jacques, he did so under constraint, and was sent to Compiègne by Guillaume Cale himself, holding letters intended to form an alliance with the townsmen. Rose's relationship to his home village had no impact on his role within the rebellion.<sup>403</sup> Jean Morel was suspected of having supplied the commoners with grain, but claimed that the rebels had actually stolen it. Worse, they 'ordered him to dance, keeping him in line with his stick'.<sup>404</sup> This priest was a focus for bullying, not a catalyst to rebellion. These individuals were not empowered by their links to their villages: Jean Rose acted outside his own parish, and Jean Morel was treated as an outsider (and as an enemy) by his own parishioners.

These men were not leaders: Jean Morel was subordinated and humiliated by his parishioners. Jean Rose may have been a more ambiguous case. He was

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<sup>402</sup> Interestingly, later monarchs like Charles VII did use mendicant friars as spies within communities, but never curates or village clergy. See M. Vale, *Charles VII* (New Jersey: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 121-3.

<sup>403</sup> AN, JJ86, n. 365, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 272-4.

<sup>404</sup> Of course, it would have been in Morel's interests to downplay links between himself and the rebellion, but there is no particular reason to believe that Morel fabricated this anecdote. AN, JJ86, n. 265, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 270-2, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 188

executed by the baillif whose ‘heart was full of anger’, and believed him to have been the leader of the Jacques. The remission then notes that this was despite the fact he was ‘tonsured and in habit’; the implication being that Rose’s habit and tonsure made it unlikely that he was the leader, the opposite of Bercé’s contention that clerics were the natural leaders of pre-industrial popular protest.

Only the remission for Colin le Barbier suggests an active role that churchmen may have played within the revolt. Worried about a potential attack on his village of Ballilleo, Colin rang the village’s two bells to summon defenders to defend the parish against enemies.<sup>405</sup> The rural clergy could be important in the assemblage and beginnings of the revolt, because they held within their jurisdiction a powerful tool for summoning and organising potential rebels: church bells. Jean Morel was even suspected by the nobles as having ‘sold the bells’, which was one of the reasons that the nobles distrusted him.<sup>406</sup> As Corbin writes, ‘in this domain, a decisive mission was devolved to the bell-ringer’.<sup>407</sup> The functions that church bells could have in the community – the impetus to assemble, to celebrate, and to arm – were in the hands of the clergyman. Yet announcing assemblies was not a crime in itself, nor were bells required to assemble. Colin rang the bells only when his parish was threatened, not when they were seeking to join the Jacques’ pillaging. As Natalie Davis has stressed, peasants often assumed the position of preacher<sup>408</sup> (in the example of

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<sup>405</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 164, no. 465, ‘nisi cum sola campana pulsare presumeret, nisi propter timorem et strepitum inimicorum regni, in quo cavere liceret cuicumque, ad parrochie tuicionem et defencionem ac inimicorum reistanciam, cum duabus pulsare campanis, ad finem quod gentes armorum, secundum cujuslibet facultatem, ad villam ubi sonus seu pulsacio dictarum campanarum inciperet, mitterentur, ad resistendum inimicis et ad eorum potenciam deprimendam’.

<sup>406</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 89, n. 265, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 270-2, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 189.

<sup>407</sup> A. Corbin, *Les cloches de la terre, paysage sonore et culture sensible dans les campagnes au XIXe siècle* (Paris: A. Michel, 1994), p. 155.

<sup>408</sup> In ‘Religious Riot’, Davis argues that although ‘clerics and political officers were active members of the crowd, though not precisely in their official capacity’ (p. 66), ‘not all religious

Ballilleo, another individual warns the villagers with his 'loud voice'<sup>409</sup>), and peasants could also assume control of the bells. Bell-ringing was not solely the preserve of the rural clergy, and only this remission shows a churchmen acting in this manner.<sup>410</sup>

Cazelles is right that there were churchmen in the revolt, but they were rare and played only minor roles, if indeed they played them at all, within the rebellion. Just as the chronicles do not see the clergy as complicit in the revolt, three of our clergymen were pardoned for acting under constraint or for having only acted in self-defence. Moreover, none was considered to have had a prominent role in the rebellion, none were leaders, and all were ancillary to the main criminal acts specified in the remissions. Colin le Barbier summoned the villagers but could not be blamed for their actions afterwards. Jean Rose was wrongly executed, and was only the unwilling messenger in the negotiations between Cale and Compiègne. Worst of all, Jean Morel was humiliated and literally whipped into action by the villagers that Bercé's model suggested he should lead. The clergy within the Jacques were notable because their position in rural society did not translate to an equal standing within the revolt.

If this revolt cannot be characterised by the involvement of clergy then neither can it be characterised by violence against clergymen. Even le Bel, who describes the Jacques as Saracens and defines them by their ungodliness, makes

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riots could boast of officers or clergy in the crowd' (p. 67). Moreover, often the crowd would often assume the clergy's function during religious riots: 'we have seen crowds taking on the role of priest, pastor or magistrate to defend doctrine or purify the religious community' (p. 90).

<sup>409</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 164, n. 465, 'et specialiter per unum hominem alta voce ad ara se prompcius preparent clamantem'.

<sup>410</sup> E. Cockayne, 'Cacophony, or vile scrapers on vile instruments: bad music in early modern English towns', *Urban History*, 29, n.1 (2002), pp. 35-47.

no mention of any specific acts against the Church.<sup>411</sup> We have only one set of remissions that suggests any anti-clerical violence at the time. These four remissions, issued to five villages that sent men to an assembly in Champagne, alleged the following:

they set many conspiracies, alliances and monopolies against the nobles and the *clergy* for their destruction and executions.<sup>412</sup>

This phrasing is exceptional, and appears nowhere else in the sources; presumably it refers to specific acts of anti-clerical violence. However, its existence both highlights the rarity of anti-clerical violence, while indicating that the crown was interested in punishing it when they could establish that it happened.<sup>413</sup>

The clergy did not play the role in the Jacquerie that Bercé imagined, nor do the Jacques ‘envelop the priests and nobles in a common hatred’.<sup>414</sup> Models that emphasise the importance of churchmen as both instigators and targets of popular violence do not fit the Jacquerie. Rather, the peasants were empowered to reject traditional ‘leaders’ who the social hierarchy provided, and instead selected their own champions and find their own impetus to revolt. Moreover, the rebels’ lack of interest in attacking the church emphasises again that these

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<sup>411</sup> le Bel does state that ‘had God not remedied matters by His grace, the commoners would have destroyed all the nobility, the Holy Church, and all the rich throughout the country’, but he makes no mention of any violence committed against the property or persons of the Church. Bel, *Chron.*, v.2, p. 257, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 152.

<sup>412</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 125, no. 367, and f. 122, nos. 358, 359, 360.

<sup>413</sup> Dommanget argues that this indicates that in the region around Perthois, Chaumont and Vitry the peasants ‘enveloppèrent dans une haine commune les prêtres et les nobles’, mentioning that the remissions use the above quote. Yet there are many remissions from that area that do not mention the clergy (for example, the much quoted remission for Bettancourt and Vroil, AN, JJ86, f. 117, no. 346, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 266-9, reprinted in Cohn, *PP*, pp. 187-8). Only the four remissions issued in connection to this grand assembly in Champagne use this form of phrase. With that in mind, it seems likely that this was one specific incident of anti-clerical violence, rather than indicative of the character of violence in the whole region. Dommanget, *La Jacquerie*, p.85.

<sup>414</sup> *ibid.*

rebels were not simply striking out at authority, but rather were focussing upon the property of nobility.

## WOMEN AND THE JACQUES

The involvement of women was also traditional. They were to be found first of all in the grain disturbances, where they often formed the majority of the crowds. In other types of disturbance, they might also appear in the front ranks, where their presence was a more eloquent sign of the misery and determination of the community.<sup>415</sup>

For Yves-Marie Bercé and others, the pre-industrial revolt was characterised by an emphasis on food riots, and therefore by the involvement of women.<sup>416</sup> Women, whose responsibilities extended over the hearth and were chiefly affected by domestic crisis, were the first to mobilise in these struggles.<sup>417</sup> This argument is central to the image of the 'pre-industrial revolt', although its relevance to the medieval period has recently been called into question.<sup>418</sup> Yet while many other generalisations of Bercé, such as the importance of the rural clergy, have been enthusiastically applied to the Jacquerie by historians such as Raymond Cazelles, there has been no mention of women in any of the studies concerning the Jacques.<sup>419</sup>

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<sup>415</sup> Bercé, *Revolt and revolution in early modern Europe* (Manchester, 1987), tr. Bergin, pp. 107-8.

<sup>416</sup> Also see Rudé, *Paris and London in the Eighteenth Century* for the importance of the food riot in the so-called pre-industrial riot.

<sup>417</sup> Of course, the Jacquerie was no food riot, and it has been categorically shown by Cohn that the food riot itself was far from prevalent in the medieval world (Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, p. 70-75). Nonetheless, Bercé's theories have been widely accepted by scholars like Raymond Cazelles, as suggested earlier.

<sup>418</sup> 'To conclude that women were the traditional participants or the leading force behind medieval revolts, however, would be to disregard the sources entirely'. Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, p. 135.

<sup>419</sup> Cazelles, 'The Jacquerie', in *The English Rising*, ed. Aston and Hilton.



The involvement of women in the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, most studied of all the great uprisings of the fourteenth century, had been largely ignored in recent years until Sylvia Federico's recent article on the subject.<sup>420</sup> This is all the more surprising considering that there is documentary evidence of women's importance within the English rising.<sup>421</sup> Pardon rolls for 1381, very different to letters of remission but serving the same general function, contained the names of women: Federico records one roll as listing thirty female names.<sup>422</sup> Federico unfortunately does not give us the relative proportion of female to male names; nonetheless, the fact that it contained women's names at all illustrates that 'royal officials could imagine women acting as perpetrators in [the revolt]. ... That these women sought pardon in the first place suggests ... that they, too, could imagine themselves as perpetrators of crime'.<sup>423</sup> While the Peasants' Revolt certainly could not be characterised as predominantly 'female',<sup>424</sup> there is documentary evidence that women were part of the rising, even acting as leaders, like the remarkable Johanna Ferrou.<sup>425</sup>

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<sup>420</sup> S. Federico, 'The Imaginary Society: Women in 1381', *The Journal of British Studies*, 40, No. 2 (April, 2001), pp. 159-183. Before that, discussion of women in the Peasants Revolt can be found in A. Réville, *Le soulèvement des travailleurs d'Angleterre en 1381* (Paris, 1898).

<sup>421</sup> Federico starts her article off with the example of Margery Starre, who is said to have burnt clerical records. Moreover, Henry Knighton believed that the improper treatment of women by the crown's officers instigated the revolt, and there are numerous legal cases in which rebels are charged with crimes of rape or abduction of women. S. Federico, 'The Imaginary Society', pp. 159, 178.

<sup>422</sup> *ibid.*, p. 163.

<sup>423</sup> *ibid.*, p. 164. Federico uses the term 'horizon of plausibility' to describe women's involvement; that it was considered plausible by contemporaries that women had been involved in the rising.

<sup>424</sup> Chroniclers like Knighton and Walsingham almost exclusively use 'men' to describe the insurgents. For example, the *Chronica Maiora* describes the peasants from Essex as 'weary of their prolonged exertions, and were to some extent desirous of seeing their homes, wives and children again' (p.433), and that the rebels were 'abandoning ... their wives' (p. 413). *The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham, 1376-1422* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), trans. D. Preest, ed. J. Clark.

<sup>425</sup> 'Johanna ... went as the chief perpetrator and leader of a great society of evildoers from Kent', KB 27/842 rex. m 3.d, translated by Federico, 'The Imaginary Society', p. 168. The full document is transcribed in Réville, *Le soulèvement* (Paris, 1898), pp. 199-200.

As regards the Jacquerie, the chronicles of 1358 make no mention of women acting as insurgents. In this respect, the Jacquerie appears similar to the third great revolt of the later Middle Ages, the revolt of the Ciompi. The general terms for the insurgents may not always be gender specific – commoners, ‘people’, rustics – but the implication is that these offenders were male.<sup>426</sup> Women do get the occasional mention, however, even if they remain largely in the background. The *Chronique des Quatre Premiers Valois* mentions that the countess of Valois gave the Jacques provisions outside Gaillefontaines and also suggests that rural women may have had a logistical role in the revolt:

For they [the Jacques] had become accustomed in the villages and places they passed through to have the people, men and women, put tables out into the streets.<sup>427</sup>

This is not repeated by any other chronicler, but it seems plausible that villagers supported and supplied the Jacques with food, while not joining the rebellion themselves. Even in stocking the rebels, men were still involved; even this was not a specifically ‘female’ role.

Alongside this single chronicle account, we have only one remission connected to the rebellion of 1358 that mentions women taking an active role. The account however has little to do with the Jacquerie itself, but is illustrative of one potential function of women within the revolt: their ability to start violence. In this case, the parliament sent Hue de Saint-Arme, a baillif and sergeant of the parlement, to arrest one man, Jean Sirejean, who with another male Jean Daulle had been fined 1,300 *livres tournois* for their part in the commotion:

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<sup>426</sup> The name ‘Jacquerie’ of course originates from the slang name used condescendingly by the nobility. Better evidence, perhaps, is the insistence by the remissions that the culprits were the *genz du plat-pays*.

<sup>427</sup> *Chron. premiers Valois*, p. 72, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 160.

That bailliff (*huissier*), went with Jehan of Arraz, our sergeant of the provosté of Montdidier, to the said town (*ville*) of Hangest (Somme) where they found the said Jehan Sire in his hostel and they placed him under arrest in our name, and they wished to take him prisoner. Then the valet of the said baillif picked up his sword drawn and ran to the church of the said town (*ville*). As soon as the women who were there who saw the said valet with the said sword unsheathed, they uttered a great cry. At that great cry, Nicaise Sire Jehan, Pierre Potin, Pierre Sire Jehan, Jehan du Lot and Martin Troquet rushed out there, each with an iron-tipped lance or axe in his hands.<sup>428</sup>

The incident diffused without further violence but shows women instigating popular action. The ‘great cry’ came close to creating a mini-riot, as it did in the beginning of several other late medieval revolts, like the *Maillotins*.<sup>429</sup> This incident, however, was not part of the Jacquerie, but rather the arrest of rebels several years after the initial revolt. If anything, it highlights the absence of women from the remissions associated with the Jacquerie. Although women could instigate popular violence in late medieval revolts and their actions could be recorded in pardon-tales (as N.Z. Davis has shown), such incidents were not recorded during the rebellion of 1358.<sup>430</sup>

The remissions concerning the Jacques only record the names of women when they are making claims on behalf of their husbands.<sup>431</sup> For example, the remission for her husband Jean Rose, who had carried letters to Compiègne for the Jacques but been executed when mistaken for a leader, was sought by

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<sup>428</sup> ‘Lequel hussier, avec lui Jehan d’Arraz notre sergent la provosté de Montdidier, allerent en ladite ville de Hangest en laquelle il trouverent Jehan Sire en son hostel, auquel il mirent la main de par nous, et le vouldrent amener prisonnier. Et lors le varlet dudit hussier print son espee et courru devant le moustier de laditte ville, et tantost les femmes d’icelle qui virent ledit varlet avec ladite espee tout nue, firent et getterent un grant cry. Pour lequel frant cry, Nicaise Sire Jehan, Pierre Potin, Pierre Sire Jehan, Jehan Du Lot et Martin Troquet, saillirent suz, chascun un baston ferré ou haches en leurs mains’. AN, JJ107, no. 186. This remission is transcribed by Gauvard, *De grace especial*, v.1, pp. 342-3.

<sup>429</sup> For some examples of revolts triggered by women’s cries, see Cohn, *Lust for Liberty* (2006), pp. 132-3.

<sup>430</sup> See, for example, ‘Women on Top’, in Davis, *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*, pp. 124-152.

<sup>431</sup> There are many examples of this. See AN, JJ86, f. 120, no. 352, where Isabelle, wife of Pierre de Soissons, appeals for grace on behalf of her late husband, murdered in the nobles’ retaliation.

‘Jehanne, wife of the late Jehan Rose of la Pirelle near Angicourt’.<sup>432</sup> Not only did Jehanne claim that Jehan had committed crimes only under duress, but also she required a posthumous pardon for her husband to ‘feed three children’. This remission is also indicative of the passive role that the pardon-letters suggest women played in the revolt: her husband sent Jehanne and her children to safety in Compiègne by the husband when violence broke out.

Chronicle and remission evidence suggest that women were connected to the Jacquerie in only two ways. First, they appear in the chronicle record as having supported the efforts of the Jacques by providing food and supplies. Second, and most commonly, they appeared in their role as wives; submitting claims for grace to re-establish their property, good name and renown. All these examples place women as secondary to the active agents of the rebellion, defined by the crown as exclusively male. Women were only recorded as aides to an entirely male insurgency.

It should be noted that women were not as numerous in the registers of the chancery as the men. Bourin and Chevalier estimate that 6.5% of remissions in fourteenth-century Loire were issued to women.<sup>433</sup> This number falls even further as the period continues: in the reign of Charles VI, only 4% were issued to women, and by the reign of Charles VIII, it was lower than 2.5%.<sup>434</sup> This is

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<sup>432</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 124, no. 365, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, p. 272-4. This remission has been transcribed by Luce, and has been detailed elsewhere.

<sup>433</sup> M. Bourin and B. Chevalier, ‘Le Comportement Criminel dans le pays de la Loire moyenne d’après les lettres de rémission (vers 1380-1450)’, *Annales de Bretagne et de pays de l’ouest*, 88 (1981), p. 251.

<sup>434</sup> Gauvard, *De grace especial*, pp. 300-301. Gauvard believes this is due to the increase in types of homicide pardonable by remission that, as most homicides are committed by men, causes a greater imbalance between the sexes: ‘[p]lus qu’à une évolution de la criminalité féminine, cet affaiblissement est dû à l’évolution de la source considérée qui, au cours du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, filtre de plus en plus les types de crimes remis pour réduire pratiquement à l’homicide dès la XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle’.

considerably less than we might expect, considering what little we know of female criminality. 10% of those recorded within the *Registre Criminel du Chatelet* were women;<sup>435</sup> Nicole Gonthier estimates for Montpellier that women committed almost 20% of all crimes in the area.<sup>436</sup> This difference may be explained by the frequency of homicide within the chancery: homicide was the most common crime recorded, and almost all murderers pardoned by the crown were male.<sup>437</sup> There would have undoubtedly been practical problems for women receiving remissions: they would need high standing in the community and willing character witnesses or supplicants who would make their case to the crown. They also required the financial capability to afford a remission, which as demonstrated was outside the reach of the vast majority of individuals. Yet it is important to stress that women did receive remissions for crimes they committed.

The chronicles of the Jacquerie do mention women, but only as victims of male violence. All of the chronicles indicate that the brutality of the Jacques was not just targeted against noble men:

And when the Jacques saw what a great crowd they were, they charged against the nobility, killing many. Worse, they became deranged, mad people of little sense, often putting to death noble women and children.<sup>438</sup>

The implication here by the otherwise sympathetic *Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois* was that the targeting of women was something extraordinarily immoral, even compared with the murder of the men. The sign that the crowd has

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<sup>435</sup> Gauvard, *De grace especial*, p.301.

<sup>436</sup> Quoted in Gauvard, *ibid.*, p. 301. For recent work on crime in the medieval period, see N. Gonthier, *Le châtement du crime au Moyen Age (XII-XVI siècles)* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 1998).

<sup>437</sup> For example, Gauvard records that over 99% of all homicides in her sample were committed by men, p. 307.

<sup>438</sup> *Chron. premiers Valois*, p. 71-2, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 160.

become deranged and lost its senses is not their attack against the nobility but rather when they turned their attention to women and children. Violence against women is repeatedly used by chroniclers to indicate how the Jacquerie was *exceptionally* savage:

The traces of their wickedness swelled: they put to death any noblemen they found, even noble children ... [a]nd even many noble ladies and maidens were rounded up to be inhumanely murdered.<sup>439</sup>

For Richard Lescot, the treatment of women was the worst wickedness the insurgents committed. Jean de Venette, one of the more sympathetic chroniclers of the Jacquerie, sounds the same note: that while the destruction of noble property was unacceptable, the execution of 'noble ladies' was 'still more lamentable'.<sup>440</sup>

Rape and sexual violence represent the worst excesses of peasant violence and the best indication of the inhumanity of the mob. For Froissart, the attack on the Marché of Meaux was specifically an attack upon 'a great gathering of ladies and maidens with their young children'; their intentions were not to have overthrown the fortress but to have 'violated, raped and killed' these 'maidens'.<sup>441</sup> Jean le Bel declares the Jacques were boastful about the sexual violence they committed:

There were even those who confessed to have helped in raping the ladies; some claiming six ladies; others, seven; still others, eight, nine, ten, and twelve, and they killed them as well, even if they were pregnant.<sup>442</sup>

In his most famous example, le Bel records in detail a woman who was gang-raped then force-fed the roasted flesh of her husband before being executed. This kind of horrific, misogynistic violence was used regularly by the chroniclers

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<sup>439</sup> Lescot, *Chron.*, p. 126, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 170.

<sup>440</sup> Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 264, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 77.

<sup>441</sup> Froissart, *Chron.*, v. 5, pp. 104, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 156.

<sup>442</sup> Bel, *Chron.*, v.2, p. 259, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 151-2.

to illustrate the exceptional brutality of the revolt – le Bel states that he ‘would not dare write or tell of ... the indecorous things they did to ladies’.<sup>443</sup> This rhetoric undoubtedly impressed on readers the atrocious behaviour of the peasantry.

It is then surprising to find no remissions whatsoever that mention women as victims of the Jacquerie.<sup>444</sup> No single individual or group is accused of attacking a woman, and neither are any communities implicated in any such violence.<sup>445</sup> General remissions do not mention women either. In contrast to the chronicles, the common phrase that appears in the bulk of remissions does not mention rape; rather, the Jacques ‘assaulted their fortresses, distributed their goods and executed them’, and ‘they’ represents the male nobility.<sup>446</sup> In many cases, their targets are specified as the *gentil hommes*.

There is only one remission that specifies any acts of violence against women connected to the Jacquerie, but it was not issued to the Jacques. The remission was for Johanis de Bonolis, an esquire (*armigerus nobilis*) who had assembled (*congregatis*) with several nobles of the realm in Lagny to retaliate against the peasantry, which resulted in a murder, an arson attack and the rape of a woman named Tassone at Vaires near Lagny (Seine-et-Marne).<sup>447</sup> This

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<sup>443</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 151-2.

<sup>444</sup> Remissions were issued only when the crown considered the applicant worthy of being pardoned; it could be that attacks on noble women within the Jacquerie were considered unpardonable offences. However, under normal circumstances men were regularly granted remissions for both rape and murder where the victim was female, so this seems unlikely.

<sup>445</sup> One should note that women were less likely to be the victim in a recorded remission in the *Registres des Trésor des Chartes* than men. Only 9% of Gauvard’s sample of remissions record violence against women, so even in this regard the sources mostly concern males. Yet 9% still represents several thousands of remissions; and we would surely expect at least one incident in the remissions that exist for the rebellions of 1358 that featured some mention of sexual violence.

<sup>446</sup> In the original, this appears as ‘abatre plusieurs lieux fortresses et dissiper leurs biens et aucuns d’iceulx mis a mort’, with variations. AN, JJ86, f. 123, no. 363.

<sup>447</sup> The reproduction of this remission is difficult to read, and cuts off several sentences. The surname of Tassone and the name of her husband is obscured, with the line reading ‘raptu Tassone quondam uxorum Mas[x]’, with [x] marking the point where the illegibility begins. The next line resumes ‘Vares prope Luaginicum’. The name of the individual murdered is unclear,

remission, written in Latin and issued to a noble, is certainly exceptional, and the immoral violence against a helpless woman was not the chivalric ideal presented by Jean le Bel, Froissart or other noble chroniclers where violence towards women is mentioned.

For the chroniclers, violence towards women was not only part of the general violence of the revolt but also what distinguished the Jacquerie as exceptionally brutal. In comparison with what chroniclers like Jean Froissart might have considered the typical conduct of war (even if that conflict was between peasants and knights), the targeting of children and especially women was focussed upon to mark out this revolt as something particularly abhorrent. Again, it is surprising that this emphasis was not transferred into the issuing of pardons and remissions. Of course, the stories of violence that caught the eye of the chroniclers may not have been representative of the behaviour of the whole of the peasant force, or may have been simple rhetorical devices. Perhaps in the process of re-establishing the peace the crown intentionally focussed on disputes concerning men and property. Nonetheless, the issue of the action of the Jacques towards women is one area where the chronicles and the records of the chancery do not concur.

The phrase used in remissions to describe the rebels – the *genz du plat-pais* – seems to be an accurate image of how the sources gender the revolt. It could be that women were simply hidden within pardons issued to village communities, but the absence of specific remissions of individuals seems more than a coincidence. When women do appear, they provide backup to men by providing

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<sup>1</sup>‘Guilli [x] hominibus en villa de boneullis’, where [x] is unclear. The individual whose house was burnt down is ‘Johanis Cousselli ad sancti Tromi de Bonuellis’. AN, JJ91, f. 173, no. 333.



assistance or seeking grace for them. More surprising is the silence of the remissions concerning violence done to women: the only example is violence done to a peasant, not a noblewoman. While other revolts and scholarship suggest that it is very unlikely that the Jacquerie was solely a male enterprise, the chroniclers' eyes and the crown's grace fell solely upon men, and the pardon-tales tell us only of crimes committed by and to them.

## 6 – DISCOVERING THE JACQUERIE

Much of what has been written up to this point has been about establishing what the Jacquerie was not. The rebellion was not co-opted by elites like Charles of Navarre or Étienne Marcel. Neither was it a brief spark centred on a small area around Paris; it spread across the whole of the north-east of France. The repression was bloody, but not spearheaded by the crown, who instead concentrated on re-establishing peace in their realm. The insurgents were not townsmen, artisans or royal sergeants, but rather the ‘men of the countryside’. Nor does the revolt follow the model suggested by Bercé for the early modern period and supposedly pre-industrial revolts writ larger; it was not dominated by women nor instigated by the clergy.

If it was not any of these things, what was it? How could a revolt as large as the Jacquerie work? What instigated it? The remissions are not silent on these issues. Rather, they establish the foundations for a new model of how large-scale rural revolts might work, one that perhaps can be applied to other such risings. Born of a peasantry already actively engaged in resisting the forces of both the French, English and Navarrese crowns, villages rose up against individual fortifications. Before rising, they appointed leaders from the local community, met in assemblies to discuss action and select objectives, and sent emissaries backwards and forwards along trade routes. The ringing of bells, audible calls-to-arms and even letters could be used to pass messages back and forth between insurgent groups. Individual local cells assembled against nearby nobles; rather than joining grand armies, they remained in small collections of villages and concentrated on their surrounding areas – recognised as part of

something bigger ('the Jacquerie'), these rural settlements pursued their own 'micro-insurgencies' against the local nobility.

This section will first establish the culture of resistance in the Île de France, before indicating just how these rebels did conduct themselves. We will explore the peasant community – the village – and how it represented the base unit of rebellion, and how these micro-insurgencies on a local level came together under the umbrella of the Jacquerie. The issue of leadership will be addressed: who led these peasants, and how were leaders chosen? Finally, we will look at communication: how these communities organised and kept in contact, and what linked these local rebellions – micro-insurgencies – together.

## PEASANT RESISTANCE

The idea that a peasant without a lord was like a sheep without a shepherd, easy prey to any passing predator, was popular with preachers but not much supported by the evidence. The arrival of the soldiers in the localities did not, usually, result in the scattering of a community but a drawing together of that community around the political organisation of the village which had served it so well in previous crises.<sup>448</sup>

Using chronicle accounts, vernacular literature and letters of remission, Nicholas Wright's *Knights and Peasants* makes clear that 'social conflict was part and parcel of the Hundred Years' War in the French countryside'.<sup>449</sup> Where the soldiers of the conflict went, violence followed; military historians have established that 'the direct inflicting of misery and harm on the enemy population was one of the three main tools in the hands of the medieval commander, along

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<sup>448</sup> N. Wright, *Knights and Peasants, the Hundred Years War in the French Countryside* (Woodbridge, Boydell, 1998), p. 115.

<sup>449</sup> *ibid.*

with battle and siege'.<sup>450</sup> The ferocity of armed assaults on non-combatants was on a new scale in the north: the 1346 *chevauchée*, for example, had stretched from Caen to Boulogne and Pontoise.<sup>451</sup> Instead of arguing that peasants were 'helpless before the power of the soldier', Wright showed that they actively dealt with the increased threat from the military, brigands and even the nobles.<sup>452</sup> Evidence from chroniclers and remissions show that the Jacquerie was the most widespread and violent outbreak in a period of sustained social conflict between the peasants and the nobility.

This wave of resistance was not simply restricted to France but spread across Europe in the wake of the Black Death of 1348. The most recent addition to the historiography of medieval peasant revolts, *Lust for Liberty*, argues that something changed in the psyche of the medieval peasant (and townsman), not immediately following the first strike of the plague, but by the middle of the 1350s:

Postplague popular revolt reflects an analogous about-face from utter despondency and fear to a new confidence on the part of peasants, artisans and workers.<sup>453</sup>

Uprisings like the Peasant's Revolt in 1381 and the Ciompi of 1378 are the best studied examples of this trend,<sup>454</sup> but in excess of one thousand smaller revolts were recorded across the continent by contemporary chroniclers. In the wake of the plague, ordinary inhabitants of medieval Europe shifted from passive

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<sup>450</sup> C. Rogers, 'The Age of the Hundred Years War', in *Medieval Warfare. A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) ed. M. Keen, p. 133.

<sup>451</sup> *ibid.*, p. 151, and also C. Rogers, *War. Cruel and Sharp, English Strategy Under Edward III, 1327-1360* (Boydell: Woodbridge, 2000), especially 'To Make an End to the War by Battle: The Crécy *Chevauchée*, 1346', pp. 238-272.

<sup>452</sup> C. Allmand, 'War and the Non-Combatant', in *Medieval Warfare. A History*, ed. M. Keen, p. 205.

<sup>453</sup> Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, p. 237.

<sup>454</sup> Indeed, Dyer describes the English Peasants' Revolt as coming out of 'well-informed self-confidence rather than a blind search for vengeance' in the original proceedings of the Past and Present Society Conference, *The English Rising of 1381* (The Past And Present Society, 1981), p. 31.

responses to direct action when dealing with social problems, particularly through protest and social revolt. In the late 1350s, the French peasantry took arms to defend their settlements against opposing armies and the nobility.

However, when historians have attempted to explain the reason for the Jacquerie, their focus has fallen on so-called economic factors: the Jacquerie was, according to Fourquin, a '*revolte de misère*'.<sup>455</sup> Mollat and Wolff claimed that 'fiscal problems were again a source of discontent', and included the revolt within their chapter 'Revolts Against Poverty'.<sup>456</sup> There have been several suggestions as to what these problems were,<sup>457</sup> including the first attempts to raise ransom due for King Jean II, who was held under captivity in England, although the sum would not be formalised until the Treaty of Brétigny in 1360.<sup>458</sup> That said, more than one quarter of the noble contingent of the French army had been captured at Poitiers in 1356, including 1400 belted knights, fourteen different counts and twenty-one barons.<sup>459</sup> If the ransoms for these lesser figures, not dealt with by the Brétigny settlement, had been paid before 1360, they would weighed heavily upon their subjects.<sup>460</sup> Mollat and Wolff suggest that the Black Death of 1348 had a catalysing effect on social tensions by creating a greater gap

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<sup>455</sup> Fourquin, *Les campagnes de la région parisienne*, p. 233.

<sup>456</sup> Mollat and Wolff, *Popular Revolutions*, p. 127.

<sup>457</sup> For example, Richard Kaeuper argued that virtually every potential trigger of the Jacquerie was essentially financial: 'peasants...found themselves expected to pay not only taxation for what seemed a war rapidly being lost, but also money to ward off deprivations of English, Navarrese or even royal soliders, and ... fines... at the same time, their lords seemed to have increased their demands'. R.W. Kaeuper, *War, Justice and Public Order, England and France in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 353.

<sup>458</sup> Sumption, *Fire*, p. 447.

<sup>459</sup> *ibid*, p. 247.

<sup>460</sup> Accurate amounts for these ransoms is difficult to obtain, even for the high nobility; Given-Wilson and Bériac argue that it is 'no easy task to discover the amounts for which Edward III eventually ransomed the prisoners – or, indeed, how many of them were asked to pay ransoms at all' (p. 817). Moreover, 'non-payment of ransoms was, in fact, extremely common in the Hundred Years' War (p. 829). The exact financial implication for the subjects is unclear. For these quotes, see C. Given-Wilson and F. Bériac, 'Edward III's Prisoners of War: The Battle of Poitiers and its context', *English Historical Review*, 468 (2001), pp. 802-33. For wider discussion of the ransoms and Poitiers, see C. Given-Wilson and F. Bériac, *Les prisonniers de la bataille de Poitiers* (Paris: H. Champion, 2002), especially p. 167-195.

between rich and poor,<sup>461</sup> although this case has never been properly demonstrated.<sup>462</sup> Fourquin blamed the so-called price-scissors effect, when the price of agricultural produce falls but the price of 'industrial' goods remains stable, which began as early as the grain crisis of 1315.<sup>463</sup> Yet Fourquin and others, as mentioned earlier, have also shown that the Île de France and the surrounding regions were comparatively well-off in comparison to the average medieval French peasant, even the wealthiest rural regions of France in the fourteenth century.<sup>464</sup> Did this grain crisis persist for so long? Even if it did, why did peasants wait over fifty years to revolt? Why economic motivations caused these seemingly solvent peasants to rebel, and why these tensions erupted in 1358 and not earlier, has gone unexplained.

On the other hand, the chroniclers do not mention destitution, starvation or even financial impositions as the cause of the Jacquerie. Nor do they list any such demands against taxes or dues. Rather, they highlight the failure of the nobility to hold up their end of the social contract as the social scientist Barrington Moore suggested: in general, the peasants provided for the lords, but the lords could not in turn protect them from harm.<sup>465</sup> As Peter Lewis wrote, the Jacquerie was the result of 'hatred engendered by the failure of the nobility to do its social duty and protect the people from the miseries of warfare'.<sup>466</sup> Jean de Venette indicated that the peasants had a 'zeal for justice': 'since their lords were

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<sup>461</sup> Mollat and Wolff, *Popular Revolutions*, pp. 110-115.

<sup>462</sup> For example, Colin Platt argued that the Black Death actually calmed social tensions, through increasing the value of the peasants' labour. C. Platt, *King Death, the Black Death and its aftermath in Late Medieval England* (London: UCL Press, 1996).

<sup>463</sup> Fourquin, *Les campagnes de la région parisienne*, p. 233.

<sup>464</sup> For example, see Fossier, *Histoire sociale de l'occident médiéval*. This issue was mentioned in note 344.

<sup>465</sup> 'There is considerable evidence to support the thesis that, where the links out of this relationship between overlord and peasant communities are strong, the tendency toward peasant rebellion (and later revolution) is feeble', B. Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press 1961), p. 469.

<sup>466</sup> Lewis, *Later Medieval France*, p. 284.

not defending them but oppressing them, [they] turned themselves to base and execrable deeds'.<sup>467</sup> Jean le Bel described the peasants' motivation as anger against the 'nobles, knights and squires [who] were ruining and disgracing the kingdom'.<sup>468</sup> The *Chronique Normande* made quite clear that revolt was caused by the French army's looting:

Then the regent was advised to order those of his knights in the Île de France and the Beauvaisis who had fortresses to stock their garrison quickly with plenty of provisions .... some did not have means to supply the provisions for their castles ... so they were advised to take the provisions from their own people ... these peasants were mortified that the knights who were supposed to protect them had seized there property.<sup>469</sup>

Not only did the nobility fail to protect the peasants from the ravages of war, they were in turn responsible for those ravages. Suffering from a lack of supplies, the crown's own troops resorted to pillaging the countryside. The continuator of Richard Lescot's chronicle records that by the summer of 1358, '[s]ince the plundering was everywhere and no-one was around to oppose the brigands and enemy troops, the fields now lay barren'.<sup>470</sup> The first time the chroniclers mentioned this plundering concerning the Île de France was in 1358, as the precursor to the Jacquerie; the chroniclers believed these recent activities were the trigger of the revolt.

It was not only the French troops garrisoned in the Beauvaisis who were responsible. Charles of Navarre's initial push east into the Île de France can be seen as one of the main catalysts for the rebellion. On 12 March 1358 the great French strongholds of Arpajon and Montlhéry (Essonne) were taken by the

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<sup>467</sup> Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 263, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 77.

<sup>468</sup> Bel, *Chron.*, v.2, p. 256, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 151.

<sup>469</sup> *Chron. norm.*, p. 127-8, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 163.

<sup>470</sup> Lescot, *Chron.*, p. 126, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 170.

Navarrese; both of these two areas would become targets of the Jacques.<sup>471</sup> Robert of Clermont attacked Corbeil (Essonne), effectively bringing the war directly into the heartland of the Jacquerie.<sup>472</sup> By 25 March, the Dauphin had to flee Paris. Through April, the Anglo-Navarrese forces had Sens (Yonne) and Château-Landon (Seine-et-Marne). In May, it is safe to presume that their troops were pushing even further into the Île de France. Connected to this military push was an increase in brigandage: historians have extensively covered the trouble that the infantry – the Great Companies – caused in the Île de France.<sup>473</sup> During this period, the peasantry faced numerous threats – from the crown’s troops, the Anglo-Navarrese troops and unaffiliated brigands ravaging the countryside – but all were connected to the Hundred Years’ War. The nobles both failed to protect the peasantry, and were responsible for the conflict that threatened the peasants.

To understand a revolt, we must ‘consider it from [the rebels]’ perspective, using their categories of understanding’, and the best way to understand their perspective is to examine their actions, and particularly their objectives. As William Reddy wrote, speaking of a riot in Rouen in 1752, ‘the targets of these crowds thus glitter in the eye of history as signs of the labourers’ conception of the nature of society’.<sup>474</sup> The Jacques expressed their ideology through the murder of nobles, the destruction of their property, and assaulting military fortifications. This revolt of the ‘non-nobles against the nobles’ was clearly marked by the division between these two ‘orders’; those were the terms

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<sup>471</sup> Sumption, *Fire*, p. 315.

<sup>472</sup> *ibid.*, p. 316.

<sup>473</sup> For examples, see Fowler, *Medieval Mercenaries, Volume 1: The Great Companies*; Allmand, ‘War and the Non-Combatant’ in *Medieval Warfare*, ed. Keen; Wright, *Knights and Peasants*, pp. 89-95.

<sup>474</sup> W. Reddy, ‘The Textile Trade and the language of the crowd at Rouen, 1752-1871’, *Past and Present* 74 (1972), pp. 62-89. This quote was used in Reicher, *The Psychology of Crowd Dynamics*.



by which rebels and victims alike viewed the conflict. The nobles' property was a natural objective to aim for. However, important military locations, like castles and fortresses were destroyed as well: many remissions attest that the rebels 'attacked, pillaged and burnt their fortresses', along with their 'houses and their goods'.<sup>475</sup> How many of these *fortresses* were currently in use by an army? There is little information on the exact details of the targets. Yet other remissions point to the rebels selecting and attacking buildings that were undoubtedly manned by soldiers (for example, the attack on castle of Villers-aux-Nonnais in Aisne).<sup>476</sup> Individual knights were assaulted,<sup>477</sup> and more importantly, so were garrisoned troops.<sup>478</sup> The initial incident which spurred the whole movement, the attack on Saint-Leu d'Esserent (Oise) was described primarily as an attack upon the *milites*; according to Luce, the fortifications had been occupied by two men in the service of the Dauphin, one of them being Robert of Clermont, Marshal of Normandy.<sup>479</sup> As the *Chronique de règnes de Jean II et Charles V* reported, the peasants then 'charged against many gentlemen who were in Saint-Leu, killing nine – four knights and five grooms'.<sup>480</sup>

If we accept the premise that the Jacquerie was prompted by increased military activity in the region and anger towards the local nobility, then the Jacquerie was part of widespread peasant resistance towards nobles and armies in this period, not least during the summer of 1358 itself. Five remissions for

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<sup>475</sup> 'abatre, gaster et ardoir leurs fortresses, maisons et leurs biens' AN, JJ86, f. 77, no. 237.

Variations of this phrase often include *chastels*, *hotels* or *châteaux*.

<sup>476</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 132, no. 383.

<sup>477</sup> For example Jehan Ourcel was pardoned for his part in the murder of three knights near Port-Saint-Maxence. See AN, JJ94, f. 2, no. 4, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 328-30.

<sup>478</sup> The men of Bruyeres, for example, attacked a local 'garrison' (JJ86, f. 204, no. 556).

<sup>479</sup> Luce, *Jacquerie*, p. 276.

<sup>480</sup> *Chron. des règnes*, v.1, p. 177, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 166.

rebellion were issued to settlements south of the Paris that historians traditionally considered part of the Jacquerie: Orléans (Loiret), Givry (Aisne), Lorris (Loiret), Vitteaux (Cote-d'Or) and Vermenton (Yonne). However, nothing in the remissions shows that these rebellions were a part of the Jacquerie: none mentioned the 'gens du plat-pais'; only Orléans mentioned the conflict between 'nobles and non-nobles' and the latter three described themselves as 'enemies of the crown', a term never used to describe the Jacques. Luce included these revolts because of the coincidence of these communities rising up, within 100 miles of the Île de France and at the same time as the Jacquerie. However, they share not just chronology, but also the same objectives: all five were focussed against military installations or soldiers. These five rebellions were not part of the Jacquerie, but rather the Jacquerie itself was part of the bigger wave of rebellions against the nobility and the armies. For example, below is the remission for Orléans:

And of these said men, after many riots and dissensions with some of the knights who lived in the town of Orléans, these habitants has become deadly enemies of the said soldiers. And at the time of the commotions of the non-nobles against the nobles, they had wished to destroy the said castle of Aula (château-la-Cour), and then certain parties knocked it down.<sup>481</sup>

Just like the Jacquerie, tensions between combatants and non-combatants erupted into violence. This also happened in Vitteaux (Cote-d'Or), as far south as Dijon, where the townsmen rose up against the garrisoned troops:

Some of the inhabitants of the town [*ville*] of Vitteaux, among those this said Johannes called Turelin, of Salvoloco, came to the castle of Dracy, where the knights were, carrying sticks and swords, and they angrily entered castle, in which were swords, wines and other mobile goods of

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<sup>481</sup> 'quin imo dicte gentes, post plures rixas et dissensiones quas cum aliquibus habitatoribus ville Orléans habuerunt, eo quod ipsi habitatores qui dicto militi fuerant inimici capitales et qui tempore commocionis innobilium contra nobiles dictum castrum de Aula destruere voluerant et iam quamdam partem prostraverunt', AN, JJ91, f. 74, no. 227, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 324-7.

the said knights were held, and then with strength and violence certain parties knocked this castle to the ground....<sup>482</sup>

The above attack draws a perfect parallel with the initial attack of the Jacques at Saint-Leu d'Esserent: the *gens d'armes* and the *ecuyers*, who looted their supplies from the peasantry, became a focus for the villagers' frustrations. At Lorris (Loiret) there was a struggle with the inhabitants of the fortress at the Châteauneuf-sur-Loire.<sup>483</sup> In Vermenton (Yonne), near Auxerre, the *gens d'armes* got involved in a violent dispute with the people of the surrounding area.<sup>484</sup>

These incidents demonstrate a culture of resistance against the nobility and the armies in France during 1358. The Jacquerie was not the only expression of this feeling; it was part of a wider social movement across the north of France and beyond. Within the previous twelve months, royal officers were attacked in Forez and there were attacks on tax collectors in the south of France, including a revolt in Toulouse.<sup>485</sup> Similarly, Jean de Venette recognised that peasant resistance had begun in the Île de France and elsewhere. The peasantry had started taking matters into their own hands, and were organising resistance against the military and the brigands in the region:

In the same year, in the Île de France and elsewhere, the peasants *dwelling in open villages with no fortifications of their own made fortresses of their churches* by surrounding them with good ditches,

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<sup>482</sup> 'vigentibus commocionibus nequissimis que inter nonnullos populares regni nostri a ribus annis citra vigerunt, nonnulli habitatores ville de Vitteaux, inter quos erat Johannes dictus Turelin, de Salvoloco, ad castrum de Dracey nuncupatum, quod est dicti militis, cum fustibus et gladiis accesserunt, et illud castrum, in quo bladorum, vinorum et aliorum bonorum mobilium dicti militis copia maxica existebat, hostiliter invaserunt, ac eciam vi et violencia quandam partem dicti castri ad terram prostraverunt ...', AN, JJ91, f. 20, no. 71, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 322-3.

<sup>483</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 24, no. 48.

<sup>484</sup> 'ceulx qui en l'année derniere passé vindrent et encores sont et demeurant en la fortesse de Ligny-le-Chastel et ès parties d'environ, lesquelx à grant nombre et force de gens d'armes sont plusieurs foiz venuz en la dicte ville de Vermenton et es parties d'environ' AN, JJ90, f. 61, no. 110.

<sup>485</sup> Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, p. 221.

protecting the towers and belfries with planks as one does castles, and stocking them with stones and crossbows. Thus they could defend themselves if perchance enemies should attack them, as I have heard, they did fairly frequently ... By day they kept lookouts on top of the church towers ... When they saw the enemy coming in the distance, they blew a horn or rang bells. Then *the peasants who were at work in the fields* or busy with other tasks in their houses ran with all speed to their churches which they had fortified and took refuge in them'.<sup>486</sup> (emphasis mine)

Peasants actively resisted the military; rather than an initiative by royal sergeants or landlords, the rural labourers themselves stood up to the armies of France, England and Burgundy. The construction of new fortified places within the villages across France had become widespread: in 1371, royal commissioners found over 111 fortified places in the *bailliage* of Caen.<sup>487</sup> The creation of these fortifications was noticed as early as February 1358 by the *Estates-General*, which demanded that all the *petites fortresses* be destroyed for security reasons.<sup>488</sup>

Jean de Venette showed a shift in philosophy towards villagers taking an active role in defending their locales against invaders before the Jacquerie; he also recorded that resistance carried on after the Jacquerie of the summer of 1358. The most famous story concerned Guillaume L'Alou who was, according to Luce, 'the obscure peasant of Longueil-Sainte-Marie [who] deserves to occupy a place of honour in our annals'.<sup>489</sup> The story of Grandferre and Guillaume L'Alou is reported by several chroniclers, all of whom gave slightly different versions of the story.<sup>490</sup> In 1359, the peasants of Longueil-Sainte-Marie

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<sup>486</sup> Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 268, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 85.

<sup>487</sup> Sumption, *Fire*, p. 386.

<sup>488</sup> *ibid.* What exactly constituted *petite fortresses* was not specified, but it seems reasonable to assume that the fortified churches that Jean de Venette described could be classed as such.

<sup>489</sup> S. Luce, 'Notice Sur Guillaume L'Aloue', *Annuaire-Bulletin de la société de l'histoire de France* (Paris, 1875) p. 150.

<sup>490</sup> These include *The Chronicle of Jean de Venette*, and the *Chronique Normande*. The major difference is that the former considers Grandferre and Guillaume l'Aloue to be two different men,

(Oise), near Compiègne in the heartland of what was the Jacquerie, rose up in rebellion, this time against the English troops. The leader, a rustic named Guillaume l'Alou, repulsed one attack from the English troops, and then his right-hand man, a peasant known as Grandferre, repulsed another.<sup>491</sup> A remission issued some years after the event confirms l'Alou's role as a leader of peasant resistance in the Île de France:

Charles, by the grace of God King of France, let it be known to all present and in the future future that we have received the humble supplication of Henry Staidue of Waugicourt, contending how, at the time of the great wars, discord and dissension that was in the countryside of the Beauvaisis and thereabouts, the said supplicant, wishing to serving us, put himself under the governance of Guillaume l'Alou who was at war helping the good men of the countryside against the enemies of the said countryside for the honour and profit of us, then regent of the realm, and inflicted with his companion great damage on these enemies at Longueil Saint Marie and elsewhere ..... However, in the time he was with the said Guillaume l'Alou, around sixteen or seventeen years ago now... he and another companion that had served the said Guillaume found a valet or boy on foot between Senlis and Saint-Christopher, and they beat him and wounded him until he was dead, and they stole his gold and the money that he had, so that the said supplicant no longer dares to go to that region...<sup>492</sup>

This movement, in the area where the Jacquerie was bloodily put down just one year before, is a good example of continued peasant resistance after the great revolt of 1358. Each chronicler characterised the rebels as being rural; for example, the English chronicler Sir Thomas Gray described that 'the people of

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while the latter believes them to be the same individual. Also see Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, pp. 37-8.

<sup>491</sup> Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 286, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 90-2.

<sup>492</sup> 'Charles, par le grace de Dieu roy de france, savoir faisons à tous presenz et à venir nous l'humble supplication de Henry Staidieu de Waugicourt avoir receue, contenant que comme ja piecà. au temps de grans guerres, descors et discensions qui estoient ou pais de Bauvoisin et environ, ledit suppliant se feust mis pour nous service souz le gouvernant de Guillaume l'Alou faisant guerre à l'aide des bonnes genz du pais aus ennemis estanz out dit pais pour l'onneur et profit de nous, lors regent le royaume, ausquelx ennemis par lui et les siens fut porté très grant dommage en plusieurs lieux, tant à Longueil Saint Marie comme ailleurs ... toutefois, pour ce que, ou temps qu'il estoit avec le dit Guillaume l'Alou, seize ou dix-sept ans a ou environ ... et que il et un autre compaignon qui estoit soubz le dit Guillaume trouvèrent un varlet ou garçon à pié entre Senliz et Saint-Christophe, lequel il batirent ou navrèrent tant que il moru, et lui ostèrent l'or et l'argent qu'il avoit, ucellui suppliant ne se ose comparoit au pais', AN, JJ108, no. 350, ed. Luce, 'Notice Sur Guillaume L'Aloue', pp. 153-4.

the fortress were saved, being for the most being only *brigauntz* and common folk of the band of the Jacques Bonhommes'.<sup>493</sup> Moreover, Jean de Noyal emphasised that far from a flash in the pan, these peasants remained a constant threat in this period: 'they sustained many strong attacks on the part of their enemies and held their place throughout the whole course of the war'.<sup>494</sup>

The men of Longueil-Sainte-Marie (Oise) was not the only example of resistance Jean de Venette provided. Townsmen were particularly active, resisting the English troops in Soissons and Troyes. At Compiègne, 'several townsmen had bravely issued forth to conquer the English in the woods', although they were eventually destroyed.<sup>495</sup> However, it was not only the *bonnes villes* that resisted attacks: numerous 'little towns' offered 'such a brave defence and a stout resistance that the English could not take it by storm'.<sup>496</sup> Little towns and villages regularly took up arms. Although they were unsuccessful, Jean de Venette used Orly (Seine-et-Marne) as an example:

Among [the fortified country villages] was a church and its tower in a village near Paris called Orly, which had been fortified by the men of the village. They had fitted it for a strong defence as well as possible and had stocked it with crossbows and other means of defence and with food in abundance. About two hundred men from the village occupied it. But those who trusted their strength and their fortresses in the end were ultimately deceived.<sup>497</sup>

Jean de Venette is not the only source in which we find continued rebellions by peasants and townsmen towards the military forces (and the nobility who sanctioned them) marauding around the countryside. The remissions offer other

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<sup>493</sup> In the original French, these individuals were described as 'lez plusours fors brigauntz et gentz du comune et du couyn Jakes Bonhom'. The 'fortress' was 'a fortress in an abbey which the French had fortified between Creil and Compiègne', according to the chronicle, Sir Thomas Gray, *Scalacronica, 1272-1363* ed. and trans. A. King (Surtees Society: London, 2007), pp. 164-5.

<sup>494</sup> 'Fragment de la chronique inédite Jean de Noyal', ed. Luce, reprinted and trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 258.

<sup>495</sup> Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 302-3, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 102.

<sup>496</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>497</sup> *ibid.*, p. 99.

examples of settlements rising up even after the Jacquerie of 1358. In May 1359, for example, the townsmen and peasants from Nevers (Nièvre) attacked the royal lieutenant and the troops he had brought with him to the area.<sup>498</sup> In Troyes (Aube), 1360, a noble and his accomplices were murdered because they were considered to have been involved in brigandage.<sup>499</sup> These attacks were not simply restricted to the towns. Fronville (Haute-Marne) is a village a few miles south of Joinville, close to Saint-Dizier, one of the centres of the Jacquerie and also the nobles' retaliation. Yet even these inhabitants were not cowed. In 1360, the villagers attacked troops garrisoned at the local castle, during which Henri de Somerville killed a man.<sup>500</sup> Villages to the west of Rouen, specifically Hauville, Le Landin, le Haye-de-Routot and Guenouville (Eure), attacked the men-at-arms and the soldiers of Pont Audemer and killed four.<sup>501</sup> The villagers of Saint-James (Manche), south of Rouen, along with their local *capitaine*, a knight, evicted their bailiff Thomas Pinchon and his men that were occupying the local castle, because they were alleged to have treasonous links to Navarre.<sup>502</sup> There was a riot between 'certain *chanoiners*' and the habitants of the town of Grenoble (Isère),<sup>503</sup> and a fight in Lyon between royal sergeants and the townsmen in 1360, but this could simply have been a brawl.<sup>504</sup> Peasants made several attempts to resist the Navarrese forces.<sup>505</sup> Whether these were true social movements, or simply everyday struggles between the populace and authorities, is sometimes unclear, but they once again emphasise how the presence of

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<sup>498</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 136, nos. 258, 259, 260, 261.

<sup>499</sup> AN, JJ89, f. 181, no. 413.

<sup>500</sup> AN, JJ88, f. 82, no. 27.

<sup>501</sup> AN, JJ87, f. 21, no. 34.

<sup>502</sup> AN, JJ87, f. 72, no. 61.

<sup>503</sup> AN, JJ87, f. 54, no. 73.

<sup>504</sup> AN, JJ89, f. 123, no. 290.

<sup>505</sup> See section on 'Navarre', in particular AN, JJ90, f. 62, no. 113; fol. 81, no. 149 and fol. 97, no. 177.

soldiers could spark popular violence; suggesting that, as Peter Lewis stated, 'peasant disorder was endemic wherever there was military disorder'.<sup>506</sup> The same issues that were at stake during the Jacquerie continued to kindle later peasant uprisings.

Some have viewed peasant resistance as doomed to failure, or as token efforts unrepresentative of the peasant masses, who presumably accepted their enemies' impositions with fatalism.<sup>507</sup> Yet resistance could be found in numerous villages across the countryside, and there were probably even more: for the most part, the remissions only tell us about resistance towards the men of the French crown, but not to the English troops. Was it likely a peasant church could hold out against an army? Such a result would have been rare. Perhaps resistance represented only a pyrrhic victory rather than an actual one, perhaps it had real benefits in terms of negotiating terms from the enemies, or it may have provided time for the peasantry to 'send their goods to safety'.<sup>508</sup> Wright argues that 'for every one disastrous encounter between a large company of soldiers and a pathetically vulnerable parish garrison, there would have been a hundred encounters between parishoners and very small companies of pillagers'.<sup>509</sup> What is indisputable is that peasants continued to resist, even after so-called failures, like the bloody end to the Jacquerie.

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<sup>506</sup> Lewis, *Later Medieval France*, p. 286.

<sup>507</sup> Sumption states that the 'great majority were militarily useless', but only offers two examples of failure, one being Orly (Sumption, *Fire*, p. 386). Allmand argues that 'since these cannot have presented much of an obstacle, they were little or no use against large and determine forces against whom walled towns and castles constituted reasonably sure places of safety', yet offers no examples of combat between armed forces and peasant fortifications, or suggests why the peasants may have continued building such obstacles. C. Allmand, *The Hundred Years War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 76-87.

<sup>508</sup> The phrase 'cuiller et mettre a sauverte ses biens qui sont aus champs' appears regularly in the remissions. For example, AN, JJ90, nos. 162, 288, 356, 413, 419, 635.

<sup>509</sup> Wright, *Knights and Peasants*, p. 113.



The chroniclers and remissions identify that not only was the Jacquerie instigated by ill-feeling towards the nobility and the armies of the Hundred Years' War, but so were many other smaller rebellions. Did the Jacquerie trigger this wave of anti-military behaviour? More likely, it was simply the biggest expression of the wave of anti-military, anti-noble feeling that was sweeping across France. Local expressions of frustration against the troops of both the crown and the English continued throughout the years following the Jacquerie, even in the Île de France, the area supposedly cowed by repression in the wake of the Jacquerie. The Jacquerie was not an expression of desperation by the peasantry of one region, or a revolt that spread for violence's sake alone. Rather, the same common cause could be seen to unite disparate peasant groups across the length and breadth of the country, as part of a large-scale expression of the violence and resistance towards nobles and armies that was occurring in the north between 1357 and 1360.

## PEASANT COMMUNITIES

To realise the causes of the success of the revolutionary armies we must remember the prodigious enthusiasm, endurance, and abnegation of these ragged and often barefoot troops ... The history of the armies of the Revolution recalls that of the nomads of Arabia, who, excited to fanaticism by the ideals of Mohammed, were transformed into formidable armies which rapidly conquered a portion of the old Roman world.<sup>510</sup>

When historians describe popular movements, they often compare the insurgents to the usual unit of violent struggle: the traditional army. In this extract, Gustave LeBon described the French peasants as forming 'formidable armies'

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<sup>510</sup> G. LeBon, *The French Revolution and the Psychology of Revolution* (London : Transaction, 1980), pp. 227-8. See the chapter 'The Armies of the Revolution', pp. 223-231.

during the Revolution of 1789, caught in the contagion of fanaticism. An analogy between a revolutionary force and an army can often be misleading. It implies that agency in the rebellion was the preserve of one unified force, that rebels were subject to a military hierarchy and that they were bound together into a homogenous unit that could be deployed at the will of its commanders.

The scholarship surrounding the Jacquerie has also made extensive use of this metaphor. The insurgents are often described in militaristic terms. Mollat and Wolff, still unchallenged on many of their descriptions of the peasant rebellions of the late Middle Ages, describes the nature of the rebellion thus: 'Carle selected the castles and strong places which would furnish support ... [h]is troops were never very numerous'.<sup>511</sup> Sumption, whose otherwise insightful account mentions a plurality of groups, local leaders and different targets, still relies on inappropriate terminology to describe the rebels, describing them as 'armies' and Cale's collective as a 'grand force'.<sup>512</sup> Dommanget's description is even more explicit:

This primitive and essentially anarchic and spontaneous terror ... was succeeded by an ordered phase. They established some progress towards a military point of view. There was a certain discipline: there was the selection of troops, there was a supreme chief.<sup>513</sup>

This terminology is imbedded in the description of historical revolts, and is revealing about the assumptions surrounding how peasant revolts actually happened: the repeated comparison with an 'army' implies that this main force was representative of the Jacquerie. This supposed army was responsible for the

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<sup>511</sup> Mollat and Wolff, *Popular Revolutions*, pp. 124-5. Mollat and Wolff use the form 'Carle' for Cale throughout their book, which is only used by Jean de Venette does use 'Karle', *Chronique latine de Guillaume de Nangis* (ed. H. Géraud, Paris, 1847).

<sup>512</sup> Sumption, *Fire*, pp. 331-3.

<sup>513</sup> Dommanget, *La Jacquerie*, p. 58.

attacks of the movement, and therefore the heads of the army were responsible for orchestrating the revolt.

A similar set of assumptions has governed study of another great rural revolt, the English Peasant's Revolt of 1381 but for it, there has been some debate. Nicholas Brooks, for example, believes that this emphasis on the great military might of the peasants is because of the inability of historians to accept that planning and local knowledge were the reasons for its relative success:

It is not medieval chroniclers (who are entirely silent on the matter) but modern historians who have repeatedly referred to the 'march', the 'long walk' or 'the wonderfully quick march' on London of the commons of Kent and Essex. It is a revealing assumption which reflects the lack of attention to the inception of the revolt and an unwillingness to suppose that fourteenth-century peasants were capable of organizing a co-ordinated rising with military precision. No one would pretend that every recorded action of the insurgents of Kent and Essex fits into a neat and readily comprehended master-plan. But if we allow that the insurgents raised a mounted force in each shire and struck with devastating speed ... we shall be less surprised at their success in overrunning the capital and at the discipline and selectivity of their targets there.<sup>514</sup>

Brooks is right to take to task those who believed in one solid force of peasants traversing the countryside and committing crimes at random, and to focus on individual forces from different shires, rather than one grand army of peasants. However, his view still assumes that there must have been a central place of planning and command:

The synchronised assembly and movement of the insurgent forces in the two counties did not fit by chance into so neat a pattern. Decisions had to be taken and orders sent about meeting places, about dates and about targets; these decisions had to take account of the distances to be covered by each band on each day and of the time that would be needed to open gaols and to break into properties and destroy records. Every vill that sent men to the assembly points had to be contacted in advance.<sup>515</sup>

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<sup>514</sup> N. Brooks 'The Organisation and Achievements of the Peasants of Kent and Essex in 1381', in *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R.H.C. Davis*, ed. H. Meyr-Harting and R.I. Moore (London: Hambledon Press, 2003), p. 240.

<sup>515</sup> *ibid.*, p.240.

Brooks rails against those who believe one military unit was behind the entire campaign, but clings to the belief that one organisational unit, a peasant high-command, lay behind the entire revolt. Both of these models rely upon manipulation from a peasant 'centre' and demand exceptional levels of cross-border organisation.

These models represent two images of medieval popular movements. The first, more generalised, is that of a peasant army, a single unified troop marauding around the landscape creating havoc, moving from target to target. The second, more nuanced, has an organisational high command, often with a charismatic leader at its head, orchestrating and micromanaging numerous attacks. In the case of the Jacques, the instrument of revolt is either a 'grand force' of peasant 'troops', or a high-command of chief *capitaines* like Guillaume Cale.

There is a simpler explanation for the events of an uprising like the Jacquerie, where large areas were covered, local objectives selected and castles overthrown. It relies neither on a grand army nor military precision in planning. Rather than one central core specifying the movements of every peasant, local peasant groups were acting independently. Individual villages took actions into their own hands. How did the peasants know where the tax collectors and sheriffs were on a particular day? Rather than conspiracy between the distant chiefs who had calculated itineraries, the local peasants, aware of the actions of their fellow peasants across the countryside, caught the contagion of rebellion and struck out against enemy properties independently.<sup>516</sup> If the villagers

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<sup>516</sup> It has been argued that the defining characteristics of the violence committed by peasants in 1381 was 'a combination of neighborly vendetta, family group activity .... the strategic confiscation of objectionable documents'. Federico describes numerous instances of familial groups plundering records concerning them from the local nobility, like Matilda and Robert

wished to attack a noble homestead or fortification, then their local knowledge would have been paramount; they may even have been the defence force that the lord would have normally relied upon. This model has recently become popularised in the media.<sup>517</sup> Today, visions of Al-Qaida, a formless ideological 'leadership' floating above specific cells each of which independently selects their own local targets, dominate popular conceptions of how terrorist movements operate.<sup>518</sup>

In the case of peasant revolts, these smaller cells were tied together by something more tangible than class consciousness, and less susceptible to the variations in status of its members. The importance of community bonds within revolt was paramount. Bercé writes that '[t]he local community was the fundamental bond, the first resort in cases of confrontation, and the most potent source of outbursts of collective violence'.<sup>519</sup> For urban uprisings, this is certainly demonstrable. Richard Trexler went to great lengths to show how the Revolt of the Ciompi was informed by neighbourhood loyalties and geographic ties between different insurgent groups, and Sam Cohn showed these bonds through marriage records.<sup>520</sup> Historians of the later period such as Roger Gould emphasises communal bonds in the 1871 Paris Commune. He concludes 'the

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Aleyn who stole a chest of documents from the London house of Hugh Ware. Moreover, there are instances of locals encouraging their neighbours to rise up (Margaret Stafford, for example, 'encouraged the people to rise' in Larkfield). See Federico, *The Imaginary Society*, pp. 159-83

<sup>517</sup> In the case of revolts, however, others are still tempted to assume some form of guiding organisation behind it. During the Banlieu Riots of autumn 2005, French interior minister Nicolas Sarkozy declared 'We were struck to see in the departments – notably Seine-Saint Denis – a large organisation', implying that the riots had been encouraged by Islamic insurgent groups. This was despite assurances from the Chief of Police that this was not the case. Notably, when BBC reporter David Chazan asked if anyone was organising the violence, a 19-year old youth replied 'We are' ('Bravado and anger in riot suburb', Wednesday 23 November 2005, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/4463862.stm>).

<sup>518</sup> For a description of the scale-free network that supports terrorist movements, and can be applied to peasant insurgencies, see A.-L. Barabasi, *Linked* (New York: Plume, 2003), particularly 'Web Without A Spider', pp. 249-254.

<sup>519</sup> Bercé, *Revolt and revolution in early modern Europe*, p. viii.

<sup>520</sup> Trexler, 'Neighbours and Comrades'; Cohn, *The Labouring Classes*, pp. 171-5.

reasons for taking part in the fighting for most of the rank and file involved membership in an urban community understood principally in spatial terms', and that 'the urban community defined in spatial terms was the fundamental unit of political action'. For Gould, 'insurrection on a citywide scale, ultimately framed in terms of a citywide collective identity, required the interplay of local neighbourhood solidarity with extralocal organizational networks forged by the mobilisation period itself'.<sup>521</sup>

Even tighter than bonds linking neighbourhoods or city quarters were the bonds linking the inhabitants of the village. Peasant communities in the Middle Ages were sources of independence and power. While the village boundaries might contain varied individuals with different status and personal wealth, the village itself represented an important administrative unit involving all inhabitants.<sup>522</sup> Village units were responsible for keeping the peace. Leopold Genicot speculates that the village could make community wealth from rents on the leasing of commons, fines for unrest within the village, and proceeds from local taxes.<sup>523</sup> The village was then able, with the money locked in the common safe, to buy landed properties and to construct common buildings.<sup>524</sup> In the mountains around Florence, collective action controlled the 'settlement of disputes with other parishes, revision of village statutes, discussion of civic issues and the initiation of litigation, the appointment of advisors to the parish or

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<sup>521</sup> R. V. Gould, *Insurgent Identities, Class Community and Protest in Paris from 1848 to the Commune* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995). See pp. 154-194, 'Neighbourhood, Class and the Commune of 1871', for a full explanation of how these solidarities work. The quoted passages come from pp. 154-155. For a medieval example, see Trexler, 'Neighbours and Comrades'.

<sup>522</sup> Leopold Genicot describes them thus: '[r]ural communities may well be notable for the variety contained within them, but they all exhibit a level of coherence and unity.' L. Genicot, *Rural Communities in the Medieval West* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), p. 57.

<sup>523</sup> For an example, see S.J. Payling, 'Law and Arbitration in Nottinghamshire 1399-1461', in *People, Politics and Community in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. J. Rosenthal and C. Richmond (Gloucester: A. Sutton, 1987) pp. 141-160.

<sup>524</sup> Genicot, *Rural Communities in the Medieval West*, p. 57.

commune, and most frequently the election of their own lay syndics who ... negotiated with the city of Florence on matters such as tax relief and indebtedness and ...decided how taxes were to be apportioned within the community'.<sup>525</sup> The village was also an important legal unit in England: Hilton offers examples of villages in which inhabitants would make legal presentments on their communities' behalf.<sup>526</sup> Moreover, these communities had strong conceptions about what constituted an outsider within their community, regulating and selecting new tenants.<sup>527</sup> This strong sense of responsibilities, boundaries and outsiders indicates a belief in the community as individual and distinct from those around it.

Village communities made these decisions collectively, through meetings or councils. Little is known about the practical application of these, but from regulating defence to the appointment of local officials and the upgrading of the local infrastructure (with approval of their lord), these decisions were made as a unit, and for that to be the case, it indicates the existence of a process by which these decisions could be made.<sup>528</sup> The community was not only used to acting together, but had appropriate methods for making collective decisions, an

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<sup>525</sup> S. Cohn, *Creating the Florentine State, Peasants and Rebellion 1348-1434* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), pp. 52-3.

<sup>526</sup> R.H. Hilton, *A Medieval Society, The West Midlands at the end of the Thirteenth Century* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), p. 150.

<sup>527</sup> Hilton offers an example where a sale cannot be sanctioned until the tenants approved the new owners. *ibid.*, p. 151.

<sup>528</sup> For example, mountain villages around Florence required all adult men of the parish to be present when electing the village priest. Cohn, *Creating the Florentine State* (1999), pp. 50-1.

assembly.<sup>529</sup> These assemblies, whose heritage stretches back to the Carolingian era, were central to the democratic core of the village.<sup>530</sup>

These communities were the units of mobilisation of the Jacquerie and answer the dilemma Brooks posed in his discussion of the events of 1381. Rather than a single military movement rampaging across the landscape, or one organisational high command co-ordinating and micro-managing rebel groups, individual villages under the umbrella of the Jacquerie were selecting their own objectives across the countryside. This allowed targets over a wide area to be struck simultaneously, explains why organised assaults on fortresses occurred alongside small-scale crimes like the looting of gardens, and allowed communities scattered from the Île de France as far as Bar, or from London to Norfolk, to join under the same banner in their attack on the nobles.

There is no doubt that the Jacques exhibited a degree of 'negative class consciousness'.<sup>531</sup> However, while the distinction between the victims and perpetrators was couched by the courts in almost proto-class terms – the nobles and the non-nobles<sup>532</sup> – this does not mean that the rebels mobilised under these auspices, and were organised in these ranks. The peasants' attack was not organised into one army of non-nobles. Rather, the base unit of peasant mobilisation was their own local communities. The remissions are quite clear that the village, settlement or town provided the organisational backbone to each individual action of revolt.

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<sup>529</sup> For a discussion of the functions of the village, and the mechanisms that must have existed to facilitate them, see Z. Razi, 'Family, Land and the Village Community in Later Medieval England', *Past and Present*, 93 (Nov., 1981), pp. 3-36, especially pp. 13-16.

<sup>530</sup> See S. Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe, 900-1300* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), pp. 138-152, for a description of the 'rural community' as it developed into the later Middle Ages.

<sup>531</sup> For a discussion of this concept of 'negative class consciousness', see R.H. Hilton, *Bond Men Made Free* (London: Temple Smith, 1973), pp. 119-134.

<sup>532</sup> 'les non-nobles contre les nobles', as it appears in the remissions.



Luce's *Pièces Justicatives* (on which some historians may have relied) strongly suggests that the majority of rebels who received pardons did so in the form of a personal remission issued to an individual appellant. Not including ones for Meaux, or that focussed upon Paris, thirty-nine remissions were issued for Jacques. Of these, thirty-three (85%) were issued to one or two individuals, while six (15%) were issued to small towns or settlements. The impression is clear: remissions were individual.

With the larger set of remissions within the *Archives Nationales*, individuals also receive pardons more often than communities, but a substantial number of peasants (and almost definitely the vast majority of them) were pardoned in groups alongside their communities. Of the 146 remissions from JJ86 and JJ90 (between 1358 and 1360 in the wake of the revolt) that can be classified as instances of the Jacques revolting, 107 (73%) were issued to individuals or a handful connected to this particular uprising. However, thirty-nine (27%) were issued to a community (sometimes combining as many as four different villages or parishes). Considering that these *villes* included perhaps hundreds of rebels, the greatest number of Jacques received grace in these community pardons. Even if we assumed only thirty inhabitants were involved in each *ville*, then the number of Jacques pardoned with their community would be ten times that of those who received individual personalised remissions.

These communities often came together in assemblies. Of the sample of 144 mentioned above, twenty-seven made some reference to 'assemblies' or the rebels having 'assembled'. That the phrase reoccurred with such regularity in what could often be a standardised remission indicates the importance the

authorities placed on this practice. Rural assemblies are paramount in the transmission of non-official news and rumours to the masses, and thus in the transmission of revolutionary zeal.<sup>533</sup> It was in an assembly that the villagers around Favresse (Marne) elected Jean Flageolot their leader. Assemblies were forums for forming village decisions on action: the village of Grandvilliers (Oise), under the captaincy of Simon Doublet, held ‘assemblies in the fields to take arms’.<sup>534</sup> For neither was rebellion a foregone conclusion: in the case of the villagers of Bettancourt and Vroil (Marne), the inhabitants assembled before deciding not to take part.<sup>535</sup> Assembling, of course, aroused the suspicion of the authorities; while it was not always illegal (*villes* often received pardons because presumably this was all they had done), it meant that the local nobility assumed they were rebels. In this latter case, the villages were fined the large sum of 2,000 *ecuz* based on assembling alone. These assemblies could also be cross parish boundaries. For example, five villages were indicted for their participation in a grand assembly somewhere in Champagne:

‘Charles, let it be known to all present and future .... the habitants of Heis-le-Marru (Marne) in the *prévôte* of Vitry went in person or had sent certain representatives with the habitants of many other villages (*villes*) of the land of Champagne to many assemblies .... and at these assemblies it is charged that there were set many conspiracies, alliances and plots against the nobles and the clergy for their destruction and executions ....for this also these said nobles had pillaged and marched through the said village’<sup>536</sup>

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<sup>533</sup> See C. Gauvard, ‘Rumeur et Stéréotypes à la fin du Moyen Age’, in *La circulation des nouvelles au Moyen Âge, XXIV<sup>e</sup> congrès de la S.H.M.E.S.* (Paris : Publications de la Sorbonne, 1994), pp.157-177.

<sup>534</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 136, no. 392.

<sup>535</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 117, n. 346, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 266-9, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 187-8.

<sup>536</sup> ‘Charles , savoir faisons à tous presenz et à venir ... oye comme les habitans de la ville de Heis-le-Marru en la provoste de Vitry aient esté ou envoie certain personnes avec les habitans de plusieurs autres villes du pais de Champaigne en plusieurs assemblees ... en quelles assemblees aient este faictes sicome en leur impose plusieurs conspiracions alliences et monopoles encontre les nobles et clergie du pais pour les destruer et mettent à mort ... pour ce aucuns des diz nobles aient pille et couru la dicte ville’, AN, JJ86, f. 125, n. 367.

Identical remissions are issued for four other villages: Etrepy, Vitry-la-Ville, Bignicourt-sur-Salle and Drouilly (Marne).<sup>537</sup> According to the pardon, these villagers had only sent their delegates to this grand assembly, but along with being ravaged by the nobles' counter-offensive they had already been fined 1,000 écus for their peaceful participation. These five, however, represented exceptions: the documents suggest that many more settlements sent villagers there, some of whom went beyond discussion to direct action against the nobility. Nor was the assembly in Champagne the only large-scale meeting: the remissions list others, such as a grand assembly at Saint Vrain (Marne), for which five villages received pardons for attending.<sup>538</sup>

The villages were not deciding whether join one big organization, Guillaume Cale's army. Rather, they were deciding whether to rebel in clusters that extend beyond their home parishes, and on which properties to attack. Villagers focussed on local objectives, rather than on fulfilling a grand plan coordinated by Cale and his accomplices. Our map in Chapter 2 indicated the targets of the rebellion. When a village attacked a target within its immediate vicinity (for example, when the men of Fransures (Somme) attacked the noble's house in the village) it was marked orange; targets beyond the settlement pardoned are marked red. The following map contains the same data with the insurgent groups added in blue, when they attacked sites not within their immediate proximity. Not included on this map are individuals, for whom it is

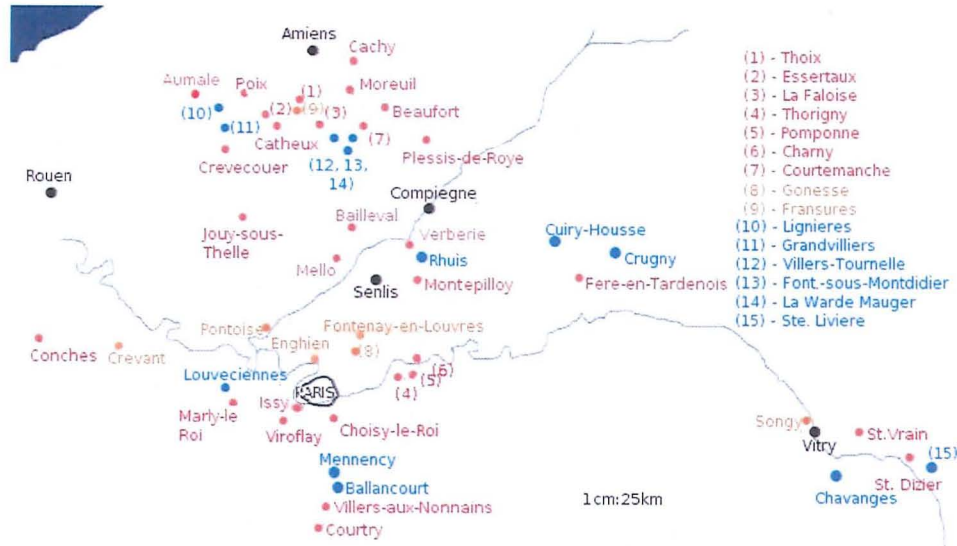
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<sup>537</sup> The last two villages named are pardoned in the same remission. AN, JJ86, f. 122, nos. 358, 359, 360.

<sup>538</sup> The assembly at Saint-Vrain is mentioned in AN, JJ86, f. 103, no. 311, f. 124, no. 365 and f. 133, no. 386.

not specified they were acting with their fellow villagers, were involved in the attacks on specific property. These examples are instructive.<sup>539</sup>

**Map IX. Villagers and their targets.**



Village communities attacked nearby nobles' property. The longest journey the rebels took was when the men of Chavanges (Aube) crossed the Marne to attack Saint-Vrain,<sup>540</sup> or when the men of Crugny (Marne) and Cuiry-Housse (Aisne) joined forces to attack a castle in La Fère-en-Tardenois (Aisne),<sup>541</sup> but even these were no more than five kilometres from the rebels' homes. This shows a familiarity with the apparatus of power: the locals knew potential objectives within reach. Secondly, it undermines the idea that the participants required massive military organisation to overthrow a castle. These villagers were well outside the traditional heartland of the rebellion. There is no evidence of any assistance from the 'military expertise' of Guillaume Cale, and

<sup>539</sup> The scale of this map is 1 / 2,000,000.

<sup>540</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 217, no. 596, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 283-5.

<sup>541</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 133, no. 386.

no reinforcements. Without any safety-net of a rebel army nearby, villagers on the border with Bar, like many others, took rebellion into their own hands. Moreover, these rebels were not being drawn inwards towards the Île de France or to a central force organised by Guillaume Cale or anyone else. The men of Crugny (Marne) headed south and the men of Chavanges (Aube) headed north, not west; the men of Mennecey and Ballancourt (Essonne) headed south to find their target, and the men of Lignieres, Grandvilliers and Poix (Somme) headed north, all away from the so-called epicentre of the violence. Cale's force, near Clermont, was not a whirlpool drawing rebels in; rather, rebels selected their own particular aims independently of events elsewhere.

These villages also combined together with other communities to attack local targets. Pardoned in three separate remissions, the villagers of Ballancourt, Mennecey and Saint-Fargue attacked a castle at Villiers-aux-Nonnains, just outside La Ferté-Alais.<sup>542</sup>

Many of the habitants of the village (*ville*) and parish of Mennecey ... who with many others of the surrounding countryside who had previously been involved with the men of the countryside against the nobles of the said realm, attacked many of their fortresses, dissipated their goods and also executed them. They especially attacked the castle of Villers near La Ferté-a-Alays.<sup>543</sup>

The same remission is repeated for the villagers of Balancourt and a certain Jehan Bruyent (with an addendum indicating that the supplicant was imprisoned

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<sup>542</sup> Cazelles, in 'The Jacquerie', claims that the Parisians and Marcel's troops to have been behind an attack on La Ferté-Alais, but there is no evidence to support this claim. Presuming Cazelles is discussing the attack on the castle nearby which these documents mention, then the remissions explicitly state that the castle was taken by 'the men of the plat-pais', not the Parisians. Moreover, Cazelles' assertion implies that Parisian troops made a 100km round trip to complete this attack, which in turn suggests that Marcel's forces was far bigger and more mobile than Cazelles can prove. What the remissions indicate was that nearby villagers came together to make an attack on this local target.

<sup>543</sup> 'Oye comme plusieurs des habitants de la ville et paroisse de Mennecey ... este avec plusieurs autres de pais d'environ au effrois qui deux et n'a gaires ont este fais par les gens du plat pais contre le nobles du dit royaume à abatre plusieurs lieux fortresses et dissiper leurs biens et aucuns d'iceulx mis a mort et especialement à abatre le chaste de villers empeschent la ferte a alays' AN, JJ86, f. 123, no. 363.

by the *capitaine* of Corbeil for his participation in the attack). The villages were all less than a couple of kilometres apart, and all within six kilometres of their selected focus. This attack, south of Paris, was outside the traditional boundaries of the Jacques' heartland, and was not mentioned in the chronicle accounts or within any of the remissions that mentioned Cale. Nor was this organised, co-ordinated effort part of the main offensive; instead, the villagers identified a target in their locale and joined together to mount their own assault. This co-operation can be seen regularly. This map records villages that joined together to assault a noble fortification (colours included just to indicate separate groups):<sup>544</sup>

**Map X. Village co-operation.**



The villages are all local to each other. When communities came together, it was always with their immediate neighbours. Nearby villages like Egly, Boissy-sous-Saint-Yon and Marolles-en-Hurepoix (Essonne) joined forces. Notably, there could often be different groups of rebels operating together in the same area. Rather than forming into one large force, they remained in small collectives even

<sup>544</sup> This map is to a 1 / 1,800,000 scale.

when they were close to other groups. The villagers of Poix, Grandvilliers and Ligni res (Somme) did not feel the need to join those around Montdidier in their attack.

Village movements show the rebels' powers of organisation. Here a collection of three villages came together to assault fortified property. The rebels also displayed a familiarity with the possessions of the nobility. Most striking, however, is the sheer daring of many of these assaults. The typical paradigms of medieval revolt give us three pillars to base our studies upon: that peasants cluster into marauding bands, that the violence is spontaneous and contagious, and that the rebellion is unavoidably a desperate failure. Yet the Jacquerie shows individual cells, well organised with specifically selected properties. Moreover, they were remarkably successful – far from being desperate failures, the documents attest to the ability of communities to cause real damage to the fortified settlements of their local lords: rebel communities managed to 'assault and attack' or even 'burn many fortresses and houses' of the nobility. Villages, like Vitteaux, or the combined force from the villages of Ballancourt, Mennency and Saint-Fargue, perpetrated raids that were organised and effective. These stories can be found throughout the documentation: communities such as Fontaine-sous-Montdidier (Somme) joined neighbouring villagers to attack the house of a local noble before moving on to the local castle at Courtemanche;<sup>545</sup> the men of Buchy (Seine-Maritime) and their neighbours brought terror to the Bray valley near Rouen;<sup>546</sup> those of Crugny (Marne) concentrated on two ch teaux just to the north.<sup>547</sup>

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<sup>545</sup> AN, JJ92, f. 125, no. 227.

<sup>546</sup> AN, JJ87, f. 81, no. 117.

<sup>547</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 133, no. 386.

There remain some issues about the ascription of ‘communities’ to the settlements listed in the remissions. While in some cases, they are established villages (and even small towns), in others, they were too small to be found on maps. Only one remission within the chancery records gives us a numerical estimate for the size of an insurgent group. This remission issued for the habitants of the parishes of Belleau and Givry (both Aisne) pardoned the thirty individuals from these two communities.<sup>548</sup> That indicates that these groups could be small, but there is no evidence to indicate whether this is representative. Moreover, this document does not use the common term *ville* to describe the community, implying that this was not as identifiable a settlement as most of the other cases. At the execution of Jehan Bernier, there was ‘two or three hundred’ villagers present from Montataire (Oise), but many more may have been involved in the revolt.<sup>549</sup> In another remission, the nobles allied to the lord of Saint-Dizier executed fifty rebels from a collection of settlements; how many rebels escaped execution is, of course, unknown. Two documents not held in the JJ series but included in Luce’s *Pièces Justificatives* also mention numbers: one records that 34 people were involved in the murder of a spy in Pont-Point (Oise),<sup>550</sup> while an *arrêt du Parlement* was issued against 46 individuals for having pillaged a house in Choisy (Oise).<sup>551</sup> Again, however, we have no real frame of reference as to what constituted a *ville*.

While they must have been relatively substantial to have inhabitants worthy of the pardon, the word *ville* can describe anything between a collection of settlements to a fully-fledged town, or even a city like Paris. Moreover, these

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<sup>548</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 109, no. 326.

<sup>549</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 102, no. 309, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 261-2, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 191-2.

<sup>550</sup> X 1a 17, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 320-2.

<sup>551</sup> Reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 331-2.



remissions sound holistic in the pardoning of a settlement, but no notice is given as to what proportion of the population involved in the violence. That in itself indicates the crown considered the village rather than an amorphous group of people to be the unit that required pardons, but it does leave us unsure of the size of each unit. Yet even with this in mind, we must find that the village unit was at the heart of this revolt. Regardless of the size of the settlement, the court pardoned rebels in the name of their *ville*, and that was the unit beyond the individual who the crown heard supplications from and granted pardons to. But we also see that the rebels were able to organise themselves beyond their traditional units of religious and secular administration, framed for centuries by lay or religious authorities.

Why is recognising this model of action – communities acting together – important to understanding the Jacquerie? First, it establishes the only realistic model under which this revolt could have functioned. By understanding the Jacquerie to be individual communities who could join with its neighbours acting against local targets, a new image of localised peasant action can explain both the scale and speed of the revolt. No longer do the Jacques have to have covered large distances in impossibly short amounts of time with massive logistical demands, and neither would they have required military organisation to have operated successfully.

Secondly, stressing ‘community action’ takes agency away from the image of the grand force that still dominates writings on the Jacquerie, whether that force be led by Guillaume Cale or more usually Étienne Marcel or even Charles of Navarre. This deals with many of the practical problems that

traditional understanding of the revolt has caused. It also deals with many of the assumptions surrounding this topic – that the leaders of the grand force also had control over the individual actions. It changes the nature of the revolt from one that could be controlled and manipulated from the centre into one that was essentially expanding distinctly not only from the core but from the geographic margins as well: each node that exploded into rebellion was acting largely independently of what was going on in the Beauvoisin.

Thirdly, it deals with one of the difficulties in assessing why ‘peasants’, with a wide disparity between wealth, status and lifestyle, would bind together against a common enemy. The defining issue is not one of monetary wealth, but rather it is one of community bonds that already existed. These men were not choosing sides dependent on their social status, but rather were reacting to a perceived threat towards their community, and rising together with those they had joined for years in legal, judicial and social matters. To paraphrase Gould, the pan-regional insurrection (and what would later be defined by its rural collective identity) was dependent on local village communities in the first instance.<sup>552</sup>

## LEADERSHIP

The issue of the leadership of the Jacquerie was confused even in the eyes of contemporaries. In Jean le Bel’s chapter ‘How certain people without leaders rose up’,<sup>553</sup> he goes on to contradict himself, saying that the ‘*meschans gens* had a captain called Jaque Bonhomme, who was the complete rustic (*parfait*

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<sup>552</sup> The original passage from Gould, *Insurgent Identities* (p. 154) is included earlier.

<sup>553</sup> Bel, *Chron.*, v.2, p. 255, ‘Comment aucunes gens sans chiefs se leverent’.

*vilain*).<sup>554</sup> This conflict in the sources, between le Bel's assertion of the uprising being leaderless, other chroniclers pointing to a captain, most often Guillaume Cale, and the remissions pointing to a myriad of local village leadership, has never been satisfactorily resolved. Generally, studies of pre-industrial revolt have tended to hinge their analysis on individual leaders.<sup>555</sup> With so many uprisings memorialised by association with a single leader (like Cade's Rebellion), the Jacques might be called Cale's Rebellion given the current historiography.

The predominance of leaders within a revolt was one of the main points under which Gustave le Bon proposed his model of crowd action. For Le Bon, '[a]s soon as a certain number of living beings are gathered together, whether they be animals or men, they place themselves instinctively under the authority of a chief'.<sup>556</sup> Following in le Bon's footsteps, it has been assumed that the 'leader' (or at least an individual who has orchestrated the revolt) holds the key to discovering the ideology and the aims of the Jacques themselves. It is on this premise that Cazelles and Bessen's theories of co-opted rebellion are based; by selecting an influential figure who shapes the will of the crowd, be it Étienne Marcel or Charles of Navarre, it is assumed that their ideology was transferred onto the rebels.<sup>557</sup>

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<sup>554</sup> *Ibid.*, 'et avoient ces meschans gens ung chappitaine qu'on appelloit Jaque Bonhomme, qui estoit un parfait vilain'.

<sup>555</sup> For the Peasant's Revolt, Dobson states that '[v]irtually every aspect of Wat Tyler's career is controversial', yet historians like Alistair Dunn have been quick to ascribe aspects of the rising to the 'personal nature of his leadership'. B. Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381* (London: Macmillan, 1970), p. 24; A. Dunn, *The great rising of 1381* (Stroud: Tempus, 2002), p. 119.

<sup>556</sup> Later psychologists, notably Allport and Freud, while taking issue with many other of Le Bon's arguments, continued to stress the importance of the leader. Their theories suggested that the crowd automatically reverts to the ideology of the leader at times of disorder. It was not until the 1950s that these ideas were systematically challenged.

<sup>557</sup> Cazelles, 'The Jacquerie' and Bessen, 'The Jacquerie: Class War or Co-Opted Rebellion?'

Most works on medieval revolts have devoted substantial space to the discussion of who exactly was in charge of the uprisings.<sup>558</sup> While this was no doubt worthwhile for establishing the identity of the key actors in a movement, it is questionable what light this has actually shed on the mechanisms of any given revolt.<sup>559</sup> Even in cases where a rebellion survives in popular memory as being connected to one individual, like Cade's Rebellion of 1450 in the south-east of England, not much has been done to establish what it was that the leader actually did within the crowd. We know virtually nothing about Jack Cade, and what sources we have are contradictory. The crown seems to believe he may have had ties to the House of York, but other chronicle accounts paint him as a physician, notary or even a sorcerer.<sup>560</sup> He is by different accounts a devil, a peasant and a nobleman.<sup>561</sup> Even less is recorded of his actions – while the rebellion has come to be identified with Cade, Cade himself is curiously absent from the action, apart from when his head is placed upon a spike in London.<sup>562</sup>

Those historians who have searched for a leader in the Jacquerie, and found Guillaume Cale, have reinvented him to fit their thesis. Rodney Hilton, who theorised that the Jacquerie was orchestrated by well-to-do peasants, comes to the conclusion that Cale must have been a 'well-to-do peasant' himself.<sup>563</sup> There is no specific evidence for either assertion, but in the models that

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<sup>558</sup> In the case of the Peasants' Revolt, see the substantial literature spent discussing Wat Tyler.

<sup>559</sup> Ryan, in her work on 19<sup>th</sup> century Irish suffrage movements, describes the problems of historical research into the leaders of crowds thus: 'In our search for neat, complete and comprehensible histories, 'the cult of personality' focuses our attention on the 'leading lights' of specific organisations and masks the wider complexities of leadership in the movement as a whole', in L. Ryan, 'The Cult of Personality: reassessing leadership and suffrage movements in Britain and Ireland', in C. Barker, A. Johnson and M. Lavalette (eds.), *Leadership and Social Movements* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), p. 211.

<sup>560</sup> For a short survey of what is (and is not) known about Cade, see I.M.W Harvey, *Jack Cade's Rebellion of 1450* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 78-79.

<sup>561</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 78-9.

<sup>562</sup> *ibid.*, p. 100. Although throughout the text the insurgents are referred to as 'Cade's men', it is unclear when Cade is with them.

<sup>563</sup> Hilton, *Bond Men Made Free*, p. 123.

historians have created, Cale becomes a representation of the top-level of the hierarchy. Of all the recent historiography, the passage that most explicitly grants attributes to Cale is from Mollat and Wolff:

He possessed a certain gift for organisation, appointed a chancery, and divided his followers into troops, each subdivided into groups of ten. *He had a feeling for tactics. Left to themselves the Jacques had pillaged at random. Guillaume Cale selected the castles and strong places which would furnish support at key points, and he was not without political sense.*<sup>564</sup> (my italics)

There are no footnotes in Mollat and Wolff's work, but if there were references, they would point directly to the *Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois*, the most sympathetic account of Cale. Yet nothing within even that Chronicle suggests that Cale 'selected the castles and strong places'; rather, this is Mollat and Wolff's speculation, putting the entire campaign waged by the Jacques as the enterprise of its heroic leader. Implicit is the understanding that the crowd was a rabble, similar to le Bel's 'animals' or Flammermont's depiction of the 'uncouth peasants', until Cale instilled order in the masses. For these historians, only Cale could have organised them, and his authority extended over the entire group of rebels from Rouen to Bar.

This is a direct result of the confusion that exists between historians' definitions of a leader, and historians' definition of leadership. The two have been welded together in such a way that a 'leader' must have performed all tasks associated with leadership – mobilised the army, shepherded the troops towards their objectives, controlled the programme of the revolt. This approach not only minimises the insurgents, but also over-simplifies the role of the leader. The idea one heroic individual controlled the masses, forcing the peasants to act in a manner different to that which suited them, is typical of the Le Bonian model of

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<sup>564</sup> Mollat and Wolff, *Popular Revolutions*, p. 124.

crowd leadership described by social psychologists as ‘zero-sum games’;<sup>565</sup> an understanding of the crowd where ‘leader agency is achieved at expense of follower agency’.<sup>566</sup> A leader forces the crowd to act in accordance with his own aims, and the crowd relinquishes its power over its actions to the leader; as Le Bon wrote, the crowd places itself entirely under the control of the heroic individual.

This view has been systematically refuted by recent scholarship. Within a revolt, it has been shown that the construction of an ideology is a two-way process between leaders and followers. Studies like Adas’ survey, work on Indian peasant revolts and others all stress that during a peasant revolt leadership comes from within the crowd, not outside it.<sup>567</sup> Leaders cannot simply substitute their agenda for that of the crowd’s, because the crowd does not accept it.<sup>568</sup> Rather, direction comes from the crowd. The submission of the crowd to the power and control of one individual is rejected.

Yet at first glance, the chronicles may seem to support the ‘heroic individual’ theory. Of these accounts, four chroniclers specify the same

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<sup>565</sup> In a zero-sum game, anything ‘added’ must be balanced by the same amount ‘subtracted’. In this case, there is only so much leadership to go around: any input by the leader necessarily takes away from the input of the crowd. S. Reicher, S. Haslam, and N. Hopkins, ‘Social identity and the dynamics of leadership: Leaders and followers as collaborative agents in the transformation of social reality’, *Leadership Quarterly* (2005, in press), p. 2.

<sup>566</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>567</sup> M. Adas, *Prophets of Rebellion: millenarian protest movements against the European colonial order* (Cambridge: CUP, 1987) and M.J. Akbar, ‘Riot After Riot’ – *Reporting on Caste and Communal Violence in India* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1988).

<sup>568</sup> For a contemporary example, see Burn, *Baby, Burn. The Los Angeles Race Riot* (London: Gollancz, 1966); J. Cohen’s and W.S. Murphy’s account of the Watts Riots of 1965. The Los Angeles Police Department produced several individuals (like civil-rights activist and comedian Dick Gregory) who were supposed to then assume control of the crowd. The crowd rejected these individuals on the grounds they did not share an ideology, with one individual responding to the activist’s pleas with ‘Baby, if you’re going to be one of us, here’s a bottle – throw it’. For an example closer to the Jacques, the crowds rejection of the words of Lord Jean des Marés, and his attempts to appease the rioters, in the tax revolt in Paris of 1382: in the *Chronique du Religeux de Saint-Denys*, VI/1, Book 3: Chapter 1, trans. Cohn, *PP* pp. 275-280.

individual to have led the peasants: Guillaume Cale.<sup>569</sup> Three of them describe Cale as being elected or chosen by the Jacques to lead them. For most, descriptions of Cale's actions are vague and unspecific, as with the *Chronique des règnes de Jean II et Charles V*:

They elected a captain called Guillaume Cale and went to Compiègne, but the townsmen would not let them enter. Then they went to Senlis and forced many of the town to flee into the countryside. They knocked down all the fortresses of the region...<sup>570</sup>

Only the *Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois* attributed any specific actions to Cale, and it gave him the role of chief negotiator, trying to temper the violent rage of the Jacques.

Cale is not just memorable for his actions; for each of the chroniclers, Cale becomes a representation of how they understood the Jacquerie. For Richard Lescot, who saw the Jacques as rabid dogs, Cale was simply a 'rustico'.<sup>571</sup> For Jean de Venette, who saw them as acting with some misplaced sense of justice, the leader is an 'astute peasant'.<sup>572</sup> Furthermore, the *Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois*, who disapproved of the Jacques but saw them as well organised and effective, the leader is a stabilising force: 'a knowledgeable man ... many times Guillaume Cale told them they had gone way too far'.<sup>573</sup> This chronicle even offers an entirely different explanation to anything recorded elsewhere – Cale was seized and forced to lead the Jacques. This account foreshadows the repeated defence used in the remissions that individuals were

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<sup>569</sup> Guillaume Cale is referred to as 'Guillaume Cale' in *Chron. des règnes*, v.1, p. 177, 'Guillaume Charles' in *Chron. premiers Valois*, p. 72, 'Guillelmus Calle' in Lescot, *Chron.*, p. 126, and 'Guillelmum Karle' in Venette, *Chron.*, v.2, p. 263.

<sup>570</sup> *Chron. des règnes*, v.1, p. 178, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 166.

<sup>571</sup> Lescot, *Chron.*, p. 126, 'quodam rustico qui Guillelmus Calle vocabatur'.

<sup>572</sup> Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 263, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 71. In the original Latin, Cale is described as a 'rusticum magis astutum'.

<sup>573</sup> *Chron. premiers Valois*, p. 71, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 158-62. He was also described as a 'ung homme bien sachant et bien parlant, de belle figure et forme'.

coerced into leading troops.<sup>574</sup> These last two sympathetic pictures of Cale are what shaped the visions of Hilton, Cazelles, Mollat and Wolff.

However, Cale does not appear in all chronicle accounts; Jean le Bel and others depicted a very different individual. The cannibalistic Jak Bonhomme is clearly a dramatic invention, a personification of the worst excesses of peasant violence. The *Anonimalle Chronicle* sees him as akin to the Devil: ‘Jak Bonehomme ripped babies from their mothers’ wombs and with these babies’ blood quenched their thirst and anointed their bodies in contempt of God and his saints ... a haughty and arrogant man with the heart of Lucifer in executing his deeds’.<sup>575</sup> Jak Bonhomme is not a real individual, but beneath the hyperbole there lies an important point. The chroniclers made the same connection as their contemporaries and the modern reader: they intended the allusion to the ‘Jacques Bonhommes’, the slang term for the peasantry.<sup>576</sup> Rather than a case of mistaken identity, these chroniclers preferred to leave an image of peasant brutality anthropomorphised into an individual. For several chroniclers, no single leader led the Jacques but rather the bloodlust of the peasantry itself: ‘he who dared commit the greatest evil and the vilest deeds was deemed the greatest master’.<sup>577</sup>

Not only was Cale’s leadership undercut by those who considered the movement spasmodic, violent and leaderless, it was also questioned by those who *forward Cale as the leader*. There are contradictory notes as to how much

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<sup>574</sup> *ibid.*, ‘dont Guillaume Charles leur dist souventeffoiz qu’ilz excedoient trop grandement, maiz onc pour ce rien n’en lasserent’.

<sup>575</sup> *Anonimalle Chronicle*, p. 42, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 172-3.

<sup>576</sup> The exact date of the term’s origin is clouded – the continuateur of the *Chronicle of Guillaume de Nangis* mentions it appearing as a term of derision used by the nobility to describe the entire peasant class in 1356. For discussion of the terms rise to prominence, see Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp.4-6, and Medeiros, *Jacques et Chroniquers*, p. 184. For our purposes, it is sufficient to note that the term was certainly well-known and widespread by the time chroniclers like le Bel created the character of ‘Jak Bonhomme’. It was also used in the remissions as early as November 1359 (AN, JJ90, f. 182, no. 354).

<sup>577</sup> Bel, *Chron.*, v.2, p. 257, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 151.



control Cale held over the Jacques. The *Chronique Normande* suggests that Cale was not even in charge of the greatest portion of the Jacques: whilst Cale's force at Clermont of around eight hundred was slaughtered by Charles of Navarre's army, over two thousand Jacques were slaughtered by the nobles' counter-offensive in the north of the Paris basin.<sup>578</sup> The *Chronique des règnes de Jean II et Charles V* places Cale similarly, beheaded at Clermont after individual groups of Jacques were defeated in the repression originating in Meaux, as does the *Chronique Quatres Premiers Valois*.<sup>579</sup> Given the many kilometres between Clermont, where Cale was beheaded, and the thousands of peasants executed around the countryside, Cale could not have effectively controlled all the rebels. This distance from the the mass of rebels, scattered across much of the north of France, indicates the problems with assuming Cale's position to be analogous to that of the typical military commander. There are other suggestions that Cale was not in complete autonomous command. When Cale tried to preserve the revolt in face of an oncoming defeat by the opposing armies, he met resistance from his charges:

Guillame Charles said to them 'We will go towards Paris and take up a position there, since we will have support and aid of those of the city'. Then the Jacques cried out they would never flee.<sup>580</sup>

Even in the account that credits Cale with the most direct action, his control of his men is described as tenuous. *The Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois* also names a hospitaller who seems to have been on an equal footing with

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<sup>578</sup> *Chron. norm.*, p. 130-2, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 164.

<sup>579</sup> *Chron. des règnes*. v.1, p. 184, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 167, *Chron. premiers Valois*, p. 73-4, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 158-62.

<sup>580</sup> *Chron. premiers Valois*, p. 73-4, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 158-62.

Cale;<sup>581</sup> the *Chronique Normande* alone mentioned that Cale was just ‘one of a number of captains’.<sup>582</sup>

Yet despite this inconsistency between his position and his power, Guillaume Cale, unlike Jak Bonhomme, is a verifiably real figure, and was recognised by the crown and the individual Jacques as a leader. The letters of remission give some evidence that Cale was an important leader within the rebellion. Twice they refer to him by name, and on five other occasions, they make reference to a ruling *capitaine* (or *capitaines*) of the countryside. Considering that Cale is referred to as the *ruling capitaine* in the same body of sources, it is a fair assumption that it might be Cale:

**Table XIX. Mentions on *general capitaine*.**

JJ	Place	Terminology
JJ86 308	Mello (Oise)	‘by constraint of the said people and their <i>capitaine</i> ’ <sup>583</sup>
JJ86 309	Mello, Pont-Saint-Maxence and Montataire (Oise)	‘by constraint of the said people and their <i>capitaine</i> ’, ‘in the absence of the general <i>capitaine</i> ’ <sup>584</sup>
JJ86 344	Conty (Somme)	‘ <i>capitaine</i> subject to the ruling capitaines of the countryside’ <sup>585</sup>
JJ86 345	Courtes (Oise)	‘by the constraint and entreaties of the <i>capitaines</i> of the countryside’ <sup>586</sup>
JJ86 391	Catenoy (Oise)	‘by the force and constraint of the late Guillaume Calle previously made <i>capitaine</i> of the people and communities of the beauvaisis’, ‘in the said company of

<sup>581</sup> *ibid.* The original states : ‘Maiz de fait les Jacques le prindrent et en firent leur gouverneur avecques ung home qui estoit hospitalier, qui avoit veu des guerres’.

<sup>582</sup> *Chron. norm.*, p. 129-30, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 164.

<sup>583</sup> ‘par contrainte dudit peuple et de leur capitaine’, AN, JJ86, f. 102, no. 308, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, p. 260.

<sup>584</sup> ‘par contrainte dudit peuple et de leur capitaine’, ‘en l’absence de leur capitaine general’, AN, JJ86, f. 102, no. 309, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 261-2.

<sup>585</sup> ‘capitaine sujet des souverains capitaines du plat pais’, AN, JJ86, f. 116, no. 344.

<sup>586</sup> ‘par la contrainte et entretment des capitaines du dit plat pays’, AN, JJ86, f. 121, no. 355, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 268-70.

<sup>587</sup> ‘par la force and contrainte de feu Guillaume Calle n’a gaires estoit capitaine du peuple et communes de beauvaisis’ ; ‘en la dicte compangie of Guillaume Calle’, AN, JJ86, f. 136, no. 391.

		Guillaume Cale <sup>587</sup>
JJ86 437	Montdidier (Somme)	'With other <i>capitaines</i> of the plat pays' <sup>588</sup>
JJ98 252	Montataire (Oise)	'Guillaume Cale, the <i>capitaine</i> of the said men of the countryside' <sup>589</sup>

The most famous of these remissions is the last one, used by Siméon Luce, Raymond Cazelles, Léon Mirot and Sam Cohn to illustrate a variety of different points regarding the Jacquerie. The remission broadly agrees with the more sympathetic picture painted by the *Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois*. Far from being a monster, or a token 'captain' of a spasmodic movement, Cale exercised control of his charges. Indicative of this is the remission issued to Mahieu de Leurel, who had assisted in the murder of Jean Bernier, a member of the Jacques accused of treasonous complicity with Charles of Navarre:

Around the time of the feast day, Jehan Bernier, a non-noble, was allegedly accused of treason, because letters from the King of Navarre were found on him, and he was commonly known for such deeds in this region. From this, he was led to Guillaume Cale, then captain of the people of the countryside, to be tried and punished. Guillaume handed him over to Étienne du Wès, then captain of the village of Montataire, to be put to death, if he (Étienne), the villagers and those of the surrounding countryside judged that he deserved it.<sup>590</sup>

After being brought initially to face the 'captain of the people', Bernier is handed over by Cale to a local captain to receive his punishment. If we do assume Cale to be nominally 'in charge' of the Jacquerie, then this remission suggests a pyramid of organisation below him.

This remission is not without its problems: it was issued in March 1364, almost six years after the insurrection. Bearing in mind that the name of

<sup>588</sup> 'avec autres *capitaines* des plat-pays', AN, JJ86, f. 154, no. 437.

<sup>589</sup> 'Guillaume Cale, lors capitaine dez dictes gens du dit plat pays', AN, JJ98, f. 120, no. 252

<sup>590</sup> AN, JJ98, f. 120, no. 252 ; reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 333-5, tr. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 191-2.

Guillaume Cale was known by chroniclers as far north as Flanders and as far west as the Rouen, it can be assumed that Cale's reputation was well known within the Île de France as well. In the document, Cale is a shadowy figure who Mahieu himself does not interact with. This suggests there is symbolic value to mentioning Cale – the name is recognisable enough to warrant inclusion within the remission. Moreover, it increases the power of the plea for clemency – for Mahieu, claiming reduced culpability for the homicide, who better to mention than Guillaume Cale himself, whose name was still memorable years after the event? More than just confirming his position as the head of an organisational structure, they confirm Cale's position as the symbolic head of the movement. His name was important in both the histories and the legal documents, either for retelling the story of the Jacquerie or for explaining the individual stories of the Jacques.

However, another remission gives us a better sense of Cale having led his men. Issued in the aftermath of the revolt – August 1358 – the remission details the involvement of Arneul Guenelon, an individual who rose to prominence ('by force and constraint', as the remission maintains) as leader of the rebels from the village (*ville*) of Catenoy (Oise). According to the pardon, he was forced to take charge of this settlement by Guillaume Cale, here described as the '*capitaine du peuple et communes de beaumontis*'. However, more interesting than this plea for clemency, Cale is then described as issuing an order to Guenelon's troops:

under force and constraint of the late Guille Calle, previously capitaine of the people and community of the Beaumontis, his adherents and companions of the region assembled for knocking down, destroyed and burned the houses, mansions and fortresses of the nobles .... [Cale] ordered the said company to execute several persons, make several

pillages and burn houses and several others went to the castle of Ermenonville ... their company was sent to the town of Senlis.<sup>591</sup>

The men from Catenoy attacked the castle at Ermenonville, and then moved on to Senlis. This action was confirmed by another remission: Germain de Reveillon is said to take control of the attack on the castle at Ermenonville when he became *capitaine* 'in the absence of their general captain'.<sup>592</sup> These two remissions together show Cale taking direct action – sending groups of individuals to Ermenonville, south of where Cale would eventually meet his death at Clermont.

Even within these descriptions, we see that whatever hierarchical organisation the Jacques had was dynamic. Guenelon has control of his men in Catenoy, but surrendered authority to Cale, while his men are subsumed into the bigger group of rebels. He had control of them again on the trip to Ermenonville, but when they arrive it was Germain de Reveillon who was their *capitaine*. Cale's absence from such an important (and well-reported) moment in the uprising as when Senlis refused to allow the Jacques within the walls indicates that much of the action happened without their general captain.

Three of the five remissions that mention a top-rung of leadership in the Jacques also indicate a plurality of leadership at the top of the uprising. Concurring with the *Chronique Normande*, and the *Chronique des Premiers Quatres Valois*, they suggest that Cale was not the only important leader. These three, all issued in August of 1358, mentioned multiple *capitaines*, in one case

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<sup>591</sup> 'par la force et contrainte de feu Guille Calle n'a gaires esleu capitaine du peuple et commune de Beaumonsis de ses adherens et complices assemblees au dit pais pour aler abatre et destruire ardoir et abatre les châteaux mansones lieux et fortresses des nobles ... ordenes de la dicte compaigne furent plusieurs personnes mises à mort, plusieurs pillages arsures de maisons et plusieurs aucunes qu'il firent du chastel d'ermenonville ... leur compaignie mettent en la vile de Senlis' AN, JJ86, f. 136, no. 391.

<sup>592</sup> 'en l'absence de leur capitaine general', AN, JJ86, f. 102, no. 309, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 261-2.

describing a local *capitaine* as ‘subject to the sovereign captains of the countryside’. This direct recognition that leadership was not solely the preserve of one individual indicates the complexity of this crowd.

Cale is referred to as the *capitaine* of the ‘men from the Beauvaisis’ in one remission. All five of the remissions that mention Cale or a singular ruling *capitaine* come from the same general area, the area between Clermont and Senlis – near the heartland of the Jacquerie, or at least one of its most important nodes, but only a small fraction of the area that the rebellion encompassed.<sup>593</sup>

**Map XI. Guillaume Cale’s involvement.**



Green places on this map indicate where Cale was mentioned. The actions he directs – the murder of Jehan Bernier and the deployment of Arnuel Guenelon’s men – take place within the same belt (Ermenonville is just a little south of Senlis). This area is little more than 30km from point to point, and concurs with the chronicle accounts: Cale was murdered by Charles of Navarre at

<sup>593</sup> The scale of this map is 1 / 850,000.

Clermont, and hailed from the village of Mello. We have no evidence of Cale operating outside this region (small in terms of the range of the Jacquerie, which spread past Amiens to the north and as far east as Bar and west to Rouen). It is hard to make the case for him exhibiting control in the majority of villages outside this central pocket.

These remissions, like the chroniclers, offer us a double vision of Cale's role within the Jacques. They confirm that Cale was viewed as the symbolic head of the uprising, but was only a regional leader. Cale did exercise power over his charges: not only did he pass Jehan Bernier to the villagers of Montataire for execution, but he deployed the men of Catenoy towards Senlis and Ermenonville. Simultaneously however, like the chroniclers, the remissions undercut the notion that Cale was in complete control of what was a complex movement. Cale only has control in the area he came from, around Clermont. According to the remissions, there were many ruling *capitaines* of the Jacques. In addition, these ruling *capitaines* were not always the driving force; instead, local *capitaines* controlled their men, like Étienne du Wes and Arneul Guenelon. These individuals may have occasionally received orders and directions from the top, but they also operated independently: it was up to the villagers of Montataire and their elected *capitaine* to decide the fate of Jehan Bernier.

Peasant communities largely operated independently with their own separate *capitaines*, providing the organisational thrust to the Jacquerie, rather than one symbolic leader or a small group of centralised chiefs. While chroniclers and historians have focussed on the prominent individual, the remissions provide another layer of leadership, a myriad of influential figures within a myriad of

communities. In comparative studies of peasant revolt, the phenomenon of primary and secondary leaders has been recognised – the former providing a focal point or figurehead (often prophetic), with the latter providing the organisational dynamism (and aggression) to the revolt.<sup>594</sup> While painting Cale as a prophetic leader would be misleading, his representation has served to obscure the real thrust of leadership that according to the remissions came not from the top of any hierarchy of the Jacques, but rather from the bottom, within the individual villages communities that rose up.

Within the remissions, seventeen documents mention a local leader, whether it is an individual receiving the remission or within another's pardon narrative.<sup>595</sup> They are identified by the single reoccurring word, *capitaine*, which appeared from the earliest remissions just months after the Jacquerie, until the last mention in the middle of the 1360s.<sup>596</sup> These local captains provide the real driving force behind groups of Jacques acting against local targets:

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<sup>594</sup> The terms 'primary' and 'secondary' should not be seen as declaring one type of leadership subservient to the other. Adas does partly intend to illustrate how a revolt can deviate from its original intentions, but as regards the Jacquerie, this is not the case. See Adas, *Prophets of Rebellion*, pp. 130-7.

<sup>595</sup> In several occasions, such as in the remission of Mahieu de Leurel, the *capitaine* is mentioned in the narrative of the remission, rather than the *capitaine* being the individual who is receiving the remission.

<sup>596</sup> All twenty-one remissions use the term *capitaine* to describe leaders.



Table XX. Mentions of local *capitaines*.

NAME	REMISSION	PLACE	Occupation ?
Jacques de Chennevières	JJ86 207	Montmorency (Val d'Oise)	None
Guillame Lanyeux	JJ86 221	Deuil (Val d'Oise)	None
Jean Hullot	JJ86 298	Etavigny (Oise)	None
Germain de Reveillon	JJ86 309	Ermenonville (Oise)	<i>Familier de Comte de Montfort</i>
Colart le Maunier	JJ86 344	Conty (Somme)	None
Estienne Nolon	JJ86 361	Jaux (Oise)	None
Jean le Grant	JJ86 362	Jaux (Oise)	None
Arnoul Guenelon	JJ86 391	Catenoy (Oise)	None
Simon Doublet	JJ86 392	Grandvilliers (Oise)	None
Jean des Hayes	JJ86 444	Rhuis (Oise)	None
Jean Bignet	JJ89 609	Remy (Oise)	None
Philippe Poignant	JJ90 148	Ponchon (Oise)	Royal sergeant
Jean Flageolot	JJ90 292	Favresse (Marne)	None
Hue de Sailleville	JJ90 298	Angicourt (Oise)	None
Michel Marin	JJ90 234	Saint-Amand	None
Gilles le Haguez	JJ90 354	Chambly (Oise)	None
Pierre Paingnant	JJ90 364	Neuilly (Aisne)	None
<unnamed capitain>	JJ94 004	Oize	None
Étienne du Wes	JJ98 252	Montataire	None

We are told virtually nothing about these individuals, their status or their position in society, except in the case of Philippe Poignant. Many of the remissions give us little idea of what these *capitaines* may have done. The most extreme example of this is the fragment of the remission for Michel Martin, which simply states ‘Item – another similar and in the form of the previous one ... for Michel

Martin of Saint-Amand made *capitaine* by the habitants of the said town of Saint-Amand'.<sup>597</sup> However, these documents can shed light on the nature of leadership in the Jacquerie.

In almost every case, the inhabitants of these communities select and promote individuals to be *capitaines*. They are not appointed from Cale or another ruling captain but rather by their neighbours. These individuals are 'made *capitaine*' by the villagers, often after they have 'assembled'; indeed, Jehan Bignet was 'electus capitainus'.<sup>598</sup> This people power extended to the top level; according to Jean de Venette, the peasants 'combined in great numbers and appointed Guillame Cale...their capitaine', although there is no specific evidence about how this election might have taken place.<sup>599</sup>

In several of these cases, the elected capitaine seemed to renounce his role in the remission, or claimed to have been forced to act. This could be seen to reaffirm the power of the crowd: the rebels may elect representatives, but they may also discard them. And of course, there may be confusion: historians may use different categories to ascribe leadership to individuals than a fourteenth-century court. Although these rioters may well have been described as *capitaines*, that does not necessarily mean that they led the revolt in the way we might assume. More likely, this is an embodiment of why Davis describes remissions as 'fiction in the archives'.<sup>600</sup> These individuals have a vested interest in proving themselves innocent of any crimes they are accused of. The majority

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<sup>597</sup> 'Item..autre semblable et en la fourme de ceste dessus passee et signee comme dessus pour Michel Martin de Saint-Amand esleu capitaine par les habitans de la dicte ville de Saint-Amand', AN, JJ90, f. 150, no. 293.

<sup>598</sup> AN, JJ89, f. 218, no. 609.

<sup>599</sup> Venette, *Chron.*, v. 2, p. 263, trans. Birdsall, *Venette*, p. 71.

<sup>600</sup> Davis, *Fiction in the Archives*.

wished to portray themselves as individuals ‘under the constraint’<sup>601</sup> of either the community that they served: ‘Estienne Nolon was made lieutenant and *capitaine* against his will and wishes by the habitants of the said village (*ville*)’,<sup>602</sup> while Arnuel Guenelon acted ‘by the force and constraint of their lord Guillaume Calle’.<sup>603</sup> As with all remissions, we must remain vigilant – appellants had to minimise their role within the movement to be granted a pardon. Pierre Paingnant, for example, who became *capitaine* of the prévôté of Neuilly (Aisne), sought his remission after being ‘sent to prison in the belfry at Soissons’ for a year, and would not have been wanting to linger too long upon his crimes.<sup>604</sup> Despite the denials of individual involvement, leadership within the riot did exist: village assemblies regularly formed and elected them. The revolt was not a spasmodic rising. Its programme was not selected randomly, nor handed down from above by an overarching authority beyond the boundaries of the *ville*.

When Cazelles and Hilton considered Cale, they both placed him at the top of the highest social group that fits their model of the Jacques. This implies a reliance on a kind of natural order to the crowd – that they select leaders from whom they were naturally led by. However, certainly in the experience of peasants in other contexts, this is relatively rare. Many examples indicated that the crowd most often subverted the natural (or imposed) hierarchy of the village. In early modern Japan, for example, peasant revolts and petitions regularly

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<sup>601</sup> Of our sample of 20 leaders, 6 mention that they may be acting under constraint. Terms used include ‘contre son gré et volenté’ (AN, JJ86, f. 123, no. 361), ‘par contrainte’ (AN, JJ86, f. 123, no. 362) and ‘par la force et contrainte de feu Guille Calle’ (AN, JJ86, f. 136, no. 391).

<sup>602</sup> ‘Estienne Nolon eust esté esleu contre son gré et volenté par les habitans de la dicte ville lieutenant du capitaine d’icelle’ AN, JJ86, f. 136, no. 391.

<sup>603</sup> ‘par la force et contrainte de seigneur Guille Calle’.

<sup>604</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 124, no. 364, Phillipe Paingnant was ‘mettent en prison au belfroy au Soissons’.

bypassed the authority of the village 'headman'.<sup>605</sup> Remissions for the Jacquerie emphasise a similar lack of reliance on the old order. Had they held to it, the clergy would have been prominent as leaders and, as we have seen, they were not. In most cases, communities of Jacques have selected leaders who were not prominent even within their own community. Only two give any sign of their employment. One of those is a royal sergent, and if his role as a *capitaine* could be multiplied many times over this may lend truth to Cazelles' ascriptions,<sup>606</sup> the other is a *familier* of the count of Montfort, and leads the rebels from the town of Ermenoville. Yet, these are the only cases of such individuals. Instead, the silence concerning the occupations of the other individuals is telling. There is no mention even of the better-off peasantry or rural landowners (normally signified by the phrase *homme de labour*). If the insurgents did contain several members of the military, then we would expect to see them prominently at the front of these crowd movements, as in the cities, especially Paris. We might also expect to see evidence of local officials orchestrating their charges' actions. In a village society that had a perceptible hierarchy to it, one would think this would be visible in the organisation of the peasant clusters, but it is not. In Jaux, for example, where a Parisian sergent is pardoned for joining the revolt, there is no implication that he was in charge of the group.<sup>607</sup> Rather, two individuals from the village who had no occupation worth recording both assumed the mantle of

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<sup>605</sup> See J.W. White, *Ikki: Social Conflict and Political Protest in Early Modern Japan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995). For other examples of crowds selecting individuals other than an existing hierarchy might suggest, see Cohen and Murphy, *Burn, Baby, Burn*: in both instance no community leaders featured within the crowd, and leadership was instead provided by individual instigators identifying new targets. Barker et al. in their discussion of leadership find that in many movement contexts '[c]onventional cultural capital can be a positive hindrance', C. Barker et al., 'Introduction', *Leadership and Social Movements*, p. 8.

<sup>606</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 81, no. 148 ; Poignant is described as being 'sergent du nostre dit seigneur'.

<sup>607</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 76, no. 233.

leading this community at different times.<sup>608</sup> That insurgents certainly ignored their traditional representatives like mayors and clerics is indicative of their power: the Jacques themselves held ultimate control of their actions.

In modern models of crowd action, the leaders' responsibilities are to help groups achieve their goal or to interpret their agenda into direct action.<sup>609</sup> It falls to the leader to channel the crowd's emotions, and to turn the crowd's wishes into action. Although the matter is dealt with in two separate remissions, Simon Doublet led the villagers of Grandvilliers, Poix and Lignières (all Somme) to destroy the castle at Poix,<sup>610</sup> and may also have played a part in the murder of the knight Guillaume de Picquigny by a group of 'murderers and rebels' midway between the latter two settlements.<sup>611</sup> Jacquin de Chennevières led the men of Montmorency (Val d'Oise) against local targets, specifically the château there.<sup>612</sup> It was not only on the offensive that local leaders made their presence felt. Two leaders, Jean Flageolot and Jean le Grant, came to prominence in their settlements after the initial burst of violence, as they reorganised their followers to resist the attacks of nobles. When the nobles in their counter-offensive were attempting to gain control of the forests around Compiègne, Jean le Grant and the men of Jaux refused to send the ferryboat to them.<sup>613</sup> Flageolot (appointed through the absence of their original leader) brought together several villages that assembled to protect themselves from the lord of Saint-Dizier's counter-

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<sup>608</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 123, nos. 361 and 362. Remissions are issued for two *capitaines*, Estienne Nolon and Jean le Grant.

<sup>609</sup> Reicher *et al.*, 'Social Identity', p.17.

<sup>610</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 136, no. 392; JJ87, f. 1, no. 1.

<sup>611</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 54, no. 165; reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 245-7 'rebelles et murtiers'.

<sup>612</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 67, no. 207.

<sup>613</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 123, no. 362.

offensive against the men of the countryside.<sup>614</sup> These individuals turned the anger of the non-nobles under their command into direct action against the nobility, either through resistance or attacks on their property and persons. There is no trace here of any direction from Guillaume Cale, or anyone else at the top of some regional or pan-regional hierarchy.

The remissions show that any hierarchy within the Jacques was not static. What these remissions indicate, like the *Chronique Normande* and *Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois*, is that leadership was not a strict hierarchy like Cazelles proposed.<sup>615</sup> What did exist was informal. In some cases, leaders seemed to be serving other leaders; the episode concerning Étienne du Wes is the best example. This was not the only example, however: 'Colart le Maunier who lived in Conti in the county of Clermont was made a *capitaine* subject to the ruling *capitaines* of the countryside' (*plat pais*).<sup>616</sup> In other cases, different leaders could work alongside each other: two separate individuals led the village of Jaux. The inhabitants needed Estienne Nolon to organise their attacks on the nobles, and Jean le Grant to organise their defence.<sup>617</sup> The Jacquerie provides another example of 'the complex and messy dynamics of a historical social movement'.<sup>618</sup>

The role of *capitaine* was not fixed: as mentioned earlier, Germain de Reveillon originally acted under constraint of Cale, and then became captain

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<sup>614</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 97, no. 292, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 293-4, 'acceptant le dit office de capitenerie pour ce que le Seigneur de Saint-Dizier accompaignez de grant nombre dez gens darmes chevauché jusques les gens du pais'.

<sup>615</sup> Ryan, 'The Cult of Personality', p. 211, as 'images of activists and leaders have become mediated through layers of representation ... [i]t is all too easy for movements to become reified, their internal dynamics and collective identity processes no longer visible to the modern researcher'.

<sup>616</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 116, no. 344.

<sup>617</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 123, nos. 361 and 362.

<sup>618</sup> Ryan, 'The Cult of Personality', p. 211.

himself (although, he claimed, only for one day and one night) in Cale's absence.<sup>619</sup> Presumably another *capitaine*, Arnuel Guenelon of Catenoy, came under Reveillon's charge there.<sup>620</sup>

This flexible chain of command, with power being held by individual collectives of villages, towns and peasants, not by a think-tank powering the whole movement, represents the only manner whereby a movement like the Jacquerie could function. Philippe Poignant was leading his troop apparently under duress, but then brought them into the main force for a great 'chevauchée'.<sup>621</sup> Groups, like that of Poignant's, could act as independent entities before joining the main force and falling under the control of (presumably) Cale or his counterparts, if they ever did. These men and their followers were not controlled from above by their superiors. There is no other evidence of any orders or objectives being specified from above than the two remissions that mention Cale. Any hierarchy may well have been symbolic, known to the insurgents in concept rather than through direct contact with the ruling *capitaines*. This fluid organisation would fit a movement like the Jacques, which covered a massive area, especially considering that Cale's name appears nowhere outside the immediate surroundings of the Île de France.

In contrast, these local leaders are scattered across the whole north of France. These individuals who came from these groups can be found across in the area where Jacques rose up (which was larger than Mollat and Wolff would have us believe):<sup>622</sup>

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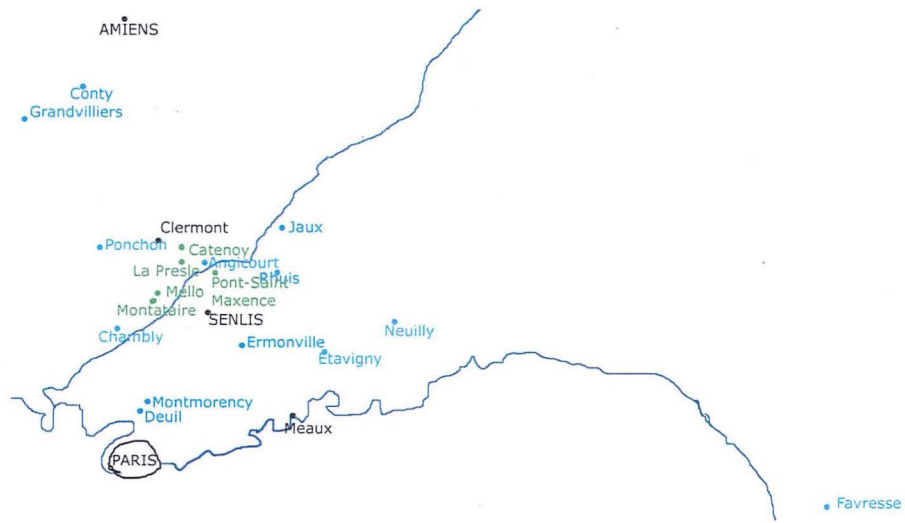
<sup>619</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 102, no. 309, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 261-2.

<sup>620</sup> *ibid.*, and AN, JJ86, f. 136, no. 391.

<sup>621</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 81, no. 148.

<sup>622</sup> The scale of this map is 1 / 1,500,000.

**Map XII. Local leaders' involvement.**



Green place-names indicate mentions of Guillaume Cale, blue place-names indicate local *capitaines* specified by the remissions. The change in the respective area covered is remarkable. Not included on this map, there is a fragment of a remission which mentions Michel Martin to have been the leader of a force at Saint-Amand, which is almost as far north as Tournai.<sup>623</sup> There are two leaders found within a couple of miles of each other, south of Amiens.<sup>624</sup> Jean Flageolot is said to have led several villages around Favresse (Marne), which is right on the borders of Bar, level in longitude with Verdun.<sup>625</sup> These are what we might consider the furthest reaches of the Jacquerie, yet local leaders are by no means only found on the periphery. The majority come from the heartland of the Jacques, between Paris and Beauvais, with men like Gilles le Hagez in Chamblay<sup>626</sup> (Oise) and Pierre Paignant in Neuilly (Aisne).<sup>627</sup> This heartland also spreads to Compiègne, with villages such as Jaux (Oise). We also see individual

<sup>623</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 125, no. 234.

<sup>624</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 116, no. 344 (Conty) ; JJ86, f. 136, no. 392 (Poix).

<sup>625</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 149, no. 292; reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 293-4.

<sup>626</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 182, no. 354; reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 297-9.

<sup>627</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 186, no. 364.



leaders hailing from the same part of the country that Cale came from: those already mentioned like Germain de Reveillon and Arneul Guenelon and others, none of whom make any mention of Guillaume Cale or any other regional leader.

Moreover, the leaders were not outsiders. They led communities they were very much familiar with, if not born in:

**Table XXI. Mentions of the local *capitaines*.**

LEADER	REMISSION	HAILS FROM	LEADS	Distance between?	AGAINST
Jacques de Chennevières	JJ86 207	Taverney	Montmorency	Around 10 km	
Guillaume Lanyeux	JJ86 221	Deuil	Deuil		
Jean Hulot	JJ86 298	Etavigny	Etavigny		
Germain de Reveillon	JJ86 309	Ermenonville	Ermenonville		
Colart le Maunier	JJ86 344	Conty	Conty		
Estienne Nolon	JJ86 361	Jaux	Jaux		
Jean le Grant	JJ86 362	Jaux	Jaux		Those attacking Jaux
Arnoul Guenelon	JJ86 391	Catenoy	Catenoy		Clermont and then to Ermenonville
Simon Doublet	JJ86 392	Grandvilliers	Grandvilliers, Poix and Lignieres	Villages all within 10km	
Jean Bignet	JJ89 609	Remy	Remy		
Philippe Poignant	JJ90 148	Ponchon	4 towns		Oize and Therain region
Jean Flageolot	JJ90 292	Favresse	Several villages around Favresse		Organsied defences in same villages
Hue de Sailleville	JJ90 298	Angicourt	Angicourt		
Michel Marin	JJ90 234	Saint-Amand	Saint-Amand		
Gilles Hageuz le	JJ90 354	Chambly	Chambly		
Pierre Paingnant	JJ90 364	Neuilly	Neuilly		
<unnamed capitain>	JJ94 004	Oize			
Étienne du Wes	JJ98 252	Montataire	Montataire		

All these individuals are identified as from within or nearby the communities that they lead. Leaders for whom names and places of residence are listed came from the community that they rose to lead or from a neighbouring one. The most distant, Jacques de Chennevières, hailed from Taverney (Val d'Oise), around eight kilometres outside Montmorency where he was their elected leader.<sup>628</sup> Even then, Taverney and Montmorency are both intimately linked – bordering the same forest and connected by road. In the remissions where the crimes of these companies of Jacques are listed, all of these groups acted against local targets: the furthest from their home that these rebels fought was Guenelon's men from Catenoy, who ended up ten kilometres to the south in Senlis on Cale's instruction, but this is only after causing devastation within their own region.

These leaders were not in charge of large regional forces: some of these leaders operated very close to another *capitaine*. Jacques de Chennevières's force from Taverney, on the outskirts of what we would consider modern Paris, was just ten kilometres away from Guillaume Lanyeux and the inhabitants of Deuil.<sup>629</sup> Simon Doublet may have led the villages of Poix, Lingnieres and Grandvilliers (all Somme, south of Amiens) in rebellion, but again just ten kilometres away (the same distance that separated the villages under his command), Conty's force was following Colart de Maunier.<sup>630</sup>

This is one of the reasons that we can be confident in saying that the surviving records represent only the tip of the iceberg, and that leadership permeated every single group of villagers who rose up. Of one hundred and seventy four individual references, only twenty make any mention of leadership within the Jacques. Can we really talk of a leadership hierarchy on a scattering

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<sup>628</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 67, n. 207; reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 254-6.

<sup>629</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 72, n. 221.

<sup>630</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 116, n. 344.

of names? Is there anything to suggest that this group made up anything more than just the second rung of Cale's hierarchy?

Although we have only dealt so far with the remissions that have specified a *capitaine*, there is reason to believe that they represent just a small sample of the many leaders who were working within the Jacques. For example, numerous remissions described actions as being done in concert with 'several others of the said town', which implies that the individual is either receiving the remission for the community as a whole (as a representative), or he is somehow considered to be more guilty than the other inhabitants. Jean Bouquel of Pont-Point (Oise), for example, was granted a remission for his part in the murder of the noble spy, committed with thirty-four habitants of the village and the adjoining settlement.<sup>631</sup> The implication is that Bouquel is seeking grace on behalf of himself and the villagers, and therefore may have been the 'leader' of that particular attack.

Even without adding to the number of remissions that may well indicate leadership to have been present, we can still consider it likely that the majority of settlements had someone who fitted the term *capitaine*. Above all, the remissions indicate the necessity of even some of the smallest communities needing a leader. Moreover, the contrast between the force marshalled by Philippe Poignant, who was at the head of four villages who then joined the main force with Cale, compared with those like Michel Martin who seemed to have held sway over only one village, indicates how levels of leadership varied and

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<sup>631</sup> AN, JJ96, f. 220, no. 425, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 311-2.

that all sizes of settlements generated leaders.<sup>632</sup> These leaders each performed acts of violence during the insurgency on radically different scales, whether within the confines of the main force, as with Poignant, or Jean le Grant, the second leader of Jaux (Oise), who organised the villagers to bar entry to nobles and foreign mercenaries. Again, remissions only concern the exceptions to the justice administered by the crown to the people of the *plat-pays*, and we should consider these leaders either exceptionally fortunate to have escaped death at the hands of the enraged nobles, or exceptionally unfortunate to have been identified as a *capitaine* in the first place.

The story that these remissions tell is certainly suggestive of a large number of micro-insurgencies, all of which could have identified a leader amongst their midst. Certainly, these individuals do not represent some elite circle of leadership, or even the chief ringleaders, amongst the Jacques. If leaders were vital to such small communities, then nearly every community and each individual attack, of which the remissions recount many, must have had at least some form of *capitaine*.

To understand exactly the importance of the leaders of the Jacques (and indeed any crowd) we must understand what it means to be a leader within a crowd. Trying to fit Cale, and the leadership of the Jacques, into the mould of a commander-in-chief, leads to misconceptions about his role. Hilton grapples with the concept of Cale as a military leader, deciding that the Jacques' shambolic defeat indicates that he had no preparation, yet the organisational abilities convince Cazelles that they must have been well-versed in warfare,

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<sup>632</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 81, no. 148 and f. 125, no. 234.

especially considering the speed at which towns and châteaux were taken.<sup>633</sup> No remission, and only one chronicle, gives us any sense that Cale was involved in any sort of military planning.

Similarly, attempts to force a top-down hierarchy on the Jacques are misplaced. While it is obvious that Cale was viewed as the leader of the movement of the Jacquerie, and the remissions suggest that Cale may have held power over a number of sub-lieutenants,<sup>634</sup> there is no sense that this is necessarily a military hierarchy, with Cale specifying targets that sub-groups would focus upon.<sup>635</sup> Rather, these rebel 'cells' were operating independently of the 'ruling captain'. Very few of the remissions concerning 'leaders' mentioned any link with the hierarchy.<sup>636</sup> There was no suggestion that Cale was an exceptional individual within the crowd, apart from those few that describe him as the most important of them all.

So if leadership was provided on a smaller scale, by men elected by their own communities, what did these leaders actually do? In the most basic sense, they represented the crowd, and were perceived by both crown and compatriots as being responsible for their charges' actions. More than that, their very existence provided a structure under which the movement could exist. By selecting objectives, casting the first stone or even just spearheading an attack, the leaders transformed the ideological base of the revolt, the anger at the

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<sup>633</sup> Hilton, *Bond Men Made Free*, pp. 119-122 and R. Cazelles, 'The Jacquerie', p. 79. While Cazelles emphasises the tactical value of their targets, Hilton calls the rebels '[m]ilitarily inexperienced'.

<sup>634</sup> Again, the remission for Mahieu de Leurel is the best example of this. AN, JJ98, f. 120, no. 252, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 333-5, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 161-2.

<sup>635</sup> Media coverage focuses on the 'leaders' of terrorist organisations, but terrorist cells operate independently of the 'leader' with whom they share only an over-arching ideology. This is an accurate comparison with the Jacquerie: the emphasis placed by historians upon Guillaume Cale obscures the independent actions of the localised 'cells' acting against the crown, who were linked ideologically to Cale, but not practically.

<sup>636</sup> Fifteen make no reference to any form of leaders, or group, operating 'above' the local leader.

nobility, into action. While the precise nature of these attacks varied, all the crowds interpreted them in a broadly similar manner, targeting in particular the homes and property of local nobles. There was undoubtedly a sense of purpose to those being led: it is mostly those Jacques outside the leadership structure (the two young men who stole the chickens and carps, for example) that behaved in a different manner.<sup>637</sup>

We can assume that most Jacques, with their neighbours and fellow *habitants* of the villages who assembled and bonded together, had some sort of *capitaine* within their association who directed their action. We can also assume that these men, rather than being manipulative outsiders, resembled their followers. Cale, and those other *capitaines* in charge of the main force, were important, and their legend has been preserved for us when we consider the Jacques. But the important part of the revolt, the genesis of the programme of destruction, lies with the local leaders, not in the hands of the main force. Rather than memorialising a heroic individual who marshalled the eventual defeat of the Jacques, credit should lie at the feet of Michel Martin and Guillaume Lanyeux, who, with their followers' blessing, led the groups to destroy numerous targets. The Jacques appeared to be a leaderless people, because active leadership was being provided by names that the chroniclers never knew.

## COMMUNICATION

The unit of rebellion was the village community, and leadership was provided by local men within those communities, but when we think of the bigger picture, it

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<sup>637</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 97, no. 291, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 256-7.

is necessary to understand how and why these communities felt they were part of the same wider rebellion. While each village did act separately, they also were considered (and considered themselves) to be part of something larger: the remissions described all actions as committed in conjunction with 'other men of the plat-pays', and in the remissions insurgents refer to themselves as Jacques or as motivated by the 'time of commotions'. As illustrated, several knew the name of Guillaume Cale, and remissions make reference to assemblies, conspiracies and joint action: how could these messages be passed between separate insurgent groups?

In the models of pre-industrial revolt, popular preaching was one way in which rebellious communities can share and communicate ideas between themselves, and can foster the imagined bonds between them.<sup>638</sup> When we searched for the influence of the clergy in the Jacquerie, however, the sources were very quiet. Not only is church property relatively undamaged in the revolt, very few mentions of preachers exist, and fewer still take a leading role in the campaign. Moreover, we have no record of any preaching of revolutionary ideology from the pulpit, nor any popular religious fever like the kind that inspired the Flagellants to spread through Germany and across the French border in the wake of the Black Death, or that can be seen in other late medieval revolts such as in Flanders in 1327 or more prominently in revolts of heretics.<sup>639</sup>

If the message was not coming from the pulpit, then, how were these village communities hearing the word, and spreading it onwards? How could

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<sup>638</sup> The most commonly cited model is that of Y.-M. Bercé, *Revolt and revolution*. For a fuller analysis, see Davis, 'Religious Riot'.

<sup>639</sup> See Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, pp. 100-104 for discussion of religious riots in the late medieval period.

news of the rebellion pass quickly enough that the peasantry as distant as on the borders with Flanders join the rebellion?

Recent scholarship has shown that the infrastructure of rural life in the Middle Ages was stronger than had previously been assumed. Most bridges were constructed at high-expense, built from stone, and lasted deep into the modern era.<sup>640</sup> In medieval England, for example, the price of transporting crops was relatively low; it was 40% less in the fourteenth century than it was in the eighteenth century.<sup>641</sup> The affordable cost of transport implies other things about medieval trade links: the proliferation of markets, the quality of roads and speed at which goods could be moved. Medieval infrastructure was good enough to foster links between communities, and these links extended further and wider than previously assumed.

Everything from the transfer of political rumours to religious heresy quickly disseminated throughout rural communities. Moreover, the transport of news could result in popular action.<sup>642</sup> In 1377, Berkshire villages came to a standstill on account of 'the great rumour among various other tenants', in this case an uprising of some forty villages in Wiltshire, Hampshire and Surrey.<sup>643</sup> Letters of remission also testify to the swift passage of rumours from settlement to settlement. Many individuals mention continued 'ill wishes and hostility' long

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<sup>640</sup> See D.F. Harrison, 'Bridges and Economic Development, 1300-1800', *Economic History Review*, 45 (1992), pp. 240-261.

<sup>641</sup> J. Masschaele, 'Transport Costs in Medieval England', *Economic History Review*, 46 (1993), p. 276.

<sup>642</sup> The importance of rumour in revolt has not diminished over the centuries. In the aftermath of the 1919 race riot in Chicago, the Report of the Chicago Commission on Race Relations featured a whole section on rumour, and concluded that '[r]umor, fermenting in mobs, prepares the mob mind for the direct suggestion impelling otherwise law-abiding citizens to atrocities'. In *The Negro in Chicago: A Study of Race Relations and a Race Riot* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1922), p. 35.

<sup>643</sup> R.J. Faith, 'The 'Great Rumour' of 1377 and Peasant Ideology', in *The English Rising*, ed. Aston and Hilton, pp. 43-70.



after the event from the local nobility: their reputations were known across the local area.<sup>644</sup> Official pardons were about bringing an end to the rumours concerning these individuals' participation in the violence.

So how did rebellion spread? The message could be transferred by individuals. When considering how revolutionary ideals spread to epidemic proportions, Malcolm Gladwell used the example of Paul Revere and the spread of revolutionary fervour at the start of the American Revolution of 1779.<sup>645</sup> Revere's ride through the north-eastern towns spreading the word of rebellion is one famous example of how an individual can pass the message of revolt and rebellion onwards. This journey, encompassing several different communities, provided a means to transmit this message to communities who wished to take part. According to Gladwell, word-of-mouth epidemics, like rebellions, require 'connectors': individuals with links in several communities who can quickly disseminate ideas through their links.<sup>646</sup> Thus, when considering the spread of revolt, it is worth considering the possibility of certain individuals having a particular importance in the spread of revolutionary ideas.

We can find individuals like this, interacting with other communities, spreading the word of the Jacquerie, even in the letters of remission; for example, Jacques de Chennievieres travelled the few kilometres to the neighbouring

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<sup>644</sup> 'malivolence et hayne', as it appears in the majority of remissions.

<sup>645</sup> M. Gladwell, *The Tipping Point* (London: Little, Brown, 2002).

<sup>646</sup> Recent studies into networks support this. In any given network, most nodes have relatively few connections, but a minority of key nodes have numerous connections which keep the network expanding. See Barabasi, *Linked*. For the application of scale-free networks to medieval rural society, see P. Ormerod and A.P. Roach, 'The Medieval inquisition: scale free networks and the suppression of heresy', *Physica A*, 339 (2004), pp. 645-52. With regard to insurgent movements, see pp. 219-225, and also M. S.-Y. Chwe, 'Structure and Strategy in Collective Action', *The American Journal of Sociology*, 105, n.1 (Jul., 1990), pp. 128-156.

village to lead them into revolt.<sup>647</sup> Jean Flageolot helped some villagers around Favresse (Marne) to organise defenses.<sup>648</sup> Pierre de Montfort, citizen of Caen, was seen to be ‘giving speeches of evil and disorder’ to the people of the city and those around (even in Picardy), while also declaring loyalty to the men of the *plat pais* in their struggle.<sup>649</sup> An outsider, Jehan Charoit of Marioles, was pardoned with the habitants of Egly (Essonne).<sup>650</sup> Individuals from the outside could convince new communities to rebel.

We cannot, however, consider the individual to be paramount in the spread of the insurgency. As Gladwell stresses, the power lies within the message the men carried. Like any epidemic, rebellions require the agent to be contagious and adaptable enough to stick on when it is exposed to new groups. The agent could be transmitted in many forms. Most notably, rebels were often orators, and used words to convince others of their cause. The Parisians, for example had ‘been won over by many false words, deceptions, proclamations and by other malicious and deceptive means’.<sup>651</sup> Étienne Marcel’s greatest weapons were his words ; the standard start of the remissions for the Parisian rebels was ‘...at the instigation, prompting and encouragement of the deceased Étienne Marcel’.<sup>652</sup> In Amiens, as well, it was the spoken word that provoked the most action: ‘many of Amiens said and spread astonishing and injurious words against our state and persons’.<sup>653</sup> As discussed in Chapter II, Marcel even sent lieutenants, like Jean Hersent, to villages dependent on Paris (like Chatres-

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<sup>647</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 67, no. 207.

<sup>648</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 149, no. 292, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp.293-4.

<sup>649</sup> AN, JJ87, f. 136, no. 231, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 291-2, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 189-91.

<sup>650</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 70, no. 215.

<sup>651</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 79, no. 240, reprinted in Secousse, *Ordonnances*, pp. 346-7, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 179-180.

<sup>652</sup> For example, see AN, JJ86, f. 68, no. 209.

<sup>653</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 79, no. 239, reprinted in Secousse, *Ordonnances*, pp. 97-9, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 197-8.

sous-Monthéry) to convince the inhabitants to join the Parisian rebellion under the command of several ‘commissaries’, even if this mission failed.<sup>654</sup>

This emphasis could be found in the countryside as well. As we have seen, Pierre de Montfort in Caen transmitted the message of rebellion through his ‘speeches of evil and disorder’.<sup>655</sup> In the village of Ballieo (Oise), an individual warned ‘in a loud voice’ that the enemy intended to destroy their land, causing the men to assemble in Saint-Vrain with the intention of resisting the nobility.<sup>656</sup> Yet there is reason to believe that others performed a similar role. We have already discussed the *capitaines*, who were clearly involved in spearheading and organising their villages. Presumably, when Germain de Reveillon took on the duties of the general *capitaine* it was his job to spread the message.

The chroniclers also suggest the importance of oratory. Even Jean le Bel suggests a group was responsible for spreading the message:

At first there were not a hundred of them, saying that the nobles, knights and squires were ruining and disgracing the kingdom, and it would be good if they all were destroyed. Each [rebel] said: ‘He speaks the truth; he speaks the truth. Shame on him who allows them to live.’<sup>657</sup>

The agency for the spread of the rebellion is not placed in the hands of the peasants who attacked the battalion at Saint-Leu; rather, it was a group of less than one hundred rabble-rousers who convinced others of the ‘truth’ with whom the responsibility lies. Of course, there is no evidence that even one rebel said this line. This may have been chanted on the fields of the Beauvaisis, but was it chanted in Champagne or Picardy? However, it gives us an understanding how important the spoken word can be in transmitting the message between a group

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<sup>654</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 76, no. 231, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 263-4.

<sup>655</sup> AN, JJ87, f. 136, no. 231, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 291-2, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 189-91.

<sup>656</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 164, no. 465, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 281-2.

<sup>657</sup> Bel, *Chron.*, v.2, p. 256, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 152.

as large as the Jacques. Phrases and war cries can give us some sense of the appeal of the message, and how it applies to these individuals. The *Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois* puts another phrase into the mouths of the rebels:

All these nobles and many others whose names are not recorded here, at least a thousand men-at-arms, joined the King of Navarre's company to face the Jacques, who with a fierce demeanour held their ranks, tooting their horns and trumpets and crying haughtily 'Mont joye', and they carried many insignia painted with the Fleur-de-lis.<sup>658</sup>

'Mont joye' was of course the traditional battle-cry of the king of France. What that actually meant in a time of uncertain kingship is unclear: King Jean of course is held captive because of the perceived failure of the nobility; perhaps, as in the Peasant's Revolt of 1381, the rebels believed the dauphin to have been misled by his advisors. Even as short a chant as 'Mont joye' has important symbolic value. S. Reicher, discussing the work of N.Z. Davis on religious riot, describes four functions that oratory and speeches perform:

First they constitute the rival group as a threat which needed to be defended against. Second, they urge violent attack as the best form of defence. Third, they point to the particular forms the violence should take. Fourth, they legitimate and indeed sanctify such violence as doing the Lord's work.<sup>659</sup>

Under this criteria, 'Mont joye' is a potent chant indeed: the noble enemies are defined as being in opposition to the rightful king, the order is given in the form of a war-cry which in turn informed (or perhaps represented) the force's decision to fight a pitched battle, and finally, it legitimises the revolt in the name of the lord, in this case secular rather than religious.<sup>660</sup> The *Chronique's* report

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<sup>658</sup> *Chron. premiers Valois*, p. 74, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 162.

<sup>659</sup> Reicher, 'The Challenge of the Crowd' (in press).

<sup>660</sup> An accurate assessment of what an average medieval peasant might have considered utopian is impossible to attain; however, the importance of the King in the Jacques' chants is similar to Hilton's characterisation of peasants' political vision in the English Peasants' Revolt of 1381: 'a popular monarchy, a state without nobles, perhaps without churchmen, in which the peasants and

of Clermont is problematic: it goes into great detail surrounding the battle, but no other account corroborates any of its details (or mentions similar sentiments towards the crown),<sup>661</sup> and it was written some forty years after the violence. It is possible that the *Chronique des Quatres Premiers Valois* may have been mocking the rebels – it seems unlikely that the peasants actually had horns and trumpeters alongside them. Nonetheless, the *Chronique* did see fit to credit the peasants with a chant; the spoken word was one way in which peasants could show solidarity, redefine their identity, and convey their message to others.

Recent scholarship has stressed that large-scale medieval peasant revolts were held together by a surprising emphasis on written messages. In Cade's Rebellion of 1450, there seems to have been an intricate web of communication amongst notaries and scribes – nearly every rebel leader had a scribe or messenger. For example, Thomas Cheyne, 'leader' of the rising in eastern Kent in 1450, had a scrivener who sent messages about the country.<sup>662</sup> The English Peasants' Revolt displays similar links. In Walsingham's record of the events of 1381 in England, he records that John Ball sent a letter to Essex exhorting them to continue their riot, which seems to have been reproduced and found on the body of an insurgent (Walsingham uses 'these', implying he was carrying propaganda). Steven Justice makes the case that several of the rebels' speeches that Knighton records may actually have been letters produced to support the case. Justice also argued

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their king are the only social forces'. Hilton, *The English Peasantry in the Later Middle Ages*, p.14.

<sup>661</sup> Some chroniclers of the English Peasants' Revolt of 1381 suggested the peasantry held loyalty towards their monarch. For example, the *Anonimale Chronicle*, p. 148 reports the peasants kneeling down in front of the King and declaring 'Welcome our Lord King Richard, if it pleases you, and we will not have any other king but you', trans. W. Oman, reprinted in *The Peasants Revolt of 1381*, ed. B. Dobson, p. 181.

<sup>662</sup> Harvey, *Jack Cade's Rebellion of 1450*, p. 75. That rebellion also produced a series of well-informed petitions, *ibid.*, p. 105.

that differences in the dialect of these letters indicate that these documents were copied and recopied.<sup>663</sup>

Scattered references suggest letters may have been just as important to the Jacques as they were to the English peasants some twenty years later. For example, in Étienne Marcel's communications with the *bonnes villes*, he claimed he had sent 'confidential letters to [the Jacques] to stop the great evil'.<sup>664</sup> Moreover, the remission issued to Jehanne Rose on behalf of her executed husband, the cleric Jean Rose, tells how Guillaume Cale sent Jean and another 'constrained man' to negotiate a truce with the men of Compiègne. Jean, fearing for his own life (and having sent his family to Compiègne for their own safety) agreed to carry the message to the townsmen:

the said general capitain of the countryside sent the said Jehan and one other constrained man to carry letters to the bourgeois and habitants of the said town (*ville*) of Compiègne to ask them if they wished to become allies of the men of the countryside and sustain comfort and aid them .... to these said letters the said bourgeois and habitants made responses to the said *capitaine* and his allies and adherents.<sup>665</sup>

Letters were clearly important to the Jacquerie. In forming important alliances the written word, just like the charms of an orator or the words of a delegate, could be vital for the rebels. More importantly, Cale, his allies and adherents expected a written response. These rebels were communicating through writing with other communities in the realm: letters were important in convincing new allies to join the uprising.

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<sup>663</sup> S. Justice, *Writing and Rebellion, England in 1381* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). See 'Insurgent Literacy', pp.13-66.

<sup>664</sup> Letter of Étienne Marcel to the Communes of Picardy and Flanders, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 177.

<sup>665</sup> 'le dit general capitaine du dit plat pais envoya icelui Jehan et un autre homme contraintes porter lettres aus bourgeois et habitants d'icelle ville de compiegne a fin qu'il voussissent etre aliez avec les gens du dit plat pais et eulx soustenir conforter et aider en ..... des quelles lettres les dis bourgeois et habitants firent response au dit capitaine et a ses allies et adherens...'. AN, JJ86, f. 124, no. 365, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 272-4.

Letters were not only useful in forging new alliances, but they could also be used to consolidate old ones. We have already drawn heavily on one letter concerning the Jacques, the pardon issued for the mason Mathieu de Leurel for his part in the murder of one Jean Bernier.<sup>666</sup> This same Jean Bernier, who was suspected of treason with Navarre and was 'commonly known for such deeds in the region', was executed when 'letters from the King of Navarre were found on him'. Obviously, this anecdote indicates the level of antagonism against Navarre by the Jacques, but it also suggests of the importance of the written word. Whether Bernier held the letters, or was simply accused of holding letters, allegiance was indicated by documents rather than rumour. Writing was important both in communicating old loyalties and forging new ones.<sup>667</sup>

Another signal that seems to be particularly important for the Jacques, and intimately connected to parish and community life, was the ringing of the church bells. For example:

the lord of Saint Dizier with a great number of soldiers rode towards Vitry in Perthois. This greatly enraged the people of this region. In many villages, they rang their bells and assembled against this Lord of Saint-Dizier, fearing he wished to harm them.<sup>668</sup>

Church bells held an exceptionally important role in pre-modern society, especially in rural societies: '*church bells* ... might well be compared to the role of the telephone, radio, newspapers, clock, calendars and telegrams in our day ... they measured the time in daily practices and served as a channel to transmit the

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<sup>666</sup> AN, JJ98, f. 84, no. 252, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 333-5, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 191-2.

<sup>667</sup> Étienne Marcel himself sent 'letters' to the *bonnes villes* to communicate his views on the Jacquerie. See 'Letter of Étienne Marcel to the Communes of Picardy and Flanders', trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 177-8.

<sup>668</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 97, no. 292, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 293-4, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 190-1

most important messages'.<sup>669</sup> Bells were a 'sacred object, symbol of the identity and cohesion of a community'.<sup>670</sup> As a medium of communicating messages, and a call to assembly for the public, bells obviously had significance in the genesis of popular movements.<sup>671</sup> Jelle Haemers, referring to fifteenth-century Flemish revolts, describes bells as 'the voice of power, a vital medium to mobilize the masses'.<sup>672</sup> Improper ringing of these bells could result in the culprit being executed. The bells themselves could be the targets of retaliation; following the Harelle of 1382 in Rouen, the King 'dismantled the bell that had called the commune to action'.<sup>673</sup>

In the case of the Jacquerie it was clear that the authorities construed the ringing of bells to be a call to arms for the peasantry. In the case of Jean Flageolot and his charges, the crown had originally considered the ringing of the bells to have been evidence in itself of the villagers' intent.<sup>674</sup> Although they had not attacked any local settlements, nor needed to defend themselves from the Lord of Saint-Dizier, the ringing of the bells was enough to suggest that they might have. In the same region, Jean le Jacqueminart's remission indicates that

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<sup>669</sup> S. Menache, *The Vox Dei : Communication in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 9. The definitive work on the importance and symbolism of bells in rural life is Alain Corbin's *Les Cloches de la Terre, Paysage sonore et culture sensible dans les campagnes au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994), although it concentrates only on the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For works on sound in earlier periods, see Cockayne, 'Cacophony, or vile scrapers on vile instruments', pp. 35-47, and D. Garrioch, 'Sounds of the city: the soundscape of early modern European towns', *Urban History* 30, n.1 (2003), pp. 5-25.

<sup>670</sup> Corbin, *Les Cloches de la Terre*, p.267. Bells were a crucial factor in a village community's own identity. Miguel Ángel Marín suggested that because bell-ringing was 'probably a local feature that only natives would be able to understand', they 'helped to create a sense of spatial awareness and of local identity'. M.A. Marín, 'Sound and urban life in a small Spanish town during the *ancien régime*', *Urban History*, 29, n.1 (2002), pp. 58-9.

<sup>671</sup> Bercé describes the ringing of bells as one of the characteristics of the 'pre-modern' revolt: 'Ringing ceaselessly, the alarm bell summoned the inhabitants of the neighbourhood who flocked to join the pillage, of which they would have their share if the rioters left the town gates open'. Bercé, *Revolt and revolution*, p. 115.

<sup>672</sup> J. Haemers, 'A Moody Community? Emotion and Ritual in Late Medieval Urban Revolts', in *Emotions in the Heart of the City (Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries); Studies in Urban History*, ed. E. Lecuppre-Desjardin and A.L. Van Bruaenl (Turnhout : Brepols, 2005), pp. 41-62.

<sup>673</sup> *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denys*, vol. 6, pp. 144-5, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 281.

<sup>674</sup> AN, JJ90, f. 97, no. 292, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 293-4, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 190-1.



the villagers of Thiébelemont (Marne) were summoned at the sound of bells.<sup>675</sup> The importance is underlined in another remission, where the priest Jean Morel was accused of having ‘sold the bells to the nobles’.<sup>676</sup> Bells (and bellmakers) were important to the village, the community and their lords. Who had control of these ‘sacred objects’, and what they did with them, was instrumental in bringing the villagers into revolt. Most explicit was a remission that details exactly how the bells could be used in case of danger. The ringing of the bells alerted villagers to danger, ‘where anyone who was able was sent to the village (*ville*) where sounds or the striking of the said bells started, to resist enemies and to suppress their force’.<sup>677</sup> The ringing of two bells in Ballieo (Oise) also allowed the assembly to hear the words of one individual who warned them that when ‘enemy parties arrived, the whole parish would be devastated’.<sup>678</sup> Bells both warned the villagers and summoned them together to hear the common message.

The role of visual imagery within popular revolts has been much discussed, as has the importance of symbols and signs within uprisings. Symbols offer legitimacy to the crowd’s actions. They also offer means of binding together individuals within the crowd to act in unison.<sup>679</sup> Trexler and Cohn have demonstrated the power of flags within the Ciompi,<sup>680</sup> and while that particular practice was not common in the northern Europe, other symbols took their place

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<sup>675</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 121, no. 355, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 268-70.

<sup>676</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 89, no. 265, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 270-2, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 188-9.

<sup>677</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 164, no. 465, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 281-2.

<sup>678</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>679</sup> Ralph H. Turner and Samuel J. Surace write about the importance of the symbol, and how it can bind a disparate crowd if they know what it ‘means’, in their 1956 essay ‘Zoot-Suiters and Mexicans: Symbols in Crowd Behaviour’, in *Collective Behaviour*, ed. Ralph H. Turner and Lewis M. Killian (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1957): ‘To the degree, then, to which any symbol evokes only one consistent set of connotations throughout the community, only one general course of action with respect to that object will be indicated, and the union of diverse members of the community into an acting crowd will be facilitated’, p. 19.

<sup>680</sup> Trexler, ‘Follow the Flag’, Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, pp. 177-92.

especially in the cities.<sup>681</sup> If we consider Marcel's revolt in Paris, chronicle accounts and also remissions indicate the importance of costume and image in the uprising. This is made clear by the remissions, like this one issued to Guillaume le Fèvre:

They wore a silver buckle enamelled half in vermillion, half in blue, with 'to a good end' written underneath it. And they wore parti-coloured hoods as a sign to live or die with this provost, against all others.<sup>682</sup>

This symbol was clearly known in Paris, and the crown mentions it in several remissions. It is also clear that a substantial number of these individuals were specifically indicted for wearing this costume. Not only was it known to the French crown and the Parisian people, but other rebels in the north. For example, in Amiens, 'they put on the hoods, part blue and red, as a sign of their unity and alliance with the city of Paris'.<sup>683</sup> Symbolism was not trapped solely within the crowd that was rioting, but it could spread beyond the boundaries to other crowds and other rebels – it could mean as much to outsiders as it did to the rebels themselves.

We see nothing that matches the complexity of the urban examples, but there is scattered evidence of symbolism connected with the rising. Pierre de Montfort, for example, while attempting to convince the people of Caen to join the revolt, showed unity with the Jacques by replacing the feather in his hat with a model plough.<sup>684</sup> If this symbol was understandable to the townsmen, as the document states, then the men of Caen were both aware of the Jacquerie, and considered it to be of a rural origin. Other than that, we have the account of the *Chronique des Quatres Valois*, which describes the rebels as draped in banners

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<sup>681</sup> Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, pp. 183-188.

<sup>682</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 85, no. 255, reprinted in Secousse, vol 1, pp. 83-4, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 192-3.

<sup>683</sup> AN, JJ86, f. 78, no. 239, reprinted in Secousse, pp. 97-9, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 197-8.

<sup>684</sup> AN, JJ87, f. 136, n. 231, reprinted in Luce, *Jacquerie*, pp. 291-2, trans. Cohn, *PP*, pp. 189-91.

emblazoned with the fleur-de-lis. The 'fleur-de-lis', especially in the context of the Hundred Years War, is powerfully symbolic: the symbol had been burned into popular consciousnesses as a stereotype for 'peace and justice'.<sup>685</sup> This account only applies to Cale's force, and as established earlier, this did not represent the whole rebellion. As we mentioned, the chronicler may not be the most reliable source on the revolt. However, if either this account or the remission is accurate, the acceptance of some form of insignia was a sign that symbolism could be important for these rebels, even if not to the same extent as for their urban counterparts.

Communities may have acted independently in selecting their own targets, but they could and did communicate ideas through a variety of means. Not only were letters transferred between rebel groups, but non-verbal signs and signals could both bring together communities as well as spread the message to those yet to rise. Moreover, the infrastructure and social organisation meant that rural villages (*villes*) could pass these messages along established routes. As we have seen, individuals with links to other villages or towns could bring the message to new settlements, like Pierre de Montfort in Caen, or could organise the peasants together, like Jean Favresse who brought together several small villages to defend against the possibility of a noble attack. Jacques Chennievieres, of Taverney (Val d'Oise), could lead the neighbouring settlement of Montmorency in violence.

The real success of the Jacquerie is apparent in the speed at which peasantry outside the Beauvaisis, upon the first outbreak of rebellion, themselves

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<sup>685</sup> Menache, *The Vox Dei*, p. 201.

took up arms. That message could be transmitted in a variety of forms but the power of the message is what seemed important: speeches, phrases and letters all seemed to have a lasting legacy that could easily be recalled by the courts and the appellants months and years later when remissions were issued. The citizens of Caen may have seen the plough on Pierre de Montfort's cap, and knew that it symbolised the rising of the peasants; the authorities considered the message powerful enough for Pierre to be arrested, over 100 miles north of the supposed heartland of the revolt.

## 7 – CONCLUSION

At the end of October and November 2005, the disaffected youth of the housing projects around the major French cities, starting in Paris, rose up into large-scale social protest. Although only one person was killed, thousands of cars were burnt, numerous buildings were destroyed and public services disrupted in the ensuing violence. The incidents caused political turmoil throughout France, and led to the opening of political discussions on subjects ranging from inner-city poverty to the unculturalist attitude that supposedly defined French cultural policies up until that point.<sup>686</sup>

The riots lasted roughly until 18 November, or twenty-two days. In the international press, they were often described as a purely Parisian problem – for example, ABC News ran a ‘special report’ on the ‘Paris Riots in Perspective’.<sup>687</sup> Any true perspective on the rioting would have identified that a national (and international, in the case of some ‘sympathy riots’ in neighbouring countries) problem, affecting 274 towns over *départements* as far from Paris as Ille-et-Vilaine and Bas-Rhin in the north and west, and Alpes-Maritimes and Pyrénées-Atlantiques in the south.<sup>688</sup>

While many international commentators ignored the scope and scale of the uprising, their focus naturally fell on the damage and disruption caused. The

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<sup>686</sup> For example, see A. Duval Smith, ‘The Week Paris Burned’, *The Observer*, 6 November 2006, available at <http://observer.guardian.co.uk/focus/story/0,6903,1635373,00.html>; J. Baudrillard, ‘The Pyres of Autumn’, *New Left Review* 37 (2006), pp. 5-7; a series of papers available at <http://riotsfrance.ssrc.org> ascribe the root cause of the violence to (amongst other factors) sociology, economics or post-colonial apartheid.

<sup>687</sup> ‘Paris Riots in Perspective’, *ABC News Special Report*, 4 November 2005, accessed 31 March 2006 <http://abcnews.go.com/International/story?id=1280843>.

<sup>688</sup> ‘Linked’ attacks were reported in Spain, Berlin, Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Greece and Denmark. Many of these attacks demonstrated similar methods (the burning of cars and trashcans) and professed sympathy with the *banlieue* inhabitants. For example, on 11 November 2005 a crowd of 80 youths attacked the French Institute in Thessalonika, Greece. In the French Caribbean colony of Guadeloupe, there were also riots.

violence caught the eye of many journalists and academics, who emphasised the seemingly unorganised rampages of the disaffected urban youth in a style that encouraged comparison with the *Jacquerie* of 1358. For example, Bernard Henri-Lévy wrote in *Le Point* that the riots were:

A sinister energy of pure hatred. A nihilistic whirlwind of violence without idea or plan which intoxicates itself, town by town, in the reflection of its own spectacle in the TV images, which is itself just as fixated [with the violence].<sup>689</sup>

This idea of nihilistic violence was furthered by Swiss journalist Martin Meyer:

They may be increasingly 'nihilist', and armed with a willingness to commit a violence honed by thousands of computer games. The events satisfy their desire for action, and are steered by the vague 'idea' that 'this'll show the people in power'. But this mentality, far from theory and doctrine, makes it extremely difficult for the public security forces to respond efficiently. The more a spontaneous terror movement sees itself as 'playful', the more difficult it is to tackle.<sup>690</sup>

Despite this emphasis on a meaningless 'whirlwind' of destruction, Lévy did note, however, that there was organisation ('the group joined, with mobiles, exchanging text messages), the groups were effective ('mobile units') and there was some sort of programme (the movement would not stop 'until they had burned or tried to burn every last representative building of France and the State of Law').<sup>691</sup> Indeed, a riot reported to have started when teenagers died hiding from the police in an electricity installation ended in the destruction of several power stations in Amiens. It was even suggested by some that there were shadowy organisations operating behind the rebels: In *The Spectator*, Rod Liddle commented that '[i]t may well be that the motive for the rioting was nothing more than an inchoate grievance allied to youthful exuberance and a penchant for

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<sup>689</sup> B.-H. Lévy, 'Sur l'explosion des banlieues', *Le Point*, 10 November 2005.

<sup>690</sup> M. Meyer, 'Frankreich brennt', *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 7 November 2005, trans. www.signandsight.com.

<sup>691</sup> Lévy, 'Sur l'explosion des banlieues', *Le Point*, 10 November 2005.

bad behaviour, but it was Islam which gave it an identity and also its retrospective *raison d'être*.<sup>692</sup> Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy hinted at a 'large organisation' behind the revolt.<sup>693</sup> Nonetheless, the defining comment on the *banlieue* rioting was that it was a revolt without a message or programme.

The links between this reportage and the chroniclers' depictions of the Jacquerie are obvious. A French phenomenon reported as a Parisian problem, in the former case; in the latter, a revolt covering virtually the whole of the north, but reported as only taking place in the Île de France. Both were described as revolts seemingly without 'meaning'. The chroniclers, like today's commentators, reported a certain organisation within the revolt, but these accounts were discarded in favour of tales of extreme violence (on the part of both the peasantry and the nobility). As later commentators will be influenced by the images of burning vehicles in Seine-Saint-Denis, modern historians have been influenced by the accounts of violence recorded by the chroniclers. The 'blazing fire of fifteen days',<sup>694</sup> which could not have been organised because 'the peasants were too brutish',<sup>695</sup> is a product of the most salacious reportage by contemporaries.

Yet as early as the nineteenth century, Siméon Luce had uncovered a source that allowed historians to understand mechanisms of this 'rampage'. The letters of remission, recorded in the Royal Chancery records, offered insight into individual rebels and rebel communities. Although they have since been used by a variety of historians, the *Pièces Justificatives* compiled by Siméon Luce has

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<sup>692</sup> R. Liddle, *The Spectator*, 11 November 2005.

<sup>693</sup> C. Salhani, 'Bedlam to Ballot: More to French Riots than meets the eye', 11 November 2005, [http://www.khaleejtimes.com/Displayarticle.asp?section=opinion&xfile=data/opinion/2005/november/opinion\\_november29.xml](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/Displayarticle.asp?section=opinion&xfile=data/opinion/2005/november/opinion_november29.xml).

<sup>694</sup> Leguai, 'Les révoltes rurales', p. 58.

<sup>695</sup> Flammermont, 'La Jacquerie en Beauvaisis', p. 12.

ever since been assumed to represent the full extent of the surviving sources. In truth, Luce's collection was only a small proportion of them, and concentrated on the attack on Meaux rather than the Jacquerie itself, and curiously, his own analysis drew more upon the chroniclers than the remissions he skilfully transcribed. He barely scratched the surface of these sources' potential.

Letters of remission offer those interested in the rebellions of 1358 access to over two hundred individual testimonies about the events of that rebellious summer. They offer vital crucial information about individual rebels and communities, including geographical data, names and dates. Moreover, the narratives themselves contain a variety of data that can, when compiled, give us a real sense of the character of the Jacquerie.

Of course, remissions were not available to all rebels. They were intended for exceptions: for those who missed the general amnesty, those who felt they were harshly treated or those who could afford an advocate on their behalf. We have no sense of the total proportion of rebels this sample represents, and the circumstances surrounding the production of remissions suggest that the sample is weighted towards the better-off Jacques. Neither should we always take their narratives at face value; these documents were primarily intended to put the supplicant's case in as positive a fashion as possible, and utilised formulae that were familiar to the crown – terms like *gens du plat-pays* – to appeal in a context most likely to bring them forgiveness.

Yet even within the rigid formulae, we can discern information of the nature of the revolt. Although recent scholarship has emphasised links between the Jacquerie and the rebellions of Marcel and Charles of Navarre, the remissions suggest that the each individual movement was almost entirely distinct. The



Jacquerie was not a co-opted rebellion as Cazelles and Bessen concluded; the crown of France certainly makes clear that each revolt was unconnected. Even the example of Jacques and Parisian cooperation at Meaux is unsupported; apart from Jean Froissart's second-hand account, no other evidence points to the Jacques playing a large part in the attack on the Marché.

Studying the Jacquerie through the remissions highlights that many of the old models concerning medieval revolt are simply inadequate. The Jacquerie was certainly not a food riot, which historians such as Rudé claimed to be the most common form of the so-called 'pre-industrial riot'.<sup>696</sup> Neither were its participants primarily women. Neither could the revolt be marked as being dominated by the clergy, as Bercé and others emphasised for the whole of 'pre-industrial Europe'.<sup>697</sup> These Jacques were peasants, agricultural labourers or semi-skilled workers who lived and worked in the rural economy.

But there is more to the remissions than simply negating current scholarship. They indicate exactly how a large-scale revolt like the Jacquerie could function. Rather than one grand 'army' led by a general, the Jacques were hundreds of individual units attacking their own targets. The unit tended to be the most natural bond in rural society – the village. The community where peasants controlled common places and local customs was the same community in which they rose up as rebels. These villages selected local objectives, and waged often successful campaigns to destroy their local nobles' property.

Villages did not need to remain independent, although they often did. On occasion, they joined together with other local groups to form substantial forces,

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<sup>696</sup> G. Rudé, 'The London Mob of the eighteenth century', *The Historical Journal*, v. 2 (1959), pp. 1-18.

<sup>697</sup> Y.-M. Bercé, *Revolt and Revolution in early modern Europe, an essay on the history of political violence* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), trans. J. Bergin, pp. 67-9.

able to destroy local fortifications and houses. To do so, they used a variety of methods of communication, including the written word; they also organised regional assemblies and congregations where they could decide on a course of action, even if they eventually chose to return to their pastures without further action. Even when these assemblies were large, however, the focus remained localised: assemblies near Saint-Dizier or south of Paris did not look to the supposed heartland of the Île de France, but concentrated on nearby installations and fortifications.

Moreover, the villages were led by local people, not outside agitators or lieutenants sent out by Étienne Marcel, although they all performed different actions like arranging offensives or defensive fortifications. These leaders came from peasant backgrounds and the villages themselves, or from nearby parishes, and were promoted from within the ranks of rebels, rather than from outside. Tactics were determined by the peasants and landworkers, not elites or artisans; from top to bottom, the Jacquerie was a peasants' revolt.

While this image of the Jacquerie may contrast with older images of revolt, it mirrors the current emphasis from social psychologists, who have sought to explain the complexity of popular movements and return the emphasis onto the insurgents themselves, rather than outside forces like the nobility.<sup>698</sup> It also mirrors the work of recent scholarship into the popular movements of the Middle Ages. Systematic study of hundreds of medieval revolts has shown that 'not even class-prejudiced chroniclers suggested that the subaltern classes depend on outside social superiors to lead them'.<sup>699</sup> They were often large-scale,

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<sup>698</sup> Reicher, *The Psychology of Crowd Dynamics* (in press).

<sup>699</sup> Cohn, *Lust for Liberty*, p. 129.

well-organised, had lofty ideals (although on this we have little evidence from the Jacquerie) and created bold plans of attack.

The Jacquerie was undoubtedly different to the majority of revolts of the Middle Ages. That the chroniclers treated the revolt and the retaliation as exceptional, plus the sudden weight put on the legal infrastructure with the mass issuing of remissions designed to restore the peace in the countryside, indicates something entirely new in the crown's experience. Yet much of this can be accounted for by the scale of the uprising, stretching as it did across much of northern France. Naturally, such a large revolt had a bigger emotional impact for the chroniclers and the crown than did the more regular urban uprising, often confined within city walls. There was more violence, but possibly proportionate to the increased scale of the rebellion. The nobles' retaliation was bloodier, but the crown sought to temper it by sounding a conciliatory tone in its issues of pardons and fines for the damage.

In these new models, the Jacques were rebels who fought with a purpose, were often successful (at least in their short-term, accomplishing their tactical missions) and were capable of organising themselves without the help of the nobility. Rather than a post-traumatic psychological reaction to the coming of the Black Death, or an explosion of exasperation from the destitute peasantry, the peasants in this area acted to protect their communities against the military nobility who they saw as responsible for the brigandage then sweeping across the countryside. Many similar peasant communities in this period echoed these actions, some of which were also mistaken for taking part in the Jacquerie, like at Vitteaux near Dijon.<sup>700</sup> Nor did this movement die with the Jacques; rather

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<sup>700</sup> See 'Peasant Resistance', p. 182-196.

resistance to armed individuals marked the relationship between crown and peasants for at least the next several years.

The tendency to describe the Jacquerie of 1358 as akin to the mindless displays of violence in the wake of the Black Death, like the Flagellant movement, is incorrect; rather, it is far closer to what has been described the so-called cluster of 'complex revolts' between 1378 and 1382. The Jacquerie was not 'incoherent' nor 'spontaneous', the adjectives Mollat and Wolff used to describe it.<sup>701</sup> Rather, it was organised and directed with clear targets and identifiable chiefs. Using the remissions, we have come a long way from Jean le Bel descriptions of the leaderless rebels' 'mindless rampage'.<sup>702</sup> The rediscovery of the Jacquerie as a dynamic movement of related peasant settlements renders descriptions like 'unimportant' as off the mark.<sup>703</sup> The Jacquerie needs to reassume its rightful place as the most important social movement in the history of medieval France, as the chroniclers knew, and the remissions prove.

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<sup>701</sup> Mollat and Wolff, *Popular Revolutions*, p. 128.

<sup>702</sup> Bel, *Chron.*, v.2, p. 256, trans. Cohn, *PP*, p. 151.

<sup>703</sup> Leguai, 'Les révoltes rurales', p. 58.

## Appendix I: Letters of remission connected to the Jacquerie

### Remissions issued to suspected Jacques

This table includes all remissions issued to supplicants (either individuals or communities) that were suspected of being part of the Jacquerie. When 'individuals' is used, it indicates that a number of persons were identified by name; when 'inhabitants' is used, the remission is issued to the entire community. Note in some cases remissions refer to a specific individual and 'others of the said ville': in this table, only the name of the supplicant is recorded.

SERIES (JJ)	ITEM	ISSUED TO...
86	203	Oudart Rouy and Colet Yon
86	205	Jacquin de Chennievieres
86	207	Inhabitants of Boissy-sous-Yon and Egly
86	208	Several individuals from St. Martin (near Paris)
86	215	Inhabitants of Boissy
86	221	Guillaume Lanyeux
86	222	Jean Boulaille
86	223	Jean Leber
86	224	Jean Ourcel
86	232	Vincent de la Vallee
86	235	Thomas Couereusse
86	239	Inhabitants of Amiens
86	244	Jehan Fillon
86	246	Inhabitants of Precy-sur-Oise
86	247	Jehan de Four and Jacquet de Saux
86	249	Guillaume le Charron
86	250	Enguerran and Guillaume de la Mare
86	254	Colin du Bruille
86	256	Oudart le Colet
86	262	Raoul le Bouchier
86	265	Jean Morel
86	267	Robert des Jardins
86	268	Simon le Cordier
86	269	8 individuals from Lucy-le-Bocage
86	275	Thiebaut le Maire
86	280	Inhabitants of Vemars-sur-Oise
86	286	Four individuals from Tremblay
86	291	Colin Francoise and Nicolas le Fremy
86	297	Gauchier Lore
86	298	Jean Huillot
86	299	Pierre Hardi
86	304	Six individuals from Loncjumeau
86	305	Jehan le Bouchier
86	306	Tassin de Lannoy

86	308	Colart du Four
86	309	Germain de Reveillon
86	310	Phillipe le Bouquillon
86	311	Inhabitants of Saint-Vrain
86	313	Roulant Maletrache
86	314	Jean Gore
86	320	Simon le Choine
86	322	Inhabitants of Neuilly-Ste-Fronte
86	326	30 individuals from Belleau
86	329	Inhabitants of Fontenay-les-Briis
86	338	Pierre Benart and others from Liancourt
86	342	Jehan Renart
86	344	Colart le Maunier
86	345	Estienne le Champion
86	346	Inhabitants of Bettancourt and Vroil
86	352	Wife of Perrot de Soissons
86	353	Estienne Asse and others of Montmorency
86	355	Jean le Jacquimart
86	356	Jacquet Diarre
86	357	Inhabitants of Heiltz-le-Maurupt
86	358	Inhabitants of Etrepy
86	359	Inhabitants of Vitry-la-Ville
86	360	Inhabitants of Bignicourt and Drouilly
86	361	Etienne Nolon
86	362	Jean le Grant
86	363	Inhabitants of Mennency
86	364	Jean Bruyant
86	365	Jean Rose
86	366	Guillaume Bruyant
86	368	Badouin le Charon
86	369	Badouin le Paris
86	370	Henri di Vilain
86	377	Inhabitants of villages around Heiltz-le-Hutier
86	378	Inhabitants of Songy
86	379	Inhabitants of La Chapelle-sur-Colle
86	380	Inhabitants of villages around Reims
86	383	Jean le Gentil
86	384	Lambert d'Autrefontaine
86	385	Denisot Rebours
86	386	Jehan Nerenget
86	387	Jehan Bernie
86	388	Inhabitants of Maisons
86	391	Arnoul Guenelon
86	393	Inhabitants of Balancourt
86	395	Denisot Rebours
86	396	Baudin le Charron
86	397	Guillaume de Trie
86	421	Jehan Charuel

86	422	Simon le Cordier
86	424	Inhabitants of Cravant
86	425	Jean du Bois
86	430	Gillebart Colas
86	437	Inhabitants of Montdidier
86	444	Jean des Hayes
86	456	Adam le Coq
86	465	Colin le Barbier
86	477	Warnier le Pontonnier
86	480	Inhabitants of Beaumont-sur-Oise
86	484	Inhabitants of Xanteuil and Abliages
86	485	Inhabitants of Sagi-la-Ville, Courtemanche, Prusieux and other villages around Pontoise
86	486	Inhabitants of Orgenay and other villages near Meulan
86	495	Mahieu and Perrin Cordelle
86	496	Inhabitants of Boran-sur-Oise
86	496.5	Inhabitants of Herennoville near Pontoise
86	498	Pierre le Bouchier
86	510	Jehan de Relenguet
86	511	Gieffroy de Chennevieres, Henry le Pennetier, Raoul de Meulis.
86	524	Inhabitants of Loissy-sur-Marne
86	533	Inhabitants of Pethes
86	534	Guy Michelet
86	571	Pierre le Macon
86	578	Inhabitants of Saint-Lumier
86	584	Regnaut Corbel
86	596	Inhabitants of Chavanges
86	597	Jehan de la Basse
87	46	Thomas de la Franc
87	117	Garnot Bellehere
87	118	Jehan de Brunel
87	231	Pierre de Montfort
88	2	Radolpho le Fevre
88	9	Nicolas le Mane
88	31	Guerart de l'Esglantier
88	43	Jehan Heudemare
88	89	Inhabitants of Gouyencourt
88	213	Rauol de Fevre
90	48	Inhabitants of Lorris
90	76	Inhabitants of Ferrieres
90	82	Colin Fabri
90	110	Inhabitants of Vermenton
90	111	Inhabitants of Cerny
90	161	Jacquet Bedin
90	162	Francisco de Berne
90	174	Johannes de Prunot

90	235	Phillipe Barnet
90	243	Pierrot de la Sene
90	244	Jehan Hurtout
90	271	Inhabitants of Bouchy-le-Repos
90	288	Hue de Sailleville
90	292	Jean Flageolot
90	293	Michel Martin
90	294	Jean le Fieron
90	354	Gilles le Hageuz
90	356	Jean Lespert
90	364	Pierre Paignant
90	387	Jehan Hequet
90	413	Pierre Troussel
90	419	Individual le Plessis-Bouchard
90	423	Roger Rogier and others
90	424	Pierre de Colebart and Pierre Rogier
90	425	Pierre la Barreur
90	446	Jehan Bonte
90	476	Fremy Houdier
90	488	Inhabitants of Marly-le-Roi
90	496	Thomas Suavale
90	556	Guillame de la Sengle and Jean Guillaume
90	564	Inhabitants of Beauvais
90	629	Henry Ravet
90	635	Guillaume Porel
91	71	Inhabitants of Dracy
92	237	Inhabitants of Courtemanche
92	277	Inhabitants of Fontaine-sous-Montdidier
94	4	Jehan Ourcel
94	26	Jean and Robert Arnoul
96	179	Perrin de Verberie
96	393	Baudouin le Vasseur
96	425	Jean Bouquet
97	358	Individuals from Cachy
98	252	Mahieu de Leurel
99	480	Martin le Tanneur
100	643	Jehan Chacon
100	683	Jean de Dore
101	55	Jehan Ourcel
102	9	Jean Macreux
102	96	Gilot and Jehan Dudelonge
102	272	Sicart le Barbier
106	393	Gille de Roy
109	173	Guillaume le Penettier and Jean Cochonet



Remissions issued to non-Jacques that concern the Jacquerie

The remissions tabulated below were issued to supplicants that were not considered to be Jacques, but the remission narratives detail either the Jacquerie itself or the retaliation that followed. Sometimes they do both - for example, the remission for Ancel la Pippe justifies his involvement in the retaliation by detailing the crimes of the men of Acy against him.

SERIES (JJ)	ITEM	ISSUED TO...
86	130	Jean de Dormans
86	131	Mathiu de Roucy
86	142	Seigneur of Saint-Dizier
86	153	Jean de Chaponoval
86	171	Jacques des Essarts
86	173	Jean de Crevecoeuer
86	258	Phillipe de Baucencourt
86	352	Perrot des Soissons
86	356	Jacquet Diacre
86	372	Gui de la Conte
86	373	Renier la Pippe
86	395	Robin Charettier
86	396	Raoul and Guillaume le Mabot, Guiot de Tremibrit, Jean de Hauchies and Jean Gobart
86	402	Nobles of Trezan
86	406	Maraguos Behosque
86	419	Thomas Cousterel
86	420	Brigands of Montlhery
86	421	Jean Charuel
86	429	Pierre Langlois
86	436	Count of Vaudemont
86	456	Adam la Coq
86	578	Seigneur of Saint-Dizier
88	31	Guerart de l'Esglantier
90	151	Pierre d'Escart
90	444	Brigands of La-Celle-en-Brie
90	519	Nobles involved with the garrison at Meaux
90	530	Ancel la Pippe
91	333	Jean de Bonneuil
96	179	Nobles at Pont-Saint-Maxence
96	393	Badouin le Vasseur
96	425	Nobles at Pont-Saint-Maxence
97	358	Nobles at Cachy
100	478	Jacquet de Bamain
100	683	Gilot Dudelonge
102	96	Sicart le Barbier
102	276	Gilot and Jean Dudelonge
107	186	Squire of Hangest
108	80	Robert Rogois
115	297	Knights of Gien
145	498	Nobles at Plainville

Appendix II: Letters of remission concerning the revolt in Paris 1358

Series (JJ)	Item	Issued to...
86	185	Jean Morelet
86	206	Pierre de Lagny
86	209	Nicolas le Flament
86	211	Jean Chandelier
86	213	Jean le Ladre
86	214	Guillaume le Fèvre
86	216	Jacques du Chatel
86	220	Nicolas de la Court Nemie
86	230	Jean Hersent
86	233	Laurens de Veullettes
86	236	Rauol d'Aucamps
86	238	Jehan de Monteux
86	240	Men of Paris
86	248	Henry de Chastillon
86	252	Guillot Bonnachet
86	253	Jehan Fagnet
86	255	Guillaume le Fèvre *
86	271	Gieffron le Flament
86	272	Thomas Gascogne
86	274	Guillaume Chavenoil
86	278	Étienne de la Fontaine
86	282	Étienne de Resnie
86	285	Phillipe de Jeurre
86	288	Men of Meaux
86	289	Jehan Pisdoe
86	290	Thibaud Farcault
86	292	Maron Pisdoe
86	300	Jehan de la Ramee
86	312	Jehan Rose
86	340	Jeannin des Champs
86	341	Regnault Blouart
86	371	Jehan de Lyon
86	390	Guillaume d'Augeuil
86	519	Salemon de la Tour
86	527	Jehan de Saint-Leu
90	66	Men of Amiens
90	78	Nicolas de la Court-Nemie *

\* This remission is a duplicate of a previous document

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On three occasions, records of the Paris *parlement* have been used. The original archival references for these are:

X 1a (civil judgements of the *parlement*): 14, 17.

X 2a (criminal judgements of the *parlement*): 1.

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