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THE NATURE, COMPOSITION, AND FUNCTIONS OF THE CANADIAN BOURGEOISIE, 1729-1748

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This study of the social structures of New France in the years 1729 to 1748 has as its object the study of New France, and not Québec after the conquest. The latter aspect of the subject, though, has aroused some controversy, one might even say polemic, and this necessitates a brief exposition as a prelude. Historiographical barricades have been erected between the history departments of the Université de Montréal and l'Université Laval. Across these barricades, cobblestones containing more or less historical evidence have been verbally tossed. The Montréal school, basing itself on the ideas of Maurice Séguin, [1] has claimed that there existed a bourgeoisie in New France prior to 1760. This claim has Michel Brunet as its most verbal exponent, [2] although the historical data for his contentions has been based primarily on the researches of Guy Frégault. [3] Another figure in the pro-bourgeoisie hypothesis is Philippe Garigue, a sociologist, and the Dean of the Social Science Faculty at the Université de Montréal. [4] He bases his conclusions on the works of Brunet

[1] None of Séguin's writings reveal clearly the basic axioms of his thought. His lectures, and the writings of his disciples, i.e., Brunet, are the best means of acquaintance.

[2] See, in particular, his "Les Canadiens après la Conquête: Les débuts de la résistance passive", *Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique Française*, vol. XII, no. 2, septembre 1958, pp. 170-207; "The British Conquest: Canadian Social Scientists and the Fate of the *Canadiens*", *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. XL, no. 2, June 1959, pp. 93-107; "Premières réactions des vaincus de 1760 devant leurs vainqueurs" and "La Conquête anglaise et la déchéance de la bourgeoisie canadienne (1760-1793)", in *La Présence Anglaise et les Canadiens*, Montréal: Beauchemin, 1958, pp. 37-48 and 49-112; *French Canada and The Early Decades of British Rule*, 1760-1791, Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1963, 16 pp.

[3] Guy Frégault, "Le régime seigneurial et l'expansion de la colonisation dans le bassin du Saint-Laurent au XVIII[e] siècle", *Canadian Historical Association Report*, 1944, pp. 61-73; "La Colonisation du Canada au XVIII[e] siècle", *Cahiers de l'Académie Canadienne-Française*, vol. 2: *Histoire*, Montréal: n.p., 1957, pp. 53-81; "Essai sur les finances canadiennes (1700-1750)", *Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique Française*, vol. XII, no. 3, décembre 1958, pp. 307-323; no. 4, mars 1958, pp. 459-484; vol. XIII, no. 1, juin 1959, pp. 30-44; no. 2, septembre 1959, pp. 157-182; "La Compagnie de la colonie", *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa*, vol. 30, 1960, pp. 5-29, 127-149; *La Guerre de la Conquête*, Montréal, Fides, 1955, 514 pp.: *Canadian Society During The French Regime*, Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1956, 16 pp.

[4] Philippe Garigue, "Change and Continuity in Rural French-Canada", *Etudes sur le Canada Français*, Montréal: Faculté des Sciences Sociales, Economiques et Politiques, Université de Montréal, 1958, pp. 17-28; "The Social Evolution of Quebec: A Reply", *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, vol. 27, no. 2, May 1961, pp. 257-260; *L'Option Politique du Canada Français; Une Interprétation de la Survivance Nationale*, Montréal: Editions du Lévrier, 1963, 175 pp.

and Frégault. The historians who have most strongly challenged the *Conquest Hypothesis School*[5] have taught at l'Université Laval : Jean Hamelin[6] and Fernand Ouellet,[7] with an assist from Hubert Guindon, a member of the Department of Sociology of Sir George Williams University.[8] Recently, the subject and controversy has been the object of two interesting historiographical essays,[9] and, at this Association's meeting last year, a paper by Alfred Dubuc considered the problem of social stratification in New France and Québec.[10]

An old feature of this controversy over the nature of *Canadian* society during the French Régime is that neither of the two most renown controversialists, Ouellet and Brunet, are specialists in the pre-1760 period of Canadian history. In the controversy, Hamelin-Ouellet form one tandem; Frégault-Brunet the other. The latter team contends that "La Nouvelle-France eut sa bourgeoisie. Celle-ci occupait les postes de commande dans le commerce, dans l'industrie, dans l'armée et dans l'administration."[11] The Hamelin-Ouellet pair respond that the *hypothesis* is

[5] Séguin, Brunet and Frégault, all at one time members of the Department of History of l'Université de Montréal, propound either a "black" interpretation of French Canada, or, more commonly, a "Conquest hypothesis" which they, and their students, accept as a law. See also Cameron Nish, *The French Canadians, 1759-1766, Conquered? Half-Conquered? Or Liberated?* Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing Company, 1966, 148 pp.

[6] Jean Hamelin, *Economie et Société en Nouvelle-France*, Québec : Presses Universitaires Laval, 1960, 137 pp. M. Hamelin is still a member of the Institut d'Histoire of l'Université Laval. His conclusion is that there was no *grande bourgeoisie* in New France. It should be noted, however, that he seems at times to completely deny the existence of a bourgeoisie in the colony. Professor Hamelin's work is by far the most important study of the economic and social structures of New France. As he himself admits, much further research is necessary to clarify some of the problems he raises.

[7] Fernand Ouellet, "M. Brunet et le problème de la Conquête", *Bulletin des recherches historiques*, vol. 62, 1956, pp. 92-101; "Les Fondements historiques de l'option séparatiste dans le Québec", *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. XLIII, No. 3, September 1962, pp. 185-203; "Le Nationalisme canadien-français : de ses origines à l'insurrection de 1837", *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. XLV, No. 4, December 1964, p. 277-292. M. Ouellet's massive thesis, presented at l'Université Laval in 1965, investigates the relations between economic and social and political structures in Quebec between 1760 and 1850. It is to be published this year, 1966, by Fides.

[8] Hubert Guindon's "The Social Evolution of Quebec Reconsidered", in *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, vol. 26, No. 4, November 1960, pp. 533-551, is a criticism of the findings, and sociological methodology of Philippe Garigue.

[9] S. R. Mealing, "The Concept of Social Class and the Interpretation of Canadian History", *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. XLVI, No. 3, September 1965, pp. 201-218; Serge Gagnon, "Pour une conscience historique de la Révolution Québecoise", *Cité Libre*, vol. XVI, no. 83, 1966, pp. 4-16. Also, the students of the Institut d'Histoire of l'Université Laval, in November 1965, held a *colloque* on "La Bourgeoisie canadienne-française : ses fondements historiques". The participants were Robert Mandrou, Cameron Nish, Alfred Dubuc and Fernand Dumont. See, for a brief summary, André Garon, José Igartue and Jacques Mathieu, "La Bourgeoisie canadienne-française et ses fondements historiques", *Recherches sociographiques*, vol. VI, no. 3, 1965, pp. 305-310.

[10] Alfred Dubuc, "Problems in the Study of the Stratification of the Canadian Society from 1760 to 1840", *Canadian Historical Association Report*, 1965, pp. 13-29.

[11] Brunet, "Déchéance", p. 50.

"... séduisante, mais correspond-elle à l'exacte réalité ? Il est permis de poser la question car l'hypothèse a été lancée sans qu'aucune recherche exhaustive ne vienne l'étayer." [12] Little is to be gained by further surveying in depth the positions of past writers on the subject; [13] it is more useful to recognize their contributions as a point of departure with, however, one necessary comment. Past writings on the social structures of New France have not had as a primary object the study of New France, but rather the effects of the conquest on the French Canadians. This tendency is most obvious in Brunet and Ouellet, [14] but is shared as well by Hamelin, Garigue, Frégault and Dubuc.[15]

Social analysis, even in historical literature, presumes an accepted system of classification. The historian's concept of social classes exists both implicitly and explicitly before his researches.[16] In some cases, this classificatory system may also involve psychological[17] and theological-economic covering laws.[18] This tendency, perhaps inevitable in sociological-historical inquiries, makes it imperative to state clearly the frames of reference which guided the present study. The word *bourgeois* has Marxian connotations, but the present essay, apart from emphasising economic matters, does not use a Marxian system of social classes. Nothing is to be gained by applying the criterion of class struggle as an analytic tool in studies of the French Régime in Canada.[19] Nor can we use what may be called the traditional sociological-historical classificatory tools:[20] Weber's distinction between a property class and an acquisitive class, with the associated "protestant ethic";[21] Henri Sée's modified Estates concept[22] and Mosca's qualified

12 Hamelin, p. 127.

13 See Cameron Nish, "Une bourgeoisie coloniale en Nouvelle-France : Une hypothèse de travail", *L'Actualité Economique*, vol. 39, juillet-septembre 1963, pp. 240-265. Also *La Bourgeoisie Canadienne, 1729-1748*, to be published in the Fall of 1967 by the Centre de Recherche en Histoire Economique du Canada Français.

14 Brunet, "Premières réactions", pp. 37-48; Ouellet, "M. Brunet", pp. 95-96. Also the third volume of Ouellet's thesis : his conclusion, 150 pages.

15 Hamelin, pp. 132-137; Garigue, *Option*, pp. 15, 27-32, 37-43; Frégault, *Conquête*, pp. 429-454; Dubuc, p. 29.

16 For evidence of this tendency see the works of Hamelin, Ouellet, Frégault, Brunet and Dubuc noted above. And, Stanley Ryerson's *The Founding of Canada, Beginning to 1815*, Toronto : Progress Books, 1960, 340 pp.

17 Ouellet, "M. Brunet", pp. 95-96.

18 Dubuc, pp. 15-16; Ouellet, "M. Brunet", p. 96.

19 Ryerson's views on the conquest, are an example, pp. 199-206. See also W. J. Eccles, *The Government of New France*, Ottawa : Canadian Historical Association, 1965, pp. 7-11, for a counter to class and structure conflicts in New France.

20 For examples of these see A. R. M. Lower, *Colony to Nation*, Toronto : Longmans, Green & Company, 1946, pp. 62-69, D. G. Creighton, *The Empire of the St. Lawrence*, Toronto : The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1956, pp. 17-24.

21 Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, translated by A. R. Henderson, and T. Parsons, revised edition, London: William Hodge & Company, 1947, p. 390, and his *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, translated by T. Parsons, New York; Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953, 292 pp.

22 Henri Sée, *La France économique et sociale au 18e siècle*, 6e édition, Paris: Armand Colin, 1958, p. 7.

Estatism,[23] are useful, but not definitive as analytic concepts for a study of the social structures of New France. Neither dictionary nor encyclopedic definitions help very much. All accept, as a criterion of social classification for the Old Régime, the classic Estates, that is, First, Second and Third.[24] Recent studies, such as those by the Barbers,[25] Ashton and Hayek,[26] have raised doubts as to the validity of past terms of reference of social analysis of seventeenth and eighteenth century Europe. This, as we shall see, is also the case in the analysis of American societies.

To reject past systems of classification, however, does not obviate the need for categories. A knowledge of types of activities generally associated with bourgeois activity was needed, and from these activities a definition of a *colonial bourgeoisie* was formulated as a work hypothesis. The historical parentage of this hypothesis was found in the rich lode of American historical literature, specially the works of Labaree,[27] Harrington,[28] East,[29] Schlesinger senior,[30] Diamond,[31] the recent works of Stuart Bruchey,[32] and, most particularly, the many fine studies of Carl Bridenbaugh.[33] These studies of nascent societies, nascent economics, and nascent political systems indicated that the social structures of Colonial America resembled those of the Mother Country, but were not

[23] Gaetano Mosca, *The Ruling Class*, translated by H. D. Kahn, revised by A. Livingston, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1939, p. 377.

[24] J. B. Lacorne de Saint-Palaye, *Dictionnaire historique de l'ancien françois ou Glossaire de la langue françoise depuis son origine jusqu'au siècle de Louis XIV*, vol. 3, Niort: L. Favre, n.d., p. 86; Carl Brinkman, "Bourgeoisie", *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, vol. 1, p. 654-655; *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1962 edition, vol. 5, pp. 968-969; *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique Quillet*, p. 103.

[25] Elinor and Bernard Barber, eds., *European Social Classes: Stability and Change*, New York: MacMillan Company, 1965, 145 pp.; Elinor Barber, *The Bourgeoisie in 18th Century France*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955, 165 pp.

[26] See their essays in *Capitalism and the Historians*, edited by F. A. Hayek, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954, pp. 33-63, 64-92.

[27] L. W. Labaree, *Conservatism in Early America*, Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1959, 182 pp.

[28] Virginia D. Harrington, *The New York Merchant on the Eve of the American Revolution*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1935, 389 pp.

[29] Robert East, "The Business Entrepreneur in a Changing Colonial Economy, 1763-1795", *Journal of Economic History: The Tasks of Economic History*, Supplement VI, 1946, pp. 16-27.

[30] A. M. Schlesinger, *The Colonial Merchant and the American Revolution, 1763-1766*, new printing, New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1957, 647 pp.

[31] Sigmund Diamond, "Old Patterns and New Societies: Virginia and French Canada in the Seventeenth Century", in *Sociology and History*, edited by W. J. Cahnman & A. Boskoff, London: Collier-Macmillan, 1964, pp. 170-190.

[32] Stuart Bruchey, *The Roots of American Economic Growth, 1607-1861: An Essay in Social Causation*, New York: Harper & Row, 1964, 234 pp.; *The Colonial Merchant: Sources and Readings*, New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1966, 199 pp.

[33] Carl and Jessica Bridenbaugh, *Rebels and Gentlemen: Philadelphia in the Age of Franklin*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1962, 393 pp.; Carl Bridenbaugh, *Cities in the Wilderness; Urban Life in America, 1625-1742*, New York: Capricorn Books, 1964, 500 pp.; *Cities in Revolt: Urban Life in America, 1743-1776*, New York: Capricorn Books, 1964, 434 pp.; and, specially, *Myths & Realities: Societies of the Colonial South*, New York: Atheneum, 1963, 208 pp.

duplicates of them.[34] From this idea a point of departure was established for the present study: to look for differences between the French metropolitan and colonial societies in the Americas. Another equally essential tenet was that concerning the differentiation of classes by exclusive function, that is, noble, landed proprietor, administrator, merchant, etc. This analytic tool may be partially valid for the study of European societies. However, it is a useless concept for studies of colonial societies.[35] Further, to look for resemblances between colonial societies regardless of the metropolis. All those became hypotheses, to be sustained or rejected depending on the evidence.

There is general agreement on some of the activities of individuals classified as belonging to a bourgeois group: they are urban based, have property, a relatively high income, are acquisitive, are professionals, engage in industrial and commercial endeavors, and are relatively well educated. Jacques LeClerc adds, correctly, that a bourgeois class is difficult to define because it is "... une classe de fait et non de loi ..." [36] These eight words became the basic criterion of the present study: what a man does will be the basis for including him in a class. Specifically, these actions must indicate a control of the material, political and economic resources of the society. The control of these sources of power by the colonial bourgeoisie of New France had as an end the enrichment of the individual, and the group to which he belonged. The means by which it is proposed to examine and to prove the presence of such a class in New France will be, first, to examine an individual, François-Etienne Cugnet; second, an institution, the Superior Council, and third, the so-called seigneurial class.

François-Etienne Cugnet came to New France in 1719 as the representative of the *fermier* of the Domaine d'Occident, the holder of the tax farm of Canada.[37] He was the *Directeur et receveur*.[38] This

[34] Robert Mandrou, in his talk at the *Colloque* on the Canadian bourgeoisie, on November 13, 1965, at l'Université Laval, insisted on social resemblances between France and New France, but also differences. In his opinion, the social structures of France became more rigid in the 1670's and 1680's, after the rise of the middle class to the ranks of the *nobilité de la robe*. In effect, the new aristocracy attempted to protect its status by closing the class to new members. *Dérogeance* was not a factor in New France. See Nish, "Une bourgeoisie coloniale", p. 248.

[35] Frégault, *Society*, p. 14, was on the verge of realizing this idea. See for similar types of social analysis, Harrington, p. 10; Labaree, pp. 2-3.

[36] Jacques Leclercq, *Leçons de Droit naturel*, vol. IV: *Les Droits et Devoirs individuels*, troisième édition, Namur: Ad. Wesmael-Charlier, 1955, pp. 224-225.

[37] On the Domaine d'Occident see Cameron Nish, "Documents relatifs à l'histoire économique du régime français: Les budgets de la Nouvelle-France", *L'Actualité économique*, vol. 40, n° 3, octobre-décembre 1964, pp. 633-635.

[38] "François-Etienne Cugnet au nom et comme fondé de procuration de Me Ayma *(sic)* Lambert adjudicataire des fermes unies de France et du Domaine d'Occident...", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 40, pp. 305-307. For early activities of Cugnet, see also Marine Leland, "François-Joseph Cugnet (1720-1789)", *La Revue de l'Université Laval*, vol. XVI, no. 1, pp. 3-13, no. 2, 129-139, no. 3, 205-214, no. 5, 411-420; Alfred Gascon, *L'Œuvre de François-Joseph Cugnet. Etude historique*, Ottawa: Université d'Ottawa, thèse de maîtrise, 1941, pp. 2-11. F.-J. Cugnet was François-Etienne's son.

placed him in the administrative class. In 1730 he was appointed to the Superior Council;[39] in 1733 he was named *premier conseiller.*[40] He was thus a member of what may be called a judicial class. By profession, he was a lawyer.[41] As one of the members of the Compagnie des Forges de Saint-Maurice, he controlled the seigneurie of Saint-Maurice, and was granted that of Saint-Etienne as a personal holding.[42] As well, he owned several lots in the city of Québec valued at 8,000, 2,900 and 7,000 *livres.*[43] These land holdings permit Cugnet's classification as a member of the seigneurial class.

In 1732 the Domaine d'Occident was taken over by the state.[44] One part of this domain, the Tadoussac trade, was leased to Cugnet for a period of nine years at an annual rental of 4,500 *livres.*[45] According to Cugnet he lost so much money that he insisted on retaining the lease for a further nine years.[46] The Tadoussac trade involved furs, fishing and the manufacturing of fish oil.[47] After his bankruptcy in 1742 (to which we will return), he was granted the trade monopoly of three hinterland posts.[48] Cugnet also grew tobacco,[49] manufactured glue[50]

39 P.-G. Roy, "Les Conseillers au Conseil Souverain de la Nouvelle-France", *Mémoire de la Société Royale du Canada,* Série III, Tome IX, 1915, p. 181. On the Superior Council see also Raymond du Bois Cahall, *The Sovereign Council of New France: A Study in Canadian Constitutional Law,* New York: Columbia University Press, 1915, 274 pp.; J. Delalande, *Le Conseil Souverain de la Nouvelle-France,* Québec: Ls.-A. Proulx, 1927, 358 pp.; Eccles, *The Government of New France;* Gustave Lanctôt, *L'Administration de la Nouvelle-France,* Paris: Librarie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1929, 169 pp.

40 Roy, "Conseillers", p. 181.

41 R.P. L. Le Jeune, *Dictionnaire général...,* vol. 1, Ottawa: Université d'Ottawa, 1931, p. 453; A. Shortt, ed., *Documents Relating to Canadian Currency, Exchange and Finance During the French Period,* vol. 2, Ottawa: King's Printer, 1925, p. 543n. There are misprints, and factual errors in Shortt's biographical note.

42 "Société entre les intéressés en l'établissement des forges des Saint-Maurice, 16 octobre 1736", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 110, pp. 241-251; "Acte de concession... au sieur François-Etienne Cugnet... du terrain, 15 avril 1737", P.-G. Roy, *Inventaire des concessions en fief et seigneurie; Fois et hommages et aveux et dénombrements...,* vol. 5, pp. 45-47. (Hereafter Roy, *Seigneurie.*)

43 P.A.C., *Documents relatifs à la province de Québec: A: Documents généraux: Registre des aveux, dénombrements et déclarations,* vol. VI, pp. 58-65, 66-70.

44 "Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre, Québec, 1er octobre 1733", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 59-1, p. 61.

45 "Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre, Québec, le 16 8'bre 1746", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 85, p. 90.

46 "Cugnet A Monseigneur le Comte de Maurepas, Ministre et Secrétaire d'Etat, Canada 1746", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 94, part 2, ff. 6-7; "A Monseigneur le Comte de Maurepas, Ministre et Secrétaire d'Etat, 20 octobre 1747", P.A.C. E, *Dossiers personnels, François Etienne Cugnet,* carton 101, pp. 33-41.

47 "Scellés et Inventaire des effets du Sr. François Etienne Cugnet, Québec, 28, 29, 30 août et le 1er et 3 septembre 1742", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 114-1, ff. 144-204.

48 "A Monseigneur le Comte de Maurepas, Ministre et Secrétaire d'Etat, 20 octobre 1747", P.A.C., E, *Dossiers personnels, François Etienne Cugnet,* carton 101, pp. 33-41.

49 "Mémoire Tabacs du Canada, 1737", P.A.C., M.G. 1/24, vol. 9, pièce 303, pp. 474-478.

50 "Hocquart au Ministre, 28 octobre 1741", cited in J.-N. Fauteux, *Essai sur l'industrie au Canada sous le Régime français,* vol. 2, Québec: Ls.-S. Proulx, 1927, pp. 494-495.

and, with the aid of a state subsidy, attempted to domesticate the Illinois cattle.[51] He was also a ship owner.[52]

By far his most important enterprise was the Saint-Maurice Forges. He was an early partner of Poulin de Francheville, the first monopolist, in a company formed in 1733.[53] This company, apart from Francheville and Cugnet, included Bricault de Valmur, the intendant Hocquart's secretary, and Ignace Gamelin, a member of the fur trade group,[54] Montréal merchant,[55] and related to the Boucher and La Vérendrye families.[56] After Francheville's death in late 1733,[57] the company was carried on by his widow and brother.[58] Between 1735 and 1737 Cugnet took over the enterprise in association with Gamelin, Thomas Jacques Taschereau, the representative of the Marine treasury in New France, and a member of the Superior Council, and two forge masters, Olivier Vézain and Jacques Simonnet.[59] The enterprise was the recipient of 10,000, 100,000 and 83,642 *livres* in subsidies from the state,[60] plus some sums that Cugnet, as Hocquart gently put it, was obliged to borrow

51 Maurepas à Beauharnois et Hocquart, Marly, 8 avril 1733", P.A.C., B, vol. 57, f 620; and "Maurepas à Beauharnois et Hocquart, Marly, 24 mars 1733", P.A.C., B, vol. 58, f 408.

52 "Etat de mes Effets actyfs et Passifs, Québec, 21, 22, 26, 27 août 1742", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 114-1, f 216.

53 "Cession au Roy pour la sécurité du Sieur Francheville du privilège de l'exploitation des mines de fer du 28 8'bre 1735", P.A.C., C 11 A., vol. 110, tome 1, pp. 93-101.

54 P. G. Roy, *Inventaire des greffes des notaires*, vol. 16, GUILLET DE CHAUMONT, pp. 156-157, and "LaVérendrye à Gamelin, 23 février 1735", P.A.C., *LaVérendrye*, and "Copie de l'ordre accordé au S. Lamarque et Compagnie contre le Sr de la Verendrye, Montréal 22 juin 1742", P.A.C., C 11 A., vol. 77, p. 162.

55 See the sale of Gamelin to the state, "Bordereau ... 1740", and "Bordereau ... 1741", P.A.C., C 11 A., vol. 113-2, f 116 and vol. 114-1, f 287.

56 On the importance of marital relations in New France see Cameron Nish, "La bourgeoisie et les mariages, 1729-1748", *Revue de l'histoire de l'Amérique française*, vol. XIX, no. 4, mars 1966, pp. 585-605. On Gamelin, specifically, p. 588.

57 Shortt, *Currency*, has Francheville dying in 1734; the senior administrators of the colony also err in saying 1734, "Beauharnois et Hocquart au Ministre, Canada, 28 septembre 1734", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 110-2, p. 163. Gamelin, in a "Mémoire au Ministre, Québec, 9e octobre mil sept cent quarante et un", claims that Francheville died in November 1733. In this he is supported by an "Obligation de la Veuve Francheville, décembre 1733", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 110-2, pp. 179-181, in which she assumes her late husband's obligations to the French state.

58 "Cession au Roy pour la sécurité du Sieur Francheville ... 23 8'bre 1735", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 110-1, p. 93.

59 "Offres et soumission par les Sieurs Cugnet, Olivier de Vezain et Gamelin de se charger de l'Etablissement des forges de Saint Maurice et de l'exploitation. . ." P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 110-1, pp. 102-108, and, "Société entre les intéressés en l'établissement des forges des Saint Maurice, 16 octobre 1736", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 110-1, pp. 241-251.

60 "Arrêt qui révoque le privilège accordé aux Srs Cugnet, Gamelin, Taschereau, Olivier de Vezain et Simonet pour l'exploitation des mines de fer de St Maurice et réunit au domaine l'établissement fait dans cet endroit ainsi que les effets qui en dépendent, Versailles, 1 mai 1743", P.A.C. F 3, *Moreau St. Mery*, vol. 13, partie 1, 1741-1749, f 70-73.

from the funds of the Domaine entrusted to his care.[61] The company went bankrupt in 1741-1742.[62]

The recital of Cugnet's little affairs is not yet at an end, but a brief summary of the activities of this most ubiquitous individual indicates that he was the equivalent of a member of the civil service establishment; a judicial administrator; a merchant, fur trader, glue manufacturer, tobacco grower, involved in the fishing trade, and in the production of iron. He was an entrepreneur. His activities indicate bourgeois activities. His total revenues are difficult to determine, and this for two reasons: his personal papers have not, as yet, been found; and, he always lost money, if we are to believe his writings.[63] However, some of his revenues may be determined. His salary as *Directeur* of the Domaine was 3,000 *livres* a year;[64] as a councillor, and first councillor, he received 600 *livres* annually.[65] As administrator of the Domaine, he was provided with an office conveniently located in his own house, for which he charged the state an annual rental of 2,000 *livres*.[66] These are his known revenues. It is possible that he lost money in all of his business enterprises, but to do so he must have reversed the business adage of maximizing profits and minimizing losses to maximizing losses and minimizing profits.

Let us, however, restrict ourselves to the meaning of a guaranteed income of 5,600 *livres* per year. A *livre* contained 20 *sols*.[67] A pound of bread was valued, in 1741-1742, at 2 *sols*, and a pound of beef at 4 *sols*.[68] A high annual wage for an artisan in New France was 600

61 "Hocquart au Ministre, Canada, 23 octobre 1743", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 80, pp. 27-34.

62 On the bankruptcy of the Saint Maurice Forges see Cameron Nish, "La banqueroute de François-Etienne Cugnet, 1742, 1: Les biens de Cugnet; 2: Cugnet et l'Etat; 3: Cugnet et les Forges de Saint-Maurice", *L'Actualité économique*, vol. 41, no. 1, pp. 146-202; no. 2, pp. 345-378; no. 3, pp. 762-810. In future numbers of the same periodical, two more selections of documents will be presented.

63 See "Memoire du Cugnet, Quebec le vingt quatre octobre 1743", P.A.C., E, *Dossiers personnels, François Etienne Cugnet,* carton 101, pp. 9-26; "Cugnet A Monseigneur le Comte de Maurepas, Ministre et Secrétaire d'Etat, Canada, 1746", P.A.C., C 11 A., vol. 94, part 2, ff 6-7; "Cugnet au Ministre, A Québec le 20 octobre 1748", P.A.C., E, *Dossiers personnels, François Etienne Cugnet,* carton 101, pp. 28-30.

64 "Mémoire concernant le Regie (du Domaine d'Occident par Bigot), 4 juin 1749", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 121-2, f 39.

65 "Mémoire du Roy aux Srs...Beauharnois et...Hocquart, Versailles, 27 avril 1734", P.A.C., B, vol. 61-1, f 538 and "Depenses du Canada, Domaine d'Occident, 1729", PA.C., F 1, vol. 28, f. 52.

66 "Bigot au Ministre, Québec, 28 octobre 1752", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 98, pp. 220-222.

67 For value of currency, and equivalents see Cameron Nish "Appendix F", *The French Regime,* Toronto: Prentice-Hall of Canada, 1965, pp. 159-160.

68 "Etat général de la Dépense faite pour l'Exploitation des forges de St Maurice depuis le 1er octobre 1741 jusqu'au 1er août 1742", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 111-2, pp. 354-444. The writer is presently analysing prices and wages in New France in the period 1713-1748. The study, as yet incomplete, supports, generally speaking, these figures, and others quoted below.

livres per year.[69] A *minot* of wheat, sufficient to feed one person for one month, sold for 3 to 4 *livres*.[70] Cugnet's money assets, in 1742,[71] were valued at approximately 20 times those of a Montauban merchant-bourgeois, Paul Sol.[72] To these known revenues one must presume additional ones from his many enterprises.

Another means of determining social classification, and social relationships in New France, still using Cugnet as a point of departure, is by an analysis of marital relations. Cugnet's wife was the sister of Henry DuSautoy,[73] also an employee of the Domaine.[74] Louise-Charlotte, Cugnet's daughter, married Liénard de Beaujeu, sieur de Villemonble.[75] He was a fur trade post commandant, seigneur, and a military administrator.[76] Beaujeu's sister was married to Jean Victor Varin de la Marre, the representative of the intendant at Montréal.[77] Beaujeu's brother was married to the daughter of François Foucault, the *garde-magasin* of the King's stores at Québec, as well as a member of the Superior Council.[78] Cugnet's son, François-Joseph, married the off-spring of another merchant, seigneur, councillor, Jacques de Belcour, sieur de Lafontaine.[79] This tangle of marital relations had roots in every important social, political and economic institution in New France.

One final word before leaving Cugnet: he was convinced that he would die a poor man, yet his estate was large enough to pay off all of his creditors and leave his wife in bourgeois comfort.[80]

69 This wage was determined on the basis of 700 wage entries in study mentioned in note 68. The sources are "Bordereau... 1736", "Bordereau... 1739", "Bordereau... 1740", "Bordereau... 1741", "Bordereau... 1743", P.A.C., C 11 A, vols. 114-1, ff 19, 20, 29, 31, 51, 52, 55, 58, 122, 123, 125, 294-296; 114-2, 34, 386-389; 115-1, 37.

70 "Lettre du conseil au gouvernement général, 11 juillet 1729", in P. G. Roy's *Inventaire des jugements et délibérations du Conseil supérieur de la Nouvelle France* de 1717 à 1760, vol. 2, Québec: l'Eclaireur, 1933-34, p. 56. See also Elizabeth Jean Lunn, *Economic Development in New France*, 1713-1760, Montréal: McGill University, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 1942, p. 448.

71 Compare his "Etat" cited in footnote 52 with the money assets of Sol in Ligov and Garison's "La Bourgeoisie reformée Montalbanaise à la fin de l'Ancien Régime", *Revue d'histoire économique et sociale*, vol. 33, 1955, pp. 377-404.

72 See note 71.

73 "Etat de la Dépense de la Direction du Domaine d'occident à Québec... mil sept cent quarante sept", P.A.C., D 2 D, carton 1. See also "Mémoire de M. Dupuy, Intendant de la Nouvelle-France, sur les troubles arrivés à Québec en 1727 et 1728 après la mort de Mgr de Saint-Vallier, Evêque de Québec", *Rapport de l'archiviste de la province de Québec*, 1920-1921, p. 98. See also Nish, "Marriages", p. 590.

74 "Mémoire concernant le Regie, 4 juin 1752", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 121-2, f 39.

75 Nish, "Marriages", p. 587.

76 This information is drawn from the forthcoming *La Bourgeoisie Canadienne*, cited above.

77 Le Jeune, vol. 1, p. 137, and "Hocquart au Ministre, 16 octobre 1733", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 120-1, f 39-40.

78 Nish, "Marriages", p. 593, and "Bordereau... 1736", "Bordereau... 1741", P.A.C., C 11 A, vols. 114-1, ff 27, 119 and 114-2, f 382.

79 Nish, "Marriages", p. 590.

80 Madame Rocbert Bégon à son fils, LaRochelle, 1er octobre 1752", *Rapport de l'archiviste de la province de Québec, 1934-35*, pp. 177-178, and "Bigot au Ministre, Québec, 28 octobre 1752", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 98, p. 222.

The activities of Cugnet led us to touch upon the Superior Council of which he was a member. Further investigation of this political-judicial body will permit insights into the nature of the social structures of New France. One of Cugnet's partners, Thomas-Jacques Taschereau, is a typical example of an individual classed as bourgeois in the present study. He began his career as an intendant's secretary.[81] In 1732 he was appointed representative of the Marine treasury in New France, and in 1735 was made a member of the Superior Council.[82] In addition to his administrative posts, he engaged in commerce, and was a seigneur.[83] By marriage he was related to the representative of the Company of the West Indies, de la Gorgentière.[84] The latter's sister was to marry the Marquis de Vaudreuil, and another of his daughters wed Vaudreuil's brother, François Pierre de Rigaud.[85] By his activities, posts and marriages, Taschereau made a mockery of the Estates concept.

François Foucault is a further illustration. He was *garde-magasin* at Québec,[86] and this was the most important post in the King's stores. At the same time he was a member of the Superior Council.[87] He was a seigneur.[88] Through extended marital relations he was connected with individuals involved in all of the important economic and political endeavors in the colony. These illustrations may be expanded by a consideration of the sixteen individuals analysed in this period,[89] but let us use but one more: Eustache Chartier de Lotbinière. He had been, before, the death of his wife, the representative of the Company of the West Indies in New France,[90] a member of the Superior Council,[91] seigneur,[92] and a supplier of timbers to the state.[93] After the demise of his spouse he "got religion" and, as a protégé of the bishop, St. Vallier,[94] was made a member of the Chapter of Quebec shortly after

81 Shortt, *Currency*, vol. 2, p. 635n.
82 Roy, "Conseillers", p. 181.
83 Roy, *Seigneurie*, vol. 5, p. 1.
84 Nish, "Marriages", pp. 594-595.
85 Nish, "Marriages", p. 595, and Guy Frégault, *Le grand marquis*, Montréal, Fides, 1952, p. 105.
86 See footnote 78.
87 Roy, "Conseillers", p. 181.
88 Roy, *Seigneurie*, vol. 4, pp. 245-246.
89 See Nish, "Marriages", pp. 593-594. The sixteen men who were members of the Superior Council in the period under study were analysed in my *La Bourgeoisie Canadienne*, chapter 8.
90 Shortt, *Currency*, vol. 1, pp. 521-523n. See also P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 40, for memoirs written by de Lotbinière as representative of the company of the West Indies.
91 Roy, "Conseillers", p. 181.
92 Roy, *Seigneurie*, vol. 3, p. 76.
93 "Ordonnance ... au sujet d'un marché pour scier deux mille planches au moulin de M. de Lotbinière, 9 mars 1743", cited by P.-G. Roy, *Inventaire des ordonnances des intendants de la Nouvelle-France*, vol. 3, Beauceville: l'Eclaireur, 1919, p. 37.
94 Le Jeune, vol. 2, pp. 172-173.

his ordination.[95] In time, he was to become Dean of the Chapter.[96] While a cleric, he retained his seat on the Superior Council, and engaged in commerce.[97] He drew salaries for all of his posts.[98] Discretion dictates that there be no analysis of his marital relations.

This brief survey of the members of the Council indicates, again, the multiple functions of the members of an institution in the colonial society of New France. Again, activities and marital links served to blend the class lines between the Cugnets, Taschereaus, Gorgendières, Vaudreuils, Foucaults, and the Lotbinières. To date, the evidence indicates, at the very least, that the First, Second and Third estates are not very satisfactory categories of social analysis in Canada before 1760. Let us approach the matter from another usually accepted classification: the seigneurial class.

Munro classified the seigneurs as *gentilhommes* and claimed that they lived on their lands.[99] Of them he wrote:[100]

> In a word, those who were the natural leaders of the colonial population were deficient in the prime qualities of economic leadership.

E. R. Adair claimed that the seigneurs, as a class, had a decided failure. He wrote:[101]

> But the relative unimportance of the seigneur was not due solely to the fact that he was often of little better birth than his tenant farmers, or that he lacked the feudal prestige of leading his tenants to war, or of administering justice in his own courts, or that the "capitaine" was more in the government's confidence than he was, his economic position was just as important a factor.

Sigmund Diamond, a sociologist and historian at Columbia University, writes of the seigneurs as an impoverished class, and uses, as have some other commentators, a psychological approach based on an implicit "protestant ethic".[102] More recently, Marcel Trudel's revisions of the seigneurial class, and system, corrected many erroneous views, but his

95 Mgr. Henri Têtu, "Le Chapitre de la Cathédrale de Québec et ses Délégués en France. Lettres des Chanoines Pierre Hazeur de l'Orme et Jean-Marie de la Corne, 1723-1773", *Bulletin des recherches historiques*, vol. 13, pp. 225-226.

96 "Hazeur de l'Orme à son frère, 21 mars 1737", cited by Têtu, *Bulletin des recherches historiques*, vol. 14, p. 72.

97 Roy, "Conseillers", p. 181.

98 "Ministre à M. le Coadjuteur, Compiègne, 29 avril 1732", P.A.C., B, vol. 52-1, 680 and "Bordereau... 1737", "Bordereau .. 1739", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 114-1, ff 18, 126-127.

99 W. B. Munro, *Documents Relating to the Seigneurial Tenure in Canada*, 1598-1854, Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1908, p. xxi.

100 Munro, p. xlviii.

101 E. R. Adair, "The French-Canadian Seigneurie", *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 35, no. 3, September 1954, p. 196.

102 Sigmund Diamond, "An Experiment in "Feudalism": French Canada in the Seventeenth Century", Bobbs-Merrill Reprint Series in History, H. 56, pp. 14 and 23.

revisions are in effect a defense of the system rather than a radical inquiry.[103]

A clue to the nature of the seigneurial system and class in New France is provided in Maurice Dobb's *The Development of Capitalism.* "The bourgeoisie", he writes, "may acquire a particular sort of property when this happens to be exceptionally cheap (in extreme cases acquiring it by duress for nothing) and realize this property at some later period, when the market value of this property is relatively high..."[104] The seigneurial system in New France was not a means to nobility,[105] nor did it tie up capital in relatively non-productive agricultural pursuits. In the period under consideration a substantial market for agricultural products was opened up by the establishment of Louisbourg.[106] Sales to the states for this bastion indicate a monopoly in the hands of a favoured group.[107] Agricultural production rose three times as fast as population.[108] As well, and this is a neglected aspect of the seigneurial system in the colony, a fair amount of land speculation was taking place. This is evident not merely from land sales,[109] but in sales of seigneuries as well. An extreme example of the latter is to be seen with reference to the holdings of Terrebonne. In 1718, Louis Lecomte Dupré sold the lands for 5,268 *livres* to François-Marie Bouat; two years later, Bouat sold the holding to the abbé Louis Lepage for 10,000 *livres;* in 1745 the cleric sold them to Louis de Chapt, sieur de la Corne, for 60,000 *livres.*[110] This, while an extreme case, is not unique. Other sales of holdings were made for 6,000, 8,010, 10,000, 12,000 and 20,000 *livres.*[111]

Past scholars have emphasized the poverty, poor production and small returns of seigneuries. This has led to a distortion of both the

103 Marcel Trudel, *The Seigneurial Regime,* Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1960, 18 pp.

104 Maurice Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism,* New York: International Publishers, 1947, p. 179.

105 Rosario Bilodeau, *Liberté économique et politique des Canadiens sous le Régime français,* Montréal: Université de Montréal, thèse de Ph.D. non publiée, 1956, p. 184.

106 See "Censuses of Canada, 1720 and 1734" and "Trade Statistics of New France, 1728-1756", in Nish, *The French Regime,* pp. 121 and 124.

107 See Chapter 4 in Nish, *La Bourgeoisie Canadienne,* cited above.

108 This conclusion is based on an analysis of the Censuses of New France contained in the IV volume of the census report of Canada of 1870.

109 The *Inventaires des greffes des notaires,* and the Roy work on seigneurial documents list many land sales by censitaires, and by seigneurs.

110 Fauteux, vol. 2, pp. 283-284 and 301; see also Roy, *Seigneurie,* vol. 3, pp. 116-117, and vol. 4, 233.

111 P.A.C., C 11 G, Domaine D'Occident, vol. 11, pp. 121-132 and vol. 9, pp. 1-10; "Acte de vente de la moitié de la Seigneurie de Verchères, Montréal, 2 juillet 1745", P.A.C., vol. 83, pp. 93-99; P.A.C., C 11 G, vol. pp. 12-15; "Acte de vente de la seigneurie et baronnie de Portneuf... 12 octobre 1742", P.A.C., *Greffes,* Panet, p. 10; "Contrat d'acquisition de la Malbaye, Québec, 29 septembre 1733", P.A.C., C 11 A, vol. 12102, p. 255.

system, and the class of men who controlled it. A more accurate view requires an analysis of two aspects of the system: 1) what were the revenues? and 2) who were the seigneurs? The revenues were not high, but it must be remembered that these revenues, for the seigneur, were one part of his total income. Even this part, as we shall see, was relatively high, when compared to an average annual income, and the cost of living. The seigneur also was engaged in commerce, the administration and the fur trade.

Trudel, in his pamphlet, writes that the seigneurial burdens sat lightly on the shoulders, and pocket-books, of the *censitaire.* As an example, he evaluates wheat at 4 *livres* the *minot*; a day's corvée at 2 *livres.* These, with the *cens* et *rentes* resulted in an average annual due of $65.30.[112] Translating eighteenth century monetary terms into twentieth century equivalences is extremely dangerous. Let us place his figures within the context of the times. A *minot* of wheat, it will be remembered, was sufficient to feed one person for one month. The value of a day's corvée was 40 *sols,* and the seigneur was entitled to three days a year per tenant. Capons, which Trudel does not mention, were valued at 10 *sols* each.[113] If the seigneur had a mill, he was entitled to a share of the wheat milled; an oven produced the same result. The land owner also had the right to the *droit de pêche,* and the *droit de commune.* Translated into economic terms these rights, which formed but part of a seigneur's income, were substantial. Concessions to five tenants by François-Antoine Pécaudy produced a return of wheat sufficient to feed one person for 15 months.[114] The monetary returns of these five concessions were, if we use M. Trudel's equivalence, $160 per year.[115] Expressed in terms of the eighteenth century, this sum represented one-quarter of a high annual wage. The annual revenues of the seigneuries of Terrebonne, apart from sales of timbers and wheat, were about 10% of the original investment.[116] The lands of Portneuf, upon which there never was established a seigneurial domain, returned two-thirds of an annual wage;[117] those of Simblim, one-half,[118] and Jean-Baptiste Couillard, a

112 Trudel, p. 13.

113 "Concession par Dame Charlotte Denis Veuve de Claude de Ramezay à Jean Baptiste St-Martin, Montréal, 9 janvier 1733", and "Concession à des Montmarque, Montréal, 7 mars 1733", P.A.C. *Sorel.*

114 "Concession à Benoit, Joseph Berbard, François Sansousy, J. Bte. Felix, François Benoist, 19 mars 1736", *Sorel : Documents légaux.*

115 Trudel, p. 13.

116 "Fief de Terrebonne et des Plaine, 20 mars 1736", P.A.C., *Aveux et dénombrements,* vol. 5, pp. 99-128.

117 "Terrier du fief et Baronnie de Portneuf à M. Eustache Lambert, Ecuer, sieur Dumont, lieutenant dans les troupes du détachement de la marine entretenues pour le service du Roy en ce pays... Sur lequel fief et Baronnie il n'y a encore aucun domaine d'établie ni même de principal manoir ni moulin banal... 2 avril 1742", P.A.C., *Greffes,* vol. 3, Dulaurent, pp. 5-132.

118 "Fief de Simblin, 26 juin 1736", P.A.C., *Aveux et dénombrements,* vol. 5, pp. 131-144.

seigneur and judicial administrator, from his half-interest in *la Rivière du Sud,* received 1,336 capons annually. This, expressed in money, equalled 547 *livres.*[119] Obviously, the terms low, high, small or great are relative. Relatively, then, the seigneuries returned a fair income.

And now let us examine who owned the seigneuries. First, let us get rid of one myth very quickly: the seigneurs examined in the period 1729 to 1748 did not live on their lands. Rather, they were absentee landlords who lived in the cities of Montreal, Three-Rivers and Quebec.[120] Further, they were a group not merely noted for land-holding, but for involvement in all of the important economic and political endeavors in the colony as well. Without exception, the members of the Superior Council in the period under consideration were granted seigneuries.[121] The more notable merchants of Quebec, Three-Rivers and Montreal, the Cugnets, Daines, Pomereaus, Rocberts, de Tonnancours, etc.,[122] held, and were granted further lands.[123] The commandants of the fur trade posts of the hinterland owned seigneuries;[124] the upper echelon of the civil and military administration owned seigneuries.[125] It is this mixture of the powers of politics and economics which explains the slow application of the Arrêt de Marly against the seigneur, and its rapid application against the *censitaire.*[126] We now know who owned the lands. It is no longer permissible to classify them as a class, at least as a seigneurial class. A new and more accurate designation is required.

A hypothesis, a tentative definition of a colonial bourgeoisie was offered early in this study. This "... supposition provisionally adopted to explain certain facts and to guide in the investigation of others",[127] has permitted us, through our examination of the individual Cugnet, the institution of the Superior Council, and the so-called seigneurial class, to determine how the nature, composition and functions of a class in the society of New France may and may not be defined. Contemporary witnesses do not appear to be always very accurate. Charlevoix[128] and

119 "Rivière du sud, 10 avril 1732", P.A.C., *Aveux et dénombrements,* vol. 4, pp. 148-172.

120 Cited in tabular form in my *La Bourgeoisie Canadienne.* The data was gathered by an analysis of the censuses of Montréal, 1731, and Québec, 1744, and comparing the results with the information available in Roy, *Seigneurie.*

121 The same procedure was followed in an analysis of the members of the Superior Council: the 1744 Québec census was correlated to the Roy work.

122 Many names have not been mentioned in the present study. Massive detail will be found in the work cited in footnote 120.

123 See Nish, *La Bourgeoisie Canadienne,* Chapter 7.

124 See Nish, *La Bourgeoisie Canadienne,* Chapters 4 and 7.

125 See Nish, *La Bourgeoisie Canadienne,* Chapters 7 to 10.

126 The Arrêts de Marly were passed in 1711. They were applied quickly against the tenant farmers. See Munro, p. lxxxii. The seigneurs did not have the Arrêt which effected them registered in the Superior Council. Eventually, in 1741, 30 years after it was issued, it was applied against the seigneurs.

127 *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary.*

128 "Charlevoix on the Canadians", Nish, *The French Regime,* pp. 132-13 .

Hocquart,[129] for example, both used the prevalent European system of classification. The mixture of functions and activities was remarked upon by one man only, to the best of my knowledge. The man was the chevalier de La Pause. His insight was but a partial one, and garbled. In his "Dissertation sur le gouvernement", he wrote:[130]

> The government of Canada is composed of four orders which are: the Church, the military, the traders or merchants, and the militia which is made up of the artisans and the habitants. The third order is the administrators of justice in the Sovereign *(sic)* Council, and the traders; it is from the latter that the former are chosen, and one can say that this order is about the same as the second because of the involvement of the military in commerce, (and the) alliances (between them).

This partial insight is correct. The men characterized as nobles or aristocrats or, to use the term of the times, *gentilhommes,* did not belong exclusively to a Second estate. Some members of the clergy, Lepage and de Lotbinière, cannot be neatly fitted into the First Estate. Cugnet and Taschereau, to name but two, cannot be described as members of a Third Estate. Nor can we use the terms military class, merchant class, judicial class or seigneurial class, for they were all these at the same time.

One of the terms favored to designate this group, this class, is *colonial bourgeoisie.* Whatever class designation is used, the word bourgeois must appear. Carl Bridenbaugh has suggested another term, *"bourgeois aristocracy"* [131] which is the most acceptable definition yet encountered. The use of these two appellations, however, is still not quite satisfactory. A word, a French word, is needed to characterize, as accurately as possible, the functions of those called bourgeois. With all due apologies to Molière, the phrase suggested is *bourgeois-gentilhomme.* In New France, this man, and these men, were not the bumbling pretentious fools of the play, barely able to speak a civilized French, and understanding little the use of cutlery. The merchants, administrators, post commandants, and seigneurs were, for their times, well educated. They lived well, according to contemporary testimony. Their libraries were surprisingly large. It is usually agreed that they drank too much. The words *bourgeois* and *gentilhomme* were used to describe them, but never hyphenated. Rather, the words were separated by a comma: "bourgeois, gentilhomme".[132] It is to this class that the Cugnets, Vaudreuils, de la Gorgendières, Taschereaus, and the others noted in this study belonged, *les bourgeois-gentilhommes de la Nouvelle-France.*

129 "Mémoire on the Canadians attributed to Hocquart", Nish, *The French Regime,* pp. 132-134.

130 Chevalier de la Pause, "Dissertation sur le gouvernement", *Rapport de l'archiviste de la province de Québec, 1933-34,* pp. 207-208.

131 Bridenbaugh, *Myth and Realities,* p. 13.

132 This is the description of Ignace Aubert in the Québec census of 1744.