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BLAISE DE MONLUC: REMONSTRANCE AND ORATORY IN THE
"COMMENTAIRES"

Rice University

PH.D.

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BLAISE DE MONLUC: REMONSTRANCE AND ORATORY IN
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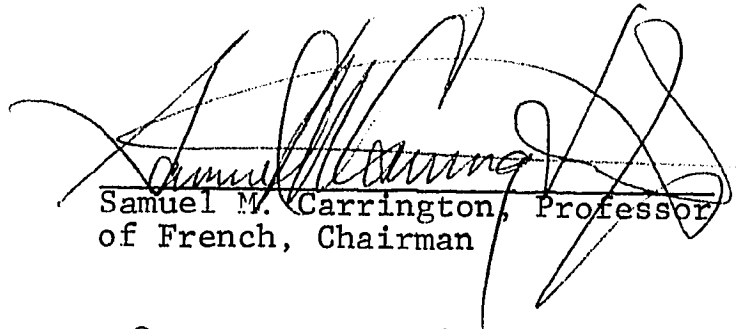
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A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

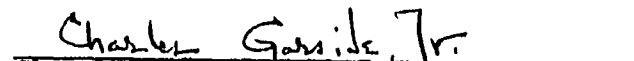
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ABSTRACT

Blaise de Monluc: Remonstrance and Oratory in the Commentaires

Clinton Bruce Cameron

Although most critics view Monluc's Commentaires as an historical work, there remains a literary value which cannot be neglected. Monluc recognized that an historical or military treatise alone would not ensure success. He therefore sought to improve the literary quality of the general narrative by impregnating it with subjective comments on moral, social, and military issues. The medium through which these comments are expressed to the reader is most often presented in the form of a remonstrance or speech. The purpose of this dissertation is to show the importance of remonstrance and oratory in the Commentaires relative to the general narrative and to determine their literary value.

Remonstrance is defined in Huguet's Dictionnaire de la langue française du seizième siècle as an "exhortation" or "enseignement"; the term "discours" is mentioned as a treatise (traité) or account (récit) of certain events. Monluc's use of remonstrance and discourse in the

Commentaires adheres closely to the above definitions.

The remonstrances and discourses are found in the Commentaires as interruptions in the historical narrative or, especially in the case of oratory, as an integral part of an historical situation as described by Monluc.

Monluc uses remonstrance and discourse for didactic purposes as he tries to impart his military knowledge to the reader; elsewhere his oratory becomes a tool of persuasion in furthering his own designs within the descriptive setting of an historical event while remonstrance takes the form of a complaint as he seeks to justify himself against accusations of treason and extortion.

This study shows that the literary value of the Commentaires lies primarily in the application of remonstrance and oratory to historical narrative. The work is unique in that few histories of the period use remonstrance and oratory for the purpose of self-interested exhortation, counsel and justification. For this reason the Commentaires can be set distinctively apart as representing something more than history, they now become literarily appealing because they represent a particular application of forms that can be interpreted, discussed and analysed as literature. This study has uncovered a Monluc who is no longer to be viewed simply as a cruel and relentless soldier-historian but as an orator and polemicist who, considering the time period and the purposes for which he wrote, achieved great success in the forms of persuasion that he chose to use.

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The entire dissertation was typed by my wife whom I love and appreciate; she deserves a tremendous amount of credit for her dedication in the completion of this work.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The Commentaires of Blaise de Monluc, first dictated in 1571¹ and later published in 1592,² are in essence a subjective history of the author's years as a French soldier and officer. The work spans a period of fifty years between 1520-1570, and comprises eyewitness accounts of the wars in Italy and of the Wars of Religion in France including numerous personal judgements, remonstrances, and discourses, most of which relate to specific historical events.

Monluc's ultimate decision to write the Commentaires was precipitated by an accident which transpired July 23, 1570; he was severely wounded during an assault on Rabastens, being forced thereby to retire temporarily from his military duties.³ This left him with many free hours in which to consider writing a personal history. He decided to dictate the events of his past life to his secretaries rather than write them himself.⁴ The dictation was surprisingly accurate and, according to Paul Courteault, it was accomplished just over a seven month period between November 1570 and June 1571.⁵

The first text of the Commentaires was almost exclusively an account of his life in historical perspective as it related to his military accomplishments. Later, as he began

revising the Commentaires (numerous revisions were made between 1571-1577),⁶ Monluc evidently felt that an historical and military rendition alone was not enough to ensure their success with the public. Consequently, in order to enhance their literary value, he began impregnating the narrative with general statements, moral and technical advice, remonstrances, and speeches. Courteault points out de Ruble's discovery of Monluc's additions, "De Ruble a noté que le Préambul à Monseigneur et les quatre remonstrances au Roi, à Monseigneur, aux gouverneurs des places et aux capitaines de gens de pied, qui manquent dans la première rédaction, et qui constituent dans le volume 5011 du fonds francais des pièces séparées, transcrites de la même main que la seconde copie, ont été insérés, le premier en partie, les remonstrances en totalité, dans l'édition originale."⁷ These insertions and additions greatly improved upon the content and indiscriminate style of the original Commentaires: "Le style de la première rédaction est loin d'avoir l'allure et la tenue du texte définitif: il est beaucoup plus naïf et plus rude, tantôt haché et saccadé, tantôt traînant et filandreux; la phrase est incorrecte, enchevêtrée, obscure . . ."⁸ The revised text changed the Commentaires from an amateurish attempt of self-expression into a work expressive of the author's intentions and recognized as a valuable contribution to sixteenth century French literature and history. The discourses and remonstrances which were added later to

the original version are therefore particularly important to the definitive text.

Despite their merits, there has been only one critical study made on the Commentaires: Paul Courteault's Blaise de Monluc, historien (Paris, 1908), which examines the historical accuracy of the Commentaires and which is the most authoritative work on the historical aspects of Monluc's work. The study makes no attempt, however, to analyse or categorize Monluc's remonstrances and discourses.

The most recent study of Monluc and the Commentaires was published by Pierre Michel under the title Travaux dirigés d'agrégation: Blaise de Monluc (Paris, 1971). Michel has summarized and commented on major historical events found in the Commentaires; he also includes summaries and comments on a number of the remonstrances and speeches, but because of the eclectic nature of his overall study, they are not discussed in depth. The remaining works on Blaise de Monluc are primarily either biographical or historical in scope and the Commentaires simply serve as a reference in support of such studies.⁹ Occasional mention is made of the remonstrances and oratory,¹⁰ but as with other works on Monluc, the works cited serve only to magnify his glorious feats of valor or infamous cruelty.

As may be seen, a more thorough study of Monluc's remonstrances and discourses is needed. The purpose of this dissertation is, therefore, 1) to categorize the speeches and remonstrances; 2) to analyse each with respect to style

and content, including comparisons with other portions of the Commentaires; 3) to establish Monluc's motives for adding them to the narrative; and 4) to present general conclusions based on the analysis. To complement the above study, a biography of Monluc, which highlights the major events of his life and delineates certain character traits relevant to this study, has been provided.

Several editions of the Commentaires have been published. The first, in 1592, was by a member of the Bordeaux parlement, Florimond de Raemonð, who, it is believed, made several stylistic corrections and who also omitted large portions of the work for fear of the Protestant administration under Henry IV.¹¹ A more complete edition appeared in 1867 prepared by Alphonse de Ruble for the Historical Society of France.¹² While this edition is in many ways superior to the first, Paul Courteault has uncovered some serious weaknesses: "En résumé, l'édition de Ruble a le tort de ne donner, pour la première moitié des Commentaire, que les variantes de la seconde copie, et d'être un amalgame perpétuel, impossible à contrôler, du texte de la vulgate et de celui des manuscrits, on ne peut dire qu'elle permette de se faire une idée exacte des différents états de l'oeuvre de Monluc."¹³ Courteault's own critical edition is an attempt at correcting the oversight made by de Ruble, and is now considered the definitive edition of Monluc's Commentaires. Of particular interest in this edition are the italicized portions which indicate the modifications and

additions made by Monluc after the original text had been dictated in 1571. For this reason, as well as for Courteault's scholarly presentation of the text and variants, his edition has been selected for this study.

Since this dissertation deals primarily with remonstrance and discourse these terms will be defined in relationship to the historical and literary period in which they were used. The 16th century French definition of remonstrance, as indicated in Huguet's Dictionnaire de la langue francaise du siezième siècle, is "exhortation". The example given is: "Pantagruel leurs feist une briefve remonstrance, à ce qu'ilz eussent à soy monstrier vertueux au combat, Rabelais, IV, 37."¹⁵ The word "remonstreur" is also designated in this dictionary and has the following meaning: "Celui qui enseigne, qui conseille."¹⁶

The term "discours", among other definitions, is mentioned in Huguet's dictionary as meaning a treatise (traité) or account (récit) of certain events.¹⁷ One example offered by Huguet comes from R. Belleau's la Bergerie (2^e Journ.): "Je rencontre l'un de mes plus familiers amis, auquel je fey le discours de poinct en poinct des songes qui m'estoyent survenus en celle douce et plaisante nuict." A second example comes from Montaigne's Essais (II,12): "Platon sur le discours de l'estat de nostre corps et de celui des bestes . . ." Monluc's use of "discours" in the Commentaires adheres to both of the above definitions. He relates historical events to the reader, in which case

we have a recit and he offers his expertise in the field of military science or, in other words, a traité.

The fundamental difference between remonstrance and discourse is that the former is less formal in nature and is generally a complaint or vehement counsel while the latter normally has a preconceived theme and a well prepared delivery. Both remonstrance and discourse can be presented in either oral or written form with discourse usually the more eloquent of the two. There is some overlapping, however, since remonstrance may be found within the body of an oral discourse and a discourse, although presented as such, may in essence be a glorified remonstrance. This overlapping takes place when the speaker's (or author's) emphasis shifts from a deliberate presentation of his thoughts to an uncalculated and fervent burst of speech which touches on exhortation, thus changing discourse into remonstrance; the same process can also work in reverse order.

Distinguishing between discourse and remonstrance then, becomes a matter of definitions. Therefore, for the purpose of clarity, whenever we speak of discourse in this study, it will have exclusive reference to Monluc's oral communication (that which is placed in quotation marks in the narrative). Remonstrance will be considered as it is found both in the direct (within a discourse) and indirect forms of speech. The last category can be separated into the following: 1) remonstrance which is presented in the

narrative as indirect speech but which Monluc had originally delivered directly (ex. "Et leur remonstray qu'eux mesmes devoient prendre les armes, . . .")¹⁸ and 2) remonstrance which is destined for the reader and which never had an oral form (ex. "Vous ne devez rejeter en arrière les remonstrances que je vous fais, . . .").¹⁹ The majority of the remonstrances as found in the Commentaires fit into the second category.

In this study, Monluc's remonstrances and discourses will be classified under four basic headings: 1) those directed at military officers and soldiers (present, past, and future), 2) those presented to parlements and governors, 3) those addressed to the nobility and, 4) those destined for the king. In some cases a particular speech or remonstrance could conceivably be placed under more than one heading. When this occurs individual portions will be examined under their proper classification.

Notes

- ¹ Blaise de Monluc, Commentaires (Paris: A. et J. Picard, 1964), p. XXIII.
- ² Commentaires, p. XXIII.
- ³ Commentaires, p. 833.
- ⁴ Commentaires, p. XVII.
- ⁵ Paul Courteault, Blaise de Monluc, historien (Toulouse, 1908; rpt. Genève: Slatking Reprints, 1970), p. 31.
- ⁶ Commentaires, p. XXIII.
- ⁷ Commentaires, p. XXVII (For further references on additions and modifications made by Monluc, see Commentaires, p. XXVIII and Courteault, Blaise de Monluc, p. 577).
- ⁸ Commentaires, p. XXIX.
- ⁹ The principal works in this category are: Joseph J. Broqua, Le Maréchal de Monluc, sa famille et son temps (Paris, 1924); Paul Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne au XVI siècle: Blaise de Monluc (Paris, 1909); A.B. Evans, Blaise de Monluc (London, 1912); Du Castre d'Auvigny, Histoire de Blaise de Monluc (Paris, 1882); Le Maréchal de Monluc, sa vie et son temps, ses maximes morales, ses conceptions tactiques, ed. J. E. Tiols de Fonclare (Paris, 1933); Biographie et maximes de Blaise de Monluc, ed. La Barre-Duparq (Paris, 1848); Joseph Le Gras, Blaise de Monluc, héros malchanceux et grand écrivain (Paris, 1826); Charles Normand, Les mémorialistes: Monluc (Paris, 1912).
- ¹⁰ For example, in his Un Cadet de Gascogne, Courteault makes general mention of Monluc's use of discourse but does not go much beyond this: "Grand discoureur, grand bavard même, il s'est distrait en versant dans le discours qu'il avait d'abord fait de sa vie, tout ce que sa longue expérience avait accumulé dans sa riche mémoire." See Un Cadet pp. 272-275.
- ¹¹ See Courteault's 1964 edition of the Commentaires, p. XXV.

12 Blaise de Monluc, Commentaires et lettres (Paris: Edition revue sur les manuscrits et publié avec les variantes, par le baron Alphonse de Ruble, 1864-1872, 5 vol.).

13 Commentaires, p. XXX.

14 Blaise de Monluc, Commentaires (Paris: Edition critique, annotée par Paul Courteault, 1911-25, 3 vol.). The latest publication of the Courteault edition and the one used in this dissertation is Blaise de Monluc, Commentaires ed. Paul Courteault (Paris: A. et J. Picard, 1964).

15 Edmond Eugène Auguste Huguet, Dictionnaire de la langue française du seizième siècle (Paris: M. Didier, 1925, Tome VI), p. 479. A similar definition is given by Frédéric Godefroy: "manifester, exposer, faire connaître". He offers the following example: "Le remonstrerent tant de belles parolles, unes et aultres, qu'il descendi a leur entente. Froissard, Chronicles, VIII, 17." Frédéric Godefroy, Dictionnaire de l'ancienne langue françoise et de tous ses dialectes du IX au XV siècles (Paris, 1892; reprint New York: Draus Reprint Corp. 1961, Tome VII), p. 8.

16 Huguet, Tome VI, p. 479.

17 Huguet, Tome III, p. 200.

18 Commentaires, p. 652.

19 Commentaires, p. 29.

Chapter II

BLAISE DE MONLUC (1500?-1577)

Blaise de Lasseran-Massencome, seigneur de Monluc, descended from a long line of Gascon nobility and, because of blood ties with the dukes of Aquitaine, he claimed to be the progeny of Clotaire, Clovis, and thus of the Merovingians.¹ Born in the small village of Saint Puy near the Garonne river in southwestern France around the year 1500, he was the oldest of five sons and by right of primogeniture was entitled to whatever inheritance might be forthcoming. In Monluc's case, however, there would be no hope of prestige or wealth through inheritance, for as he states himself, he was the "fils d'un gentil-homme, de qui le père avoit vendu tout le bien qu'il possedoit . . ."² Over a period of 150 years there had been a gradual decline in the affluence of the Monluc line of nobility, resulting primarily from the Hundred Years' War and its devastation to their property and gentry. The reputation of his ancestry, while still important when Monluc was born, had been greatly weakened from lack of wealth.

Thus, from the very beginning Monluc was left in a precarious situation with respect to his future livelihood. As a result there stirred within him a most pressing concern

and desire to reestablish the respectability and fortune of his family. A timely opportunity came when one of Monluc's neighbors, Bertrand of Goth, was able to secure for him the position of page to Antoine, Duke of Lorraine. Only fifteen at the time, he soon became familiar with his duties and eventually graduated to the more respectable status of archer to the duke's famous lieutenant commander, the idolized Bayard: "Ayant esté nourri en la maison du duc Antoine de Lorraine et mis hors de page, je fuz pourveu d'une place d'archier de sa compaignie, estant monsieur de Bayard son lieutenant."³ This apprenticeship gave him insights into the art of warfare which would later contribute to his military success.

His personal commitment to soldiery led him next to Italy during Francis I's campaign of 1521-22 where his inborn desire to excel was to manifest itself: "Il me print envie d'aller en Italie, sur le bruit qui couroit des beaus faits d'armes qu'on y faisoit ordinairement."⁴ After a short return visit in Gascony with his family from whom he obtained a horse and a little money, he traversed the Alps and arrived in Milan. Monluc's penchant for action and inclination toward acquiring recognition for himself soon placed him in the forefront of the conflict: "Or pendant ceste guerre, qui dura vingt-deux mois, j'y vis de très belles choses pour mon apprentissage, et me trouvay ordinairement en tous les lieux où je pouvais penser acquerir de la reputation, à quelque pris

que ce fust."⁵ This attitude, however, forced him into taking risks. Five horses were shot from underneath him, and while he escaped this first battle without bodily injury, he could not avoid being taken prisoner. Luckily, he was released through the efforts of some friends.

After this defeat at La Bicoque in April, 1522, Monluc was called to serve under the Maréchal de Foix as an armed horseman and archer. He distinguished himself during a skirmish at Saint-Jean-De-Luz whereupon he gained his first significant recognition. The king's lieutenant, Monsieur de Lautrec, honored him with a compliment in his own dialect, "Monluc, mon amie, iou n'oublièderay jamai lou service qu'abes fait au Rei, et m'en souviera tant que iou vivrai."⁶ In addition he gave Monluc a chance to command some troops, an opportunity which fueled the fires of Monluc's ambitions: "Voilà le premier lieu auquel je me trouvé jamais commandant et où je commencé à marquer ma reputation."⁷

By now Monluc was twenty years old and becoming increasingly confident in his capacity as a soldier. In February 1525, he led his troops into the battle of Pavia and thought it a privilege to fight in the same conflict with Francis I. Although he was captured along with the king, he was released after being found unworthy (too poor) to be ransomed.

After his capture at Pavia Monluc returned to France for a short period and then accepted a position to serve under Monsieur de Lautrec during the Naples' expedition. In 1528 he commanded a company of troops during the assault on

Forcha di Penne and, although seriously wounded himself, he encouraged his men to fight on. When the French finally succeeded in capturing the city, he maintained control of the takeover by directing his troops from a stretcher.

Throughout his life Monluc endured great physical hardship and extreme pain. He was wounded or injured on numerous occasions, seven times by harquebus fire alone, and yet he recovered admirably. While helping to position some artillery in front of the castle of Vigeve in June 1527 he was wounded in the right leg by harquebus fire which he says "fut cause que je demeuray boyteux fort longtemps".⁸ On another occasion his hand and shoulder were fractured by musket fire and while seeking medical attention he fell, breaking the same arm in two places. When two surgeons suggested amputation, Monluc almost gave in to their advice; in the end, however, he resisted because of "divine intervention": "Et comme Dieu aide aux personnes, quand il luy plaist, encores que je fusse resolu de l'endurer, il me fit changer ma volonté . . ."⁹

Monluc attributes much of his hardy resolution to "ce meschant naturel aspre, fascheux et collère, qui sent un peu et par trop le terrior de Gascoigne."¹⁰ He was more than once accused of being too brisk and argumentative, character traits recognized as belonging, as Monluc admits, to the Gascons. His temperament was in this respect particular, if not to the Gascons, at least to himself, and it was a definite advantage in helping him survive the precarious military environment of his day.

In the Commentaires Monluc presents himself as a robust and courageous soldier with an exceptional ability as a leader and military strategist. There is no doubt that he was inherently capable of such a profession as demonstrated throughout his career. He assures us that his thoughts were entirely devoted to absorbing every aspect of military life which could be used to concretize his own objectives.

Monluc claims that his obsession for military life was such that he rarely gave way to outside interests including women, drinking, and politics:¹¹ "Estant en l'eage de vingt-cinq ans, je prenois plus de plaisir à ouyr discourir les vieux guerriers que je ne fis jamais à entretenir la plus belle dame que j'aye jamais aimé."¹²

As with most important figures, Monluc was occasionally the object of criticism, some of which resulted in temporary dismissals from active duty because, although he argued his innocence before the king, he was not always successful. These periods of mandatory resignation were few, and Monluc seldom had to wait long before the king summoned him from retirement to lead another battle.

Some feel that one of Monluc's biggest impediments to renown was poverty.¹³ There can be no doubt as to some privations, especially early in his career. He relates how extremely poor his family was when he returned home from Italy in July of 1534, "En ce bel equipage j'arrivay en nostre maison, où je trouvay mon père assés en nécessité, pour n'avoir pas grands moyens de m'aider, de tant que son

père avoit vendu des quatres parts les trois des biens de la maison, et le laissa encores chargé de cinq enfants d'un second mariage, et nous, qui estions dix de notre père."¹⁴

We gather from this comment that Monluc "En ce bel equipage" was essentially more well-to-do than his own father. Despite his claims in the Commentaires to being impoverished, Monluc had the advantage of military commissions from the king as well as any booty acquired from captured cities or castles. Thus his financial status when weighed in relationship to his own family was substantial. He was, however, considerably less affluent than many of the nobles and other military leaders with whom he came into contact.

Monluc participated in numerous skirmishes and battles between 1536-1542 including the invasion of Piedmont and a campaign in the Alps. An interim peace treaty gave him an opportunity to appear at court where he hoped to become a courtier of preference. The social milieu of his period, however, was one of refinement, eloquence, gentleness and wit--qualities requisite to any aspiring courtier. For the most part, Monluc did not possess these qualities. Being from a disadvantaged family his manners were unrefined; he frequently spoke out of turn and used abusive language which made it difficult to please would-be admirers: "Pendant ceste trefve, j'essayé, mais en vain, d'estre courtisant; je fuz toute ma vie mal propre pour ce mestier. Je suis trop franc et trop libre; aussi y trouvé-je fort peu d'acquit."¹⁵

Despite his unorthodox behavior and his failure to gain entrance into the influential and refined circles at court, Monluc was not shunned altogether. In fact he was highly regarded both by Francis I and Henry II, not only for his military achievements but also for his lusty character. There was no doubt as to his worth to the crown, and appreciation was shown to him in the form of financial assistance, complimentary epistles, and invitations to visit the court.

While at court, Monluc was frequently in the presence of the king, giving advice and discussing matters with him on a relatively familiar basis. On two different occasions he was received into the king's sleeping quarters; one of these visits took place after his defense of Siena in May 1555. Many thought that he had been killed in the action until he finally arrived safely in Paris:

"Lendemain matin, je fuz au lever de monsieur de Guyse, qui ne se pouvoit saouller de m'enbrasser; et m'amena en la chambre du Roy, lequel estoit encores au lit, toutefois esveillé. Et à l'entrée de la chambre, il commenca à crier tout haut, me tenant par la main: 'Sire, voicy vostre homme perdu.' Et alors je m'approchay pour luy baiser les mains. Il m'embrassa de tous ses deus bras, et me tint la teste contre sa poictrine presque autant comme on demeuroit à dire un patynostre, me disant par deux fois en me tenant de ceste sorte: 'He, monsieur de Monluc, vous soyez le bien venu! Je ne vous pensois jamais veoir.'" 17

It was not everyone that had access to conversation with His Majesty, particularly in the royal bed chamber, and thus it appears that Monluc, although not a courtier per se, was among the favorites. At age 55, he had reached the apogee of his career in terms of military success. His role in the

defeat of the Emperor's forces at Cerisoles (1544), and their eventual expulsion from Piedmont had earned him the title of "chevalier du roi." The leadership displayed during the siege of Chiare and Lanzo (1551) as well as his brilliant defense of San Damiano (1553) added even more honor and respect to his reputation. With few exceptions, it would not be until his later years and under the troubled reign of Charles IX and Catherine de Medici that he lost favor with the court.¹⁸

Along with the military recognition which he received from Henri II, Monluc achieved political benefits from his sovereign. He had been appointed governor and commander-in-chief of the king's forces at Moncallier in 1550, gentleman of the chamber, governor of Alba in 1553, and governor of Siena in 1554-5. The wisdom and fortitude demonstrated by Monluc while fulfilling this last appointment were remarkable. The defense of Siena was rightfully compared to the Spartan heroism at Thermopylae against the Persians, and Monluc was given credit for a governorship well managed.

But if the success at Siena increased Monluc's renown it also seems to have marked the beginning of a decline both in his military achievements and in his acceptance by important political figures of the day. In October 1555 he was reprimanded by the king for disobeying orders (which he denied), and was temporarily suspended from his duties in Piedmont. The following year (1557) he had a disagreement with the Duke of Guise over military operations near Rocca d'Orcia.

His activities during the Wars of Religion only served to darken his failing reputation even more. His execution of Saint-Mézard in 1562 precipitated a multitude of atrocities which earned him the hatred of the Protestants and the disrespect of the Catholics--the former labeling him an atheist, and the latter hesitating to claim him as a devoted member. Indeed, there is little evidence that Monluc entertained serious religious convictions; he had a simple and sincere faith in God, but his undying loyalty was to the king.¹⁹

To make matters worse, the Protestants had succeeded in gaining a viable influence at court, and chronic accusations, which had been building against him for several years, began to receive more credence. Complaints increased in 1565 when he personally assumed the total administration of Guyenne. Catherine de Medici, partially convinced of Monluc's unwarranted assumption of responsibility, placed half of Guyenne under the direction of Henri de Foix-Candale an action which Monluc protested vehemently but with little success. Embittered, he relaxed his military responsibilities to the point of endangering the security of certain areas under his charge. This in turn gave rise to treasonous accusations which were leveled against him this same year (1565) by Marchastel who claimed Monluc wanted to turn Guyenne over to Spain for personal rewards.

In addition, there were growing implications that Monluc had embezzled large amounts of the royal purse destined for

military purposes--he had in the past been known as a frequent petitioner to the king for monies supposedly needed for the wars. But, despite Monluc's vehement denial, there remained those who thought him too wealthy, including Charles IX. Brantôme, one of those who questioned the accumulation and extent of Monluc's wealth, made the following statement: "Luy qui auparadvant n'avoit pas grandes finances, se trouva à la fin de la guerre avoir dans ses coffres cents mil escus."²⁰ In retrospect it is difficult to determine Monluc's exact financial worth. In 1872 Clément-Simon published an unofficial will and testament purportedly written by Monluc. In the preface he tries to assess Monluc's financial worth prior to his death in 1577. His conclusion is essentially the same as Courteault's--namely that Monluc's fortune was more considerable than he admitted but that the Gascon was not guilty of any more excessive dishonesty or corruption than found among other military men of his times and that most of his wealth was inherited.²¹ Nonetheless, in October 1567, Charles IX's two pro-Huguenot ministers of finance, DuGast and Robert de Mondoulcet, accused him of spending too excessively and later subjected him to investigations.

At this point, Monluc accused Damville, governor of Languedoc, of being the culprit who dispensed too freely the king's money. Matters came to a head in 1569 when Monluc aggravated the feud with Damville by implying that he was in league with the Huguenots. According to Paul Courteault,

"Damville y répondit par un démenti violent, où il traitait Monluc de menteur et, ramassant contre lui les accusations portées depuis longtemps, l'accusait d'avoir été un déloyal serviteur du roi, d'avoir dilapidé ses finances, pillé son peuple, enfin d'estre un forceur de filles."²²

Numerous copies of Damville's letter were reproduced and in 1570 Monluc, hoping to dampen his accuser's claims, wrote a letter to Charles IX. Unfortunately two of Monluc's greatest enemies, François de Montmorency (Damville's older brother) and Henri de Mesmes, had gained a great deal of respect at court for their role in laying the ground-work for a possible treaty with the Protestants. Monluc's letter was a point by point defense and although well conceived, it fell on deaf ears. This snubbing was in preparation for his total disgrace which was precipitated by the mishap at Rabastens in 1570 when his entire nose was blown away by a musket ball and a lengthy convalescence provided an opportunity for the king to relieve him of his position as lieutenant commander in Guyenne. His wife and brother withheld the news until after he had partially recovered, but the revocation of his lieutenancy was even more demoralizing than the loss of his nose because it meant a forfeiture of the king's esteem.

Monluc had spent over fifty years trying to establish a name for himself as a soldier, and there is little doubt that he had achieved this personal goal; even his enemies would not have disputed his success during the political

wars with Charles V in Italy. But the Damville controversy in 1569 and his disfigurement were the culmination of a long series of misfortunes and setbacks, and his role as a successful military officer was all but played out. His reputation had dwindled to its lowest ebb ever during the investigation of his finances, and the Protestants as well as some Catholics were hoping for a coup de grâce which would ruin him completely. The Protestants disrespectfully labeled him "ceste nazarde",²³ and yet his age prevented him from confronting them with the imposing military force he had so often wielded in the past. It was now, in his seventieth year and in a weakened condition, that Monluc thought of writing what he called the "Discours de ma vie."

The letter which he composed for Charles IX in November 1570 in order to justify himself against accusations of incompetence and extortion became the model for his Commentaires.²⁴ To Monluc's dismay the letter was published, bearing the title, "Remonstrances de Monsieur de Monluc à la Maiesté du Roy sur son gouvernement de Guienne où est contenu une grande partie de ses faicts et de plusieurs autres seigneurs et capitaines de ce Royaume."²⁵ Whether the purpose of this publication was to unveil Monluc's attempts at trying to enhance his image at court or simply to popularize the letter's historical contents, it inspired a full-fledged biographical and historical narrative because, although he had not intended his personal correspondence to be read publicly, the printing helped Monluc envisage a personal

history which would remove any blemish from his reputation. His hope was to retell his entire life in such a way as to convince the king of his loyalty and the world of his great military achievements. ". . . mais c'est pour la deffence de mon honneur et reputation j'ay acquize dens la France et aux païs estrangers, dont mon nom est congneu et remarqué pour ung fidelle, loyal subject et serviteur de mon Roy par toute la chrestienté."²⁶

From the beginning Monluc classifies himself as a special type of writer, that of an old soldier awkwardly writing the truth of his past experiences from memory, and at the end of the Commentaires Monluc reemphasizes his status as a writer: "Je prie ceux qui les liront de ne les prendre point comme escrits de la main d'un historien, mais d'un vieux soldat, et encor Gascon, qui a escrit sa vie à la vérité et en guerrier."²⁷ This tactic at once places him apart from the regular historians and spares him the disparaging criticism of contemporaries. He is neither an historian in the sense of being a specialist or authority on history in general nor a historiographer in the sense of being appointed to write the history of his country. The history he writes is a personal one--a history that is subjected to his own motives even though it does not preclude a high degree of accuracy. In this case, how could anyone condemn him for poor style or historical ineptitude--all that he claims to be is a "vieux soldat". Writing from this point of view, Monluc is able to be more candid while

establishing his own criteria for the narrative. He makes no claims to be a stylist. In fact he labels his Commentaires as "mal polis", and admits that as a Gascon he was always more interested in doing things correctly than expressing them correctly--a man of action rather than of words.²⁸

In order to gain public acceptance for the Commentaires, however, Monluc was confronted with the task of finding the form or forms most conducive to his arguments and instruction. According to him he had a particular talent for expressing himself orally: ". . . et ay eu ce don de Dieu, encore que je ne sois pas grand clerc, de me sçavoir bien exprimer quand j'en ay eu besoin."²⁹ This ability may have been the product of the naturally talkative nature of the Gascons. Paul Courteault refers to this trait in his biography of Monluc: "Orateur de race, il avait cultivé ce don de la parole qu'il tenait de sa terre de Gascogne. Les occasions ne lui avaient pas manqué en un siècle où l'éloquence était une partie maîtresse du bon capitaine."³⁰ There were many occasions for Monluc to use his ability at oral communication and he accepted them willingly. Remonstrance and discourse became persuasive tools toward the accomplishment of his duties as a military leader and were the form chosen by him as the best means of conveying his views.³¹ At times very subtle, at other times totally undisguised, Monluc tries to find ways to exonerate himself of the numerous charges leveled against him. A tendency

toward self-justification acts as a leitmotif throughout the Commentaires, and is especially evident in the remonstrances and discourses, the former being the more prevalent medium through which these justificative arguments are expressed.

The complaints and justifications which Monluc made to the crown in 1570 had had some effect despite opposition from his enemies. Catherine de Medici and Charles still felt indebted to Monluc for his past service, and although he had made some errors of judgement, they would not deny him the important title of maréchal de France which they bestowed upon him September 20, 1574. His Commentaires, which had been circulating in unpublished form since 1571, no doubt contributed significantly to the restitution of his honor and reputation. Having attained the highest military rank possible, Monluc sat back and reveled in this succès d'estime for which he had worked so hard during a career extending over a fifty year period. At the moment of his death on August 26, 1577, while at Condom visiting his youngest son, he had actively served under four French kings (Francis I, Henry II, Francis II, and Charles IX), and lived to see the beginning of the reign of a fifth, Henry III.

Notes

¹ Joseph LeGras, Blaise de Monluc, héros malchanceux et grand écrivain (Paris, 1926), p. 8.

² Commentaires, p. 23.

³ Commentaires, p. 30.

⁴ Commentaires, p. 30.

⁵ Commentaires, p. 31.

⁶ Commentaires, p. 39 "Monluc, mon ami, je n'oublierai jamais le service que vous avez rendu au Roi, et je m'en souviendrai autant que je vivrai."

⁷ Commentaires, p. 40.

⁸ Commentaires, p. 46.

⁹ Commentaires, p. 49.

¹⁰ Commentaires, p. 50.

¹¹ Paul Courteault has uncovered some interesting aspects of Monluc's life which were left untouched in the Commentaires. See Courteault, Blaise de Monluc, historien, p. 61. He contends that there were two periods of several years each wherein Monluc was given to parties, rivalries, and numerous intrigues. If true, we have before us what Courteault calls "un Monluc tout nouveau," and it forces us to question the basic honesty of Monluc's statements in the Commentaires concerning his personal life. It is inconsistent to think that Monluc would play the role of intriguer for a few short years and then spend the remainder of his life married to the sword. It is more conceivable to see a certain facade constructed in the Commentaires through which Monluc tries to coverup his futile attempts at vanity in favor of his proven worth as a soldier.

¹² Commentaires, p. 340.

13 Jean Giono mentions poverty as a contributing factor to Monluc's character: "Il a été pendant toute la première sensibilité de la jeunesse rempli jusqu' à ras bord et uniquement de pauvreté. Il ne pourra jamais l'oublier et toutes ses passions seront mélangés du sentiment de pauvreté" (Commentaires, p. XIII).

14 Commentaires, p. 61.

15 In his preface to the Courteault edition of the Commentaires Jean Giono makes the following statement: "Il Monluc ne réussira ni dans le monde, ni à la cour, ses plus grands exploits le desserviront, il n'aura que la gloire d'être le fils de ses oeuvres et il sera obligé de dicter les Commentaires pour affirmer son existence." Commentaires, p. X.

16 Commentaires, p. 76.

17 Commentaires, p. 352.

18 From all available evidence, it seems that Monluc was more the victim of the opportunists at court than of the wrath of Catherine or Charles. With respect to this Courteault says, "Aussi, à deux reprises, elle Catherine de Medici avoit refusé la démission qu'il Monluc lui offrait; elle l'avait même défendu contre les accusations les plus graves, parfois les plus justifiées" (Courteault, Blaise de Monluc, historien, p. 24).

19 There are differing opinions as to Monluc's true penchant for religion, but the general consensus is that he was more concerned with going to battle for the king than going to church for the Pope. Normand gives a good summation, "Il fut de la religion du roi loyaliste et royaliste, et ce fut la cause du roi et non celle de la religion catholique, qu'il soutint si vigoureusement" (Normand, Les Mémorialistes, p. 91). See also Michel, Blaise de Monluc, p. 116, and Le Gras, p. 276.

20 Brantôme, Hommes illustres (Paris: Ed. Bonchon) Tome 1^{er}, p. 363.

21 Monluc, Blaise de Lasseran-Massencome seigneur de Monluc, Le testament du Maréchal Blaise de Monluc, publié en entier, M. Clément-Simon ed, (Agen: Imprimerie de Prosper Noubel, 1872), p. 12-16.

22 Courteault, Blaise de Monluc, historien, p. 28.

23 Commentaires, p. XV.

24 Commentaires, p. XXVII.

- 25 Courteault, Blaise de Monluc, historien, p. 31.
- 26 Commentaires, p. 7.
- 27 Commentaires, p. 833.
- 28 Commentaires, p. 22.
- 29 Commentaires, p. 564.
- 30 Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne, p. 276.

31 It must be understood that the point of view in the Commentaires is Monluc's and that the remonstrances and discourses are not only subjective in nature but, for the most part, unvarifiable by historical documents even though Monluc claims that they are based on factual experience; the remonstrances and discourses are, therefore, to be considered as a literary device by the author and not as historical occurrences.

Chapter III

ADDRESSES TO OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS

While the immediate reasons for Monluc's decision to write the Commentaires appear to be the Rabastens incident and the justification of his actions, there is yet another reason which cannot be overlooked. At the very core of his desire to relate his personal military achievements is the exemplary figure of Julius Caesar. Monluc admits that he was greatly influenced by this Roman general's military history: "Le plus grand capitaine qui ait jamais esté, qui est Caesar, m'en a monstré le chemin, ayant luy-mesme escrit ses Commentaires, escrivant la nuit ce qu'il executoit le jour."¹ Could it be that Monluc saw himself as the Julius Caesar of France? In any case he was anxious to establish himself as a prominent military figure and Caesar's Belli Gallici caused him to think that he, too, could pass on a praiseworthy image to countrymen yet unborn.

Initially, Caesar had entered upon a military career more for political advantages than for personal preference.² After several years of quasi successful attempts at climbing the political ladder, he realized that he could not reach the top until he had achieved widespread respect as a Roman general.³ The conquest of Gaul became a means to this end,

and his commentaries helped popularize his victories, thus establishing him as a prominent leader and military figure. Arthur Walker, in his introduction to Caesar's Belli Gallici speaks of the ulterior motives behind this work: "Yet the book was written hastily, probably in the winter of 52-51, after the events narrated in Book VII; and it was written for a political purpose. Absent from Rome and deprived of his two chief supporters by the death of Crassus and the alienation of Pompey, Caesar wished to put himself in a good light before the Roman people."⁴ Whether Monluc was familiar with Caesar's original purpose for writing his commentaries or with its ultimate success is uncertain; yet he was significantly influenced by the writings of this Roman general. The similarities between their commentaries can be summarized as follows: first, both works were written in a relatively short period of time for the specific purpose of enhancing the author's reputation. Secondly, as far as historians can determine, both accounts are historically and militarily accurate despite the authors' obvious intent on profiting from their works. Lastly, the two authors are remarkably similar in the general treatment of their military experiences. Caesar's contribution to Monluc's military views becomes evident as one studies the remonstrances in which he gives advice to military officers. This influence will be examined in depth later.

Another possible Caesarian influence on Monluc lies in the area of oratory. Caesar was a frequent speaker in the

forum where, because of his speeches, he played a significant role in Roman political affairs: "An excellent orator both by nature and by training, he used his oratorical powers in furthering the plans of his party."⁵ The words "by training" indicate that Caesar was schooled in public discourse, an advantage that was never available to Monluc. Yet, despite a rich background in public discourse, Caesar relied very little on remonstrance and oratory in his commentaries, while Monluc, who was less schooled in oral persuasion but equally as talented by nature, used them to great advantage. It is possible that Monluc, in addition to his attentive reading of the Belli Gallici, might have had access to some of Caesar's discourses as delivered in the Roman forum.⁶ If so, this could partially account for his reliance on oratory in the Commentaires (some apparent similarities in their rhetoric will be discussed later). At any rate, he admits not only to having read Caesar's commentaries but also to having used them as a guide to his own military history.⁷ There were no less than two 16th Century French editions of Caesar's commentaries which would have been available to Monluc;⁸ in addition, other works existed on or by Livy, Tacitus, Alexander the Great, Hannibal, Cicero and others.⁹ Such an accessibility to military histories of this nature and references made to them in his Commentaires, suggest that Monluc was moderately well read, at least within the scope of his own profession.

Although his primary model, Caesar, did not specifically orient himself in his history toward instructing future soldiers in the art of warfare, Monluc had apparently envisaged such a role for himself in his own commentaries. As an extension to the basic account of his life, Monluc wanted to present the novice soldiers and future officers with a manual for military success, and he expected contemporary officers to profit from it: "C'est à vous, capitaines mes compagnons, à qui principalement il s'adresse: vous en pourrez peut estre tirer du proffit."¹⁰ Instruction becomes a fundamental element in Monluc's narrative, but he realized that if this instruction was to be acceptable to the reader, he must first establish his own credibility as a soldier. By achieving this objective, and thus gaining the reader's confidence, the Commentaires would then become a useful handbook of military and moral instruction.

The edge of credibility sought by Monluc is achieved by presenting himself as a "vieux soldat" and by reminding the reader that his long experience in the king's service has in countless ways qualified him to write such a work. On several occasions statements like the following appear: "Or, capitaines, vous ne vous devez desdaigner d'apprendre quelque chose de moy, qui suis le plus vieux capitaine de France et qui me suis trouvé en autant de combats ou plus que capitaine de l'Europe, comme vous jugerez à la fin de mon livre."¹¹ The psychology behind this approach establishes experience as the master teacher, thus rendering the

Commentaires more believable. Monluc's own experience as a combatant acts as the ultimate lever in obtaining respect from the reader. As a prime example of military excellence, and as one who had seen what makes men succeed or fail, Monluc is in an excellent position to give advice.

Among the principal themes developed by Monluc in his exhortations to military men are his condemnation of vice and his praise of virtue. His concept of these two terms is rather limited in scope because of his own preoccupation with military affairs and also because of the martial nature of his intended audience. In other words, the counsel on these subjects is given more from a military perspective than from a truly ethical one. Monluc is not concerned with the moral question of right or wrong; he is primarily interested in individual actions or conduct that might have an effect on a soldier's performance. If one were to establish the vices in a hierarchy of severity, the worst vice would be the one which does the most to prevent a soldier or an officer from executing his duties. On the opposite pole, Monluc would say that the greatest virtue is the one which best aids a soldier in accomplishing his responsibilities. Since, as a rule, vice and virtue vary according to the individual, a predetermined judgement cannot be made as to which is worse or better than the other. Monluc, then, does not present a hierarchy of vices according to ethical values but rather he counsels the reader on the types of conduct which, to him (a subjective viewpoint), pose the

greatest threat to competent military service. Likewise, on the subject of virtue, he has some preconceived ideas about which character traits are the most suitable to an officer. To facilitate the study of virtue and vice in the remonstrances, each will be examined separately beginning with the latter.

While some of the counsel on vice apparently touches on moral issues, Monluc insists that its essential purpose is to prepare soldiers to become more capable officers and leaders. As he states in the remonstrance "Aux capitaines de gens de pied" he had, as a young soldier himself, sought counsel on what was expected of a great commander, for he wanted to improve his own situation by learning from the mistakes of others. At this point he enters into a lengthy remonstrance on the ill effects of gambling, drinking, and avarice, claiming that captains who engage in these vices lead their men astray.

Monluc takes each vice and, as if preparing for a debate, substantiates his reasons for condemning it. Gambling enslaves a man so that he has no time to perform his military responsibilities. If he loses, he wants to regain what he lost; if he wins, the fever for becoming richer forces him to continue. Thus a gambling soldier's constant attention is placed on the next throw of the dice rather than on fighting the enemy: "Et au lieu de songer à pipper vostre ennemy, vous pensez à pipper les cartes ou les dets. Cela vous divertist du tout de vostre charge."¹² In place of gambling Monluc suggests

that the officers mingle with their men, getting to know them on a first name basis and encouraging them to refrain from unworthy actions which might cause a reproach to the king's lieutenant. In addition they should be aware of any mutinous undercurrents among the troops. With so many responsibilities, what officer could justify playing cards?

The next vice discussed by Monluc is drinking. In essence he says that alcohol dilutes one's mind and adds to the appetite: "Car il n'y a rien au monde qui asoupisse tant l'esprit de l'homme et qui invite tant à dormir que le vin. Si vous ne beuvez guère, par consequent vous ne mangez pas trop, car le vin appelle le manger, pour plus longuement prendre le plaisir de boire."¹³ The consumption of wine, combined with food in the stomach, encourages too much sleep in an officer whose primary duty should be studying new strategies and seeking opportunities for service.

One of the most adverse effects of alcohol on a military officer is the change in personality and loss of perspective when intoxicated: "Encore amène le vin un autre peril: C'est que, comme le capitaine est yvre, il ne se scait commander et moins commander les autres, et se mettra à frapper ses soldats sans aucune raison."¹⁴ The uncontrolled wrath of a drunken officer attracts disrespect and often hatred from his men. At this point Monluc sets down the importance of remonstrance in directing soldiers: "Et ne trouvez vous pas meilleur le chastiment de vostre soldat avecques paroles et menaces que à coups d'espée, le tuant

et mutilant de ses membres?"¹⁵ According to Monluc, evidence shows that oral persuasion is often more effective than harsh treatment. He claims that he saw four officers shot in the back by soldiers who they had abused while inebriated. And, once a soldier has been offended or seen others harassed, he is not likely to demonstrate any loyalty to an officer given to drinking. Consequently alcoholism can become a primary cause for divisiveness in an army. Added to this is the detrimental effect which intemperance could have on an officer's career. Competency is an obvious factor in the promotion of a soldier to a higher rank. With this in mind, those responsible for selecting someone for advancement would find it difficult to promote a soldier with a reputation for irresponsibility because of frequent intoxication.

The counsel given by Monluc in this remonstrance is directed toward a military public, one that was well acquainted with the consequences of excessive alcoholism. Equally significant, however, was the awareness of the temporary relief wine could bring to the rigorous and sometimes unpleasant task of being a soldier; even Monluc found occasion to share a bottle of wine with his fellow officers as a means of calming the nerves before a battle as exemplified just before the assault on Rabastens:

Comme les deux heures furent venues, je fis apporter huit ou dix flacons de vin, que madame de Panjas m'avoit envoyé, et le delivray aux gentils-hommes, et leur dis: 'Beuvons, mes compagnons, car bien tost se verra qui a tété de bon lait. Dieu veuille

que nous puissions quelque jour boire ensemble!
 Si noz jours derniers sont venuz, il n'est en
 nostre pouvoir de rompre les destinées'. 16

It is apparent from this passage that Monluc valued the effects of wine under certain conditions and yet, in spite of the occasional use of wine himself, he recognized and tried to prevent excessive drinking among his officers and troops.

The third vice treated is avarice. The love of money, similar to the other two vices, carries with it the seeds of a harmful reputation. This in turn hinders an officer from progressing rapidly in the accomplishment of his duties and the attainment of military success. Enslaved by this vice, he is characteristically seen as more interested in his own welfare than that of his men. Instead of offering them a subsistence either in booty or wages, he seeks to enrich himself at their expense by using his authority selfishly for that purpose. Throughout the Middle Ages the more renowned military figures often retained loyal followers who were granted special privileges for their services:

"These companions they led in battle and on plundering expeditions, and in the intervals of rest gave them hospitality in their great wooden 'halls' where the atmosphere was congenial for long drinking-bouts. The little band was the mainstay of its captain in wars and vendettas; it supported his authority in the deliberations of the free men; and the generous gifts--of food and drink, of slaves, of gold rings--which he lavished upon his followers was an indispensable element of his prestige." 17

Such arrangements between military leaders and their men carried into the sixteenth century, and the unequal dispersion of goods acquired in battle was in no way considered

unethical. It is this longstanding fiduciary tradition between officers and men to which Monluc refers when he speaks of avarice.

For him it was a breach of trust for officers to deny their men a rightful guerdon, and he reminds them that this venality might backfire on them: "Car tous les bons hommes vous fuyront, disant que vous aimez plus un escu qu'un vaillant homme, de sorte que vous n'aurez que gens de peu de valleur auprès de vous, et, au premier lieu qui se presentera, là où vous faudra paroistre, vous serez abandonné, et faudra que vous perdes la vie ou que vous fuyez."¹⁸ Thus having attracted only the worst of the fighting men, he will be deserted when he needs their help the most. An officer guilty of avarice therefore runs a greater risk of losing his life in battle than an officer free from this vice. Regretfully for him, it will probably be said that he was a victim of his own weakness while his bad reputation will endure as evidence of a life unwisely lived.

Monluc appeals to two very powerful human needs: the preservation of one's life and acceptance from one's fellow beings. Furthermore, by assuring the reader that vice will prevent advancement in military rank, he makes him aware of the monetary rewards that will consequently be lost. His strategy is to show that the value of life and honor (acceptance) far exceed the minor gains that can be had through avidity. Although the aforementioned vices are not the only ones discussed in Monluc's remonstrances (others such as

cowardice are found in conjunction with his counsel on virtues like courage; these will be studied later in that context), his treatment of them typifies his concept of vice as being any action which hinders a soldier's military effectiveness.

Opposite vice are the virtuous elements which, according to Monluc, act as catalists toward the attainment of military success, this success being synonymous with the honor gained through meritorious actions. Virtue becomes a means to this end, and he treats it frequently in the remonstrances and discourses. It would be assuming too much to think that Monluc had any lofty conceptions of virtue and vice in the form of a personal philosophy of ethics. There is no question, however, that he was influenced in a general way by contemporary views concerning individual and social conduct. Medieval society's espousal of the Aristotelian doctrine wherein virtue was defined as justice with regard to the state (society) and vice as injustice to the state, as it was inherited by the Renaissance,¹⁹ is partially reflected in Monluc's moralizing. For instance, the virtues that he extols (courage, temperance, etc.) correspond closely to those put forth by Aristotle in his Ethics.²⁰ In addition, his avowed purpose for giving advice on moral conduct is ultimately destined to benefit the state, in this case, the king of France, the guardian of all Frenchmen. On a more subjective level, Monluc's treatment of virtue differs from Aristotle's because of the

military overtone; Monluc does not approach the intellectual or political magnitude of Aristotle's development of the subject.

Christian ethics also had some effect on Monluc, and yet they seem to play a secondary role to the Aristotelian influence. The Christian doctrine wherein any act against oneself or God (suicide, blasphemy, etc) receives strict condemnation, contributes little to Monluc's own views on virtue, at least not in the Commentaires. Even the concept "love thy neighbor as thyself," taught by Christ, went virtually unnoticed by him even though it had the potential of benefiting the state. Sixteenth century France hesitated between the meaning of the word "vertu" with its moral, religious overtones resulting from the Christian influence and the meaning more readily given to it by the Greeks and Romans, namely courage, manliness, and character.²¹ Monluc was more inclined towards the latter definition, particularly as it had to do with physical courage on the battlefield, but this does not preclude his use of it in the other sense, although never to the degree taught by Christian dogma. Nevertheless, to avoid confusion, it can be assumed that "vertu", as discussed in this chapter, will carry the definition of courage or manliness unless otherwise stated.

In his discussion of feudal knights, Mark Bloch describes the noble character that had to accompany a knight's physical being onto the battlefield:

A supple and muscular body, however, it is almost superfluous to say, was not enough to make the ideal knight. To these qualities he must add courage as well. And it was also because it gave scope for the exercise of this virtue that war created such joy in the hearts of men for whom daring and the contempt for death were, in a sense, professional assets. 22

Monluc lived in a day when the bravest soldier could be killed from two hundred yards by a coward firing an arquebus. He himself was a victim of this warfare which had no equitable way of rewarding personal courage. Nonetheless, he continued to eulogize the old system of chivalry wherein a man's courage counted for more than the weapon he carried.

Although his attitude towards chivalric virtues calls forth visions of a nobility well suited to its profession, Monluc also foreshadows the Napoleonic practice wherein the recognition of courage on the battlefield extends to every soldier regardless of his lineage. Monluc emphasizes that even the lowliest soldier can rise to the top if he demonstrates his prowess and virtue: "Et, au contraire, j'en ay veu d'autres parvenir, qui ont porté la picque à six francs de paye, faire des actes si belliqueux, et se sont trouvez si capables qu'il y en a prou, qu'estoyent fils de pauvres laboureurs, qui se sont avancez plus avant que beaucoup de nobles, pour leur hardiesse, et vertu."²³ Prior to this statement Monluc testified to having seen many lose their rank and nobility because of cowardly actions. His desire is to make success appear available to any soldier or officer who wishes to achieve it through virtuous actions.

As for the soldiers who have the potential of attaining positions of leadership, they have a particular interest in the virtues of their immediate superior; for, by accepting and participating in his military responsibilities, they become partners with him in his achievements. They also become heirs to his office, because by following his example they are able to emulate his pattern for success. Since he has learned to lead his men consistently to victory under the auspices of respectable conduct and bravery, the virtuous captain is more capable of showing his men how to preserve their lives in battle and how to develop a good reputation. Here again the virtues spoken of have more to do with military capacities than with religious questions of morality.

In commenting on the capture of Thionville in June 1558, Monluc alludes to a situation in which he forced his men to be courageous and indicates that this action was instrumental in his ultimate victory. At a critical point in the conflict, it appeared that his assault on the city was being repulsed. A certain M. de Bordillon counseled Monluc to withdraw, but instead he ordered his men to hold their positions despite the odds. His decision was based on what he considered an inherent courage in his men which appeared when the necessity to survive became imminent: "Car lors, se voyans perdus, ils prenent courage et font de necessité vertu."²⁴ For emphasis, Monluc uses the words vertu and courage synonymously. He insinuates that even constrained

bravery, although not equal in merit to self-initiated courage, is worthy of praise when it contributes to victory. The lesson Monluc wants to convey is one which encourages his readers to force their men to demonstrate courage if the circumstances demand it. This type of action brings respect and military success.

A great advantage to having secured a favorable reputation, says Monluc, is that it will attract soldiers who are willing to fight courageously for a cause: "Si vous estes tel que vous devez estre, c'est-à-dire craint et aimé, vous tout seul en vaudrez cent; chacun, qui vous verra marcher, ira au secours et prendra coeur, et vos ennemis, pour un homme que vous aurez, ils diront que vous en aurez cent."²⁵ The soldierly qualities of being feared and respected also fit into Monluc's concept of virtue since they add to an officer's effectiveness. This remonstrance, addressed to the king's lieutenants, refers to a military situation in Guyenne where Monluc made a decision to enter and defend Lectoure (September 1567) against the Protestants.²⁶ Although his forces were initially inferior to the enemy, his own bravery, along with that of his troops, attracted reinforcements sufficient to dissuade the attackers.

The type of bravery espoused and exemplified by Monluc in the preceding paragraph was increasingly important to the 16th century French nobility because during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the French crown's reliance on military services provided by the nobility had begun to dwindle.²⁷

This was due in large part to the formation of a national army, more effective weaponry (guns), and the use of foreign mercenaries.²⁸ With its usefulness on the wane, the nobility had lost much of its prestige by the sixteenth century; equally important, its economic basis had been undermined by the growth of the bourgeoisie. The nobles often found themselves in debt to money lenders and were thereby forced to relinquish their lands or to rely more and more on the king. The degenerated economic state of the nobility is described by Wallace Ferguson:

Forced into dependence on the crown, the great nobles flocked to court, where they formed a brilliant entourage about the monarch, devoting their social grace and the clamor of ancient names to the glorification of royalty. In return for this service, they received pensions, sinecures, and offices in army and church. By virtue of constant contact with the king, they could still exert a powerful influence on the policies of state. They could also bring pressure to bear on the government by exploiting a very considerable nuisance value. But, for all that, even the great nobles were becoming courtiers rather than independent vassals, while the lesser nobles were sinking into a genteel poverty, eked out by service in the royal army.²⁹

Thus a very real concern entertained by military men of the period was whether they could retire from service with a royal pension. Those who were from the poverty stricken nobility and who had been successful in becoming an officer were especially concerned about their future retirement pay. One can understand why they would not be anxious to return to their former penury. Monluc approaches this problem of anxiety with some astute reasoning and later offers a solution:

"Mais voulez vous croire que le capitaine vaillant et sage, grand entrepreneur et executer, aille mourir de faim à un hospital, comme s'il en y avoit en un camp à centaines?"³⁰

To his own question he replies by subtly placing them in the king's shoes and by reassuring them that it would be to his disadvantage to waive a captain's pension who, through his bravery and excellent conduct, had earned it. Such injustice would soon be rumored among the other officers and before long his most seasoned leaders would be seeking employment elsewhere.

Monluc asserts that only those who live in corruption need fear a loss of pension: "Ceste crainte ne doit estre mise en avant par les sages et vaillans capitaines, mais par les yvrongnes, par les joueurs et par les avarés, et par les gens qui ne vallent rien."³¹ Thus the captains who demonstrate courage and virtue during their service are released from the fear of being unjustly deprived of royal compensation. In addition to the above argument, Monluc offers yet another apology for valor and moral rectitude. If for some reason the king was financially unable to compensate his veterans, there would always be a prince or lord who, having recognized his virtues, would offer him a subsistence.

There could, of course, be no hope of a pension until the officer had reached a certain rank and gained the king's favor. Monluc suggests that the way to the top is to be valiant in the accomplishment of one's duties: "Car on

cherchera tousjours à bailler les grandes charges à ceux qui se seront bien acquittés de petites."³² In essence he is saying that success breeds success, and that an officer can more easily be promoted if he has an excellent record of achievement. He supports this claim by referring to several acquaintances from Guyenne who had acquired a favorable reputation at the court, not because of any great wealth or noble lineage but on account of their meritorious conduct. In this case Monluc is appealing to the competitive nature of his reader by taunting him with a challenge: "If they can do it, you can do it too."

Courage and moral fortitude, the latter of which relates to Monluc's concept of virtue in that it spawns character traits beneficial to society (military society especially), are fundamental to the attainment of military greatness because they lay the ground work for all other qualities and judgments requisite to the profession. Monluc reveals three additional traits necessary to a great general and the ones to which he ascribes the majority of his success: vigilance, diligence, and prompt execution. His reverence for these attributes is a borrowing from Julius Caesar who, as previously discussed, contributed greatly to Monluc's personal views on military strategy. While there are many similarities that might be drawn between the military effectiveness of Caesar and Monluc, there seems to be a striking resemblance on the value they attribute to

decisiveness in battle. For example Caesar's decisiveness during the Gallic wars was legendary:

Yet in an emergency he would coolly carry out the most daring plans, so that he sometimes appears even reckless; but this apparent recklessness was the result of swift and unerring decision, based on a keen insight in the character and probably action of his opponents. He always took the offensive and endeavored to concentrate his force and strike the enemy unexpectedly." 33

Likewise, with regard to the imperative nature of quick decisions and prompt action, Monluc says, "Et au contraire, il n'y peut avoir hardiesse, encore que l'homme en soit tout plein, s'il est lent, tardif et long à executer; car, avant qu'il aye prins sa deliberation, il y met un si long temps que l'ennemy est adverty de ce qu'il veut faire et remediera au tout; et s'il est hastif, il le surprendra à luy mesmes."³⁴ Both Monluc and Caesar place courage in an inferior position to prompt execution since without the latter, the former would be weakened because the element of surprise would be lost.

Monluc asserts that courage and prompt action cannot function properly by themselves; the fusion of these two qualities strengthens a leader's overall effectiveness in dealing with military situations. As examples, he gives Alexander the Great, whose motto was "Ce que tu peux faire annuit, n'attends au lendemain", and Caesar who, out of fifty-two battles, lost only that of Dyrrachium. With his typically subtle arrogance, Monluc credits himself with having demonstrated the same qualities of these heroes:

"Je ne me veux comparer à eux, mais si veux-je dire cela de moy-mesmes, puisqu'il est vray, que jamais ma paresse et ma longueur ne me fist perdre rien ny à mon maistre; l'ennemy me pensoit à une lieuë de luy que je luy allois porter la chemise blanche."³⁵

He cites many instances where his victories were a direct result of his ability to surprise the enemy. One of the most notable examples took place in 1567 when the Protestant forces devised a plan to infiltrate and capture Lectoure which at the time was one of the few remaining Catholic strongholds in Guyenne. The Protestant intention was first to have Monluc assassinated at Cassaigne where he was stationed and then, with the help of allies within the walls of Lectoure, storm the city. Luckily, Monluc was alerted and resolved immediately to secure it for the Catholics which he did. He relates what the consequences would have been had he delayed his march on Lectoure: ". . . car toutes ces choses sauvarent la ville au Roy, à moy la vie, et par consequent tout le pays, qui estoit entièrement perdu si j'eusse esté prinse, car l'on ne se pouvait sauver que dans les portes de Thoulouse et Bordeaux."³⁶ Had he not anticipated the enemy, the entire province of Guyenne would have been lost and the king would consequently have been placed in a critical military situation. The remonstrance, as directed to the military officers, was meant as a lesson on the importance of timely decisions.

Closely related to moral fortitude is the physical fortitude required for arduous military exercises. Commenting on the success of another of his forced marches, this time to relieve Corbie (1558), Monluc declares that a qualified leader should carry out an order regardless of physical deterrents: "Car il vous vaut beaucoup mieux travailler vostre corps et vos jambes jusques au dernier de vostre force, et entrer dedans la place, et demeurer en vie, que d'aller à vostre ainse et estre tué et n'y entrer point; car vous-mesmes estes cause de vostre mort et que la place sera perdue."³⁷ The body for him was destined for the accomplishment of the task at hand and he thought that humans had an inherent ability to extend themselves beyond their normal physical capacity for endurance. When compared to a horse, for example, man could continue under sheer will power while the animal would collapse from exhaustion. As long as a man was fueled by sufficient food and drink and guided by personal fortitude, he could force his body to continue towards the prescribed destination. It is of capital importance for military leaders to demonstrate a willingness to endure the same physical punishment as their men, for otherwise they would be in danger of losing the latter's respect.

As reflected in the above paragraph, Monluc felt a need for physical intensity and endurance. This same philosophy carried over into his views on what a soldier's mental attitude should be toward his profession. Monluc was one of the great optimists of sixteenth century France. While

Montaigne bathed in his own scepticism and Aubigné lamented the evils of war, this hardy Gascon was cheering his men on to victory after victory and at the same time building a name for himself. He believed strongly in the principle of mind over matter when there was a goal to be achieved. This is why he insisted on sublimating insofar as possible all physical demands to the mind. If what we read in the Commentaires about his own character is true, he was indeed extraordinary in his ability to control his own environment both physically and mentally. He never succumbed to discouragement of any kind and was never influenced by pessimism even by his superiors.

Optimism is seen by him as an essential element in the make-up of a great leader. In the remonstrance inserted after Corbie, he tells his military readers to never apologize to or sympathize with soldiers who complain or who demonstrate negative attitudes. He counsels them to make every task seem easy rather than dwelling on the difficulties or dangers involved. He also insists that they spend time with their men for the purpose of encouraging them in their duties: "Parlés tousjours par les chemins joyeusement avecques eux, leur donnant tousjours grand courage, et leur mettez au devant le grand honneur qu'ils gagneront et le grand service qu'ils feront au Roy."³⁸ Monluc recognized that discouragement and dissatisfaction with a leader are the two biggest causes of mutiny. For this reason he despised leaders who had to be encouraged by their own men or

who had a tendency towards pessimism. For instance, during the preparations to defend Siena one of his lieutenants, Saint-Auban, remained in bed leaving his military responsibilities unattended. The first chance he had, Monluc grabbed him, placed a sword against his throat, and gave him the following ultimatum: "Paillard, meschant, tu es cause de nous faire perdre la ville; ce que ne verras jamais, car je te tueray tout à ceste heure, ou tu sauteras dedans."³⁹

During the defense of Siena, Monluc was confronted with an entire populace and the largest portion of an army who were discouraged and ready to capitulate. In a remonstrance directed to the governors of the cities and the captains of armies (as readers), Monluc alerts them to the fact that when citizens petition for surrender and when soldiers refuse to fight, they have no one to blame but themselves, for they simply have not functioned properly as leaders.⁴⁰ Anything short of this recognition would be an excuse. He encourages them if they are ever presented with a situation such as Siena, to wash their face in Greek wine and to mingle with the public and their troops and to demonstrate enthusiasm and even a will to die for a just cause if necessary.

He then acquaints them with how, through optimism, they can turn a hopeless predicament into a victory: "Parlés souvent avec ceux de la ville en quatre ou cinq paroles, et pareillement aux soldats, leur disant: 'Et bien, mes amys, n'avez-vous pas courage? Je tiens la victoire nostre et la

mort de nos ennemis desjà pour assurée; car j'ay je scay quel presage en moy que, quand il me vient, je suis tout assuré de vaincre, lequel je tiens de Dieu, et non des hommes; par quoy reposez-vous sur moy et resolvez-vous tous de combattre et sortir d'icy avec honneur et reputation."⁴¹

As with most counsel given by Monluc, this one is based on his personal experience. He had in fact successfully used this principle at Siena when it was imperative for him to maintain the morale of the citizens as well as the troops in order to avoid total panic and capitulation. His objective here is to convince his reader that by remaining optimistic, an officer can more handily retain control of a critical situation.

In a very strict sense, Monluc was one of the king's men. It is generally agreed that the motives behind his actions during the religious wars were based more upon loyalty to the crown than on any religious convictions. Courteault makes the following comment in this regard: "Monluc ne fut pas un fanatique. Les préoccupations théologiques ne tinrent certainement aucune place dans les raisons qui déterminèrent son attitude pendant les guerres civiles."⁴² As acknowledged by Monluc himself, his primary concern was to be of service to the king: " . . . que je n'ay jamais eu repos, pour acquerir de l'honneur en faisant service aux Rois mes maistres, qui estoit mon seul but, . . ."⁴³ All else became secondary to this desire, and he sought to impart the same

sentiments to his reader: service should be the ultimate aim of every military leader and soldier.

Associated with the responsibility for service was a requirement for obedience. The commands made by one's superiors were, for Monluc, an opportunity to demonstrate loyalty and consequently to be advanced in rank more easily. There were, however, times when obeying a command was not easily performed; yet it had to be done: "Voyez les dangers qu'on court de servir les princes. Il n'y a ordre: ils sont nez pour commander, et nous pour servir et obeir. Et Dieu scait si j'avois occasion de me plaindre d'avoir esté ainsi abandonné et mis en proye!"⁴⁴ This statement was inserted into the account of his return trip from Italy after the final capitulation of Siena; he had just learned that the king was displeased with the loss of the city. Monluc's complaint is based on the fact that the king had not rendered the relief in men and supplies which he had originally promised. Therefore, he was not in a position to criticize Monluc's performance. The initial lack of appreciation on the part of the king pricked Monluc's pride since he had defended the city in good faith and in direct response to a royal command.⁴⁵ This, however, did not hinder him from willingly serving the king on future occasions. He realized from the beginning of his career the importance of obedience, and although he was outspoken on military matters, he usually gave in to the final decisions of his superiors.

He believed so strongly in service and obedience that he was willing to risk his life. During the campaign in Guyenne against Montgomery (1569), Monluc made a sortie into enemy territory in order to scout Moirax. The risks were high because if he would have been discovered, there would have been no possible escape. Of this experience Monluc relates: "Et à la verité, si monsieur de Montgommery eust envoyé seulement dix ou douze chevaux sur le chemin d'Agen à Moirax, j'estois prins ou mort; mais il faut parfois tenter fortune et faire le soldat; l'ennemy ne scait pas ce que vous faictes."⁴⁶ The compulsion to complete any and every assignment given to him despite the hazards is reflected in the following statement taken from the remonstrance on the capture of Thionville: "Mes compagnons, mes amis, après avoir dit vostre 'In manus', ne vous souvenez plus que de bien faire. Si vostre heure est venue, vous avez beau conniller [tergiverser]; puisqu'il faut mourir, il vaut mieux mourir en gens de bien et laisser une belle memoire de soy."⁴⁷ He is encouraging his readers to carry through with their commitments even though it may mean giving up their lives. He is trying to convey his own feeling that life has no value unless it is directed toward a worthy cause and for him any cause was worthy which was in the king's name.

If there was any one thing which kindled Monluc's fire the most, it was his desire for "honor". For him this meant gaining the respect of his peers and superiors for praiseworthy

actions. In the last remonstrance in the Commentaires before the supplement, he dwells lengthily on the importance of leading a life which would merit posthumous praise: "Mes compagnons, combien de choses grandes ferez-vous si vous mettez toute vostre fiance en Dieu, et si vous proposez tousjours l'honneur devant les yeux, discourant en vous mesmes que, si voz jours doivent finir sur la bresche, vous avez beau demeurer dans le fossé. 'Un bel morir, dict l'Italien, tuta la vita honora.' C'est mourir en beste de ne laisser nulle memoire après soy."⁴⁸ On numerous occasions Monluc claimed that he would rather be dead and respected than alive and despised. Alluding to the success of his own career, Monluc calls attention to the honor he had gained by avoiding vice and cleaving to virtue. He denounces anything that would pose a threat to this honor. At the end of his life, he felt that he had been rewarded with the fruit of his virtuous labors: honor and respect. He states, "A present je me vois tirant à la mort, dans le lict; je me sens grandement soulagé: en despit d'elle mon nom vivra non-seulement en la Gascogne, amis parmi les estrangers."⁴⁹

In addition to the remonstrances mentioned above, Monluc gave advice on a number of more general topics. For example, he makes plain the military usefulness of learning foreign languages: "Vous, messieurs, qui avez le moyen et qui voulez pousser vos enfans, croyez que c'est une bonne chose de leur faire apprendre, s'il est possible, les langues estrangeres; cela sert fort, soit pour passer, soit pour se

sauver, soit pour negotier."⁵⁰ This comment was in connection with the speech delivered by him in Spanish to some Spanish troops in October 1562. Monluc prided himself on his ability to communicate in several languages, and throughout his career he had had occasion to use this ability, particularly in negotiating and counseling with foreign troops. He used his Italian to win the confidence of the citizens at Siena and his English when he played the role of a spy.⁵¹

Since one of the main purposes of the Commentaires was to share his military experiences with the public, Monluc dedicated considerable space to military strategy. Besides the narrative in which he gives a detailed historical account, the remonstrances inserted into the cadre of the narrative serve to draw lessons from specific military events. Frequently after an assault, a skirmish or other happening, Monluc interrupts his narrative in order to expostulate on why things turned out the way they did.

As an example one can cite the remonstrance in which Monluc comments on the battle of the Terre D'Oye. Fighting near Calais in 1545, Monluc's troop came across a castle occupied by some English soldiers. In the meantime another segment of the king's army under the direction of Charles de Cossé, comte de Brissac had spied a group of about fifty English calvarymen. Brissac sent one of his petty officers to investigate more closely who subsequently returned and reported that he had seen an additional four

hundred horsemen in the next valley. Brissac thus assumed that his men were outnumbered and made plans to retreat. Meanwhile, Monluc continued his approach on the castle. He cut off another group of English soldiers who were planning to reinforce the castle. When Brissac arrived, Monluc convinced him to help in the assault because the four hundred people sighted by Castegeac were not soldiers but peasants and village women who were fleeing towards Calais.

If this false report had not been uncovered, it would have spoiled the chances of capturing the castle and the territory in that area. As it was, the fifty English cavalrymen first encountered by Brissac were allowed free passage to Calais. Based upon his experience in this incident, Monluc gives the following counsel: "Un general sur tout doit envoyer un vieux routier ou un homme fort asseuré pour descouvrir; un homme non experimenté prendra bien tost l'arme et s'imaginera que les buissons sont des bataillons ennemis. Je ne veux pas dire que Castegeac ne fut soldat; mais il fit un pas de clerc."⁵² He suggests that reconnaissance missions should be delegated to seasoned scouts or older soldiers rather than to green petty officers who, out of fear or lack of experience, have a tendency to exaggerate the enemies strength.

In the general remonstrance treating this episode, Monluc gives four basic reasons why he fought the battle: 1) he had tested the enemies' strength with an initial foray and found it to be weak; 2) the enemy had abandoned its

artillery on some of the ramparts; 3) he was able to get a good view of the situation including the enemy's numbers; 4) he saw that his soldiers would be able to scale one of the outer walls which was not very high. It seems that the objective in this remonstrance is to emphasize the need for precise calculations when initiating an attack against the enemy. Monluc contrasts the irresponsible and inaccurate reporting of the French officer, Castegeac, with his own effective assessment of the castle and its defense.

During the attack on Thionville in 1558 Monluc made some very daring and timely manoeuvres. He reiterates the reason for his success: "Or, capitaines mes compagnons, vous avez icy un beau exemple, si vous le voulez retenir, et cognoistrez de quoy sert une grande promptitude; car ceste place se gaigna pour la hastiveté dont j'usay."⁵³ He is referring to a particular point in the battle when the enemy started abandoning the casemates. Rather than simply capturing the ground relinquished by the enemy, Monluc recognized the need to pursue them as quickly as possible in order to prevent them from entering and fortifying a castle situated in the middle of the city. He demonstrates to the reader that by taking advantage of the enemy's flight he was able to secure the victory.

After courageously fording the Garonne river on September 6, 1569 and relieving the city of Casteljaloux, Monluc gives some additional counsel on military strategy. He reemphasizes the occasional need for taking risks: "Par

ainsi vous pouvez cognoistre que la guerre porte qu'il faut hazarder quelquefois, quand l'affaire est de grande importance, et ne regarder pas tousjours à la raison de la guerre."⁵⁴ In the same paragraph he tells his reader to use deceptive tactics in order to put the enemy off-guard: "Ne prenez pas tousjours le plus aisé, ains trompez-le, faisant semblant de vous jeter en un lieu pour passer par un'autre."⁵⁵ The situation in September of 1569 was extremely perilous for the Catholic forces in southwestern France. Montgomery's forces had devastated the countryside and scattered or captured the majority of the royal troops.⁵⁶ Monluc, with one of the remaining Catholic contingents, was attempting to restore order and to preserve those portions of the area which had not yet been seized by the English or the Protestants. Since his army was numerically inferior, Monluc used a hit-and-run tactic, avoiding pitched battles and deceiving the enemy as to his whereabouts. He felt that these tactics were the most workable alternatives to what would have otherwise been a hopeless situation: "Ce que j'ay voulu escrire pour monstrer qu'avec peu de forces j'ai faict ce que j'ai peu, sans cropir en ma maison ny laisser tout à l'abandon."⁵⁷ As he says, he did his best under the circumstances, and he asks the reader to take this lesson as a good example of what he should do if he is ever confronted with a similar predicament.

The remonstrances in this chapter were destined for present and future day military officers. Monluc has, after

justifying his own actions, imparted valuable counsel to his reader, counsel which touches on all aspects of military life and which, if used wisely, was sure to make their careers more productive both for themselves and for their country. The exhortative nature of the remonstrances corresponds to the sixteenth century French usage of this form and Monluc uses it effectively both in defending himself against multiple accusations and in sharing his personal experiences with the reader.

The most striking portrayal of Monluc's vibrant personality is found in his discourses. This was, for him, the medium of communication par excellence because he saw it as being more effective than physical punishment in manipulating a soldier's will: "Mes capitaines, mes compagnons, il faut que ce soit chose qui depende principalement de vous, que si vous ssavez gagner le soldat avec un mot, vous ferés plus qu'avec des bastonnades."⁵⁸ Likewise, he considered it extremely useful in governing cities and exposing one's own opinions before royalty. His attachment to oratory resulted primarily from his natural tendency toward garrulity but, in addition; Monluc was mildly influenced by ancient Roman generals who had successfully used remonstrance and oratory to encourage their men.⁵⁹ Whenever he was confronted with a delicate or difficult situation, he resorted either to a minor discourse in the form of a remonstrance or a full-fledged discourse for the purpose of whole-scale persuasion. In this study we are primarily

concerned with his major speeches although occasional reference will also be made to minor discourses as they are used for basic conversational purposes or for persuasion.

Karl Wallace, in a recent publication on the art of speech and rhetoric, states that oral communication should be studied in units of meaning, and he emphasizes that a unit of meaning in speech (either written or oral) does not always coincide with punctuation: "Rather, the unit is determined by the speaker's attention to that conceptual feature of his inner experience that is symbolized in utterance and gesture."⁶⁰ Since the reader was not present during the delivery of Monluc's speeches, the true effect of utterance and gesture has been partially lost. However, in the transposition from oral communication to the written form, certain traces of the physical elements of the speech act still appear. An example of this can be seen in the description of Monluc's facial expression during his speeches before Henry II. More importantly, it is the expression of this "inner experience" spoken of by Wallace, that exemplifies Monluc's art of oratory. Since, as we have already mentioned, Monluc had no formal schooling in rhetoric, what we see is almost a pure expression of his inner being, of his own personality. His perspective is strictly militaristic and thus his "inner experience", colored by a constant exposure to war, dominates the tone of his oratory.

Although in some cases his speeches appear to have been thought out before hand, there is no attempt at formal

oratory as one might find in Cicero or Cato. This does not mean that his discourses are ineffective; on the contrary, they are consistently persuasive for several reasons: first, through a demonstrated (and sometimes feigned) sincerity in the question at hand, Monluc is able to win the sympathy of his listeners' intellect; lastly, and most importantly, his forceful character is so pervading as to influence the audience favorably.

On 20 November 1554, while governing Siena, Monluc delivered a speech to the combined officers of the German, French, and Italian forces in the city. He was just recovering from an illness which had restricted his activity since his arrival on July 12. As the king's governor and representative in the city, he was responsible for defending it against Marignan who had begun the siege August 5.⁶¹

Monluc begins by telling them that he believes everyone there wants to leave with his honor, but he reminds them that they should expect to be there for an extended period of time because the enemy had no intention of leaving without a victory. Even worse, the king, whom they had expected to send reinforcements, was involved in his own conflicts and unable to render any relief. The Italians were themselves split into multiple factions and fighting against each other and consequently the citizens of Siena could not hope for any assistance from their countrymen. It was the anticipation of a long siege that compelled Monluc to restrict the rations: "Et pour attendre le secours, il nous faut avoir

une longue patience, en espargnant noz vivres tant qu'il nous sera possible. Et pour ceste occasion, j'ay à vous remonstrer que je veux faire amoindrir le pain, qui est de vingt-quatre onces, à vingt."⁶² This request probably came as no surprise to the majority of officers present, and yet it would not be easily achieved with conditions as they were in the city. Supplies were short and both the soldiers and the townspeople were becoming uneasy.

Knowing the task to be difficult, Monluc wisely appealed to their pride as a means of dispelling their concerns over the restriction of food. After telling them that their soldiers would be looking to them for leadership and that it would be their responsibility to demonstrate a do-or-die attitude, he says, "Ce seroit un vilain reproche pour remplir le ventre perdre son honneur."⁶³ He artfully pricks their conscience to the point where, if they had any self-respect at all, they felt responsible for the defense of the city. In fact, he emphasizes that the reason they were all enclosed within those walls was not to relinquish the city but rather to preserve it.

Monluc's next approach is to touch on the spirit of nationalism. To the German and French officers he says, ". . . quel honneur gaignent les hommes de se faire non seulement honnorer, mais encores honnorer la nation de là où ils sortent. C'est ce qu'un coeur genereux se doit proposer."⁶⁴ Monluc reaches three levels of psychological appeal in the above statement: 1) individual pride,

2) national pride, and 3) moral pride. At least one of these approaches would hopefully reinforce a resolution within them to stay and assist in the defense of the city despite the circumstances. Next, then addressing the Italians, he calls on their sense of liberty: "Quant à vous, qui estes Italiens, vous nous rendrez tousjours ceste gloire d'avoir d'un coeur invincible combattu pour la liberté de vostre patrie . . ."⁶⁵ Although he is primarily concerned with the Germans and his own officers in this remonstrance, Monluc assures the Italians that they can still count on assistance from the French crown and that it is only a matter of time before help arrives.

Finally, he recommends that they relay his message to the soldiers in such a way as to encourage their devotion to it: "Si vous remonstrez tout cecy à vos soldats, et qu'ils voyent et cognoissent que vous-memes estes en ceste deliberation, je m'asseure qu'ils prendront le mesme chemin que vous tiendrez. Ne vous excusez pas, messieurs, sur eux; je n'ay jamais veu mutinerie, et si en ay veu souvent advenir, pour les soldats, si les capitaines ne leur portoient le manton."⁶⁶ Some of the officers had no doubt been to Monluc complaining that their underpaid and undernourished troops were on the verge of mutiny. But Monluc would not and indeed could not, because of his military philosophy, give in to such complaints. He states that in the final analysis it is the officer who usually sounds the first cry of mutiny and that to lay the blame on the men

would be an excuse, not a justification. It was their duty and responsibility to lead the way with an honorable display of courage.

The effects of this discourse were favorable and in harmony with Monluc's original intention which was to impose a stricter rationing of food without causing panic as well as to encourage the officers of the various military contingents to remain faithful to the immediate task of defending Siena. Since his speech was in French he had it translated into the other two languages. Monluc feared that the Germans, because of an extraordinarily strong aversion to denying themselves food and drink, might rebel against his counsel. His worries subsided, however, at least for the time being, when all of the soldiers agreed to abide by the instructions: "Les soldats, l'ayant entendue, levarent tous la main et jurarent qu'ils patiroient jusques au dernier soupir de leur vie avant que se rendre ny faire rien indigne de gens d'honneur."⁶⁷

After the eventual capitulation of Siena on April 21, 1555, Monluc returned to Paris and then to his home where he had a three week rest before being commissioned by Henry II to command some troops in Piedmont. Throughout the remainder of 1555 he served under Brissac and was instrumental in the capture of two major enemy strongholds: Volpiano and Moncalvo. Late in 1555 he was accused of disobeying some of the king's orders for which he was relieved of his duties in Piedmont. He was shortly thereafter acquitted of the charge,

but he nonetheless spent the first half of 1556 at his home in Guyenne. In July of this same year he was called back into service in order to govern as the lieutenant-general at Montalcino. However before he could assume that responsibility Cardinal Carrafe, the Pope's delegate at Paris, requested some military assistance from Henry II because the Duke of Alba was approaching Rome with his forces.⁵⁵ He describes his visit with Paul IV: ". . . et le lendemain me menarent baiser les pieds du Pape, lequel me fit fort grand chère, s'enquerant de moy des particularitez de la France."⁶⁸

By now the Duke of Alba was only twenty miles from Rome and advancing. Monluc, realizing that he would be obliged to lead his men against the duke on behalf of the Pope, wanted to set up his line of defense and prepare for a pitched battle about ten miles outside of Rome. His opinion was overruled by Camille Ursin who was governing the Pope's military affairs. He wanted instead to fortify the city and hope that they would not be attacked. For three weeks the duke kept them in a suspense which caused a great deal of alarm and confusion among the citizens. A number of them tried to escape to St. Pierre while still others sought the protection of those cardinals who sided with the King of Spain. With this being the situation, there was little hope of resisting an assault by the Duke of Alba. At this point, a group of cardinals and the maréchal de Strozzi petitioned Monluc to deliver a discourse

to the commanding officers of the city. They wished to have him outline the procedures he used in the defense of Siena in hopes that it would help restore order in their own city. With his approval they ordered all the dignitaries and military officers to assemble in the lower court of Cardinal Avanson's home. It was here that Monluc delivered his discourse to the Romans on September 17, 1556.

Appropriate to the occasion, Monluc addresses his audience in their native tongue and begins by reviewing the situation as it exists in the city. He accuses them of entertaining "un merveilleux effroy" without cause and claims that they are therefore plagued with a confusion which might force them into capitulation. Monluc suggests two possible reasons for their present state of affairs: "Cela ne peut proceder que d'une de deux choses: ou bien faute de coeur, ou faute que vous ne commandez pas bien l'ordre qu'il faut que vos gens tiennent, quand les affaires se presenteront, tant la nuit que le jour."⁶⁹

Despite their fears, Monluc is able, through his discourse to provide the audience with sufficient reasons for returning to normalcy. The approach he uses is meant to evoke a sense of shame from the listeners and to increase their hopes of success against the enemy: "Si vous le faictes pour faute de coeur, c'est donc signe que vous n'aviez pas bien consideré quelles gens sont vos ennemis. Et que peuvent-ils estre autres qu'hommes comme vous? Ne portez-vous pas les armes pareilles aux leurs, et aussi

bonnes que les leurs? Ne sont-ils pas sujets à recevoir la mort de nos coups, comme nous des leurs?"⁷⁰

Since Rome was such a conglomerate of various ethnic groups, it was necessary to find a way to unify their interests. The unity Monluc seeks is to be found in the people's common desire to survive. Monluc tries first to demystify and devalue the strength of the enemy in order to dispell the fears of his audience whose city, in 1527, had been besieged and mercilessly sacked by the Duke of Bourbon. Since there was still a grim memory of this incident in the minds of these people, he tells them that the enemy forces now confronting them are much inferior to those which devastated Rome in 1527. He then reduces the enemy to a level on a par with or below that of the officers listening to him and by so doing causes them to recognize within themselves a potential for victory which had previously gone unnoticed because of emotional turmoil in the city.

The next angle developed in the discourse is religious motive. Monluc reemphasizes the special character of this conflict when he asks them the following question: "La querelle du pape n'est-elle pas juste et sainte, et meilleure que la leur?"⁷¹ Although not as fervent in their commitment as the twelfth century crusaders to Palestine, the soldiers in the papal army had a similar obligation in that they were fighting as God's emissaries (via the pope) against His enemies. Monluc reminds them of this duty when he labels the pope's cause as divinely inspired. This being the case,

he asks them why they should not expect God's help in resisting the enemy. Monluc is thus approaching them from the point of view that, if they have any degree of Christian faith left in them, they should manifest it through their willingness to defend their spiritual leader, the pope.

Thirdly, as further argument in persuading them to defend themselves, Monluc refers to the courage of the ancient Romans and asks what happened to cause such dissipation among the present day citizens. His comparison continues as he contrasts the rampant fear in Rome of today with the omnipotence and grandeur of ancient Rome: "O messieurs, que vous faictes un grand tort à la renommée de voz predecesseurs, de monstrier que vous ayés craincte de gens qui ne sont que hommes comme vous! Vous faites beaucoup pour les ennemis, de ce qu'ils se pourront vanter avoir fait peur à ceux qui ancienement faisoient trembler toutes les nations du monde."⁷² Monluc's wish is to convince his audience to rekindle the enthusiasm and courage as exemplified by their ancestors.

Another comparison with the same object in mind is made between his defense of Siena and the impending conflict-- Monluc states that Marignan's forces were at least double those of the Duke of Alba. He insists that in spite of their great disadvantage not one citizen in Siena feared the enemy. In addition to this they demonstrated the qualities of their predecessors: "Bien heureux sont les Sienois, qui ont monstré estre extraits et vrais enfans legitimes de voz

anciens pères, qui ont fondé ces murailles et les leurs aussi, à ce qu'ilz m'ont assuré; aussi portent-ils mesmes armes que vous."⁷³ Knowing the rivalry that had existed between Italian city-states for centuries (Genoa vs. Venice, etc.), Monluc tries to arouse the Romans into a sense of competition in which they will seek to surpass the courage of their neighbors, the Sienese. This attempt at stimulating rivalry is carried even further when Monluc claims he would rather fight along side Sienese women than the cowardly men of Rome: "Que si vous ne faites autrement que comme j'ay veu jusques icy, je veux dire que je seray tousjours plus assuré de deffendre Siene, n'ayant que les femmes sienoises avec moy pour combattre, que non deffendre Rome avec les Romains qui y sont."⁷⁴ Although he excuses himself for being so frank, Monluc insists that he has no ulterior motive and that his desire to save the city is strictly a reflection of his genuine concern for their welfare.

As the final weapon from his oratorical arsenal, he proposes a plan to his audience which will allow them to escape from their predicament in an honorable fashion. He suggests that they put aside any existing fears in exchange for a more orderly conduct. If they proceed immediately to restore order the populace will regain their courage and believe that their state of confusion was caused more from a lack of order than from lack of courage:

"Si ceste peur procède du mauvais ordre que vous
Y avez donné à vostre commencement jusques icy, il
n'y a rien encores tant gasté qu'en un seul jour

vous n'y puissiez remedier, vous en allant tout à ceste heure adviser d'où procède ce deffaut et promptement y remedier. Et ainsin vous ferez cognoistre à tout le monde que ce n'est pas faute de coeur, mais que c'est faute de l'ordre. Et ainsin tout vostre peuple reprendra courage, se voyant dans le bon ordre que vous y aurez donné."75

By placing the blame for their confusion on careless leadership, Monluc has presented them with an alternative. They can now choose to take things in hand, develop an organized plan of defense and begin work towards that end.

Monluc's discourse produced the effect he desired. He relates how, after thanking him, they assured him that the condition which had existed in the city would be remedied. They also invited him to sit in council with them the following morning where they promised to unveil their strategy and seek his advice. The discourse is a remarkable example of Monluc's ability at oral persuasion. He demonstrates a keen understanding of human psychology and is able to subjugate one of the strongest emotions, fear, by appealing to pride and to the emotional and spiritual force of religious duty.

The peace of Cateau-Cambrésis April 3, 1559, in which the French gave more concessions to the English and Spanish than they had gained, marked the end of the Italian campaigns. Henry II died from a jousting wound the following July, and Catherine de Medicis began her long regency through her sons, Francois II and Charles IX. Her first attempt at patching the differences between the Catholics and Protestants, the Ambroise Edict March 2, 1560, only temporarily

reduced the tension which had been building since the Affaire des Placards.⁷⁶ When Catherine's attempts at finding an accord between the two factions failed to produce the desired results and when de Fumel was massacred by his own subjects who had become Huguenots, Catherine's patience came to an end.⁷⁷ She requested that Monluc raise an army in Guyenne for the purpose of restoring order to Bordeaux and the rest of Guyenne: "A la fin ils [la Royne et le roy de Navarre] se resolurent de m'envoyer en Guyenne, avecques patenttes et permissions de lever gens de pied et à cheval pour courir sus aux uns et aux autres qui prendroient les armes."⁷⁸ Thus in January 1562 he organized his forces and went to Guyenne where he was petitioned by several groups of Protestants who wished to have their complaints against the Catholics rectified. Instead, they met with fierce disapproval from Monluc and were fortunate to escape his presence with their lives. Monluc was determined to restore order to the queen's kingdom in that area, and although he was willing to punish Catholics who were disloyal to the crown, the Huguenots became the prime target of his wrath. He viewed this new religion as an insidious and dangerous movement that threatened the stability of the government.

On February 20, 1562 Monluc initiated his personal reign of terror when he had Verdier, the leader of a rebellious Protestant group, executed along with several of his cohorts. His favorite saying became "O meschant paillard, traistre à ton roy," and from the execution of Verdier in

February to the battle of Vergt in October, there was a veritable blood bath at the expense of the Protestants, the most notable massacres taking place at Monségur and Lectoure.

It was just prior to the battle of Vergt that Monluc delivered two of his most influential military speeches. The first was addressed to the Spanish troops which had been recruited to help fight against the "heretics"; the second was destined for his own troops, the Gascons.

Monluc's reason for delivering these speeches was to encourage the two forces to fight courageously and in harmony with each other. He approached the Spanish with his typical appeal to pride: "Souvenez-vous, de la belle et grande reputation dont vostre nation s'est faite remarquer par tout le monde ayant eu si souvent tant de belles et grande victoires, tant contre les Turcs, Mores et barbares, que contre les chrestiens."⁷⁹ The mention of Turks, Moors, and barbarians served as a reminder of past wars fought against infidels. The Spanish had been involved in fighting the Moslems for centuries, sometimes successfully and sometimes not. Here Monluc praises their victories and tries to augment their desire by subtly comparing the present foe to former enemies. He then glorifies the Spanish infantry: "Vous nous avez fait souvent sentir que vaut l'infanterie espagnole, laquelle parmi toute celle du monde tient le premier lieu."⁸⁰ Few men fail to respond positively to such praise; by lauding the Spanish forces, he skillfully creates

within them a desire to exemplify the very virtues for which they are being praised.

Having already alluded to the former enemies of Christendom and thereby putting the conflict on the level of a crusade, Monluc touches on the religious motive as being paramount in the conflict against the Protestants: "Le Roy, vostre maistre, sgachent le devoir que vous aurez fait, vous en sçaura meilleur gré que si vous cambattiez pour luy-mesme: car c'est pour la querelle de Dieu, c'est contre les Loutheranous,⁸¹ qui vous mettront en mille pieces, si vous tombez entre leurs mains."⁸² Thus Monluc has planted a religious image in their minds by referring to the impending battle as "la querelle de Dieu." The implications of these words raises the conflict above the political or patriotic motives usually associated with a man's will to fight; it now becomes a question of religious faith and the duty of each individual soldier to demonstrate that faith in open battle. He suggests that the two countries unite their efforts to put down these rebellious Huguenots who he refers to as "ceus qui sont cent fois pires que les Mores de Barbarie". Monluc claims that these infidels have desecrated the alters and polluted the churches of God. The soldiers' duty to God and to their own king consequently prevails as a convincing reason why they should demonstrate courage against the Protestants.

After Monluc had finished his speech, Dom Loys, the Spanish general, gave a brief response in which he pledged

his full support to Monluc. He energetically proposes immediate plans to fight the heretics: "Nos tarda il tiempo que non veiamos a las manos contra los hereges."⁸³ Monluc's discourse, delivered in Spanish, was well received, and he willingly accepted their allegiance.

The second speech was delivered on the same day to the Gascon troops. In preparation Monluc had Charry, his lieutenant, summon the men to a central location so that he could address them. His opening remarks concern what he considers a long-standing quarrel between the Spaniards and the Gascons as to which is the most valiant. With regard to his own expectations, he gives them the following counsel: "Or, mes amis, monstrez-leur ce que vous scavez faire; et s'ils frappent un coup, donnez-en quatre."⁸⁴ He then reminds them of a particular advantage over the Spaniards which should reinforce their will to fight: "Vous avez plus d'occasion qu'eux, car vous combattez pour votre Roy, pour vos autels, pour vos foyers."⁸⁵ The three incentives mentioned by Monluc touch on the fundamental elements necessary to individual security and happiness. His reference to them is meant to inspire his troops to the point of preventing the enemy from disrupting their country, their religion, or their homes. Toward the end of the discourse Monluc assures them that the Protestants are living in fear of their lives, having been subjected to his executioners. Knowing this, they should have all the more reason to display courage and to bring honor to themselves and their country.

After finishing his speech, Monluc requested his men to raise their hands in sign of victory which they did with enthusiasm shouting "Laissez-nous aller, car nous n'arrestons jamais que nous ne soyons aux espées."⁸⁶ This vow of allegiance confirms the effectiveness of Monluc's discourse and represents more evidence of his persuasive spirit. The challenge to outfight the Spaniards excites a sense of duty to uphold the traditional Gascon reputation for valor. Equally effective in Monluc's discourse to the Gascons is the call to bring honor to king, family, and religion. While the Gascons were by nature inclined toward keeping their identity, they also experienced great pleasure in employing their bellicose talents on behalf of the French crown. Their families were of obvious importance to them and Monluc's reference to them serves to reinforce their will to fight. Of the arguments used by Monluc, the least likely to succeed was religion, this is why he only mentions it in passing, the biggest emphasis being oriented toward their chivalric pride.

By comparison, Monluc's approach to the Spaniards is just the opposite. He appeals primarily to their sense of religious devotion and their inherent desire to see Catholicism triumph over paganism. He presents the Protestants as infidels and thereby supplies them with the perfect reason to enter the conflict. Secondly, the praise of their bravery and the challenge to enhance their reputation are added incentives which complement the religious motives.

Thus, Monluc accomplishes the same result (the desire to fight) with both the Spanish and the Gascons even though he provides different reasons for each.

In late September 1567 rumors had spread concerning a plot by Huguenot leaders to capture the king and his counselors, and Charles IX and his court were obliged to take refuge in the castle of Meaux. After several days Swiss troops hired by the king were summoned from Château-Thierry to escort the court safely back to Paris. On September 28, Charles IX sent a letter to Monluc explaining his perilous situation. Although not specifically commanded to so do, Monluc decided to send reinforcements to the king. Prior to their departure he delivered a moving speech to this special contingent in which he counseled them to represent him well in defending the king. He states that a greater privilege cannot come to a soldier than to assist in the preservation of the crown: " . . . car quel plus grand bien vous peut estre envoyé de Dieu, que vous voir en si belle troupe, en si peu de temps à cheval, pour aller au secours de vostre prince et de vostre roy, pour la deffence duquel Dieu vous a donné la vie et à moy aussi, pour le secours, dis-je, de sa personne?"⁸⁷ Treachery against the king's person, therefore, is no longer one of religion but rather one of political treason. Monluc underscores the joy which will be felt by the king when he sees the Gascon nobility coming to his rescue. He then requests that everyone follow the leadership of Monsieur de Terride, who will represent

him since he cannot go himself. He states, too, that their allegiance will turn to their own advantage, particularly when the king witnesses their military prowess. As an experienced soldier in the use of weaponry, Monluc insists that there is none better skilled in this métier than a Gascon: "J'ay practiqué toutes celles de monde; mais je n'en ay point veu de pareille, et en tous les faicts d'armes, petis et grands, que j'ay veu faire, tousjours les Gascons y ont eu la meilleure part."⁸⁸ Being a Gascon himself, Monluc probably envisioned the Gascon army annihilating the Huguenot rebels and saving the king. Such a feat would reflect favorably on his own ability to make sound military judgments as well as strengthen Charles' view of Gascons in general. However, in order for this to take place his troops had to live up to their reputation. He therefore reminds them of this fact along with his conviction that they will never again have such an opportunity.

At the end of the speech M. de Terride thanked him for placing him in charge and the others assured him that they would not relax until they were in the presence of the king. Monluc's penchant for oratory carried with it the potential of affecting a man's will. Following this discourse he says, ". . . j'ay tousjours eu ceste coustume de faire opiner tout le monde, et m'en suis bien trouve."⁸⁹ The preceding oration was no exception. The journey to Paris was an arduous one and yet, by the time he had finished speaking, his officers were convinced that it was an honor and privilege

to undertake the task. Again, as in the discourse to his men prior to the battle of Vergt, the will to fight is activated by the praise of Gascon expertise and courage in military situations. However, in this case there is no challenge to outdo the Spanish. Instead Monluc impresses them with the personal satisfaction that would be forthcoming once they had saved the king. Monluc's natural talent for exciting enthusiasm in his audience is attested by the results he achieves. Apparently his personal magnetism was such that it radiated its effects to others; this is evidenced by the fact that his decision to have Terride direct the relief troops was willingly accepted by his men. Later, when they were no longer in his presence, some dissension erupted. However, the latter incident does not detract from the overall impact of his oratory.

The last major discourse to his officers in the Commentaires was delivered shortly after the facial wound he received at Rabastens in 1570. His introductory comments show less worry over his wound than the battle at hand. He appears genuinely concerned about helping his men retain their honor by refusing to lift the siege on his behalf. At this point, according to Monluc, those present were moved to tears: "Sur quoy je vis la pluspart de la compagnie ayant les larmes aux yeux; et ayant un peu reprins haleine, je suivis mon propos."⁹⁰ As indicated by the words "les larmes aus yeux", this speech reached quite an emotional state; his officers were understandably moved by his dire

condition and disturbed by the loss of their leader. They probably even expected him to succumb to his wound which must have appeared fatal. However, the emotionalism surrounding this discourse did not deter Monluc from completing it. In fact, he continued by offering counsel and praise for their adeptness at leadership. And then, just before retiring to his room, he delegated monsieur de Grondin to replace him and requested that the others look to him as their new commander.

This particular discourse, more than any other, reveals the supreme devotion that Monluc's troops held for him. The tears that were shed on this occasion did not necessarily result from the words spoken in the discourse, but were rather evoked by Monluc's good intentions. His efforts under such critical circumstances to leave a parting word of advice and consolation typified the same dedication that he had always shown toward his men and his profession.

The remonstrances and orations which Monluc addressed to officers and soldiers reflect his basic desire to teach others through his own experience. With very few exceptions the counsel which he imparts to them is inspired by a personal encounter with the point in question. While this is particularly true of the remonstrances, the discourses delivered in contemporary situations also mirror his former experiences. This is well exemplified when he relies on his successful achievements at Siena to convince the Romans to defend their own city. He insists that the reader take

his advice seriously, and the confident demonstration of his ideas is sufficient to persuade them in most instances.

Behind what appears to be a genuine wish to instruct his reader, lies a more selfish motive and one which, in my opinion, reveals Monluc's true character; that of justification of his deeds. He seeks to exonerate himself by appealing to the sympathy of his reader, by delineating his service to the crown and by taking a moral stand against the corrupt practices for which he had been accused. In a more direct way he denies the charges of enrichment and emphasizes the generosity he had always displayed towards his men. All in all, the remonstrances and speeches to officers serve to enlighten the reader as to Monluc's "innocence" and to aid them in avoiding unnecessary pitfalls.

Notes

- ¹ Commentaires, p. 22.
- ² Julius Caesar, Gallic War, Arthur Walker ed. (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1907), pp. 10-12.
- ³ Caesar, pp. 10-12.
- ⁴ Caesar, p. 19.
- ⁵ Caesar, p. 12.
- ⁶ Works available to Monluc include: Les Concions et harengues de Tite-Live, nouvellement traduites en françois par J. de Amelin (Paris: M. de Vascosan, 1554). Tacite, Le Traicté . . . de la situation, meurs et peuples de la Germanie; Le Traicté de la meilleure forme d'orateurs. Le sixième livre des Commentaires de César . . . Le tout mis en françois par le sieur de Vigenère (Paris: n.p., 1575).
- ⁷ Commentaires, p. 22, 779.
- ⁸ Les Commentaires de Jules César, de la guerre civile, etc. . . . translatez par Estienne Delaigue dict Beauvoys; des batailles et conquestez faitz par César au pays de Gaule, translatez par Robert Gaguin (Paris: Pierre Vidoue imprimeur, 1531). Commentaires de Jules César, de la guerre de la Gaule, Traduits par feu Robert Gaguin (Lyon: J. de Tournes, 1555).
- ⁹ See footnote 6 above.
- ¹⁰ Commentaires, p. 22.
- ¹¹ Commentaires, p. 187.
- ¹² Commentaires, p. 24.
- ¹³ Commentaires, p. 24.
- ¹⁴ Commentaires, p. 25.
- ¹⁵ Commentaires, p. 25.

- 16 Commentaires, p. 780.
- 17 Marc Bloch, Feudal Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 154.
- 18 Commentaires, p. 26.
- 19 Karl Vossler, Mediaeval Culture (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1958), p. 182-187.
- 20 Aristotle, Ethics, Trans. Martin Ostwald (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1962), p. 38-41.
- 21 Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, A Latin Dictionary (London: Oxford, 1958), p. 1997.
- 22 Bloch, p. 294.
- 23 Commentaires, p. 23.
- 24 Commentaires, p. 447.
- 25 Commentaires, p. 605.
- 26 Commentaires, p. 599.
- 27 Wallace K. Ferguson, The Renaissance (New York: Holt, Rinehard and Winston, Incorporated., 1967), p. 34.
- 28 Ferguson, p. 34.
- 29 Ferguson, p. 35.
- 30 Commentaires, p. 26.
- 31 Commentaires, p. 27.
- 32 Commentaires, p. 27.
- 33 Caesar, p. 18.
- 34 Commentaires, p. 778.
- 35 Commentaires, p. 779.
- 36 Commentaires, p. 605.
- 37 Commentaires, p. 459.
- 38 Commentaires, p. 460.
- 39 Commentaires, p. 286.

40 Commentaires, p. 301.

41 Commentaires, p. 301.

42 Courteault, Un Cadet, p. 287.

43 Commentaires, p. 22.

44 Commentaires, p. 351.

45 As has already been mentioned (See p. 16 Chapter II), when the king was informed of the actual situation at Siena he withdrew his disapproval and in fact gave Monluc a very warm reception upon his arrival in Paris.

46 Commentaires, p. 751.

47 Commentaires, p. 447.

48 Commentaires, p. 832.

49 Commentaires, p. 832.

50 Commentaires, p. 563.

51 References to his use of foreign languages: Spanish, Commentaires, p. 563-564; English, p. 174; Italian, p. 266.

52 Commentaires, p. 186.

53 Commentaires, p. 445.

54 Commentaires, p. 708.

55 Commentaires, p. 708.

56 This is Gabrielle de Montgomery, the same one who caused the death of Henry II in 1559 during a jousting tournament. He had received an order from La Rochelle signed July 10, 1569 by Jeanne d'Albret, to march on Béarn. Monluc credits him with the destruction of Guyenne. See Commentaires, pp. 683-4 and 1326, n. 8.

57 Commentaires, p. 707.

58 Commentaires, p. 214.

59 On p. 654 of the Commentaires, Monluc makes a general reference to the use of remonstrance by the ancients and to their awareness of its great utility. He does not, however, name any of them specifically and Courteault fails to clarify any individuals. Elsewhere in the Commentaires Monluc mentions Livy and Caesar, we can assume that the

Roman influence on his oratory was derived from his general readings of these historians. See p. 30 of this dissertation for a discussion of the Roman influence.

60 Caesar, p. 128.

61 See p.89 of this dissertation.

62 Commentaires, p. 277.

63 Commentaires, p. 277.

64 Commentaires, p. 278.

65 Commentaires, p. 278.

66 Commentaires, p. 278.

67 Commentaires, p. 279.

68 Commentaires, p. 369.

69 Commentaires, p. 371.

70 Commentaires, p. 371.

71 Commentaires, p. 371.

72 Commentaires, p. 371. Julius Caesar, in a speech before the Roman senate concerning the Catilinarian conspirators, employs a similar form of rhetoric. With regard to the action that should be taken against the conspirators, he refers to the precedent set by their ancestors: "This lenity of our ancestors, conscript fathers, I regard as a very strong reason why we should not adopt any new measures of severity. For assuredly there was greater merit and wisdom in those, who raised so mighty an empire from humble means, than in us, who can scarcely preserve what they so honorably acquired." Chauncey M. Depew, ed., The Library of Oratory (New York: A.L. Fowle, 1902), Vol 1, p. 337. Caesar is trying to encourage his audience to emulate their predecessors because of their meritorious conduct. In essence, Monluc is using the same approach but again there is no conclusive evidence that he derived part of his rhetoric from Caesar; we can only assume that there is at least an indirect influence.

73 Commentaires, p. 372.

74 Commentaires, p. 372.

75 Commentaires, p. 371.

76 While Francis I had originally been sympathetic to Protestant demands, the bold attempt allegedly perpetrated by some Huguenot zealots in 1534 to influence him by posting grievances on his door, only turned him against them. With respect to developments during his reign, Lecler states, "The last years of Francis I's reign (1540-1547) were marked by increasing persecution of Protestants. Many were imprisoned for heresy at Paris and each year there were executions; in 1546, for instance, Etienne Dolet was put to death although he was not a Protestant but a free thinker." Joseph Lecler, Toleration and Reformation, Trans. T.L. Westow (New York: Association Press, 1960), p. 26. Continuing this policy, Henry II permitted the establishment of the chambre ardente (a court for trying Protestants as heretics) on October 8, 1547.

77 Monluc claims that he had told the Queen that a lasting peace with the Protestants was out of the question: "Cela [l'assassination de Fumel] donna plus de travail à l'esprit de la Royne que tout le demeurant, et cogneut bien Sa Majesté que ce que je luy avois predit, qu'on ne demeureroit guières sans venir aux prinses, estoit veritable." Commentaires, p. 474.

78 Commentaires p. 475. With regard to this royal request Monluc relates how he initially rejected the appointment on grounds that a major war was imminent and that it would require a more capable general. He tells on what terms he finally agreed to their demand: "Et comme je fuz devant eux, après plusieurs remonstrances qu'ils me firent, je fuz contrainct de l'accepter, pour veu que monsieur de Burie fust compris en la commission. Je voulois qu'il eust part au gasteau." Commentaires, p. 475. Can we believe that Monluc, with his extraordinary desire to advance his name and reputation, would want to share an opportunity like this with Burie? Is there a chance that he was sympathetic with the Huguenot cause and did not want to commit himself? J.H. Salmon, in his work on this embattled period, asserts that Monluc was at least partially influenced by the new religion: "In 1559 Monluc was faced with a choice of religious and political loyalties. For a time, he flirted with Protestantism. He was the brother of the liberal bishop of Valence, and on one occasion he attended a Calvinist service at Nérac where Beza officiated." J.H.M. Salmon, The French Wars of Religion (Boston: D.C. Heath and Co., 1967), p. 129. Although the above statement can be substantiated, there is little evidence that Monluc ever seriously considered turning his loyalty to the Protestants; it seems more likely that his hesitancy in accepting this position was due to the precarious military situation in Guyenne and that he needed additional support. Burie was the most available general and capable enough to render

assistance and yet not so powerful as to overshadow Monluc's own activities.

79 Commentaires, p. 564.

80 Commentaires, p. 564.

81 The term "Loutheranous", as mentioned in the above passage, is a pejorative reference to the Protestant followers of Luther. It is a defamatory appellation intended by Monluc to help incite the Spanish troops against the enemy.

82 Commentaires, p. 564.

83 Commentaires, p. 565. Translation into English:
"Time will seem long to us if we do not come to arms against the heretics."

84 Commentaires, p. 565.

85 Commentaires, p. 565.

86 Commentaires, p. 565.

87 Commentaires, p. 608.

88 Commentaires, p. 609.

89 Commentaires, p. 610.

90 Commentaires, p. 785.

Chapter IV

ADDRESSES TO PARLEMENTS AND GOVERNORS

In the preceding chapter we saw a Monluc who was primarily concerned with instructing the reader in military strategy while defending at the same time his own professional reputation. In the present chapter we will see a Monluc who assumes more the role of an orator who successfully wins a contemporary audience over to his own views. Of all the discourses found in the Commentaires, the most abundant and most convincing are those which are delivered to the Concistoro¹ during the defense of Siena (July 1554-April 1555).

Henry II, wanting to disrupt the emperor's holdings in Italy, convinced the citizens of Siena to revolt against the German and Spanish influence in favor of that of France. This was in early 1554, and by March the Sienese were requesting political guidance and military assistance from the French king. He delegated Pierre de Strozzi as his envoy, and despite being outnumbered by the enemy, the latter was able to recapture several cities belonging to the state of Siena. Strozzi's unexpected successes naturally caused some concern for the Holy Roman Emperor as well as for

Cosimo de Medici,² Duke of Florence who saw their interests giving way to French dominance.

Since Strozzi was involved militarily with retaining Siena's possessions and recapturing cities formerly belonging to it, he found it difficult to manage the affairs of the city itself. Consequently he requested that Henry send someone temporarily to replace him at Siena. The king summoned several of his principal advisers, among whom were the constable Montmorency, the Duke of Guise, and the maréchal de Saint André, to help make suggestions as to whom would be the most favorable candidate. After each had presented his choice, the king proposed Monluc's name as a possibility and asked for their opinions. They all agreed with this choice except the constable who claimed that Monluc was too quick-tempered to govern a city. He evidently had forgotten that the old Gascon had already successfully administered the affairs of Montcallier and Alba. At any rate Henry overruled the constable's objections and decided to send Monluc whom he considered to be the most qualified.

At the time the above decision was being made, Monluc was at Agen suffering from a very serious illness. His doctors counseled him not to undertake any lengthy journeys. Because the king had requested it, he nevertheless traveled to Marseille from where he was to leave for Siena. Since the main route was blocked by Spanish forces under the command of Gianjacomo Medici, Marquis de Marignan, Monluc and the ten companies of French soldiers which he was

commanding were obliged to alter their direction by way of Escarlin where Strozzi was camped. He finally arrived at Siena on July 12, 1554.

The same day he arrived, Marignan had advanced his army to Sant' Albondio, just a short distance from Siena. A skirmish ensued which was overlooked by Strozzi, but which Monluc considered important enough to investigate. He found that some of Strozzi's loyal Sienese troops were giving ground and relinquishing fortifications because they lacked leadership. Showing the experience of his previous encounters with situations of this type, Monluc took things in hand and distinguished himself as a great military officer. As a result of this incident he gained the respect of the Sienese and established a basis for his authority as governor.

When Marignan withdrew his army from the vicinity of Siena in order to attack some weaker cities, Strozzi made a sortie of his own against Marciano, which he captured on the 21st of July. Shortly thereafter, through some unwise decisions on his part, Strozzi managed to get his army pinned in between the forces of Marignan just outside of Marciano and his ability to resist was being weakened by a barrage of artillery fire directed at his troops. Informed of the situation, Monluc sent a letter by way of Seigneur Lecussan wherein he counseled Strozzi to retreat under cover of darkness. Thinking his honor to be more important, Strozzi neglected Monluc's counsel and subjected himself to total

defeat. With Strozzi absent, Monluc was in sole charge as the king's representative at Siena. In view of Strozzi's defeat Monluc expected a frightened reaction from the Sienese. In order to forestall this, he gave them some advance warning in the first of his seven speeches to the Concistoro, the governing body of Siena.

On August 2 he called a meeting in the Palace of Justice so that he could relate the pressing news to the Sienese leadership. They obeyed his command, and he subsequently delivered an address in which he outlines the basic reasons they could still resist Marignan even without Strozzi's assistance. After preparing his audience for the worst with regard to Strozzi's predicament, Monluc bases his speech on four arguments designed to win their support for defending the city. First, he refers to the sovereignty inherited from their forefathers: "La première, et qui plus vous touche, c'est qu'il vous souviennne que vous estes souverains en vostre republicque; que voz predecesseurs vous ont laissé cest honnorable tiltre de père en fils; . . ."³ The sovereignty of which Monluc speaks was a valuable consideration during a period in which many of the Italian principalities were in turmoil and constantly under the subjugation of one dictator or another. Monluc intends to excite their need to prevent their freedoms from being molested by outsiders. Also, by referring to their sovereignty as "cest honnorable tiltre" he has magnified its

importance by making it the symbol of the accomplishments of their ancestors; it therefore becomes a status worth preserving.

Since the Sienese would lose their rights to freedom if defeated, Monluc challenges his audience to take a do-or-die stand: ". . . qu'il vous vaut beaucoup mieux mourir les armes en la main, pour soustenir cest honorable tiltre, que vivre et perdre ignominieusement."⁴ This suggestion to die with sword in hand rather than relinquish one's liberty to the enemy, is apparently derived from classical tradition. The Spartans, for example, under the commander Leonidas, fought to the last man against the Persians at Thermopylae in 480 B.C.⁵ In like manner, every Roman soldier took an oath of allegiance once a year wherein he promised his life in the defense of the empire.⁶ Monluc is trying to convince his listeners that dying courageously has more merit than living in servitude.

In his second argument Monluc emphasizes the French king's loyalty to the Sienese and their obligation of reciprocal friendship. Monluc's object is to create a forceful image of the unpleasant circumstances which could arise if the Sienese character was found to be fickle instead of constant. He says, "Il n'y auroit prince sur la terre que vous voulût aider ny secourir, si vous vous monstriez legers et muables."⁷ By hinting at a possible letdown in military aid resulting from their own capriciousness, Monluc is trying to dissuade them from a sudden change of heart with

respect to their commitment to Henry II. At this point a reversal in their loyalty would serve only to alienate them from all possible benefactors because such a move would spawn mistrust, even among their present enemies. Monluc's approach therefore leaves no alternative for the Sienese except to remain constant to their French allies.

The third consideration with which Monluc confronts his audience is their duty to remain true to the nobility of their ancestry. One aspect of Monluc's art of persuasion when addressing the Italians is to remind them that they descended from the Romans, the greatest conquerors of all times. He states, "Vous vous dites aussi estre sortis des anciens belliqueux Romains, et vous dites leurs vrayes enfans legitimes, portans leurs armes antiques, qui est la louve avec Remus et Romulus, fondateurs de leur superbe cité, la capitale du monde."⁸ Hoping to produce a desire within his audience to preserve honor for their children, Monluc accentuates the Sienese responsibility of revering the name earned for them by their predecessors.

In the fourth and last point of his speech, Monluc deals with the immediate need to fortify the city and, referring to Strozzi, stresses the importance of executing an orderly retreat. With respect to preparing the city he states:

"La quatre sera pour vous remonstrer que, comme j'ay parfaite fiance que vous vous monstrerez vertueux et magnanimes, et que vous prendrez en bonne part toutes la remonstrances que je vous ay faictes, que aussi vous vous resoudrez promptement à donner ordre à tout ce que sera necessaire pour la conservation de vostre ville; . . ."⁹

Monluc demonstrates a subtle awareness of human psychology as he tries to bolster his listeners' amour propre by placing his personal confidence in their courage and magnanimity. He recognizes praise as an effective means of influence and, in this case, he expects this laudatory influence to win support for the advice given in his speech. Praise, as seen in the above discourse, is one of the most often used tools of persuasion employed by Monluc.

Next, Monluc reminds his audience that when a vanquished army like Strozzi's falls into a state of fear, it has an adverse effect on the entire population. He describes how the invincible Roman legions gave way to an uncontrollable fear when Hannibal routed their forces at Cannes and how, according to Monluc's rendition of Livy's account, the people of Rome were so terrified at seeing their great armies defeated, which they never thought possible, that the doors of the city were left open and unmanned for three days. Monluc then adds; ". . . et si Hannibal eust suivy sa victoire, sans aucune difficulté il estoit entré de dans."¹⁰ It is this type of rampant fear among the Sienese that Monluc is trying to prevent when he uses a historical event to teach a practical lesson in the present, a confirmation of his commitment to the value of history.

Assuming that his arguments had been convincing, Monluc prescribes preparations for the defense of the city such as fortifying the gates and choosing able men to lead their troops in a successful repulsion of the enemy; he also

suggests that enough foodstuffs be gathered from outside the walls to withstand a lengthy seige:

"Or doncques, messieurs, donnez ordre tout à cest' heure à voz portes, et eslisez des hommes pour en prendre la charge, et faictes que l'eslection soit des plus gens de bien et des plus fidelles qui sont parmy vous. Faictes crier par la ville, dès à cest' heure, que tous ceux qui ont bleds et farine aux moulins se hastent de les faire moudre et d'apporter, tout dans la ville." ¹¹

Monluc's foresight in anticipation of Marignan's assault is commendable, although, as subsequent events would show, he overestimated his own sovereign's ability to render sufficient relief. In fact, as a gesture of good faith before terminating his speech, he all but promises the Sienese that Henry II will soon come to their aid: ". . . et ce afin que nous puissions avoir vivres pour attendre la secours que le Roy nous envoyera; car il n'est pas si petit prince que, comme il a eu la puissance de vous envoyer secours, qu'il n'en aye encores pour vous en envoyer d'avantage."¹² Had he known that the assistance pledged by Henry would never come, Monluc might have altered his plans either by stockpiling more provisions or by confronting Marignan in an open battle outside the city.

The speech itself evidently had a positive effect since his audience subsequently resolved to follow his suggestions: "Ainsi me despartis d'eux, lesquels incontinant immédiatement resolurent de prendre patience en la fortune que Dieu leur enverrait et de manger jusques à leurs enfans, avant que de se desister, pour quelque mal'heur qui leur sceust advenir,

de la protection et amitié du Roy."¹³ Therefore, after having been at Siena for only two weeks, Monluc demonstrated a convincing influence over the people whom he was asked to govern. This influence was primarily achieved because of the nature of Monluc's arguments. An example of this can be seen in his reference to the audience's debt of sovereignty owed to their ancestors which aroused their sense of dignity. A second example is his reminder of the consequences that might follow any alienation from the French crown which served to distract them from changing their allegiance. Also, his predication of Strozzi's defeat caught the Sienese leadership off guard, thus strengthening his position; and his constructive insight into the situation earned him the respect of the audience. He added force to his arguments by supporting them with well-defined examples based on historical precedent, and the confident tone with which they were presented radiated a positive spirit to the audience. His confidence spread to his hearers who in turn radiated the same spirit to the townspeople. The success of this first speech opened the doors for future discourses which would later be delivered in even more critical circumstances.

Shortly after the preceding discourse, news came of Strozzi's defeat at the hands of Marignan, and the remains of the defeated army poured into Siena. If Monluc had not warned the citizens, panic would probably have seized the city. Instead, Strozzi's discouraged soldiers were placed

in the ranks of the defenders who were already preparing for the impending assault. Since Strozzi was at Montalcino recovering from a severe wound, Monluc was left on his own to manage the defense of the city. He was in no condition to command, having suffered from a serious illness for several months; in fact, the doctors did not expect him to live. Meanwhile the awaited seige began as Marignan approached the city three days after Strozzi's defeat at Marciano. By mid-September, although very little had transpired militarily, Monluc's condition had worsened to the point where rumors of his death had begun to spread throughout the city. Strozzi was informed of this, and he immediately made plans to enter Siena undercover. After several close encounters with the enemy, he succeeded in entering the city, and to his surprise, he found Monluc still alive. After three weeks Monluc recovered sufficiently to allow Strozzi's departure for the resumption of responsibilities elsewhere and to assess the city's needs.

It soon became apparent that the food supply would not last much longer without mandatory rationing. He thereupon informed his military officers of a need to ration the supplies. Once he had assured himself of their allegiance, he sought support from the Sienese citizenry. He again approached the Concistoro in his capacity as the representative of Henry II.

In this second speech to the Consistoro, he addresses them as before--in their native tongue and professes his

desire to find the best means of preserving the city. In a move designed to gain his audience's confidence in him as an inspired leader, Monluc claims that his recovery was a miracle performed by God so that he could aid in defending Siena: "Vous avez tous veu comme la maladie m'a conduit jusques au dernier soupir; et à la fin Dieu, plustot par miracle que par oeuvre de nature, m'a ressuscité pour faire encor service à ceste republique, à une telle et si grande extremité."¹⁴ In this case the religious element seemingly comes into play as a device intended by Monluc to promote faith in his role as God's representative sent to save the Sienese from calamity. Knowing the pious nature of the Sienese, he calculated that, in addition to the military respect they already held for him, if he could acquire their confidence in religious matters as well, then his authority in the city would be substantially strengthened.

Telling his listeners that the principal reason for summoning them is to announce a need to ration the food, he expressly states that conserving their provisions would be the only way of preserving their liberty:

"Or, seigneurs, je voy bien que la conservation de la cité et de vostre liberté ne consiste sinon à prolonger les vivres: car si par les armes le marquis se veut efforcer de nous avoir, j'espère que nous le rendrons si mal content qu'il maudira l'heure de nous estre venuz assieger."¹⁵

The Marquis de Marignan, according to Monluc, would have an impossible task if he tried to take the city by force; therefore, his sole alternative would be to starve the inhabitants

into capitulation. This assessment of the situation by Monluc is characteristic of his method of manipulating facts to fit a specific occasion. There was no certainty that Marignan would not attack nor that the occupants would be able to withstand such an assault. But by eliminating Marignan's chance of taking the city by force, Monluc has relieved his audience of the psychological burden of wondering if they could successfully defend themselves militarily. In this way, he has shifted their attention to the more pressing matter of food supplies.

In order to soften their resistance and to prepare them to receive the proposed order of reduced consumption, Monluc explains how he has requested all military personnel to cut back from twenty-four ounces to twenty ounces of bread per day. He then relates how stoically they have accepted this challenge after having been assured that the king, upon seeing their great sacrifice, will feel obliged to send relief more quickly. Having thus established the military as an example of dedication to the new policy and having left open the possibility of assistance from Henry II, Monluc seeks a commitment from his audience. He first chastizes them somewhat for having sent a detailed assessment of their provisions to the king stating that the supplies would not last past November 15th. This decision, says Monluc, was rather unfortunate since it probably served more as a hindrance to their cause than as a help. As he explains, "Cela luy pourroit bien avoir donné occasion

de se refroidir à nous envoyer le secours, veu le long chemin qu'il y a et aussi que nous aprochons de l'hyver."¹⁶ Monluc insinuates that the king, who fully intended to send aid, might have to alter his plans to render assistance if he believes that he has no chance of reaching Siena in time to save it. At this point Monluc suggests that it will now be spring before help can arrive and therefore it will be the responsibility of everyone at Siena to provide the king with the needed time.

As an additional support to his argument, Monluc reminds them that, since they have placed themselves under the protection of Henry II in defiance of the Duke of Florence, they will not only lose their liberty but also their lives. With this weighing on their minds, Monluc next asks for a commitment: "Je vous prie doncques, . . . de regler vostre despence et ordonner commissaires pour faire description des bouches; et, ce fait, commencez à amoindrir vostre pain jusques à quinze onces, car il n'est possible que vous n'aiez quelque peu plus de commodité en voz maisons, ce que n'ont pas les soldats."¹⁷ Monluc is even bold enough to commit them to a bread ration below that of the soldiers. The allotment of fifteen ounces was meant to awaken the Sienese citizens to the critical nature of their predicament and allow them to participate in the sacrifice already agreed upon by the military.

In his closing remarks Monluc assures the Sinese leadership of his intention to send a messenger to Henry II

informing him of their new determination to hold out for several months longer. He also disclaims any privileges for himself, stating that he will sacrifice along with everyone else. The voluntary rationing, referred to by Monluc as "Ce jeusne", takes on a triple purpose: first, in a religious sense, it purifies the souls of those who fast; secondly, in the more practical sense, it prolongs the available provisions, thus preserving the chances for survival; and, lastly, in a psychological sense, the sacrifice involved in fasting creates unity among the participants and a feeling of accomplishment on the individual level.

When the discourse was over, the members of the Concistoro reviewed the matter in a special council with the nobility of Siena; the positive outcome of this conference is expressed in the following statement by Monluc: "En ceste assemblée ma proposition ayant este representée, enfin tous d'une voix prindrent resolution de manger jusques aux femmes et enfans, . . ." ¹⁸ While it is difficult to evaluate Monluc's tone of voice and other variables characteristic of oral communication, one can see a definite pattern of successful influence upon the audience. In the preceding discourse much of what he accomplished was due to the timely and proper placement of persuasive elements in his argument. For instance, an appeal to the audience's religious sentiments at the beginning of the speech gave credence to Monluc's remaining comments; because of the miracle, he was divinely called as the defender of Siena

and therefore his advice took on added importance. The Concistoro may have also been swayed by Monluc's forceful personality, but when they went before the Seigneurie, his personal influence was no longer present; it seems that the acceptance of Monluc's plan to ration the food was due first to the religious impetus behind "Ce jeusne" and secondly to the practical aspect of preserving the city from famine.

Near Christmas Marignan, possibly hoping to catch the defenders off guard, assaulted the city at its weakest points, broke through the defensive perimeters and threatened to capture Siena. Through Monluc's timely leadership the inhabitants gained control of the situation: "Les ennemis perdirent de cinq à six cent hommes, morts ou blessez, comme nous disoient les prisonniers que nous prenions. Nous ne perdîmes en tout cinquante hommes, morts ou blessez."¹⁹ These figures, according to Courteault, are relatively accurate and Marignan was understandably disappointed by his inability to triumph over the Sienese defense. At the end of December, Charles V, becoming impatient himself, sent word to the Duke of Florence that Marignan was possibly extending the siege unnecessarily. His suggestion was to bombard the city with artillery in the hopes that it would soon capitulate. Marignan claimed that he had done everything humanly possible and that artillery would not force a capitulation. The Duke was convinced otherwise, and

on January 20 twenty-six canons left Florence destined for use against Siena.

This development naturally caused a great deal of consternation among the Sienese who had visions of tumbling walls and burned-out homes. After having sent spies out to verify the existence of these canons, the governing body of the city along with the nobility and citizens called an assembly in the public palace in order to decide whether they should capitulate or prepare to defend themselves against the oncoming assault. Monluc, recognizing the critical nature of this meeting, was acutely aware that, by overreacting or by trying to coerce them into remaining faithful to the French crown, he would simply complicate matters. He states, "Or là il ne me falloit pas faire le mauvais, car ils estoient plus forts que moi, et falloit tousjours gagner ces gens-là avec remonstrances et persuasions douces et honnestes, sans parler de se courroucer."²⁰ This is an excellent example of Monluc's keen insight into the Sienese character. On another occasion he again displays an extraordinary familiarity with the psychological make-up of various nationalities when he says, "Parmy les Allemans et Suisses, il faut faire carrous; avec les Espagnols, tenir leur morgue superbe et faire plus le religieux et devotieux qu'on est; parmi l'Italien, estre discret et sage, ne l'offencer ny caresser leurs femmes."²¹ He acknowledges the Sienese dislike for unsolicited and assertive opinions and consequently adheres to a milder alternative in the form of

"persuasions douces et honnestes" reflects a general awareness of the need for integrity when dealing with people; but as we have seen, under extenuating circumstances involving loyalty to the king, he was at times inclined to vary from this principle. At any rate, his recognition and wise interpretation of the Sienese disquietude over the arrival of the canons prevented him from giving any hasty advice which, if rejected by them, would probably have jeopardized all chances of moderating their fears. He astutely awaited an opportunity to prepare a speech which would allay their fears of Marignan's artillery.

Prior to these anxieties over a possible bombardment, Monluc had again fallen ill and had not been seen about the city for some time. Many of the townspeople were afraid that he was totally incapacitated and that without his directives they would be unable to defend themselves. In order to dispel the concerns about his condition, he concocted a plan wherein he would appear before the assembly superbly arrayed in fine clothing. The intended effect of this ostentatious dress was to divert the audience's attention from his gaunt visage. By making himself appear in better health than he was, Monluc was able to reestablish the Concistoro's confidence in his leadership capabilities.

In this third address to the Sienese Monluc reveals his knowledge pertaining to the artillery and to his audience's decision to consider turning over the city to the enemy. He exposes his own view by labeling their attitude as

". . . plutost la peur et la crainte que quelque belle resolution . . ." ²² But to avoid offending them, he feigns shock at seeing such a noble people demonstrate weakness in face of adversity: ". . . ce que j'ay trouvé fort estrange, et m'en suis esmerveillé, ne me le pouvant persuader." ²³ This is flattery at its best; Monluc is building up morale by assuming that the Sienese are incapable of fear. He reminds them of the magnitude of their decision, a decision which might place them in bondage for years to come. He then returns to his flattery as he goes through a process of eliminating all blame from the citizens of Siena for the current state of fear and discouragement. In reconfirming his awareness of their virtues, Monluc lists four reasons why they could not be at fault: 1) they had already demonstrated their generosity towards him; 2) their friendship and confidence in the king are solid, 3) divisiveness could not be the cause since it was not in their nature and, finally; 4) it could not be the result of cowardice because he had personally witnessed their prowess on many occasions. By absolving them of all responsibility Monluc has softened their resistance and made them more susceptible to the remaining portion of his discourse.

Monluc demonstrates his mastery in oral communication and persuasion when, in the next paragraph, he says: "Or, puisque cela ne procède de vous, il faut donc qu'il procède de moy, qui ay cest honneur d'estre lieutenant du roy de France, vostre bon amy et protecteur." ²⁴ The liability for

Siena was obviously shared among both the Sienese and the French governorship under Monluc. While being well aware of this, Monluc decides to achieve two objectives simultaneously. First, by accepting total responsibility himself, he places them off guard since, to a large extent, they acknowledged their own accountability for the future of the city. They have in fact assembled in the palace for the very purpose of executing their responsibilities as leaders. If they allow Monluc to assume all of the burden for their immediate predicament, they will be remiss in their own duties. In this way Monluc has tried to create within his listeners both a guilt complex and a sense of obligation. Secondly, if he can shift their responsibilities to himself, he knows that they will be compelled to accept his authority as final. This in turn will permit him to restore order to the city and to prepare for Marignan's assault. Although he accepts full blame for the city's desperate situation, Monluc gives credit to his own character in order to substantiate his selection as the king's governor. He also minimizes his illness as a sufficient reason to concede defeat, citing as evidence the case of Antoine de Lève who, according to Monluc, won numerous battles while he was bedridden. He permits them to assume that he too could accomplish as much. In fact, with respect to this he says, "Dieu m'a réservé tousjours le jugement pour vous conserver. M'avez-vous jamais veu manques? Estojs-je croupi dans un lict, lors de la grand camisade et escallade que vostre ennemy

vous donna?"²⁵ Thus he reconfirms his ability to function effectively despite his ailment and once again presents God as his personal guardian, having raised him from his bed of affliction and given him the physical force and mental capacity to accomplish his duties.

Monluc turns next to a rationale which is expected to add respectability to his leadership role and gain confidence from his listeners. He asserts that, if they reject or overrule him as their governor, they will in essence be saying that the king made a wrong choice by sending him to Siena. This, however, was not the case according to Monluc: "Quoy? pensez-vous que le Roy vous ayme si peu que de m'avoir envoyé icy, s'il n'avoit grande assurance de moy et qu'il n'eust essayé en autre lieu qu'est-ce que je porte et ce que je puis?"²⁶ The king was not misinformed as to Monluc's ability to handle critical situations; he had in fact been chosen from among several members of the French nobility. Besides, the citizens of Siena had personally witnessed his fortitude on several occasions: "Estant malade, vous m'avez veu sortir dès que j'ay peu monter à cheval, allant voir les escarmouches de si près que moy-mesmes les commandois."²⁷ His design in this case is to emphasize how important his presence is to their cause by asserting that he has at no time failed to fulfill his original commitment to the king, which was to preserve the city.

When Monluc entered the palace, he did so in the company of the officers in charge of the armies. The reason for this action becomes apparent at the end of the discourse when he vows the total allegiance of the joint military forces: "Et de moy et de tous les collonels et capitaines que voylà, nous jurons Dieu que tous mourrons avec vous, comme nous vous en donnerons à ceste heure l'assurance."²⁸ This tactic is purposefully designed to prevent the Sienese from having an excuse to capitulate. If they accept defeat, knowing that they were supported by the military, such a decision would be infra dignitatem. Therefore, after shifting the responsibility to himself, at the end of the discourse he returns some responsibility to them for their own fate. However, he retains for himself and his troops the overall liability for the defense of the city, and he asserts that they will someday be referred to as "les conservateurs des Sienois."

This discourse received the approval of the general leadership; those who still felt some allegiance to the French crown and to the preservation of their own liberty found sufficient reason in Monluc's speech to remain firm. There were some who wanted to negotiate a reasonable settlement with Marignan, but after Monluc's discourse their influence dwindled considerably. The Concistoro, along with the other leaders, therefore agreed to abide by Monluc's counsel, and the effects of his speech were felt throughout the city. The success of this third speech can partially

be attributed to the rhetorical techniques so effectively used by Monluc in the two preceding discourses. Herein he applies his foreknowledge of Strozzi's defeat to create the allusion of a presentiment thus making it seem to the audience as if he were a sage or clairvoyant. Such techniques lend credence to his remarks because of the superstitious or religious awe developed within his listeners.

A similar technique has to do with his uncanny ability to show himself as God's emissary to the Sienese people and consequently their savior in a time of crisis. This is accomplished by playing on the audience's pious nature; on several occasions he was believed to be dead or on the verge of death, and he presents his recoveries as miraculous manifestations of God's desire to have him as their leader.

Monluc employs another rhetorical device which, although not exclusive to the third discourse, is a major factor in its success. In this speech he manifests a psychological insight into the Sienese mentality in that he is able to discern their self-pride and to adjust for it accordingly. Instead of approaching them in a peremptory or haughty manner he practices mild persuasion through flattery.

Towards the middle of January 1555 the artillery from Florence arrived in Marignan's camp. Monluc had divided the city into eight parts and had delegated an officer for each. They were to assess the military and civilian needs for their sector and to make the preparations for defending it. Meanwhile he and his senior commander Cornelio surveyed the

city for the purpose of determining where Marignan would be most likely to begin his assault. They devised a strategy in which they were to pull back their forces some distance inside the city, and then, once they had drawn Marignan's troops inside the walls, the French cannoneers would bombard them from close range after which they would be stormed by all of the available troops from that sector. The plan was evidently a good one because Marignan, after his artillery had successfully demolished an entire wall, unexpectedly withdrew the cannonade. Later Monluc discovered that someone inside Siena had informed him of the ambush. Thus, as evidenced by Marignan's withdrawal, the French commander had lived up to the promises he had made in his speech before the Concistoro.

By now the German troops were becoming overly impatient with their meager allotment of food and the total lack of wine. Monluc, sensing their discontent and realizing that the city's supplies would last several months longer without them, secretly sent a letter to Strozzi requesting him to summon them to Lusignano. Naturally when the Sienese heard about this they were quite disturbed, thinking that without the Germans there could be no hope of resisting Margnan's superior forces. This attitude occasioned another discourse from Monluc.

In the palace where the notables of the city gathered to review their situation now that the Germans were leaving, Monluc tells them that he has guessed their intentions;

in this manner he exposes their fears and places them at a disadvantage. Their apprehension, according to him, is illfounded: "Je vous dis que c'est la conservation d'icelle, et non la perte; car leurs six enseignes despendoient plus que les douze italiennes et françoises."²⁹ At this point Monluc is simply trying to calm their anxieties by minimizing the need for the Germans and by reaffirming the strength of their own contingents. What they thought was a disaster is really nothing more than a minor disruption of the status quo. Indeed, Monluc would like them to view the German's departure as an advantage, for they were nothing more than excess baggage being of little help in the defense of the city: "Car vous sçavez que tous les grands combats qui se sont faits en ce siège, vous et nous les avons faits, . . ."³⁰ The one time they ventured out they were hastily defeated by Marignan and would have been annihilated if Monluc had not sent the Italians to assist them in their retreat. Moreover, the Sienese honor is at stake because, if they give up their liberty now, it will be said that their courage depended more on the Germans than on themselves. Monluc is goading their pride, as he would do later with his own officers at Rabastens, in the hope that it will move them to virtuous action.

In an audacious move to test their confidence in him and to gain a more solid control of the circumstances, Monluc proposes some strigent steps which he claims will ensure the prolongation of the defense for at least three months. First

he requests that the night watch be on a rotating basis with the Sienese having two nights of rest per week and the French one; secondly he demands an additional reduction in the amount of bread consumed each day; and, finally, he recommends that every person who does not play an essential part in the preservation of Siena should be expelled so as to leave more food for the remaining defenders. This last request, although heartless on Monluc's part, was a matter of military expediency. At the time, he truly believed that this decision would buy them sufficient time for Henry II to send relief. As it turned out, a majority of those who were ejected from the city died from starvation or were executed by Marignan's troops and, sadly enough, the expected help never came.

Monluc describes the result of this discourse:

"Le matin, toute la harangue que je leur avois faicte fust sceuë par la cité, et ne se parla plus de crainte aucune. Or, ils ne se peurent bonnement accorder aux bouches inutiles, pource que l'un vouloit favoriser l'autre; me crearent par balotte leur general pour l'espace d'un mois, de sorte que le capitaine du peuple ny le magistrat pendant ce temps ne commandarent jamais rien, ains moy absolument tenois le rang et l'estat que faisoient anciennement les dictateurs romains."³¹

Hence Monluc was free to assume control of Siena. The title of dictator inspired him with a sense of power and pride reminiscent of his desire to emulate Julius Caesar. Roman law provided the emperor with dictatorial powers during a military crisis, allowing him to bypass even the Senates. This power was used on occasion by Julius Caesar, the most

notable being when Pompey revolted against him in 45 B.C.³² The Concistoro provided Monluc with similar powers, and he used this opportunity to unleash what he considered to be his inherent ability at leadership. His discourse seems to have been, if not the single cause, at least a major factor in bringing about his election as dictator. If he had failed to appear in the palace that day or if his oratory had been unconvincing the city would likely have capitulated much sooner than it did.

Shortly after his one month term as sole commander, Monluc became involved in what seemingly was an internal feud among some of the nobility in Siena. Several assassinations had occurred and an anonymous letter was found with evidence that led the authorities to a couple of members of the nobility. On the surface they appeared to be guilty of the crimes committed against their peers, but Monluc was sceptical of the events that had transpired. In a speech delivered to the Concistoro addressing this very subject he says, "Tout le monde (et croyez-moy) ne me scauroit faire croire que cecy soit autre chose qu'une ruse et cautelle du marquis."³³ As stated, he suspected Marignan as the originator of the present dissension. He knew that if those who had been arrested were executed, it would cause an internal conflict bordering on civil war. His speech therefore becomes a last ditch effort to calm the emotions which had been building. In the introduction he seeks their confidence by reminding them of the effectiveness of his

opinions on other important occasions. He petitions them to listen to his counsel, ". . . puisque j'ay esté si heureux et si fortuné que de vous avoir tousjours donné des conseils salutaires et profitable, je vous supplie en avoir la mesme opinion et me croyre en un affaire si important qui se present . . ." ³⁴ Along with trying to gain their interest in his comments, Monluc has also exposed the critical nature of the affair. In fact, a major element in his argument involves the unmasking of the seriousness of the matter. He assures them that on their decision may hang the lives of countless Sienese citizens. On these grounds he requests patience and unmuddled reasoning before making a final judgement: "Je vous demande à present, les mains jointcs et au nom de Dieu, que vous vous gardiez, sur toutes choses, de mettre la main au sang de vos citoyens jusques à ce que la vérité soit du tout descouverte, laquelle ne peut estre longuement cahcée." ³⁵ Monluc uses his oratorical skills to forestall the internal conflict that would result from a hasty reprisal against the accused. His apparent determination to uncover the truth is derived less from his commitment to the principle of justice than from his desire to reestablish solidarity among the citizens, without which there would be no hope of defending the city. In the speech, he appears unconvinced of the accusations leveled against the noblemen who had been taken into custody; this uncertainty is specifically meant to place questions in the minds of the listeners. At any rate Monluc tells that if

this is a plot by Marignan, he is probably enjoying these scenes of internal dissension. He contends that regardless of where the guilt lies, a decision born from hysteria could do nothing but harm.

Monluc's final and most powerful persuasion is an appeal to their piety; as he says, such a weighty decision as this should be sanctioned by God. He therefore proposes a special day of prayer: "Commandez que tout le clergé de vostre ville, des demain, ordonne une procession generale par toute la ville, et qu'il soit enjoinct à tout le monde de s'y trouver, et qu'on se mette en prières, afin qu'il plaise à Dieu nous faire tant de grâce de descouvrir la verité de ce faict et la trahison, s'il en y a, ou l'innocence de ces prisonniers."³⁶ Monluc does not specifically indicate how he expects God's will to be made manifest in the matter. The medieval concept of trial by endurance remains a possibility, and yet, Monluc seems to be hoping for more concrete evidence, something that would incontrovertibly reveal the true offenders. At any rate the council agreed to effectuate his proposal for a prayer session, knowing that if they did not comply, their faith would be placed in doubt along with their judgment of the three noblemen. As usual, Monluc's counsel held sway despite some vigorous opposition, and his discourse was consequently successful in preventing the unnecessary deaths of three prominent Sienese citizens. Eventually, through some investigations ordered by Monluc, it was discovered that a

"messer Piedro" had been hired by Marignan to commit the murders and then to plant false evidence designed to start dissension within the city.

As the food in Siena began to dwindle, more and more people began to die from minor illnesses, because their resistance had been reduced for lack of nourishment. In March 1555, the famine had grown so bad that having a rat for dinner was considered a feast. Monluc relates how critical circumstances were "Nous avons mangé tous les chevaux, asnes, mulets, chats et rats qui estoient dans la ville. Les chats se vendoient trois et quatre escus, et le rat un escu."³⁷ On another occasion he states, "Ny la ville ny nous ne mangeâmes jamais, depuis la fin de février jusques au vingt-deuxième d'avril, qu'une fois le jour. Je ne trouvay jamais soldat qui en fit plainte. Et asseurez-vous que les remonstrances que je leur faisois souvent nous servoient de beaucoup."³⁸ Monluc prides himself on the effectiveness of his counsel which by now was probably needed on almost a daily basis in order to keep the morale up. During the last two months, hunger had largely replaced Marignan as the number one enemy. The citizens were on the point of capitulating when, on March 29, Strozzi initiated a rumor that Charles de Cossé, comte de Brissac was marching to their aid and that a company of French soldiers would also be sent from Porto-Ercole. The Sienese gained new hope and decided not to surrender. However, to their dismay the promised relief did not arrive and on April 8 they were

forced to consider ways of surrendering the city without jeopardizing their lives. After several meetings between Sienese leaders and Marignan, a tentative arrangement was reached. It provided for the safe passage of the entire Sienese population and military personnel with the exception of "les rebelles de l'estat de L'Empereur, du roy d'Angleterre et du duc de Florence".³⁹ This last clause provoked Monluc into a personal vow to resist until death rather than permit his enemies to massacre those whom they termed rebels but who, for him, had been faithful in defending Siena and who were equally entitled to free passage. The most susceptible to these merciless executions that were sure to follow the capitulation were the Florentines who had deserted the Duke of Florence and who had fought on the side of the Sienese. Monluc had no desire or intention of sacrificing them to the enemy. He admits having prepared a special oration designed to coax the Sienese leaders into agreeing to a plan which would provide safety for all:

"Or, m'asseurois-je bien que cest article n'y avoit pas esté mis pour eux, mais seulement pour ceux que j'ay nommé les Florentins, etc ; et trouvay ceste invention, afin d'amener les Sienois au combat avec nous, car j'aymois mieux mettre le tout au hazard que de perdre un seul homme de ceux qui estoient dedans la ville, et qui sous ma parole s'y estoient opiniastrez."⁴⁰

Since the Concistoro, unconcerned with the plight of the Florentines, had agreed to the terms outlined by Marignan, the principal scheme in Monluc's discourse is directed towards creating an ambiguity in the classification of rebelles.

Just whom exactly would the enemy place in this category once the capitulation was complete? In order to cause the Sienese some fears of their own, Monluc made a false statement with regard to the status of the Sienese people in the eyes of Charles V: "Or vous sçavez que l'Empereur vous a faicts declarer rebelles à la chambre imperialle, comme sujets de l'Empire, pour vous estre rebellés contre luy."⁴¹ Although the truth of Monluc's statement could not be verified, they had no reason to question it; in the past he had dealt honestly with them and guided them to great achievements. If, as he was saying, they were considered as subjects of the Holy Roman Empire, it would place them in the same category as the Florentines. Monluc reminds them of what might happen when the gates are opened and they find themselves at the mercy of their captors: "Or, messieurs, je vous voy tous morts, vos biens confisquez, vos femmes et vos enfans en perdition."⁴² This must have weighed heavily on the minds of his listeners. He wanted them to doubt the outcome of the tentative treaty which they had consummated with Marignan. As an alternative, Monluc proposes an open conflict which he claims is preferable to the uncertainty engendered by the treaty. By marching into battle they would retain their honor and possibly preserve their liberty.

The discourse resulted in a resolution by the leading men of Siena to prepare for an open assault against the enemy. Monluc gave the directives as the city became alive

with activity. When Marignan was informed of the Sienese intentions, he realized that what once appeared to be an uncontested entry into a defeated city had now turned into a threat which might spoil his anticipated success. After communicating with the Duke of Florence, it was decided that it would be better to assure safe passage for everyone in Siena, as Monluc expected, than to risk losing a battle and everything they had gained up to that point. In the ensuing consultations Monluc claims that before they would agree to render the city, the clause containing potentially harmful repercussions for the Florentines and others had to be deleted.⁴³ Thus the demands of the Sienese were met and, on April 21, 1555, the occupants began their exit out of the city.

The defense of Siena was a remarkable tribute to Monluc and his oratory. From the time he took over the office as the king's governor in July 1554 until the final capitulation in April 1555 he had, despite a serious illness, demonstrated an extraordinary capacity for leadership. His unrelenting faith in the king and himself was an influential factor in the attitude of the citizens of Siena to withstand Marignan's assaults from the outside as well as the adverse conditions inside the walls. His most effective tool was an acute ability to foresee the intentions of the Concistoro and consequently to dissuade them from negative decisions. This he did through several well-planned discourses, at times using reasoning to neutralize emotions,

while at other times making psychological appeals to their pride and selfworth. As reflected in his discourses, his own stamina and positive approach to critical situations was a boon to the Sienese morale and they contributed greatly to the initial and continual trust placed in his opinions and leadership.

As elsewhere in the Commentaires, after the recounting of a major military conflict, Monluc analyzes the outcome of the Siena experience and in a general remonstrance presents to governors advice which he believes will help them handle a similar situation if they are ever confronted with it. At the beginning of the remonstrance he beseeches his reader to accept the counsel given by seasoned leaders: "Ne desdaignez donc d'apprendre; et encor que vous soyez bien experimentez, cela ne vous peut nuire d'escouter et lire les discours des vieux capitaines."⁴⁴ Being a "vieux capitaine" he expects the governors to listen well to what he has to say. He claims that there are three essential considerations which a good governor should recognize when he takes office. The first concerns the honor which comes from being selected by the king, for such a choice indicates the king's confidence in the governor's wisdom and courage, and the governor is therefore responsible for living up to these expectations. The position also entails a personal obligation to oneself and to one's ancestors since the king, when he offers the governorship of a city, is in essence turning over the keys to a portion of his kingdom. This

view reflects the medieval liege-vassal concept wherein the latter, being obligated by way of sustenance to the former, agreed to devote himself unceasingly to his sovereign's interests.⁴⁵ If this oath was not carried out to the fullest, it would result in serious repercussions for the vassal, both in loss of honor and material benefits. Thus, according to Monluc, if the office of governor is not suitably carried out, it will taint one's reputation beyond repair. The appeal to honor is typically employed by Monluc as a means of encouraging his audience or reader to more valorous action. In this case, he approaches honor from a slightly different angle by associating it more with national security than with personal achievement. However, he also states that the natural result of heroic leadership is recognition: "Doncques les historiens, qui ne laissent rien à mettre en leurs livres, marqueront vostre nom en blanc et en noir avec gloire ou avec honte, comme vous voyez qu'ils ont faict de tant de capitaines qui nous ont devancés."⁴⁶ Just prior to this statement Monluc had related how Livy honored the Catons, Scipions and Caesars in his history. This, for him, would have been an incentive to fulfill a responsible position with character and bravery, and he insinuates that this should also be a common desire among his readers.

Secondly, Monluc counsels them to acknowledge the damage that might be done to the king's possessions if they were to lose the city. Since the revenue from the city would flow into enemy hands, the monarch would be deprived

of his rightful assets. Here again, Monluc touches on the feudal idea of the vassal being responsible for the lord's domains. In addition, he reminds the governors of what dire circumstances the subjects of the king would be placed in once the city was lost: "Puis vous devez penser au dommage que vous portez à ses pauvres subjects: combien de maledictions vous donneront ceux qui seront destruits; par vostre nonchalance ou faute de coeur ils sont ruynez et perduz; ils maudiront l'heure que vous fustes jamais né, . . ." ⁴⁷ While on the surface his advice seems well-intended, Monluc fails to mention how little sympathy he had for the king's subjects at Siena whom he expelled from the city knowing that they would either be killed or starved. Did he repent of this action or did he rationalize it as military expediency? He speaks as if he had been victorious in defending Siena and gives the English victims of Calais as an example of what happens when an incompetent officer is asked to govern a city. He says, "Comment pourrez-vous lever les yeux, si vous tumbiez en tel mal'heur?" ⁴⁸ Although he had tried valiantly to save Siena, was not Monluc somewhat responsible for the eventual capitulation? He evidently felt that because he had done everything possible to fulfill his obligation of loyalty, he was not answerable to anyone. Even though the remaining occupants were permitted free passage, many others had lost their lives and Siena was lost to the enemy. It would seem therefore that for Monluc the primary criterion for governing was to have an

unwavering desire to do the utmost in retaining the king's possession and, if after accomplishing this, the city was still lost, he could not be blamed; on the other hand, if he failed to demonstrate fortitude while losing the city, he would be forever despised by his sovereign.

In an interesting continuation of the liege concept,⁴⁹ Monluc claims that if a governor did not honor his allegiance to the king, he might be despised by his own wife:

"Et veulx encor passer plus outre, que vostre propre femme, encores qu'elle face semblant de vous aimer, elle vous hayra et estimera moins dans son coeur; car le naturel de toutes les femmes est tel qu'elles hayssent mortellement les coüards et les poltrons, encor qu'ils soyent bien peignez et aiment les hardis et courageux, pour laids et difformes qu'ils soyent."⁵⁰

The feudal idea of chivalry plays a part in this passage; meaning, of course, that a woman's love and respect for a man (knight) is based on his ability to prove himself worthy through acts of bravery and courtesy. Likewise, Monluc suggests that a man, in this case also a governor, must show courage and character if he expects to retain the love of his wife. A governor then finds himself owing a multiple allegiance: one to his sovereign, one to the king's subjects in the city he governs, and one to his household, especially to his wife. In any case he is acting as the fiduciary tie between the king and his subjects; therefore, if he does not adhere to this responsibility, he will be in breach of trust. In the preceding quotation, the words "coüards" and "poltrons" designate how a husband who had broken such a trust would be

viewed by his wife. The pejorative nature of the entire passage is expected to cause some reflection on the part of the governors; it must have also produced some indignation but, once this had subsided, they probably gave some serious consideration to rededicating themselves.

According to Monluc, a reprehensible performance as governor would eventually have adverse effects on the governor's posterity, and he uses this argument to pressure the reader into a dauntless commitment to his gubernatorial responsibilities. The idea of liege still prevails here as Monluc continues to emphasize the governor's duty to protect the royal domains; this obligation of preserving the king's interests is such that it should even extend beyond a governor's will to live: "Doncques, si vous la voulez conserver, il ne faut pas que vous entrés en ceste craincte de mourir;. . ."⁵¹ If this loyalty were to fail, the opportunities of the governor's posterity would be undermined; for, based on the precedent set by their father, the king would never confer a governorship on the children. Therefore, Monluc's reference to posterity, probably caused the reader to assess his present actions in light of their eventual consequences.

As constructive counsel to the reader on how to be a more effective governor, Monluc encourages him to read the histories of great men who had honored themselves and their countries: ". . . lisez ou faictes-vous lire souvent les livres qui parlent de l'honneur des grands capitaines,

mesmes ceux qui ont escrit de nostre temps, comme Langey et un autre que a escrit en italien (je ne sçay comme il s'appelle) qui a si bien escrit depuis le roy Charles huictiesme; souvent je me le suis faict lire: c'est un bon auteur."⁵² The Langey referred to is Martin Du Bellay, sieur de Langey, the author of the Mémoires published in 1569. It is an accepted fact that Monluc borrowed freely from DuBellay and other contemporary historians, sometimes quoting whole passages verbatim from their works in order to supplement his own commentaries.⁵³ The unnamed Italian author is identified by Courteault as Francesco Guicciardini whose Storia d'Italia appeared in 1561. For the most part the borrowings were used to help bridge the gaps in Monluc's narrative where his memory of a particular event had failed him or because he had more confidence in the other historian's perspective on the same event. At any rate, this passage reflects Monluc's interest in military history and his recognition of its beneficial effects on contemporary leaders. The value of history as a teacher of practical lessons and as a means of avoiding the repetition of error, especially in a military context, was viewed positively by Monluc. This is amply evidenced by the preceding quotation wherein he challenges the reader to make use of historical writings. Further proof can be seen in the same paragraph where he advises the reader to write down his own achievements since an eyewitness account is always better than a clerk's interpretation:

"Pleust à Dieu que nous, qui protons les armes, prinsions ceste coustume d'escire ce que nous voyons et faisons! Car il me semble que cela seroit mieux accomodé de notre main (j'entends du faict de la guerre) que non pas des gens de lettre; car ils desguisent trop les choses, et cela sent son clerc." 54

This passage is significant for two reasons; first, it is a further revelation on Monluc's professed interest and desire to see history written and, secondly, it distinguishes the type of history in which he places the most value. Monluc contrasts the personal histories written by eye witnesses with the history composed by the "gens de lettre". In the latter case a more omniscient point of view is demanded as the historian tries to encompass all historical events. Monluc states that this type of historian disguises too many facts and relegates too much responsibility to "son clerc"; the implication is that such a history is too superficial and therefore less useful to the reader. On the other hand, Monluc credits personal history with being more accurate since the events were witnessed by the author; he cites Antoine de Leve's account of the battle of Pavia and Seigneur Lude's account of Fonterabie as excellent examples of this type of history. In this way, Monluc regards the subjective nature of personal history as an advantage.

This emphasis on personal history is largely based on Monluc's desires to see his own Commentaires read by the public; by establishing the merit of eye witness accounts to historical events, he has in essence secured the creditability of his own work. In addition, Monluc's advice to the

governors on this subject appears to have been motivated by a genuine interest in what they could contribute by way of history. To encourage them even further he claims that the weakest of cities has been defended by brave and wise commanders. This, he says, can best be done by putting oneself in the position of the assailant and asking: "'Si j'estois l'assaillant, que ferois-je? par quel costé pourrois-je entreprendre?'"⁵⁵ Monluc makes this statement under the assumption that, given similar circumstances, the enemy commander's plan of attack would coincide with his own. While this would not always be the case, military history seems to confirm Monluc's logic. Much of Caesar's success against the Gauls, for example, was determined by his ability to anticipate the enemy's intentions.⁵⁶ Monluc's own philosophy on this point of military science was probably derived both from his own experience and from his readings of Caesar and other historians. The importance of this counsel vis-à-vis the reader is that, assuming the governor is able to guess the enemy's plan of attack, he will then be in a better position to defend his city.

Another counsel presented to the reader concerns the general conduct that should be maintained by a governor during critical military situations. His view relates closely to the advice he gave to his officers regarding the wisdom of participating personally in difficult tasks in order to gain the respect of their men.⁵⁷ Likewise, if a governor wanted to win the confidence of those whom he was

governing, he should share their pains: "Je vous veux advertir d'une autre chose: c'est que, lorsque l'extrémité vous pressera, vous ne demeuriez qu'enfermé en vostre cabinet; mais monstrez-vous aux capitaines et soldats, voire au peuple, avec un visage assuré; votre seule presence leur redoublera le coeur."⁵⁸ Evidently it was not uncommon for governors to avoid personal involvement in the defense of their cities; rather, the average governor probably had a tendency to delegate unglorious duties or tasks to his subordinates. He gives the example of a governor in Italy who, rather than survey the needs of the city, spent hours in his chamber reading Orlando furioso. Monluc advised his readers against such irresponsible practices, suggesting instead that the governor should be out on the ramparts encouraging the soldiers.

As a last resort, Monluc even counsels governors to cover up information or falsify statements if it means preserving the city. This type of conduct is personally exemplified by Monluc in his handling of the German contingent's exit from Siena; in this case he withheld information from the Concistoro so as not to cause panic. He rationalizes this action for the following reason: "Faignez aussy avoir quelque intelligence en l'armée de vostre ennemy, encores que vous n'en y ayés pas, car ce sera une contremine. Je ne vous diray que ce mot: que vous vous representez et la bonne grâce de vostre prince et son inimité, car vous avez le choix: elle s'efface pas comme la nostre."⁵⁹ Here

again Monluc reaffirms his adherence to the liege relationship between the governor and the king. Thus lying and other dubious practices are acceptable so long as they contribute to the welfare of the state. Since the king represents the state, Monluc's conduct would therefore be compatible with the Aristotelian idea of virtue being justice to the States. In a similar way, the cruelty of Monluc's actions during the civil wars was largely justified by himself as part of his duties in serving the king's interests. From his viewpoint, then, governors are justified in taking whatever steps necessary in order to preserve their own appointment and to hold the king's possessions intact.

In a brief remonstrance to provincial governors, Monluc summarizes the conditions that existed in Guyenne in June, 1562. He indicates that the advantage was on the side of the Huguenots because of the numerous spies in each village and city. Toulouse and Bordeaux were the only major strongholds that had not been captured, and he attributes this situation to divine intervention: "Dieu a conservé ces deux forts boulevards en la Guyenne, afin de garder le reste,"⁶⁰ From the Commentaires, it is difficult to assess Monluc's true devotion to God or Catholicism because there are very few references to religion. Those occasions when he does mention God are in a military context and divine power does not appear to concern him except as it affects a particular military situation. Often, instead of God being the controller of man's destiny, Monluc seems to mold God's

influence to fit his own needs. As examples one could cite how he profited from "la querelle de Dieu" to incite the Spanish troops at Vergt⁶¹ and his call for prayer at Siena.⁶² In the above passage, God's powers are again acted out in favor of Monluc's own perspective on military events in Guyenne. Monluc's God seems to be a God of War whose sole purpose is to support this French general personally and the cause for which he is fighting. It is possible, in this case, that his reference to God is also a means of appealing to his reader's religious sentiments in order to win his approval of the Commentaires.

A definite factor in the preservation of these cities in Guyenne for the king was Monluc's own military leadership in the area. He reminds the reader of his uncanny manoeuvres which prevented the enemy from organizing any major offensives; his successes were achieved by moving his forces quickly and without warning, never allowing the enemy to know where he was:

"Je rompis fort leurs desseins, envoyant gens de tous costez et ne demeurant guière en un lieu. Car, faisant ainsi, un lieutenant de roy tiendra tout le monde en cervelle, parce qu'on ne sçait pas son dessein, et chacun pense qu'il vient à luy, et a peur; au lieu que, s'il cropit tousjours en mesme endroit, il ne pourra pouvoir à tout ny arriver à propos; . . ." ⁶³

Julius Caesar used lightning attacks and deceptive manoeuvres to great advantage against the Gauls; Monluc's adherence to the same tactic is additional evidence of the Caesarian influence. However, in the above passage, Monluc is not

simply theorizing on military strategy, his counsel to the governors is based on his personal experience and success with the strategies he proposes.

Communication with various parts of Guyenne was primarily through letters or oral messages by way of a courier. Monluc insists that these brief communications were largely responsible for keeping the fragments of the province possessed by the king from being engulfed by aspiring politicians who were willing to join forces with the Protestants in order to have more power: "Croyés-moy, vous qui avez cest honneur d'estre gouverneurs des provinces, que c'est une belle chose et utile à vostre maistre d'entretenir par lettres ceux que vous sçavez avoir tant soit peu de credit."⁶⁴ His advice then is political as well as military. A provincial governor's duty, according to Monluc, includes writing letters and communicating with those most likely to support the king. This was a preventive measure and one which marked the difference between a superior leader and a mediocre one.

On November 4, 1568 Monluc made a trip to Bordeaux, summoned there by the parlement in order to clear up a matter which was crippling the internal affairs of the city and which threatened the king's interests. The citizens had become extremely fearful of suffering defeat from a possible Huguenot attack on the city. In addition to the rampant fear, the king had just recently replaced Ragebaston as president of the parlement with Roffignac. This transition

would not have been significant if it had not been for the rumor of a battle with the Protestants. As it was, this shift in political leadership only compounded the existing anxiety. The day after his arrival in the city, Monluc addressed the parlement with the intention of quelling their apprehensions and preparing them to withstand the assault. His original comments were delivered orally in the form of a discourse but, in the Commentaires, he summarizes the first part and places the rest in quotations as direct discourse. His initial objective to encourage his audience met with a substantial acceptance: "Ceste compagnie montra avoir beaucoup de contentement de moy, et me remercia."⁶⁵ Thereafter he proceeds by divulging his own opinions as to what should be done to preserve the city. This included the taking of an oath on the part of every citizen to fight to the death if required and a commitment on the part of the politicians to take up arms along with the others.

Again relying on the ancient Romans as models, he tells his audience that these former conquerors were at once men of letters and men of war: ". . . et qu'il leur souvînt que les plus vaillans capitaines qu'avoient les Romains, c'estoient gens de lettre, et que s'ils n'avoient appris les lettres, l'on les tenoit pour indignes de grandes charges, et que les lettres ne les devoient empescher de prendre les armes et combattre, . . ."⁶⁶ Monluc placed great value on Roman military prowess, and much of his military theory was modeled on it. In this instance he emphasizes the priority

set by the Romans with respect to military affairs. Although political, literary, and other pursuits had their place in Roman society, military knowledge was required of all great Roman leaders.⁶⁷ Monluc is alluding to this principle when he states that some of the best Roman generals were also men of letters. His reference to this Roman precedent obviously meant to dislodge his listeners, members of the parlement and men of lettres, from their traditional avoidance of personal involvement in military affairs. At this point in the narrative Monluc switches to direct discourse. He emphasizes how great the influence would be if they, as leaders in the city, agreed to enter the conflict as soldiers: "Combien pensez-vous que cela accouragera le peuple, quand il verra ceux qui ont puissance sur leur bien et sur leur vie prendre les armes pour leur deffence? Nul n'osera gronder; voz ennemis seront en peur, quand ils oyront que la cour de Parlement s'arme; ils verront que c'est à bon escient."⁶⁸ The effect of his speech on the audience seems to have been a common commitment by all to follow his advice. The Palace of Justice was closed for eight days while the members of parlement and the lawyers prepared themselves for military combat.

The narrative sequel to the preceding remonstrance and discourse finds Monluc counseling governors in general on the utility of remonstrance. He says,

"Je veux dire une chose pour ceste nation: que si le gouverneur a gagné quelque reputation parmy elle, et qu'il leur sache faire des remonstrances, là où il puissent prendre quelque fondement, que

nonseulement il fera combattre la noblesse, les soldats; les gens de justice, mais les moines, les prestres, les laboureurs et les femmes avec; car ceste nation n'a point besoing de hardiesse, mais a besoing d'un bon chef, qui la sçache bien ordonner et commander."⁶⁹

Monluc's penchant for oral persuasion is apparent in this passage as he tries to impart the same sentiment to his reader. Remonstrance is underscored as an excellent means of urging people to undertake tasks which they would decline under normal circumstances. This advice to the governors is based on Monluc's own experience since he had, through his persuasive spirit, convinced priests, monks, and women to take the sword in their own defense. At Siena, at Rome, in the Pyrenees or on the battle field, he never failed to voice his opinions when he felt compelled to do so. His frank and optimistic deportment was sufficient to influence the majority of his listeners. He felt that this capacity for oral persuasion should be developed and exercised by everyone in a leadership position. His own talent for remonstrance and oratory is manifest in the positive results he achieves, and yet one has the feeling while reading the Commentaires that he was less gifted in transcribing his speeches than he was in delivering them in person. Despite this, he has succeeded in communicating a great deal of solid advice to his readers.

The last speech to be examined in this chapter was addressed to the Agenais in November 1569. News had spread that Montgomery might try to capture Agen. Monluc had

entered the city in order to reassure the citizens and to secure the place for the king. He summoned all of the political, religious, and military leaders to the city hall where he delivered his speech. In his opening remarks, as in several other discourses, he tries to win the trust of his audience. He begins by establishing his own credibility: "Ma renommée n'est pas en si petit lieu et en la Guyenne seulement; je suis tenu pour tel par toute l'Italie et par toute la France."⁷⁰ The Agenais had been making plans to evacuate the city and to take refuge in Bordeaux and Monluc surmises that this decision was a product of a fear which had developed when it was thought that he had abandoned the Agenais in favor of defending Lectoure. Monluc wishes to alleviate their worries by showing himself as an undaunted champion of oppressed cities, both in France and Italy.

After verifying his intentions to assist them, Monluc prescribes three steps requisite to an effective defense of Agen: first, he requests that they quash all fears and apprehensions; secondly, he suggests that they unite their efforts and organize themselves and their provisions; finally, he proposes that six or eight dependable leaders be chosen who can each command a section of the city. Whereupon Monluc pledges that if these three provisions are satisfied he can guarantee their safety.

At this point he demands a commitment from his listeners: "Comme vous voyez mon visage remply de bonne volonté de vous deffendre, je veux aussi que me monstrez le vostre, que je

puisse cognoistre que vous accomplirez ces trois choses que je vous demande."⁷¹ This is a challenge which Monluc expected them to accept since the preservation of their city is at stake. However, many of the citizens were already in the process of trying to save their possessions. In this latter regard Monluc simulates a degree of understanding in order to win support from them; but he also stresses the consequences of the city's being captured by the Protestants: "Mais que ceux-là considèrent qu'est-ce qu'ils deviendront, si les ennemys se rendent maistres de la ville, comme sans doute ils feront si vous ne vous esvertuez; et que deviendront voz biens, voz estats, voz maisons, voz femmes et enfans, tombant entre les mains de ces gens qui gastent tout: tout sera renversé sens dessus dessous."⁷² The aim is to cause some reflection on the part of the audience; he wants them to envisage the terrible consequences of the enemy's wrath: the devastation of property and loss of life.

As usual Monluc's oratory proved successful; every major segment of the Agenais leadership responded positively to his call to defend the city. The clergy, represented by MM. Blazimond and La Lande, was the first to voice its support of Monluc's objectives; it even agreed to take up arms in demonstration of its avowed allegiance. Next came the lawmakers who likewise committed themselves to fight and a monsieur de Nort spoke in favor of having everyone in the city, including women, children, and old people, participate in the conflict. This left only the military leadership

to join forces with the others who had approved Monluc's plan. With emotions obviously running in his favor, Monluc decided to solidify this acceptance by calling for a pledge: "Alors, comme j'avois levé la main, je leur fis lever la leur et faire la mesme serment que j'avois faict, . . ." ⁷³

The visual effect of raising their hand in support served as a psychological reinforcement of the commitment that had already been made by the clergy and lawmakers while at the same time drawing in those leaders who to that point had been uncommitted. His goal was achieved, the city fortified, and the attack was consequently averted. Monluc credits this outcome to what he calls "ma seule parole"; meaning of course, that his oratory had been instrumental in saving Agen.

In this chapter, we have seen how Monluc's particular talent for oratory influenced the decisions of the Sienese leadership in such a way as to place him in complete control. His success was the result of a remarkable ability to recognize the need for a speech and then to deliver it effectively. His orations contributed greatly to the skillful defense of a city that would have normally had to capitulate months earlier. His advice, as delivered to the "gouverneurs des places", is based on his own achievements as a governor and reflects Monluc's continual desire to present his Commentaires as a practical guide. For the governor as reader, he offers counsel on the need for a personal commitment to the protection of the king's domains, the importance of placing

duty above life, and the advantage of oral and written discourse in administration. His discourse to the Parlement of Bordeaux was instrumental in the eventual solution of political machinations in the city. On the whole, these remonstrances and speeches give sound advice to governors and demonstrate Monluc's own capacity for oratory and leadership.

Notes

¹ Governing body of Siena, comparable to French parlement but on a smaller scale.

² Cosimo I de Medici, granduca di Toscana (1519-1574).

³ Commentaires, p. 267.

⁴ Commentaires, p. 267.

⁵ George Willis Botsford, Hellenic History (New York, 1948), p. 129.

⁶ Edward Gibbon, History of the Roman Empire (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1880), Vol. I, p. 52.

⁷ Commentaires, p. 267.

⁸ Commentaires, p. 268.

⁹ Commentaires, p. 268.

¹⁰ Commentaires, p. 269.

¹¹ Commentaires, p. 269.

¹² Commentaires, p. 269.

¹³ Commentaires, p. 269.

¹⁴ Commentaires, p. 279.

¹⁵ Commentaires, p. 279.

¹⁶ Commentaires, p. 280.

¹⁷ Commentaires, p. 280.

¹⁸ Commentaires, p. 281.

¹⁹ Commentaires, p. 289.

²⁰ Commentaires, p. 292.

- 21 Commentaires, p. 292.
- 22 Commentaires, p. 296.
- 23 Commentaires, p. 296.
- 24 Commentaires, p. 297.
- 25 Commentaires, p. 297.
- 26 Commentaires, p. 297.
- 27 Commentaires, p. 298.
- 28 Commentaires, p. 298.
- 29 Commentaires, p. 316.
- 30 Commentaires, p. 316.
- 31 Commentaires, p. 317.
- 32 Guglielmo Ferrero, The Life of Julius Caesar (New York, 1962), p. 453.
- 33 Commentaires, p. 322.
- 34 Commentaires, p. 322.
- 35 Commentaires, p. 322.
- 36 Commentaires, p. 323.
- 37 Commentaires, p. 327.
- 38 Commentaires, p. 329.
- 39 Commentaires, p. 333.
- 40 Commentaires, p. 334.
- 41 Commentaires, p. 333.
- 42 Commentaires, p. 333.
- 43 However, according to Courteault, this clause was never stricken from the document of capitulation: "Il y a une bonne part d'imagination dans tout ce passage. Monluc n'obtint pas le moins du monde la suppression de la clause relative aux fuoruscite florentins; elle est en toutes lettres et deux fois dans le texte officiel de la capitulation." Note p. 1082 of his edition of the Commentaires.

- 44 Commentaires, p. 340.
- 45 Bloch, Feudal Society, p. 219.
- 46 Commentaires, p. 341.
- 47 Commentaires, p. 341.
- 48 Commentaires, p. 342.
- 49 Based on the feudal law wherein a vassal owes service and allegiance to his lord.
- 50 Commentaires, p. 342.
- 51 Commentaires, p. 344.
- 52 Commentaires, p. 344.
- 53 See Courteault, Gallimard edition of the Commentaires, p. XXVIII.
- 54 Commentaires, p. 344.
- 55 Commentaires, p. 345.
- 56 See p. 46 of this dissertation.
- 57 See p. 48 of this dissertation
- 58 Commentaires, p. 346.
- 59 Commentaires, p. 346.
- 60 Commentaires, p. 513.
- 61 See p. 73 of this dissertation.
- 62 See p. 114 of this dissertation.
- 63 Commentaires, p. 513.
- 64 Commentaires, p. 514.
- 65 Commentaires, p. 652.
- 66 Commentaires, p. 652.
- 67 See comments on Julius Caesar, this dissertation p.30
See also Gibbons, History of the Roman Empire, vol. 1, p. 52.
- 68 Commentaires, p. 653.

- 69 Commentaires, p. 653.
70 Commentaires, p. 740.
71 Commentaires, p. 741.
72 Commentaires, p. 741.
73 Commentaires, p. 742.

Chapter V

ADDRESSES TO THE NOBILITY

Since the officers in the king's army were, almost without exception, members of the nobility, it becomes rather difficult to distinguish between the two. There are, however, several remonstrances in the Commentaires which are specifically oriented toward the nobility as opposed to military officers and which deserve special attention. Two of them were addressed to Henri de Valois, duc d'Anjou, the future Henry III, and the other, a speech, was delivered in July of 1575 to some nobles near Gensac.

The "Préambul à Monseigneur," which comprises the first twelve pages of and provides a sort of preface to the Commentaires, was addressed to the Duke of Anjou sometime before April 8, 1572, the date Monluc was absolved of his guilt by Charles IX. It seems likely from the contents of this remonstrance that it was composed during the investigations of Monluc made in June, 1571, and that he thereby intended to clear himself of the accusations. A trial was scheduled at the Parlement of Toulouse, and it appears that Monluc used this remonstrance as a means of averting the legal proceedings against him. The "Préambul" accompanied the

first redaction of the Commentaires but it was not published until the de Ruble edition.

At the same time Monluc composed the "Préambul", the image of Henri d'Anjou in France was on the upswing. He showed great political promise and had earned prestige as a military leader for his role in the victories of Jarnac and Montcontrou.¹ This in itself would have been sufficient reason for Monluc to address him rather than someone else. But, in addition, there are grounds for believing that Henri d'Anjou had a particular preference for Monluc. For instance, in May 1569 while at Montmoreau Henri d'Anjou entertained Monluc graciously: "Quelques jours après, Monsieur [Henri d'Anjou] s'aprocha, et vint à Montmoreau, où je luy allay baiser les mains, suivi d'une bonne troupe de noblesse. Mondit seigneur me fit une fort grand chère, me commandant de ne bouger d'auprès de luy."² The duke's petition for Monluc to stay "auprès de luy" evidences some fondness for him. On other occasions he facilitated Monluc's military endeavors by relieving him of all responsibility to Damville³ and even honored him by asking for his military opinion during the seige of La Rochelle.⁴ Therefore, since Monluc was in favor with Henri d'Anjou, it is understandable why he dedicated the "Préambul" to the duke and why he expected to be redeemed by this endeavor. Monluc begins the first paragraph with a recognition of the duke's important role as the king's lieutenant general: "Monseigneur, encores que Sa Majesté soit de principal chef des armes et de toutes

chozes qui deppendent de sa coronne, vous estes son lieutenant general, qui commandés soubz luy à tout ce que est soubz la couronne; . . ."⁵ By distinguishing the duke as second only to the king, Monluc shows the customary respect due a nobleman of Henri d'Anjou's stature. Thereupon Monluc reveals the principal purpose for having written the Commentaires:

"Et pour ce que vous me pourrés demander qui m'a esmeu d'escripre ma vie, ou soit que je m'aye voullu vanter dens mon livre, ou bien qu'après l'avoir veu, me fere fere au Roy quelque recompence des services que j'ay faictz, je proteste devant Dieu et l'en appelle en tesmoin si c'est ny l'ung ny l'autre; mais c'est pour la deffence de mon honneur et reputation, lequel honneur et reputtation j'ay acquize dens la France et aux païs estrangers, dont mon nom est cogneu et remarqué pour ung fidelle, loyal subject et serviteur de mon Roy par tout la chrestienté."⁶

Monluc is careful to eliminate any motives that might be considered dubious by his reader, thus orienting Henri d'Anjou toward what Monluc indicates as "la deffence de mon honneur et reputtation", which is claimed as the primary motive behind the Commentaires. This reference to the protection of his honor and reputation is directly related to the numerous incriminations which had been heaped on him: ". . . et puisque ce bruit a coureu par tout, je n'ay peu fere de moingz que de rendre compte de ma vie et de toutes choses qui sont passées par mes mains, et par le menu et à la veritté, affin d'ouster la mauvaize oppinion que dens le royaulme et hors icelley l'on pourroict avoir prins de moy."⁷ This passage is in essence a statement of Monluc's thesis. His primary aim is to clear his name and to reestablish it

in its rightful and reputable position. In order to emphasize his complaint against these accusations, he lists the major ones, in hopes that the duke will agree to the preposterousness of such indictments. Monluc then proceeds to justify himself systematically, at times using a moralistic⁸ approach while at other times overtly defending his actions.

He confronts his inculpation for treason, the most serious indictment, by stating its relationship to disloyalty and by moralizing on its damaging effects. He makes disloyalty and treason equally felonious and magnifies their seriousness by stating how they can destroy an officer's renown. The implication contained in this reasoning is that Monluc himself could not be guilty of such a severe breach of trust.

In continuation of his role as a moralizer, Monluc gives a remedy which he claims will nullify the influence of disloyalty: "Doncques que faut-il fere pour ne tomber en ce malheur? Il fault que nous faisons requeste à Dieu qu'il nous conserve la loyaulté . . ."⁹ This counsel on how to avoid treasonous actions was purposefully expected to convince Henri d'Anjou of Monluc's innocence with regard to this matter. He wanted to display his opposition to any form of treason, whether it be simple disloyalty or the more serious crime of betraying the king to the enemy. His suggestion to seek God's help is an open manifestation of a dependence on the Supreme Being and, whether genuine or not, it was nevertheless a means of impressing the duke or anyone else

that might read the Préambul. The religious element serves to substantiate the sincerity behind Monluc's advice through an appeal to the reader's own consciousness of divine influence.

Until now there has been no direct declaration of innocence on Monluc's part. However, the tone of the remonstrance goes from moralizing to a frank avowal of his loyalty: "Et pour retourner à mon faict particulier, je declaire icy que je n'ay eu à ma vie particippation ny intelligence avecques prince ny aultre estrangier, ny avecques personne vivante, que aye esté declairé ennemy du Roy."¹⁰ This overt denial of having been involved in treasonous actions is an attempt to put Henry at a disadvantage by placing the burden of proof on him. If Monluc's statement is true, then the allegation of treason should be dropped; if false, the crown will need to provide enough evidence to uncover the perjury. In further support of this profession of innocence and loyalty, Monluc adds the testimonies of those who served with him during the wars and assures Henry that the officers will confirm his unreserved dedication to the crown: "Or, des grandz qui ont menné ces guerres, ne sont point encore tous mortz, car il en y a en vie; que l'on leur y demande, et ne m'ayment pas tant qu'ilz ne disent la veritté de ce qui en est."¹¹ The "grandz" of whom Monluc speaks include such notables as Claude de Lorraine, duc d'Aumale, "grand veneur de France et colonel général de la cavalerie légère" and Artus de Cossé, sieur de Gonnort,

"grand panetier de France."¹² Since his reader, Henri d'Anjou is himself a distinguished nobleman, the fact that his peers would vouch for Monluc's inviolable conduct strengthens the latter's plea of innocence.

The second aspect of Monluc's defense is a denial of the charge against him for supposedly diverting royal monies to his personal use: "Et quant aux finances, les recepveurs et tresoriers sont en vie, les commaissaires pour enquerir qui y aura touché. Et si je m'y trouve d'ung seul liard, si le Roy ne me faict trencher la teste, il ne fault pas trouver estrange s'il est si mal servy, comme l'on dict et qu'il est, . . ."¹³ It seems that by volunteering to have the "recepveurs et tresoriers" investigate the dispersement of royal funds, Monluc is taking a big risk since, if he is guilty, his extortion will be uncovered. Therefore, despite his awareness of the investigation, Henri d'Anjou, knowing the risk involved, would be inclined to view Monluc's suggestion as evidence of his innocence. Likewise, why would Monluc offer himself for execution if there was any possibility he would be found guilty of stealing "ung seul liard"? In actuality, Monluc has nothing to lose by making such proposals. The distribution of royal monies in Guyenne was under inquiry by Mondoulcet and if anything were found amiss Monluc would certainly be implicated since he was the governor; in essence then, Monluc is simply suggesting that the duke begin an investigation that is already in progress.

As for the third accusation, personal enrichment at the expense of the king's subjects, Monluc again claims innocence. He first exaggerates the severity of the charge by comparing it with the previous indictment: ". . .car plus facilement Sa Majesté s'en fera bailler à son peuple que son peuple en trouver ne gaigner au grand travail de leurs corps."¹⁴ By insinuating that it is easier for a king to recuperate his monetary losses than for the common laborer to recover from the theft of his life savings, Monluc makes the felony against the people appear more grievous. His purpose in creating the image of a stricken people is to help transfer the reader's attention from a crime against the king to the one against his subjects. Monluc probably assumed that it would be much more difficult to convict him of the latter crime since the laws protecting the common citizen during a war were practically unenforceable.¹⁵ In connection with the aforementioned injustice against the people, Monluc proposes a harsh punishment for the guilty party. In this case, Monluc, the accused, simulates a willingness to suffer the consequences if found guilty; however, as stated in the following quotation, he expects to be exonerated: "Or le president Tamboneau a faict rendre compte à tout manière de gens qui ont levé deniers et aura peu veoir s'il en est jamais venu ung dennier en ma bource."¹⁶ Jean de Tambonneau arrived in Guyenne in January, 1571 with orders from the king to audit the royal accounts in the province. Again, Monluc is trying to appear innocent by assuring Henry that

he fears no investigation. The claim that he had not taken even one unauthorized denier could, according to Monluc, be substantiated by the investigation of Jean de Tambonneau.

An additional incrimination was levied against Monluc for having taken goods and properties belonging to Huguenots who were supposedly under the king's protection. On this count Monluc admits confiscating Protestant belongings but, at the same time, he refuses to accept any liability for these actions: "Et que pouvois-je fere de moingz que de donner de leurs meubles aux gens d'armes et soldatz qui m'en demandoinct, puis qu'eux les Protestants ne se vouloint contenir et laisser vivre en paix et seuretté les catholiques qui ne bougeoient de leurs maisons ny ne pourtoient point les armes?"¹⁷ Monluc justifies his giving Huguenot property to his soldiers as booty as retaliation for similar improprieties committed against the Catholics.¹⁸ In other words, Monluc felt his conduct was legitimate because the Protestant victims were themselves guilty of even more heinous crimes against the Catholics and therefore deserving of retribution. He furthers his argument by assuring the duke that if he had not taken from the Huguenots in return for what they had done to the Catholics, there would have been a revolt: "Si je n'eusse faict cella, je revoltais toute la noblesse et tous les soldatz contre le Roy, puis que les ennemis avoinct permission de pilher et saccaiger les catholiques, et non les catholiques à eux."¹⁹ Thus he rationalizes his conduct (as governor in Guyenne) against the

Huguenots by claiming to have prevented a revolt which would have been detrimental to the king's interests. This being the case, how could he be accused of irresponsibility? And, since the duke was himself a Catholic, it seems probable that he viewed sympathetically Monluc's justification.

Monluc was also inculpated for diverting some Huguenot effects to his own use. Surprisingly enough, he admits to having been a recipient of a certain amount of booty: "Il est vray et la confesse, de merchans qui apportoint marchandizes et vivres aux ennemis et aux terres qu'ilz tennoient."²⁰ However, he claims that this was done legally because the items received could be considered the spoils of war. He therefore negates the accusation against him and even turns his actions into an equable achievement. In his typically audacious way, Monluc even blames the Bordeaux Parlement for not confiscating Huguenot properties and using them to benefit the king's interests; thus, not only did he feel that his pilfering of Protestant goods was warranted, but he also expected his peers to do the same. As for his personal enrichment, he tries to minimize it as much as possible; he asserts that his biggest gain came with the ransoming of Monsieur de la Roche Challais and that at no time did he ever take in more than six thousand écus. While defending himself, Monluc felt equally obliged to denounce the accusations which had been lodged against his second wife, Isabelle de Beauville: "Je confesse que l'on luy a faict quelque present pour fere quelque chaine; mais s'il se trouve que

jamais il luy aye esté donné cinq cens escuz, j'en payeray deux mil."²¹ There is a tone of guilt in Monluc's admission that his wife had received some gratuities. He seems to be saying that she is innocent, not because there was no wrong committed, but because the sum accepted by her was insignificant; she had only pocketed five hundred écus. If indeed there were some improprieties to be found in her conduct, he was willing to put up "deux mil" écus in order to purchase her freedom from prosecution.

Eventually Monluc becomes somewhat irascible and labels the incriminations as simply a pack of lies intended to ensnare him: "Or je loue Dieu que puis que l'on ne me peult nuyre par verités, on s'est aydé et s'ayde on par men-songes."²² He does not mention by name those whom he believes to be responsible for initiating these falsehoods, but by throwing the general blame back on his incriminators, he emphasizes his own innocence. In the same breath he assures the duke that, if he along with the king and queen mother will review his case, they will surely recognize the strength of his assertions. Once this had been accomplished there would no longer be any question in their minds as to his loyalty and innocence.

Another attempt at restoring credibility occurs when Monluc presents his views on the degraded state of affairs in France. For example, he states that the civil wars had left the entire country plundered and divided and that political loyalties were such that no one knew from one

month to the next whether an individual was for or against the crown. Monluc reminds the duke of these conditions and especially of the fact that the king has increasingly been the object of disrespect by his own subjects: "Or, pour laisser ce propoz, j'en prendray ung autre. C'est que nous sommes au jour d'huy si ingratz à l'endroit du Roy que l'on n'en veoid à grand peyne pas ung qui ne se plaigne et qu'il n'uze de reproches envers Sa Majesté."²³ In contrast to these mutinous sentiments, Monluc implies that his own loyalty to the king has been unwavering by remonstrating on the indispensable character of kings. Throughout his career Monluc professed a strong attachment to the principle of kingship and devoted his services and loyalty to the individual monarchs without regard to their political persuasions so long as he retained his own status in the royal army. In this case, Monluc's remonstrance takes an approbatory form in order to be viewed by his reader as a grateful recipient of the king's benevolence. After referring to certain criticisms that had been made against the king for not having given sufficient remuneration to his subjects for services rendered, he states, "Que serions-nous (si n'estoit le Roy), grandz et petis, ny vous mesmes, monsigneur?"²⁴ Some moralizing is also evident in this passage; Monluc has not limited himself to praising the king but has actually extended his own views as general advice in which he encourages everyone to demonstrate appreciation for the king's graces.

With his immediate reader being a nobleman, Monluc sees a premier opportunity to expound on the nobility's dependence on the king. He calls Henri d'Anjou's attention to his indebtedness to Charles IX: "N'est-ce pas le Roy qui vous a baillé les charges que vous avés, au moyen desquelles vous avés acquis unne renommée et repputation qu'il n'y a prince en Oroppe qui l'aye meilleurs que vous."²⁵ This is a well conceived approach by Monluc for, assuming Henri d'Anjou will become king, he appears as a loyal supporter of his future reign while at the same time making the nobility subject to Henry's sovereign will. Monluc's reasoning anticipates a twofold effect: first, it will elevate him in the eyes of Henry who, once he becomes king, will be his personal protector and benefactor; secondly, if Henry accepts his counsel to subordinate the nobility to the crown, then Monluc and other military officers in the king's service would be solely responsible to the former, the latter being unable to manipulate them as before. Therefore, in the sense that Monluc is trying to bolster his own image in the eyes of Henri d'Anjou, he could be considered a sycophant. However, he would probably have disagreed with this view on grounds that he was only trying to protect his reputation from being harmed by conspiring noblemen.

The effectiveness of Monluc's reasoning is placed in doubt when one considers the rivalry that existed between Charles IX and Henri d'Anjou. As Henry gained more and more prestige as a leader in both military and political

affairs his brother, the king, became increasingly jealous to the point where he even envisaged a war with Spain to eclipse Henry's growing power.²⁶ Because of this animosity, it is unlikely that Henry would have ever given credit to Charles IX for his position in life as insinuated by Monluc. If anything, the statement probably caused him a great deal of consternation. Nevertheless, the entirety of Monluc's remonstrance presumably allayed his dismay.

Continuing his moralizing and praise of the king, Monluc takes up the question of ingratitude (among the king's subjects) and establishes the necessity of serving without hope of reward. As indicated in the following passage Monluc professes the will of God and the will of the king to be one and the same: "Je scay bien que l'on me dira que pour les grandz services que l'on a faict l'on devroit avoir grandz recompences. Je vous respondray à cella que, si vous avés faict services au Roy (grandz et petis), vous avés observé le commandement de Dieu, qu'ainsi le nous a commandé."²⁷ According to this statement, those who served the king were doing so in obedience to what Monluc calls "le commandement de Dieu". But in exactly what sense is Monluc using this term? A possible connection can be drawn between Monluc's reference to "le commandement de Dieu" and the oath taken in the Middle Ages by crusaders going to Palestine or Spain to fight the Saracens. In the latter case each combatant dedicated his martial abilities to defending the Holy Land in compliance with a papal directive or

commandment.²⁸ A similar concept can be seen in Monluc's statement in that each soldier and officer in the king's service dedicates himself to his sovereign's interests. In this case one must assume, since he employs the term "le commandement de Dieu", that Monluc views the sovereign as God's representative analogous to the pope being God's emissary from the crusader's viewpoint. It is possible and there is even some evidence²⁹ that Monluc regarded military service under the French king as a crusade, particularly during the Wars of Religion when the crown opposed the Protestant insurrections. But for the most part Monluc's military service was spent in Italy and southern France fighting fellow Catholics in conflicts based more on political than religious motives. It appears then that Monluc's theory of kingship, as indicated by the term "le commandement de Dieu", follows the sacrem concept wherein French kings (dating from the Capétians) traditionally took the Holy Sacrament and were consecrated with sacred ointment in connection with their coronation in the Rheims Cathedral; the ceremony closely resembled the consecration of Catholic bishops and the king's coronation therefore possessed a sacerdotal dignity which helped sanction the new monarch's role as God's temporal representative and protector.³⁰

By reemphasizing the king's role as God's delegate on earth, Monluc places himself in a much better position to deal with the question of ingratitude which he partially develops in this remonstrance. Monluc's treatment of

ingratitude is aimed at those noblemen and others who take the king's generosity for granted and who complain when they do not receive sufficient compensation for their services: "Et verra l'on bien souvent que ceux qui ont obtenu plus de bienfaictz du Roy, eux ou leurs predecesseurs, ce sont ceux là qui se plaignent le plus et qui uzent de pluz grandz reproches envers le Roy, disans qu'ilz lui ont faict de grandz services et endure beaucoup de peynes et travaulx aux guerres."³¹ He approaches this problem of ingratitude by suggesting that, since the king is divinely called, his subjects have an obligation to sustain him out of faithful devotion rather than for a hope of reward: ". . . car, si nous faisons aultrement, nous monstrerons evidentement que nous ne l'avons point servy sinon pour l'esperance de ses biens faictz, et non pour la bonne fame et rennommée que par son moyen nous aurons acquis."³² Monluc suggests that if they serve the monarch only in hopes of being indemnified, it is a sign of ingratitude. Consequently, such a dishonorable gesture would be detrimental to their citizenship, and he thereupon recommends the following for such ungrateful vassals: "O que l'honneur de telles gens demoureen bien petit lieu, puis qu'ilz estiment plus les biens que leur rennommée et reputtation."³³

Since the king's actions are directly inspired by God and since God is not always consistent in his distribution of blessings, the apportionment of compensations awarded to his subjects does not necessarily have to be equitable. In

any case, there can be no justification for criticizing the king because the king has given all Frenchmen a place in society; it is therefore their duty to repay him for this benevolence.

The obvious motive behind Monluc's condemnation of ingratitude is to make his own service to the king appear impeccable. In order to achieve his objective, he contrasts those who are constantly seeking the king's largesse with examples of dedicated royal servants who never became rich but who have been sufficiently rewarded in other respects and he subsequently establishes himself as an indebted liegeman. To begin with he refers to the time of Louis XI when the noble families of Chastillon, Bordillon, Galiot and Boneval were faithfully serving in the government; assessing the financial condition of each family, Monluc determines that not one of them ever received more than "trois ou quatre mil livres de rente."³⁴ However, despite their low salaries, complaints were seldom ever made and Monluc honors these families for having established a standard of excellent conduct to be followed by succeeding generations: "Or fault sçavoir si ceulx qui sont descendeus d'eux meurent de faim pour cella. Ils en sont plus estimés et honorés par tout le royaulme de France que ceux qui en ont usé aultrement."³⁵ By presenting these families as the "plus estimés et honorés" in all of France, Monluc demonstrates that the natural consequence of devoted service is first dignity and honor and secondly monetary rewards. Thus

he suggests that the motives for service should parallel the example set by the noble families of Chastillon, Bordillon, Galiot, and Boneval. In this way, he is able to denounce the ungrateful subjects in the kingdom through comparison rather than through criticism of individuals.

After this comparison between grateful and ungrateful servants, the next step in Monluc's attempt to improve his own image is to place himself in the grateful servant category by emphasizing his debt to the king for the opportunities given him to advance from a man with little means and no reputation to one of renown:

"Maintenant je veulx parler de moy mesmes, qui ne suis jamais esté cogneu, sinon pour ung homme de peu et de rien, si ce n'estoict les moyens que le Roy m'a baillés pour acquerir la renommée que j'ay gaignée non seulement dans le royaume, mais par toute la chrestienté; et loue Dieu et le remercie de la grace qu'il m'a faict de m'avoir faict entrer en la cognoissance du Roy, par là où j'ay acquis ce que j'estime plus que tous les biens de ce monde, qu'est l'honneur et reputation en laquelle j'ay immortalisé le nom de Monluc, par l'ayde de Dieu, et pour loial et fidelle subject et serviteur du Roy;. . . ."36

By labeling himself a "loial et fidelle subject" he is in essence reiterating his loyalty and thus preparing his reader, Henri d'Anjou, to view his accomplishments and status in a positive light. Monluc's avowed appreciation both to God and king strengthens his image as a devoted servant to the crown and, although Henri d'Anjou had no particular appreciation for Charles IX, he undoubtedly viewed Monluc's dedication to the king in a favorable way for, once he became king himself, he would need a capable

and faithful follower like Monluc. If this assumption is true, there seem to be mutual advantages to be gained on the part of Henri d'Anjou and Monluc; the latter would receive help from the former in obtaining immunity from the accusations against him while in return Henri d'Anjou (as king) would be supported by Monluc's military services. All in all Monluc has presented a firm picture of himself to the reader with respect to his "renommée" and his status as a "loial et fidelle subject et serviteur du Roy".

With regard to the accusation against him for unwarranted acceptance and use of royal and provincial funds, Monluc summarizes his personal financial statement to the duke as a reminder of his innocence in this matter. He avers that, in addition to some 7,000 écus which he legitimately received from the Parlements of Toulouse and Bordeaux he did not receive more than "huict mil" francs in pension, but he admits that with interest and legal reward for military service he had earned "quatre vingtz ou cent mil franz." This money, he claims, was used as a dowry for his daughter Charlotte Catherine and as a gift to his wife for the care she took in nursing him back to health after the incident at Rabastens. Other than a few thousand francs set aside for his burial, he claims to have no surplus money: ". . . et s'il se trouve que j'aye ung escu d'avantage, je le donne au Roy ou à qui luy fera la relation que j'en aye d'avantage."³⁷

Becoming extremely weary and disgruntled over the continual harassments about finances, Monluc states that throughout his life he had been obliged to account for his income because of jealous or misinformed people who circulated rumors in hopes of ensnaring him. One such rumor concerns a sum of 300,000 écus which Monluc had supposedly accumulated: "J'ay esté contrainct mettre toute ma vie par escript et declairer tout ce que j'ay au monde, pour ce que l'on m'a maudé que l'on avoict faict entendre au Roy, à la Reyne et à vous, Monseigneur, que j'avois guaigné trois cens mil escuz."³⁸ If this accusation were true, it would mean that Monluc had consciously defrauded the government. In answer to this possibility he says: "Que j'aymerois mieux estre mort que si cella estoict veritable; . . ."³⁹ The exclamation of wishing himself dead rather than to accept responsibility for this charge seems slightly overdone and yet this declaration, because it insinuates denial of the accusation, serves notice to the reader of Monluc's innocence.

A final argument in support of Monluc's innocence is his patience in regard to wages owed him by the king. He asserts that if he had wanted to pilfer the royal treasury, he would have first demanded five thousand francs in back pay: "Et comment pense on que j'en aye prins, que le Roy me doibt encores quatre ou cinq mil franx de ma pension, du temps que j'estois son lieutenant, et si j'eusse voullu toucher aux finances du Roy, je pouvois plus tost prendre

les gwaiges qui me sont deubz."⁴⁰ Assuming that the king did in fact owe these wages, Monluc has a solid argument in support of his claim that he was not involved in extortion. Why would he steal from the king when he had legal right to collect monies which his sovereign owed him? Based on this reasoning the only safe conclusion that can be drawn by Henri d'Anjou is that Monluc is innocent with regard to his inculpation for diverting funds to his personal use.

By the end of this remonstrance, Monluc has exhausted every available means in the defense of his case, and he is optimistic that the verdict will be in his favor. He makes one last petition to the duke: "Or, Monseigneur, puis que vous estes le chef des armes après le Roy, doncques debvés vous estre protecteur de l'honneur des gens de bien, qui ont fidellement et loyaulment servy le Roy envers tous et contre tous. Et vous supplie très humblement doncques, soiés protecteur de la mienne . . ."⁴¹ Monluc evidently remembered the amiable reception he received from the duke at Montmoreau as well as the military favors, for, in this remonstrance, he appears to be placing all of his hopes in Henri d'Anjou's ability to relieve the pressure of the investigation. Subsequent events would prove that he was not wrong in his assumption.

The duke was admittedly Monluc's last resort. Hostile elements at the court had forced the king and queen to turn a deaf ear to his cause and he knew that unless he could gain an influential friend at the court, his chances would

be nil. As mentioned, the duke had in the past shown some favoritism toward the old Gascon and, although Monluc's language was abrasive at times, Henri d'Anjou was intrigued by his fiery character and his ability to achieve favorable military results; for example on several occasions he specifically requested Monluc to undertake missions that could have been conferred on another officer.⁴² In addition, certain elements within the "Préambul" point clearly to Monluc's express objective of personally involving the duke in his case. He first acknowledges Henri d'Anjou's important role as the king's lieutenant general by calling him "le principal chef des armes" and recognizing that the stability of the kingdom rests with him. This laudatory recognition of Henry's indispensability to the crown prepares the reader to accept Monluc's perspective on matters pertaining to his investigation and, more specifically, to convince Henry to use his powers in defense of Monluc's honor. Having gained Henri d'Anjou's attention, Monluc achieves further support by systematically refuting each charge through logical arguments as exemplified by the impeccable statement on personal finances and the debt owed him by the king thus dissolving him of any motive to steal from his sovereign. The strength of his arguments helps satisfy the reader's questions as to Monluc's innocence and gives Henri d'Anjou a legitimate reason to become engaged in defending Monluc's cause. Monluc wins additional support from the duke by sustaining his innocence with testimonies

from witnesses of high repute and peers of Henry. Although their testimonies are not actually recorded in the "Préambul" Monluc's reference to "les grandz", contemporary men of renown who uphold his innocence, increases Henri d'Anjou's interest in the case because, as a nobleman himself, the views of his peers take on added meaning and validity. Monluc's final plea, wherein he beseeches Henri d'Anjou to be his "protecteur" against abuses to his honor, reflects the general purpose of this remonstrance which is to profess innocence and receive assistance from the duke in warding off further investigations.

Another remonstrance dedicated to the Duke of Anjou is found at the end of the Commentaires. Although it parallels in some respects the preceding one, the main emphasis has shifted from a fervent attempt at justification to a more subdued request that the duke honor the faithful military officers of France. The change in tone can largely be attributed to the events which had transpired since the writing of the first remonstrance in June 1571: Monluc had been granted immunity from prosecution in April 1572, reinstated as the king's military commander in Guyenne, and honored with the title of Maréchal de France in September 1574. The first remonstrance to the Duke of Anjou had been well-timed and extremely effective. If there was any one thing that contributed more to Monluc's escape from prosecution and possible conviction, it was the first remonstrance to Henri d'Anjou. The duke used his influence to change the

tide of events in Monluc's favor and the old "capitaine de France" knew he had a debt to repay. Consequently, this second remonstrance, apparently written after 1574, assumes largely a tone of appreciation and fatherly counsel which is meant as an expression of gratitude.

He begins with an expressed desire to honor the duke in his Commentaires. The royal lineage from which he descended is acclaimed by Monluc as the most competent and hardy of any on earth, and he eulogizes the duke's grandfather (Francis I) and his father (Henry II) for their great accomplishments. The duke is placed in the same category: "Et encor que vous ne soyez pas roy, si participez vous à la benediction que Dieu leur a departy."⁴³ The heirarchy of the feudal system is apparently still revered as Monluc shows a line of homage and authority ascending from the duke to the king and from the king to God: "Doncques il faut que chascun confesse que ce royaume est à Dieu et que le Roy, vostre frère, est son lieutenant, et vous le sien."⁴⁴ Despite the rivalry between Henri d'Anjou and his brother Charles IX the former undoubtedly recognized his legal obligation of homage. In this passage Monluc is reminding him of this obligation as well as his obligation of devotion to God. The counsel herein given is simply meant to help Henri d'Anjou reassess the responsibilities of his office.

As the king's lieutenant the duke was entrusted with the command of the entire military. Since his position was such that he had access to all field reports, acts of valor,

and other information pertinent to the advancement of an officer from one rank to the next, Monluc suggests that the duke use some of his renown to aid the officers who had served under him:

"Puis que vous tenez si grand lieu, d'où dependent toutes les charges qui procèdent des armes, et qu'il faut que nous tous mourions auprès de vous pour le service du Toy et vostre, il faut que vous mettés tout vostre soin et voz pensers en nous, qui suivons les armes, car tous les autres estats ne participent rien avec le vostre, de tant que tout le reste depend des gens de robbe longue; il y en a prou au conseil du Roy; vous n'avez rien à desmesler avec eux, car on dit: qui trop embrasse peu estraint."⁴⁵

The fact that these men were willing to die if need be in serving the duke and the king was reason enough for Monluc to imply that they be given something more than a loaf of bread and a month's pay. Monluc then challenges his reader to champion the cause of the officers. Finally, he makes a reasonable demand by underscoring the valuable nature of their role as active servants and contrasts it with that of the "gens de robbe longue" which he presents as inutile to his position as the king's lieutenant. His desire is to show the duke that, as commander of the army, he should acknowledge a mutual dependence between his men and himself; a partnership had to exist or neither element could survive. The practice of catering to the noblesse de robe is discouraged by Monluc because he obviously viewed it as an obstacle barring the way to better relations between the duke and his military officers.

Monluc next offers advice on the type of officers most apt to render honorable service to the crown. First, he disqualifies the younger military officers who have no experience and who would therefore be of only minor usefulness. Secondly, he reemphasizes the indolent nature of the judicial nobility and refers to them as those who, in battle, "s'en meslent trop et veulent sur le tapis verd juger des coups." This leaves only the "vieux capitaines" who, having passed through countless military encounters, are in the best position to give the duke counsel on the strategies of warfare: "Si vous prenez advis et conseil de telles gens, vous ne pouvez faillir de maintenir vostre grandeur accroistre vostre renommée et reputation; car de telles gens vous apprendrez de sçavoir bien commander, et retiendrez d'eux ce qu'ils vous mettront en avant, racompant ce qu'ils auront veu."⁴⁶ Again, this is audacious counsel coming from Monluc because in essence he is telling the chief commander that he still has something to learn about fighting a war and that he might do well to receive instruction from his most seasoned officers. Although one can never learn too much about one's profession, it would take an extremely humble leader to accept such advice from a subordinate. The duke's reaction to the assertive nature of this passage would have been interesting to watch. At any rate, Monluc has good intentions in wishing to see his benefactor develop his potential as a leader. In addition, he had a personal desire to acquire a maximum influence on

military affairs and felt justified in this because he had been one of the foremost figures during the Italian campaign and civil wars. One of his main objectives, then, is to profit from past experiences by sharing his extrinsic military knowledge with the reader. In part, his objective is achieved through remonstrance: "Si vous voulez un peu considerer ma remonstrance, . . ." ⁴⁷ And, once he has gained the duke's attention, Monluc has a captive listener toward whom he can direct counsel which, in his own eyes, is extremely valuable: "Ceux que vous devez avoir près de vostre personne et de vostre conseil estroit doivent estre les vieux capitaines qui ont eu reputation à estre gens sans peur, vigilans et de prompt execution." ⁴⁸ The reference to other experienced captains was simply a means of camouflaging his own desire to have his soldierly talents recognized. What had he been preaching throughout the Commentaires if it was not courage, vigilance, and prompt execution? These are obviously the same traits he claims for himself, and his suggestion that the duke retain someone with these qualities near his person seems to indicate Monluc's own desire to become his right-hand man. Having already been promoted to the position of Maréchal de France Monluc would like to have been selected as a military advisor to the duke, thereby crowning his career with even more glory. Evidently this request was overlooked or misunderstood, or since it was unsolicited, it may have been

negatively received by the duke. In any case this ambition was never realized.

To further support the idea that Monluc is alluding to himself in this part of the remonstrance, one can cite the following passage where he denounces those who are unable to recall clearly the events to which they have been witnesses: "Il en y a aussi d'autres qui à faute d'esprit, n'on peu retenir ce qu'ils ont veu."⁴⁹ Indeed, Monluc on more than one occasion credited himself with a remarkable talent for remembering the details of past events and, as previously indicated, his excellent memory was largely responsible for his being able to dictate the Commentaires with such accuracy. He had also mentioned how gifted he was with respect to delivering speeches. This would account for his having placed such importance on the ability "de sçavoir discourir" and thus the inclination toward self-recognition becomes a relevant leitmotif which pervades the Commentaires: "Tel que je suis, vous me verrez dans mon livre."⁵⁰ Almost an echo of Montaigne's famous phrase, "Ainsi, lecteur, je suis moy-mesmes la matière de mon livre",⁵¹ this declaration, if true, helps to substantiate our findings which point toward a very self-centered Monluc.

Evidently viewing himself as the duke's personal advisor, he continues making suggestions. With regard to soldiers who, once they have accomplished a meritorious feat, demand a monetary reward, obviously the king cannot be so generous as to hand out bonuses for every good deed;

yet, their demands have to be appeased. Monluc proposes the following solution: "En cela il y a bon remède; suivez le dire des anciens: 'Qui n'a de l'argent en bourse Qu'il ait du miel dans la bouche.'

Ainsi vous ne mettrez personne hors d'espoir que vous n'ayez souvenance d'eux, lorsque la commodité se présentera, que vous y tiendrez la main. Un bon accueil, un sousris, une accolade les tiendra en haleine."⁵² If the recompence cannot be in money, it would be better to repay them with compliments than to turn them away cold and such positive gestures would reveal the degree of loyalty which the duke's men held for him. For example, Monluc claims that if a soldier refuses a meaningful overture on the part of his sovereign, it indicates a lack of devotion on his part, a recusant attitude which Monluc considers dangerous:

"Car tout homme qui sert son maistre plus par avarice que par amitié n'a rien de bon au ventre."⁵³ The duke is therefore advised by Monluc to avoid individuals of questionable motives. By preaching against avarice and restive soldiers Monluc is in effect strengthening his chances of impressing the duke as a man of loyalty and integrity.

Additional advice which Monluc gives the duke concerns the writing of letters. According to him the practice of communicating with one's officers is an excellent means of sustaining their morale because such correspondence can convince them of their superior's appreciation for their services. There is an additional advantage to this

procedure: ". . .c'est qu'ils monstrent les lettres à leurs parens et amis, et comme ceux-là verront que vous faites cas de l'un, que vous l'honorez de voz lettres, ils se mettront en devoir et despence de la suivre."⁵⁴ Monluc asserts that the news of the duke's habit of corresponding with his men would enhance his popularity throughout France, not only with the military but also with the social and political segments of society.

To render his counsel on writing letters more feasible, Monluc suggests that most of the work could be done by his secretaries: "Cela ne vous sera pas grand peine, mais à voz secretares; quittant un'heure de voz plaisirs, vous signerez plus de despeches qu'il n'en faudra pour tout ce royaume."⁵⁵ With a little organization the task of sending out a few thousand letters would take little effort, but in order to make them more effective, Monluc counsels him to avoid redundancy. His own experience has taught that, once the letters have been circulated among friends, similarities would become evident and the original purpose for having sent them would be lost. Therefore, ". . .il ne faut pas aussi que cella soit trop commun. . .". An additional proposal to be implemented on special occasions or for special individuals would include "un petit mot" in the duke's own handwriting. This would carry a much stronger impact and would establish his credibility as a concerned and capable leader.

At this point Monluc reasserts the importance of his counsel and predicts the consequences if the duke choses not to follow his advice: "Si vous ne faites ce que je vous dy, Monseigneur, voicy ce qui vous adviendra."⁵⁶ After this statement Monluc outlines how the duke might be viewed by his officers. First he says that when the officers recognize his lack of interest in them and see that no appreciation is being shown for their services, they will become disenchanted with the prospects of improving their situation and even in assisting in what they might have originally considered a just cause. Thoughts of returning home to their families will then replace thoughts of fighting the duke's battles. How could they possibly justify serving a man whose only concern was his personal advancement on the ladder of success? In addition, once they had become accustomed to the comforts of home these officers would find it extremely difficult to take up arms again: "Et depuis que l'homme de guerre, pour peu de bien qu'il aye, commence à sentir le plaisir de sa maison, de sa femme et de ses chiens, et qu'on luy laisse prendre ce ply, il est bien mal-aisé de le tirer plus du foyer pour aller à la guerre et de quitter la plume pour dormir sur la dure."⁵⁷ In short time a good soldier would be converted into a complacent citizen. If the army were ever depleted of competent officers by reason of the duke's unwillingness to express interest in their well-being, then a critical situation would arise since the country's military effectiveness would be drastically

diminished. Monluc is trying to impress the duke with this fact and his emphasis is on preventing such a situation from occurring. He speaks of a particular difficulty that would be encountered in an armed conflict: "Il [un officier] n'ouyra tirer arquebusade que, comme le franc-archier, il ne pense estre mort."⁵⁸ Monluc alerts Henri d'Anjou to the adjustments that must be made by officers returning to military service after some years of retirement. According to Monluc the sound of musket fire is a frightful experience for unseasoned soldiers or ex-soldiers who have lost contact with the clamours of war. He implies that the initial fears of battle among new recruits would have a damaging effect on the entire army. His proposal is therefore to retain a standing body of competent soldiers who would be prepared to meet any crisis. Monluc describes the rewards that will come to Henri d'Anjou by preparing and maintaining a formidable military force: "Chacun qui aura envie de suivre les armes, se resoudra d'accompagner jusques au bout vostre fortune; vous ferez cognoistre que, puis que Dieu vous a desjà mis la main sur l'espaule, vous essayerez s'il la voudra mettre sur la teste."⁵⁹ Monluc suggests that a positive action toward retaining talented soldiers would encourage other soldiers to commit their services to an honorable cause. The strength of mercenaries or seasoned recruits would make the French military a redoubtable force in Europe and consequently bring added respectability to Henri d'Anjou's already flowering career. Monluc's counsel

on building a superior military force is probably based on his knowledge of the Roman practice of maintaining a standing army and using foreign troops as a supplement to their own legions. Caesar, for example, successfully employed German calvary in defeating Vertingorix and habitually deployed his foreign infantry in the front lines as a buffer between the enemy and his first phalanx. The success of the Roman army probably inspired Monluc to envisage a similar achievement for the French military under the direction of Henri d'Anjou. The last part of the preceding passage is possibly a reflection of Monluc's desire to see the duke become king because the word "teste", as used here, implies a coronation. As king, Henry could more easily assure the implementation of Monluc's counsel. At any rate Monluc assures him that the rewards of his just efforts in maintaining a strong royal army would be manifold.

The last two paragraphs of this remonstrance consist of some parting advice to the duke and praise for himself and his immediate family. He recommends that the duke adopt as his motto: "Coelum coeli Domino, terram autem dedit filius hominum", taken from Psalms 115:16. This gives him the Biblical authorization to conquer the world. This authorization to rule the world is based on man being the dominant species and the French sovereign being delegated by God to reign over the temporal affairs of all men. Monluc admits that conquering the world is not within the realm of possibility for himself because of his station in life, but

for a prince, it would be conceivable: "Un prince de coeur ne doit jamais estre contant, ains faut pousser sa fortune; la terre est si grande, il y a prou à conquerir. Le Roy, vostre frère, a assez de moyens pour vous assister; vous avez l'age et la bonne fortune."⁶¹ Monluc suggests that, because of his youth and noble lineage, the duke would have a superb chance of becoming a great military figure. As the godson of Edward VI of England, the original name taken by the Duke of Anjou was Alexandre-Edouard. Later he dropped Alexander from his name, and Monluc expresses his discontent with this action: "Je suis marry que vous ayez laissé ce beau et brave nom d'Alexandre, qui a esté, si je ne me trompe, le plus vaillant homme qui porta jamais armes. Sa Majesté vous aydera pour mettre sur vostre teste quelque couronne estrangère."⁶² Monluc is still living in the past glories of ancient conquerors. Alexander the Great conquered numerous foreign capitals including almost the entire Mediterranean world. Apparently Monluc has envisioned the same destiny for the duke as evidenced by his reference to "quelque couronne estrangère"; in this case he is likely alluding to the impending election of Henri d'Anjou as King of Poland.

As a "pauvre gentilhomme", Monluc assures the duke that if things had worked more in his favor, he could have won "quelque coin du monde" for himself. At no time has Monluc ever downplayed his own potential in the Commentaires without subsequently coming back with a more forceful confirmation of it. He also hardily supports the promising careers

of his offspring: "Si mon fils eust vescu, je croy qu'il aust venu à bout du dessein que monsieur l'amiral scait bien qu'il avoit dans la teste, qu'il vous pourra dire."⁶³ In this allusion to Peyrot de Monluc's expedition to the island of Madera in 1566, he states essentially that if Peyrot had not been killed during the expedition his career would have been successful. There seem to be many "ifs" in Monluc's language. Now at the end of his life he is looking back and wishing that more honors had come to him and his family. He realizes that because of his age and disabilities there will be no chance to reassert himself militarily. The best he could do would be to contribute significantly to someone else's success, and this is why he is so adamant about having the counsel in this remonstrance accepted and used by the duke. Besides the abundant recommendations found herein, Monluc recommends his own descendants as competent replacements: "Je n'espère pas, estant si maladif et cassé, vous y pouvoir servir; mais je vous laisse trois petits Monlucz, lesquels, j'espère, ne degeneront de leur ayeul ny de leurs pères."⁶⁴ The remonstrance ends on a positive note with the assumption that the Duke of Anjou, aided by Monluc's timely advice and grandsons, will go on to become a leader of great renown.

This second remonstrance, a token of gratitude to Henri d'Anjou in the form of general counsel, also reemphasizes Monluc's desire to see the talents of his posterity recognized by the crown. As in the first remonstrance, Monluc

sets about honoring his reader with laudatory remarks about his hardy ancestry; however, he gives a new dimension to this eulogy by showing how Henry's line of authority ascends from himself through the king to God. The proclamation of this divinely sanctioned authority is designed by Monluc to prepare Henri d'Anjou to envision himself as a supreme ruler. Evidence of this intention can be seen elsewhere in the remonstrance when Monluc uses the passage from Psalms as biblical proof of the duke's right to possess and assert his authority.

Monluc apparently imagines himself in the role of a tutor to Henri d'Anjou similar to the way Aristotle tutored Alexander the Great; he even shows discontent over Henry's decision to drop Alexander from his name and does not hide the connection he sees between the name Alexander and the Greek conqueror. There is little doubt that superstition plays a part in Monluc's insinuation that the name Alexander might contribute something to Henri d'Anjou's personal achievements. At any rate Monluc tries to project the grandeur of Alexander the Great onto the duke whom he fantasizes will eventually reach equal greatness. In order to assist this future king in the attainment of greatness, Monluc gives advice on the importance of championing the cause of his military officers as opposed to showing excessive sympathy toward courtiers or the nobless de robe; on the need for employing "des vieux capitaines" as his personal advisors instead of the judicial nobility whom he claims is

too steeped in tradition and impractical knowledge; on the wisdom of sending epistles to his military officers as proof of his genuine concern for their needs; on the desirability of maintaining a standing army of formidable strength which would allow him to protect and extend his authority; and on the sine qua non of what he calls "sçavoir discourir", the art of remonstrance and oratory for which Monluc had a particular talent and inclination.

After his accident at Rabastens and his subsequent dismissal from his duties in Guyenne, Monluc went into what he expected to be a permanent retirement. However, once he had been acquitted of the accusations lodged against him and honored in 1574 with the title of Maréchal de France, he agreed to return to military service as a noncombatant. His responsibilities included the directing of operations near Bordeaux for Henry III, the former Duke of Anjou. The discourse delivered to a group of noblemen at Gensac in July 1575 is the last one in the Commentaires and was apparently the last one to be given while Monluc was still actively involved in military affairs.

The circumstances surrounding this speech are interesting and also typical of the minor crises in which Monluc was frequently embroiled. Prior to the seige of Gensac, Monsieur de Monferran, a respected military leader and noblemen in that area, had summoned a large group of his peers to help in this conflict. During the attack on the city he was killed by a musket ball and since he was a key figure in

Monluc's offensive, someone equally as competent had to be chosen as his replacement. Monluc tells of the complications that ensued:

"Après la mort de monsieur de Monferran, je voulus donner la charge qu'il avoit en l'armée à monsieur de Duras, parce qu'il me sembloit qu'estant seigneur de si bonne maison comme il est, il seroit agreable; mais tout le monde ne le trouva pas bon, de quoy sortit un autre chose, c'est qu'on me dit que la noblesse, qui estoit venue avec tous ces monsieurs me trouver, se plaignoit fort de quelques propos que j'avois tenu d'elle, aussi faux que le diable est faux."⁶⁵

So, not only did his choice for replacement meet with resistance, but his very person had been challenged by the nobility.

The exact reason for their discontent is not discussed in the Commentaires, but from the available information, it appears as though he had in some way offended their dignity. Part of the reason could have been Monluc's failure to consult them before making a final choice regarding Monferran's replacement. Their familiarity with the qualities of the various candidates was probably better than that of Monluc's since he had only been in the area for a couple of months. However, there must have also been an inadvertent or intentional insult which precipitated the wrath of these noblemen. It is unclear as to whether the "quelques propos" spoken of in the above passage refer to something abstract such as slanderous remarks or something concrete such as properties or monies. In any case, the

nobility had developed a resentment toward Monluc which threatened to undermine his whole operation at Gensac.

In order to appease these hostile sentiments he decided to confront the nobility openly. The setting for this discourse is picturesque and exemplary of Monluc's style of oratory:

"Je les envoiay prier tous me faire ce plaisir de se trouver de bon matin en la campagne, où j'avois à leur dire quelque chose, ce qu'ils firent. J'y fus de bon matin aux flambeaux, tant j'avois haste de descharger mon coeur. S'estans tous mis en rond, je me mis au milieu d'eux et leur parlay, le chapeau au poing, en telle sorte. . ."66

With the nobility circled about him, Monluc must have certainly had an attentive audience.

In his opening remarks he beckons the men who had previously served under him to remember his true character. He then encourages the others to reflect on what they have heard respecting his temperament. This done, he tells what they should have heard about him: "Mais je croy que nul de tous tant que vous estes, n'a jamais sçeu ne ouy dire que j'ay esté d'un naturel mesdisant et injurieux."⁶⁷ The words "mesdisant and injurieux" suggest that maybe the discontent expressed by the nobility was due to something Monluc had said. In response to this he denies all responsibility for having intentionally maligned anyone; this type of vice, he says, is not typical of him, although he admits to having other shortcomings. He almost makes them feel ashamed for even thinking such a thing of him: "Comment donc m'avez-vous fait ce tort de croire que j'aye esté si mal advisé de

parler de vous avec tel mespris, comme on m'a dit qu'il vous a esté raporté?"⁶⁸ It is apparent from this passage that the supposed offense had not been witnessed by everyone there and that in fact Monluc himself had become the victim of a defamatory rumor. At least this is what he would like for his audience to believe. After he had partially convinced the audience of his innocence, Monluc turns to flattery, a device frequently employed in his other remonstrances and discourses: "J'ay tousjours aymé et honoré la noblesse; car, après Dieu, c'est elle qui m'a fait acquérir l'honneur et la reputation que j'ay acquise."⁶⁹ In this case he compliments those present by attributing his achievements to the nobility as a whole and by astutely assuring them of his respect and appreciation for their class. Through compliments he is able to cause them to forget about their complaints against him by diverting their attention to their own greatness.

A decision had been made by the nobility to desert Monluc's cause and return home. The old Gascon reveals his knowledge of this plan and also of their spiteful attitude with respect to his nomination of Duras. Showing his adeptness at negotiation, he agrees to revoke this nomination in favor of a more acceptable one to be selected by the king at a later date. This, however, will be on condition that they remain in his service until the Gensac operation has been completed. He challenges their amour-propre by stating that, if they did not want to stay for his sake,

they still have an obligation to the king and he suggests that by leaving they would only bring dishonor on themselves. At the end of the discourse he admits that his failing age and countless wounds have diminished his effectiveness: "Quant à moy, je n'en vois retirer aussi chez moy, car mon aage, mes maladies et mes playes ne me peuvent plus permettre de porter les armes, ny prendre la peyne, qui est requise à la guerre."⁷⁰ Monluc would have been almost totally incapacitated if the nobility had abandoned him; luckily for him the audience was favorably moved by this speech, thus deciding to stay and render him their support. After the offensive had been completed, Monluc made his retirement final by returning home to his native Gascony where he remained until his death in 1577.

With this discourse Monluc has left a concrete example of his ability to influence the most distinguished segment of French society, the nobility. His handling of the Monferran incident is commendable in that he was able to appease a querulous audience first by denying that he had intentionally offended them and secondly by circumventing further complications by placing the blame on an ill-conceived rumor. He makes no frontal apology but instead dislodges himself from this predicament through flattery, thus practicing some of the advice which he had extended to Henri d'Anjou.

The remonstrances addressed to the Duke of Anjou are similarly replete with instances of effective speech. Monluc

deliberately employs techniques and arguments which he expects will convince Henri d'Anjou of his innocence with regard to the charges of treason, extortion and incompetence. In fact, he pleads his case so well that he is granted a permanent reprieve and the respect of the crown; indeed, it was the success of this first remonstrance to Henri d'Anjou which inspired him to finish the Commentaires.

Monluc's general exhortation to Henri d'Anjou offers counsel on how to improve his effectiveness as a leader. The emphasis placed on the indispensability of military officers, as opposed to the indolent nature of courtiers, appears as a reflection of Monluc's own interest in the counsel he offers Henry. Monluc felt somewhat spiteful toward certain noblemen such as Damville and Montmorency who had used their influence to hinder his activities. By counseling Henri d'Anjou to give more consideration to military officers, Monluc hopes to eliminate or at least diminish the nobility's manipulation of individuals such as himself who, although not born into the noblesse d'epée, had earned his rank through meritorious conduct. Monluc's own aspirations toward grandeur can be seen as he visualizes Henri d'Anjou as a future Alexander the Great while his counsel on the writing of epistles and the utility of remonstrance and oratory suggest a Monluc who is offering personal advice to the reader in hopes that his own influence will live on.

Notes

- ¹ A.G. Dickens, The Age of Humanism and Reformation (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1972), p. 221.
- ² Commentaires, p. 670.
- ³ Commentaires, p. 683.
- ⁴ Commentaires, p. 836.
- ⁵ Commentaires, p. 7.
- ⁶ Commentaires, p. 7.
- ⁷ Commentaires, p. 8.
- ⁸ Moralistic in a strict military sense as it has to do with counseling on acceptable or unacceptable actions performed by an officer or soldier.
- ⁹ Commentaires, p. 8.
- ¹⁰ Commentaires, p. 9.
- ¹¹ Commentaires, p. 9.
- ¹² Commentaires, p. 831. See also Commentaires, p. 198, n. 5; p. 203, n. 1.
- ¹³ Commentaires, p. 9.
- ¹⁴ Commentaires, p. 9.
- ¹⁵ Not only was the confiscation of properties during war a depressing reality to commoners but the whole question of their right to properties was debated during the sixteenth century. See Marc Bloch, French Rural History (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 185-189.
- ¹⁶ Commentaires, p. 9.
- ¹⁷ Commentaires, p. 10.

18 "At the time of the Tumult of Amboise the Cardinal de Lorraine himself appeared overwhelmed by the Protestant problem. He declared that every day he encountered such sympathies among the principal ministers, their servants and their relations, so that one no longer knew where to turn or whom to trust." J.H.N. Salmon, ed., The French Wars of Religion, (Boston: D.C. Heath and Co., 1967), p. 25.

19 Commentaires, p. 10.

20 Commentaires, p. 10.

21 Commentaires, p. 10.

22 Commentaires, p. 11.

23 Commentaires, p. 11.

24 Commentaires, p. 11.

25 Commentaires, p. 11.

26 Dickens, p. 221.

27 Commentaires, p. 13.

28 Lynn Thorndike. Medieval Europe (London: George G. Harrap, 1920), pp. 296-299.

29 See this dissertation, p. 73.

30 Bloch, Feudal Society, pp. 380-381.

31 Commentaires, p. 12.

32 Commentaires, p. 12.

33 Commentaires, p. 12.

34 Commentaires, p. 13.

35 Commentaires, p. 13.

36 Commentaires, p. 13.

37 Commentaires, p. 16.

38 Commentaires, p. 16.

39 Commentaires, p. 16.

40 Commentaires, p. 16.

- 41 Commentaires, p. 19.
- 42 See Commentaires, pp. 655, 659, 671.
- 43 Commentaires, p. 816.
- 44 Commentaires, p. 816.
- 45 Commentaires, p. 816.
- 46 Commentaires, p. 817.
- 47 Commentaires, p. 816.
- 48 Commentaires, p. 818.
- 49 Commentaires, p. 817.
- 50 Commentaires, p. 818.
- 51 Michel de Montaigne, Essais (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1962), Tome I, p. 2.
- 52 Commentaires, p. 818.
- 53 Commentaires, p. 818.
- 54 Commentaires, p. 819.
- 55 Commentaires, p. 819.
- 56 Commentaires, p. 819.
- 57 Commentaires, p. 819.
- 58 Commentaires, p. 819.
- 59 Commentaires, p. 820.
- 60 "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lords': but the earth hath he given to the children of men."
- 61 Commentaires, p. 821.
- 62 Commentaires, p. 821.
- 63 Commentaires, p. 820.
- 64 Commentaires, p. 821.
- 65 Commentaires, p. 841.

- 66 Commentaires, p. 841.
- 67 Commentaires, p. 841.
- 68 Commentaires, p. 841.
- 69 Commentaires, p. 841.
- 70 Commentaires, p. 842.

Chapter VI

ADDRESSES TO KINGS

To a large degree the Commentaires expose Monluc's personal views on matters of particular interest to himself, such as justification of past actions and the sharing of military knowledge with the reader; in the latter case he plays the role of a sagacious counselor whose exhortations never fail to benefit the recipient whether it be a military officer, governor, or nobleman. In this chapter, we see similar motives but in a slightly different perspective as Monluc attempts to influence an even more distinguished reader, meaning, of course the king. In the first part of the chapter we will be studying Monluc's oratorical abilities from a novel angle: his use of minor discourse as polemic. Elsewhere in the chapter Monluc's persuasiveness via general remonstrance will be examined in light of its relevance to kings.

In March 1554, the military situation in Piedmont had become critical because of clandestine designs by the Holy Roman Emperor and the king of England to invade France simultaneously from two directions. When this scheme was uncovered, it posed a severe problem for Francis I whose military commanders were unprepared to meet such a test.

One point of attack was expected to come in Piedmont, which at the time was governed by Francois de Bourbon-Vendôme, comte d'Enghien.¹ Being concerned about the defense of his area, he wanted to know whether he should initiate an offensive of his own or avoid the enemy. This same month, a council was held in Francis I's chamber in order to consider the Piedmont question. The general consensus among the nobility and the king was to have Enghien avoid a confrontation because, ". . . si monsieur d'Anguyen perdoit la bataille, le royaume seroit en peril d'estre perdu, pour ce que toute l'esperance du Roy, quant aux gens de pied, estoit aux compagnies qu'il y avoit en Piedmont. . ."² This type of thinking appears logical on the surface, especially when one considers the very real possibility of losing the entire country in one battle. Few were willing to take such a risk or even discuss alternative solutions. Enghien sent Monluc to the court in order to relate his needs to the king and to have Monluc return to Piedmont with the king's directive. Enghien, however, did not expect his envoy to become embroiled in a debate over which plan would best succeed against the enemy in Piedmont. Nevertheless, Monluc became personally involved in the council and even inspired the polemic with vehement and convincing arguments which caused Francis I to reevaluate and eventually change his own position on the Piedmont matter. The account of this debate as found in the Commentaires can neither be verified nor disproven since no other rendition exists.³

The reader is therefore left to his own conclusion as to the accuracy of Monluc's perspective.

The discussion of the Piedmont question was all but terminated when the king gave Monluc the following dictum: "Monluc, je veux que vous en retourniez en Piedmont porter ma deliberation et de mon conseil à monsieur d'Anguyen, et veux que vous entendiez icy la difficulté que nous faisons pour ne luy pouvoir bailler congé de donner bataille, comme il demande.'"⁴ The "difficulté" of which Francis I speaks is a possible reference to the king's hesitancy to restrict his military forces in Piedmont, but it also serves as a token consolation to Enghien who, according to Monluc, was inclined to do battle with the emperor's forces. Monluc, hearing a confirmation of the king's command from others present but, evidently sensing some hesitancy in the king's bidding, decides to interject his own opinion: "Je trepignois de parler; et, voulant interrompre lorsque monsieur Galiot opinoit, monsieur de Saint Pol me fit signe de la main et me dict: 'Tout beau! tout beau !' Ce qui me fait taire; et vis que le Roy se print à rire."⁵ Monluc was rudely awakened to the established custom of open discussion in the king's presence. Since Monluc had obtrusively interrupted monsieur Galiot,⁶ the "grand écuyer de France et maître de l'artillerie", one can assume that by quieting Monluc, François de Bourbon, comte de Saint Pol is showing his dissatisfaction with this lack of courtesy. In addition, Saint Pol, as will be seen, disapproves of Monluc's

anticipation in the discussion on grounds that his opinions are ill-tempered and therefore unsound. In his narrative description of this incident, Monluc partially in response to Saint Pol's rebuke accuses the nobles of sheepish tendencies: "On ne parle pas à demy et tousjours à l'humeur du maistre. Je ne serois pas bon là, car je dis tousjours ce qu'il m'en semble."⁷ Monluc is accusing the king's advisors of catering to "l'humeur du maistre" rather than offering their candid opinions. On the basis of this affected advice emanating from Francis I's counselors, Monluc justifies his own view as being the only unadulterated and thus the only valid one. Therefore, although he had to await a further opportunity to speak, he refuses to withhold his opinions from the king.

The king, seeing Monluc's interest in the discussion and possibly hoping to convince him of the wisdom in having Enghien avoid the enemy, asks Monluc if he has heard and understood the logic behind their decision. The king's interrogation provides Monluc with a chance to request permission to state his position: "Je luy respondis que je l'avois bien entendu, mais que, s'il plaisoit à Sa Majesté me permettre de luy en dire mon advis, je le ferois fort volontiers, non que pour ce Sa Majesté en fist autre chose, sinon ce qu'elle et son conseil en avoient déterminé."⁸

From this passage Monluc's approach to the king appears intentionally unassertive as he assures Francis I that his wish is not to alter the status quo but to simply offer his

opinion as such. This subdued tone, while helping to win the monarch's assent to speak, does not eclipse the confident spirit in which Monluc's views are presented. There is no hesitancy in his desire to expound on an alternative solution opposing the one already decided upon because, having been in the service of Enghien in Piedmont, he believes that he has more insight into the situation.

A definite advantage in Monluc's effort to influence the king is Francis I's own background as a soldier and military leader. By appealing to his bellicose nature, Monluc can more easily persuade him to accept his judgments. Thus, the first part of Monluc's rhetoric consists in praise of the king's courage and soldierly conduct. He flatters Francis by calling him "un roy soldat" who, along with his subjects, has risked his life in battle. At this point Monluc has the king's complete attention and even his interest; he therefore decides to reveal the substance of his argument.

Monluc believes a pitched battle to be the answer to the threat from Charles Quint in Piedmont. He bases this contention on two factors: 1) the king's army in that area has recently won several major victories⁹ against the enemy; their morale therefore is very high; 2) the numerical strength of the French forces in Piedmont, although inferior to the enemy, is sufficient to gain the victory. In order to allay the king's fears of not having a large enough army in Piedmont to halt the Emperor's invasion, Monluc details

the existing strength of the royal army. He mentions first "six mille Gascons" who carry the following credentials:

"Croyez, Sire, qu'au monde il n'y a point de soldats plus resolu que ceux-là: ils ne desirent que mener les mains."¹⁰

No one could ever persuade Monluc, who was a native Gascon himself, that the Gascons were not the best fighting men in Europe. Next come "treze enseignes de Suisses" whom he credits with being excellent soldiers and who are noted for their willingness to demonstrate their courage. In order to prove that his facts are correct, Monluc volunteers the names of every soldier in both the Gascon and Swiss contingents. Such an enumeration would assure Francis that the number of troops had not been inflated. Between these two groups alone Monluc claims 9,000 experienced combatants who "combattront jusques au dernier soupir de leurs vies."

In case the king is not satisfied with the competency of these soldiers, Monluc reminds him that the king has witnessed the courage of many of them during the battle of Landrecy. Added to the 9,000 Gascons and Swiss are several contingents of Italian, Provencal, and Greek troops for whom he could not vouch personally but who could be expected to assist in any conflict that might ensue. There were also four hundred men-at-arms, three hundred archers, and five to six hundred calvarymen already stationed in Piedmont.

Despite the more than 10,000 troops accounted for by Monluc, the king is still concerned over the fact that many of his regular companies are incomplete. This anxiety is

is somewhat remedied when it is suggested that the empty ranks might be filled by noblemen from other parts of France who would come for the sole purpose of fighting in this battle. In rebuttal to the king's charge that the royal army is deficient in manpower, Monluc presents the following argument:

"Puis doncques, Sire, dis-je lors continuant mon propos, que je suis si heureux de parler devant un roy soldat, qui voulez-vous qui tue neuf ou dix mil hommes et mil à douze cens chevaux, tous resolu de mourir ou de vaincre? Telles gens que cela ne se deffont pas ainsi. Ce ne sont pas des apprentis. Nous avons souvent sans avantage attaqué l'ennemy, et l'avons le plus souvent battu."¹¹

So, according to Monluc, it is not numerical superiority that would win the victory but the attitude of the individual soldiers. In further support of this theory he suggests that on the day of battle the larger army would not feel a pressing need to put its full effort into the conflict because it would be overconfident of its strength. Conversely, the smaller army, realizing that it would have to double its efforts in order to win, would endeavor to achieve victory at all costs.

Monluc's rhetoric now begins to effectively reach the intended audience: "Monsieur le Dauphin s'en rioit derrière la chaire du Roy, continuant tousjours à me faire signe de la teste; car, à ma mine, il sembloit que je feusse desja au combat."¹² From the above passage, it would appear that some of the king's guests were more interested in being bystanders than participants in the discussion. This is certainly

the case for the dauphin whose antics behind the king's throne encourage Monluc and entertain the king's other advisors. Monluc himself, as expressed in the words "à ma mine, il sembloit que je feusse desja au combat", is also doing some playacting in order to produce the emotionalism necessary for the total acceptance of his argument. The dramatized effect employed by Monluc in this first debate is reminiscent of his use of the same technique in his discourses as when he presented himself before the Concistoro in a lavish costume.¹³

With the tide of opinion evidently turning in his favor, Monluc intensifies his argument by again referring to the invincibility of the troops in Piedmont: "'Non, non, Sire, ces gens ne sont pas pour estre deffaits.'" ¹⁴ In addition, he emphasizes the negative effects that would occur if the king's decision proved unsuccessful. He tells Francis of the demoralizing influence it would have on his soldiers if they were told that they should avoid the enemy instead of fight: "Ce ne sont pas soldats pour reposer dans une garnison; ils demandent l'ennemy et veulent monstrier leur valeur. Ils vous demandent permission de combattre. Si vous les refusez, vous leur osterez le courage, et serez cause que celui de vostre ennemy s'enflera. Peu à peu vostre armée se deffera."¹⁵ For Francis, who was himself a military tactician, the solidity of Monluc's case must have been convincing. Even the lowest ranking officer at this council knew that, when a soldier is denied the right of performing his

duties in an honorable fashion, he becomes discouraged and therefore ineffective. On a larger scale, an entire army could eventually become incapable of winning even a minor victory because of its demoralized condition.

In this same declamation to the king, Monluc criticizes the other participants at the council for approaching the Piedmont problem in a pessimistic fashion: "A ce que j'ay entendu, Sire, tout ce que esmeut messieurs qui ont opiné devant Vostre Majesté, est la crainte d'une perte. Ils ne disent autre chose, si ce n'est: si nous perdons, si nous perdons! Je n'ay ouy personne d'eux qui aye jamais dict: Si nous gagnons, si nous gagnons, quel grand bien vous adviendra!"¹⁶ The advantage gained by Monluc in the above statement is twofold: first, by making the advice given by the king's counselors appear cowardly, he renders his own recommendations more valid and acceptable to the king; secondly, through his optimism, he presents a new option to Francis as manifested in the proposition "Si nous gagnons, si nous gagnons." The preceding words imply the likelihood of victory and for Francis I the possibility of victory must have been much more appealing than the certainty of withdrawal from Piedmont. In this way, Monluc's optimistic rhetoric begins to effect the king who appears inclined to reevaluate the Piedmont question in light of the new comments expressed by Monluc. That the king is indeed on the verge of reconsideration can be demonstrated by the reaction of Saint Pol who intervenes in an effort to dissuade him:

"Monsieur, voudriez vous bien changer d'opinion pour le dire de ce fol, qui ne se soucie que de combattre et n'a nulle consideration du malheur que ce vous seroit, si perdions la bataille? C'est chose trop importante pour la remettre à la cervelle d'un jeune Gascon!"¹⁷ As stated by Saint Pol, Monluc is young and he is a Gascon, but he is not as crazy as Saint Pol would have Francis and the rest of the participants believe. In fact, his oratorical ability, this time in the presence of Francis I and in a polemical situation, has already received the king's recognition and has helped place Monluc's advice in a position to take precedence over the initial decision of having Enghien refrain from taking any risks.

Despite his commanding position, Monluc refuses to allow Saint Pol any leverage that might undermine his objectives. Addressing his adversary, he says, "Monsieur, asseurez vous que je ne suis point un bravache, ny si escervelé que vous me pensez?"¹⁸ Thus Monluc, in face of Saint Pol's insult, defends his integrity; thereafter he reminds his accuser of the many victories that the royal troops had recently won in Piedmont, thus weakening the strength of his assertion that Monluc's judgments are ill-founded.

Monluc makes a very persuasive statement concerning the importance of momentum or emotional superiority as a necessary element in achieving military victory. He emphasizes that, in the above regard, the advantage is on the French

side because of their habit of winning: "Regardez donc nous, qui sommes en coeur, et eux en peur; nous qui sommes vaincoeurs, et eux vaincus; nous qui les desestimons, cependant qu'ils nous craignent, quelle difference il y a l'eux à nous!"¹⁹ With the momentum in their favor, Monluc hints that it would be self-defeating to restrict the French forces from continuing in their victorious ways. If they had been losing, a different strategy would have been required; however, in this case, such a change could do nothing but impede the progress already made in Piedmont and stifle the potential for future military success. Monluc stresses this view in support of what he has already said and then reassures Francis that the battle, if ferociously fought, would be won by the French and would also be a turning point in the war: "Et si Dieu nous fait la grace de la gagner, comme je me tiens assuré que nous ferons, vous arresterez L'Empereur et le Roy d'Angleterre sur le cul, qui ne sçauront quel party prendre."²⁰

At this point Monluc's remarks during the debate become increasingly controversial as a number of guests, evidently finding their own opinions being engulfed by Monluc's comments, try to prevent the king from being influenced. Monluc's primary opponent, Saint Pol, again enters into the discussion but his argument is untenable as he attempts to expose Monluc as a "fol enragé" whose views are of little substance. However, these efforts to weaken Monluc's position only serve to enhance it as the king's response to

Saint Pol's reproach of Monluc reveals: "'Foy de gentil-homme, mon cousin, il m'a dit de si grandes raisons et me represente si bien le bon coeur de mes gens que je ne sçay que faire.'"²¹ It is not only "le bon coeur" (positive attitude) which helps convince Francis to change his opinion but also the "grandes raisons" put forth by Monluc thus substantiating the dialectical aspect of his oratory, a compliment to his showmanship and optimism.

The final thrust of Monluc's argument, the prospect of being able to thwart the emperor's designs in Piedmont, thereby preserving the entire kingdom, is an attractive proposal to Francis I who, following the advice of a counselor, seeks divine assistance in a moment of prayer and then yields to Monluc's point of view: "Le Roy, après avoir demeuré quelque peu, se tourna vers moy, disant comme en s'escriant: 'Qu'ils combattent! qu'ils combattent!'"²² The decision is thus made final and Saint Pol sums up the precarious situation in which Monluc will now find himself: "Fol enragé, tu seras cause du plus grand bien qu'il pourroit venir au Roy, ou du plus grand mal.'"²³ The Gascon is indeed taking a big risk by insisting on a point of view which, if unsuccessful, may end his career or even his life.

Monluc's optimism is an integral part of his effectiveness as an orator and, in this case, as a polemicist. The value of a positive approach to oratory is particularly evident in this debate since it gains him the respect and support of the king. Monluc refuses to yield to any

contradictory or negative remarks voiced by those present, nor does he allow himself to radiate anything but a positive outlook on events that might transpire in Piedmont; he leaves no room for defeat at the hands of the emperor or the King of England. This positive attitude emanates from Monluc's own emotional commitment to the rhetoric he vocalizes, and from thence it works similar effects on his listeners who are thereby inclined to unite their sentiments with his.

Before adjourning the council, the king gives Monluc a commission to deliver to Enghien with respect to the performance of military responsibilities in Piedmont. More particularly, he asks Monluc to stress the gravity of the situation and to explain to his soldiers that his decision to let them fight came from his great confidence in them. Monluc's response to the command is as follows: "Sire, je feray vostre commandement, et ce sera un coup d'esperon pour les resjouyr et donner encore plus de volonté de combattre; et supplie très humblement Vostre Majesté ne vous mettre en aucun doubte de l'issuë de nostre combat, car cela ne vous serviroit que de travail à vostre esprit."²⁵ When Monluc says "ne vous mettre en aucun doubte" he is in essence supporting the sovereign's decision to combat the enemy in Piedmont.

Upon his return to Piedmont, Monluc delivers the king's message to Enghien and the other military officers. Afterwards he goes about trying to bolster the courage of

individual soldiers: "Je ne me contenté pas d'en parler aux chefs, mais en parlé aux particuliers, les asseurant que nous serions tous recompensez du Roy, et faisois la chose plus grande qu'elle n'estoit."²⁶ This concentrated effort to prepare the men for the impending battle reflects in some ways Monluc's own enthusiasm but, on the other hand, one cannot help believing that he also felt a strong personal need to assure the success of this venture for which he was highly responsible. If their endeavors in Piedmont did not produce a victory, he would subsequently be the object of the king's wrath.

Luckily, or maybe providentially, when the battle of Cerisoles took place on April 13, 1544, the French were emotionally prepared and, after some minor setbacks because of the enemy's superior strength, they gained the victory. This victory undoubtedly brought a great thrill to Monluc since it marked the success of the plans he had presented in the king's council a month earlier. With the conflict ended, someone had to be given the charge of carrying the good news to Francis I. During the combat Monluc had so distinguished himself on several occasions that Enghien had knighted him "chevalier" on the battle field. He felt that, in addition to this honor, he should be chosen as Enghien's delegate to the court: "Je luy dis que c'estoit qu'il m'envoyast porter les nouvelles du gain de la bataille au Roy, et qu'il n'y avoit homme que le deust faire si tost que moy, veu ce que j'avois dit à Sa Majesté et à son conseil

pour obtenir le congé de combattre, et que les derniers mots que j'avois dit au Roy estoient qu'il s'attendit seulement d'avoir nouvelles de la victoire."²⁷ Initially Enghien agreed to Monluc's wish, but he did not fulfill that promise. Jacques d'Escars, a nobleman of some repute, used his influence to be named messenger to the king instead of Monluc.

This deceitful move dashed Monluc's hopes of returning to Paris to personally relate the victory to the court. The old Gascon must have been extremely annoyed and even resentful because of the injustice that had been done to him. What he wrote in his Commentaires about his reaction to this incident is probably an understatement of how he actually felt: "A peine me peut-on appaiser; j'avois beau me fâcher et remontrer le tort qu'on me faisoit."²⁸

The Piedmont debate transpired in March, 1544, with the victory at Cerisoles following in April; the narrative treatment of this polemic was not written until 1571. The description of this debate in the Commentaires is the first indication of Monluc's capacity for direct discourse. Previous to the polemic before Francis I, direct discourse is found in the narrative as general conversation, as an exchange of words meant solely to enliven the historical account, thus having no immediate bearing on Monluc's talent for oratory. His participation and ultimate success at Francis I's council on Piedmont is therefore paramount in the development of his oratory. Later he effectively applies

his declamatory talents as governor of Siena, as the king's envoy to Rome, and as governor of Guyenne.

While the discourses in the Commentaires are relatively few in number and represent Monluc's oral communications to a given audience in a given historical context, the remonstrances are found throughout the Commentaires as interruptions in the general narrative; interruptions that offer the narrator, Monluc, an occasion to interject brief or lengthy comments on diverse subjects and for diverse reasons. At one point, after his account of the pacification of Bordeaux in March, 1563, he interrupts the narrative in order to present his personal views to the reader on what the king should have done to prevent political and religious complications at Bordeaux. Monluc felt that the critical situation at Bordeaux was largely due to a wrong choice of governors: "O que le Roy doit bien regarder à qui il baille les gouvernemens, et que sur tout il eslise des personnes qui ayent esté gouverneurs autrefois de quelques places!"²⁹ His reasoning is based on the rule of experience; if a man has not been a governor before, his lack of knowledge could have a detrimental effect on a city's security because he would not know what to do when confronted with serious challenges. He then tells the reader how the experience he had gained as governor of Montcallier, Albe and Siena contributed greatly to his ability to handle administrative and political disputes in later years. Based on his own experience, he assumes that all governors should have had an apprenticeship

in their backgrounds before attempting to govern a city like Bordeaux. The above remonstrance is not specifically addressed to kings and yet the counsel itself, since it pertains to the king's selection of governors, is probably expected to reach the king either through the monarch's own reading of the Commentaires or by way of someone else who had read them.

On another occasion, following his semi-disgrace in November, 1567,³⁰ Monluc interrupts the narrative to discuss the injustices found at the court. A noteworthy portion of Monluc's judgments on life at the court is directed to the king who, he believes, can remedy the inequities that exist. Monluc approaches the problem by offering examples which verify his denunciation of scandalous practices at the court. One such example concerns Jean de Tais who was accused of maligning a lady of the court. In defense of de Tais Monluc says, "Ce mal-heur est en France qu'elles les femmes à la court se meslent de trop de choses, et ont trop de credit."³¹ According to this statement, Monluc felt that women had too much influence at court. De Tais, who at the time held the position of "grand maistre de l'artillerie," was relieved of his duties and later killed in the battle of Hedin without having reestablished his credibility. For a man like Monluc, who placed soldierly virtues above all else, it was difficult to accept de Tais' disgrace lightly. He claims that the king later regretted his decision to have de Tais banished from the court. In giving his judgments on the

matter, Monluc states that the king should put conniving women in their rightful place: "Le Roy devroit clorre la bouche aux dames qui se meslent de parler en sa cour; de là viennent tous les rapports, toutes les calomnies."³²

This obvious discontent with female influences at court stems largely from Monluc's displeasure at seeing military officers deprived of their rightful positions. He makes reference, for example, to the plight of Anne de Montmorency who, because of the Duchess d'Etampes and Marguerite de Navarre, was disgraced and banned from court for six years between 1541 and 1547. Another notable victim, according to Monluc, was Francois de Lorraine, duc de Guise, whose popularity vacillated between complete social acceptance and disdainful rebuke. In a more definitive case, Monluc tells of how Francois de Vivonne, Sieur de La Châtaigneraye, was drawn into a duel with Guy Chabot, baron de Jarnac, and killed because of a woman who talked too much: "Une babillarde causa la mort de monsieur de la Chastengneraye. S'il m'eust voulu croire, et cinq ou six de ses amis, il eust desmêlé sa fuzée contre monsieur de Jarnac d'autre sorte; car il combattist contre sa conscience et perdist l'honneur et la vie."³³ Monluc's perspective on the La Châtaigneraye incident along with the disgrace of the other nobles is reflective of society in the 16th century with its duels, favoritisms and intrigues at the court, paralleling something one might read out of Mme de Lafayette's La Princesse de Clèves, and yet the narrator's purpose for

writing about events associated with the court is debatable. His observations, especially the cynical attitude toward intriguing women, are subjective in nature, but the personal advantage to be gained by these overt criticisms is somewhat obscure. One possible reward would come if these writings were to find their way eventually into the hand of the king who in turn might use them as guides to administering policy at court. The most probable personal advantage to be won by Monluc from these criticisms of scandalous influences at the court would be his own reinstatement as governor of Guyenne. Thus, although his personal judgements in this case, similar to the comments after the Bordeaux incident, take the form of general observations, and although they are not explicitly directed to the king, they reveal an indirect attempt to influence him through exhortation and therefore fall into the category of remonstrance.

Besides the discourses, personal judgements and remonstrances found in the Commentaires, Monluc has also included several letters, one of which is to Charles IX, dated November 20, 1570, and which became a prototype for the Commentaires. The letter has been inserted into the narrative by Monluc, and interestingly enough, its placement in the text does not coincide chronologically with the general account. He leaves off with his accident at Rabastens in July, 1570 (he includes one statement about his replacement, the Marquis de Villars, who took over in September, 1570) and picks up the account again in August, 1570, when his

wife had him taken to Cassaigne for better medical treatment. Since the essential purpose of the Préambul to Henri d'Anjou (discussed in the preceding chapter) and this letter to Charles IX are strikingly similar, both being designed to gain a favorable understanding from the reader in Monluc's attempt to redeem himself after the revocation of his governorship in Guyenne, the letter to Charles IX will be studied in its relationship to the Préambul.

A definite disparity in tone exists between the Préambul and the letter to Charles IX; in his address to Henri d'Anjou, Monluc opens his remarks in a relatively humble manner, praising his reader and acknowledging his authority:

". . . vous suppliant très humblement, Monseigneur, le vouloir accepter venant d'ung vostre très humble et très obéissant serviteur que je vous suis."³⁴ By contrast there is a total lack of humility in Monluc's preliminary remarks to Charles IX as he demonstrates his dissatisfaction with the king's decision to have him removed from office: "Sire j'ay tant tardé à vous faire mes doleances pour ma grande indisposition, et aussi qu'on m'a celé que vous m'avez osté le gouvernement de Guienne."³⁵ Monluc's discontent is reflected in the words "doleances" and "grande indisposition" and although this approach to the king is not blatantly disrespectful, it certainly differs from the humble tone found in the above passage from the Préambul. The difference in the nature of the preceding two passages can be attributed to two factors: the first concerns the individuals to

whom Monluc is addressing his remarks; he felt a great deal of respect and attachment for Henri d'Anjou who had shown Monluc reciprocal appreciation and even some favoritism; on the other hand, while until now, Monluc had had no personal reasons to feel spiteful toward Charles IX and while he theoretically owed more appreciation to the king because of his office than to Henri d'Anjou, Monluc had in general lost respect for this monarch for allowing himself to be called a "petit reyot de merde" by the Huguenots,³⁶ for condoling Damville's retreat in face of Montgomery,³⁷ and for giving too many concessions to the Protestants.³⁸ The second factor, however, appears to have contributed the most toward the difference in tone: the period of time at which they were written. The letter to Charles IX was composed shortly after Monluc's dismissal from office when he was still suffering from the wound at Rabastens, dismayed at the loss of his governorship. In contrast, the Préambul was written after the first redaction of the Commentaires in 1571 and thus a full nine months following the revocation of his governorship in Guyenne during which time he was able to gain enough composure to present his arguments to Henri d'Anjou in a subdued and orderly fashion.

Besides the difference in tone, the method of persuasion also varies. In the letter to Charles IX, Monluc tries to justify himself before the king by emphasizing the invaluable service that he rendered the crown during the Wars of Religion with special attention given to his personal feats

of valor: "Car, ayant commencé à Rabastens, comme il estoit
 necessaire, pour les raisons que je vous ay ci-devant
 escrites, bien que ce fût des plus fortes places de la
 Guienne, je l'emportay en huict jours, où je servis de
 pionnier, de cannonnier, de soldat et de capitaine."³⁹ The
 letter to Charles IX contains many passages similar to the
 one above in which Monluc seeks to enhance his image in the
 eyes of the king; he details his major military achievements
 from the beginning of the first religious troubles in
 Guyenne to the day he was incapacitated by a facial wound
 at Rabastens. In the Préambul, however, Monluc tries to per-
 suade his reader, not through an itemized list of valorous
 achievements, but rather through a system of arguments and
 moralizings in which he attempts to prove his innocence with
 regard to treason and extortion. Noteable examples of his
 moralizing in the Préambul include a declamation against
 disloyalty and treason⁴⁰ and a denunciation of ingratitude
 among the king's subjects⁴¹ which were designed to make his
 own loyalty appear unblemished. Unlike the letter to Charles
 IX, Monluc refers infrequently to his feats of valor, rely-
 ing much more on his ability to convince the reader through
 logical and moralistic arguments which fit his particular
 needs.

The Préambul and letter to Charles IX, although dissim-
 ilar in some respects, share several common elements. In
 both cases Monluc complains to the reader of "ung bruict à
 la court" which unjustifiably caused his disfavor with

Charles IX and later the loss of his governorship. The "bruict" to which Monluc alludes was, if not originated by, at least proliferated by Damville's letter to the king dated February 22, 1570. Damville's accusations against Monluc for treason and extorting monies from the royal treasury naturally won support from the Protestant elements at the court as well as from others that might have had reason to negate Monluc's military activities in Guyenne. Monluc's obvious reason for bringing these "rumors" to the attention of Henri d'Anjou and Charles IX is first to impel them to recognize the existence of the rumors, which in turn would cause them to reflect on the possibility of unjust actions having been lodged against Monluc, and secondly to open the way for proving these rumors false, which he tries to do in both the Préambul and the letter to Charles IX.

Another point in common is the reference to the "recepveurs generaux" whom Monluc claims made a thorough investigation of the finances in Guyenne and who, according to him, had found nothing amiss: ". . . car, pendant que j'ay esté icy vostre lieutenant, il y a eu plusieurs commis de l'estraordinaire, il y a eu de vos recepveurs generaux et autres officiers de vos finances qui ont rendu leurs comptes; et si j'eusse esté trouvé dans leurs papiers, l'on n'eust pas failly à rayer les parties qui auroient esté mal couchées."⁴² The above passage, taken from the letter to Charles IX, resembles very closely a statement in the Préambul where Monluc refers to the investigations by "les

recepveurs et tresoriers" as proof of his innocence. The preceding quotation from the letter infers that an investigation or investigations had been ordered in Guyenne prior to 1570, the results of which had uncovered nothing incriminatory against Monluc. By trying to get his reader to rely on the inconclusive evidence of previous "recepveurs," Monluc is apparently trying to minimize the need for further investigations by Du Gast and Mondoulcet.

This comparison between the Préambul and the letter to Charles IX provides the basis for a better understanding of what the letter to the king was and what it was not. From this evaluation we can see that Monluc's letter of November 20, 1570 was inspired more by an indignant reaction to the situation of losing his governorship than to a well reasoned attempt at defending himself as was the case with the Préambul. However, from the fact that certain portions of the letter and the Préambul are similar in content and purpose, one can conclude that several of the arguments used so effectively in the Préambul had their origins in the letter to Charles IX, thus showing a certain evolution in the development of Monluc's defense.

Following the account of his removal to Cassaigne in August, 1570, Monluc gives some personal judgments on the Treaty of Saint-Germain which took place that same month. The general tone of his remarks is one of disgust at seeing all of his victories against the Protestants nullified by the signing of what he considered a worthless document:

"Nous les avions battus et rebattus, mais ce nonobstant, ils avoient si bon credit au conseil du Roy que les edicts estoient tousjours à leur avantage: nous gagnions par les armes mais ils gaignoyent par ces diables d'escriptures."⁴³

As seen here, he felt that treaties were more advantageous to the Huguenots than to the Catholics since more was conceded to them in these documents than they would have ever won by way of arms; Monluc is blaming Charles for allowing himself to be drawn into these subversive schemes. Immediately following the above passage Monluc tries to discredit Charles IX's performance with respect to the treaty by asserting that his predecessors Francis I and Henry II would have never been coaxed into giving concessions to the opposition.

Gradually Monluc's comments on the Treaty of Saint-Germain lead to a fully developed and lengthy remonstrance addressed to the king. The paragraphs which immediately precede the determinable beginning of the remonstrance are in italics. There are also many italicized passages in the main body of the remonstrance, including an extended one at the very end. As previously mentioned, these italicized portions indicate additions to the text sometime after the original dictation of 1571. In this case there is a marked difference in tone between the comments that are italicized and those that are not. For example, in his short italicized preface to the general remonstrance, Monluc appears almost indignant toward the king: "Je laisse le tort que

vous faictes de faire ces beaux edicts et donner tant d'avantage à voz ennemis; je laisse le desordre de vostre justice et de voz finances, et veux seulement, avec vostre permission, dire quelque chose qui concerne la charge des armes . . ."⁴⁴ He had already made Charles look incompetent when he compared his weaknesses to the strengths of former kings, but in this passage, he is even more impudent, for he openly criticizes the king's political leniency towards the Protestants and accuses him of having a disorderly government, especially with regard to judicial and financial administration. Under normal circumstances Monluc could have anticipated a severe reprimand or maybe even prosecution for such insolence. With this in mind, it can be assumed that these comments were placed in the narrative sometime after Charles' death in 1574. Ironically, toward the end of the preceding quotation, he asks Charles' permission before giving him additional counsel on how to make more effective use of his army. A possible reason for this token acknowledgment of the king's authority is Monluc's awareness that blatant disrespect toward a monarch could only have the effect of offending the reader; therefore, he halfheartedly subordinates his passionate dissatisfaction with Charles IX in order to make his comments more acceptable to the reading public.

A very different tone is noticeable in the unitalicized opening lines of the actual remonstrance: "Je sçay bien, Sire, que Vostre Majesté ne me fera pas cet honneur de

vouloir entendre la lecture de mon livre; vous avez d'autres occupations et le temps trop cher pour l'employer à lire la vie d'un soldat; mais peut-estre quelqu'un qui l'aura leu, vous entretenant, en pourra faire quelque recit à Vostre Majesté."⁴⁵ In this case Monluc carefully addresses him by his rightful titles, and being sure to demonstrate the humility and respect owing to one's sovereign, he politely petitions him for some slight interest in his Commentaires. This remonstrance to Charles IX, unitalicized except for additions and corrections, forms part of the original redaction of 1571. It was therefore composed during the investigations of Mondoulcet in which case Monluc recognized that he was in a weak position to be bargaining too vehemently with the king. This explains why the tone of the previous quotation appears almost sheepish when compared to the italicized preface. Thus, because of the evolution of circumstances, the two passages cited above, taken from the italicized preface to the remonstrance and the remonstrance itself, mostly unitalicized, differ considerably in tone. It should be mentioned, however, that although in many cases Monluc takes on a more assertive attitude in the italicized portions of his speeches and remonstrances, this does not hold true in every instance. In fact, because the process of correcting and inserting, which continued over a period of several years dating from 1571, there appears to be an even greater tonal diversity in these passages than in

the original narrative which was written in a surprisingly short period of time.

Examples of this tonal diversity can be seen in the italicized portions of this remonstrance to Charles IX one of which shows a more favorable or estimable attitude toward the king than the one found in the preface: "Vous estes naturellement martial et avez le coeur genereux; voylà pourquoy vous ne trouverez mauvais d'ouyr le discours d'un vieux gendarme, vostre sujet et serviteur."⁴⁶ Although the date when this passage was inserted into the original body of the remonstrance has not been determined, it appears from the reverential tone, the same tone that dominates the unitalicized portions of the remonstrance, that Monluc made this addition shortly after the first redaction of the Commentaires. Elsewhere in the remonstrance Monluc is less reserved: "A present le moindre picqueboeuf se faict appeller ainsi, s'il a eu quelque commandement. Vous direz, Sire, que nous, qui sommes vos lieutenans, faisons ces fautes; mais pardonnez-nous, s'il vous plaist; elle viennent piemièremment de vous, qui avez commancé les donner à gens de peu, et après les gentils-hommes n'en veullent plus."⁴⁷ This passage is referring to the degraded state to which Charles IX had allowed his military to fall. Monluc's principal criticism is that the king had started offering the more important military posts to incompetent sycophants, a practice which had weakened the army. A tone of impudence is evident in the above passage as Monluc resolutely places the

blame for the degradation of the army on the king. Again, it is uncertain when Monluc added this portion to the remonstrance; however there is an obvious difference in tone, from one of respect in the first example where Monluc compliments his sovereign as being "naturellement martial" to one of impertinence here in the second example. There are two possible explanations for this diversity of tone; first, Monluc's tempestuous nature cannot be ruled out as a factor, his obstinacy in the presence of Francis I and the rancorous letter to Charles IX verify this tendency in Monluc to be outspoken. However, his precipitous character was usually activated by an immediate situation (the Piedmont question, the revocation of his governorship, etc.) which is not the case in the italicized additions to his remonstrance since they were added later.

The second possibility, as discussed in chapter II, would be Monluc's desire to render his Commentaires more poignant and thus more attractive to the reading public with the change in tone being a literary device. Courteault suggests that Monluc purposefully tried to improve the style of the Commentaires by enhancing the original narrative:

"J'ai étudié ailleurs, et je me borne à le rappeler ici, comment Monluc a pendant les cinq dernières années de sa vie, enrichi sa première rédaction en multipliant les réflexions personnelles, les préceptes techniques, les maximes morales, en emplifiant les considérations qui servent de commentaires à son récit, en développant certains discours, en en remaniant d'autres . . ."⁴⁸

"Pour donner à l'oeuvre plus de vie, le style direct a été substitué au style indirect; les dialogues en

ont été plus nettement détachés. Pour lui donner plus de couleur, des mots gascons ont été parfois substitués aux mots français . . . "49

The "cinq dernières années" referred to by Courteault would situate Monluc's corrections between 1572-1577, a period tempered by a permanent reprieve in 1572 which absolved him of any culpability for treason or extortion in Guyenne and by his election as "maréchal de France" in 1574. These events eliminated a need to use further argumentation in the Commentaires and allowed Monluc to concentrate more on style and content. It seems likely that the diversity in tone found in the italicized portions of this remonstrance, and throughout the Commentaires for that matter, is primarily due to Monluc's efforts to add literary value to his work.

The general nature of the original remonstrance to Charles IX (unitalicized in the Commentaires) reflects the same confident disposition discovered in other remonstrances while, at the same time, lacking indignant overtones. The counsel offered in this remonstrance is similar to that directed toward military officers as general readers and elsewhere to Henri d'Anjou: suggestions on better ways of fighting a war. The primary difference lies with the reader who, in this case, is the king instead of the Duke of Anjou or an ordinary officer. Much of this military advice is based on Monluc's own experiences; this rich background is expected to impel the king to view the advice in the remonstrance more seriously. From the beginning, then, Monluc establishes himself as a prime observer of events which had

taken place in France while he was serving the crown from 1520-1570 and thus places himself in a position to give advice on what he terms "les causes et mal-heurs" that had come to plague the kingdom in recent years, an allusion to the religious wars. Throughout the remonstrance Monluc offers solutions to these "mal-heurs" hoping that the king will accept and implement them: "Vostre Majesté la pourra changer, ce que pourra apporter un grand bien à vostre royaume pour l'exercice des armes."⁵⁰ The remedy proposed by Monluc as evidenced by the words "l'exercice des armes," is not one of peaceful negotiations; as witnessed in his own campaigns, he felt that the best defense, at least with respect to the Huguenots, was a merciless offense which would put fear into the hearts of the enemy.

Besides his support of a more intensified military campaign against the Protestants, Monluc develops his views on a practice which he feels has undermined the effectiveness of the royal administration: the delicate problem of favoritism which had been gradually replacing merit as the criterion for promotion. He tells Charles that the practice of bestowing an office on someone out of kindness for his presence at court would only lead to the deterioration of the kingdom: "Mais la faute et ignorance des gouverneurs et capitaines, à qui facilement vous accordez les gouvernements pour le premier qui le vous demande, porte grand et grand prejudice à vostre royaume."⁵¹ The two prime concerns in the passage are first, the incompetence of the

opportunists who were being sent out to fill important offices and secondly, the inequitable way in which they had been chosen. For governors Monluc proposes seasoned officers who are knowledgeable concerning the defense of a city. He gives examples of competent military officers such as Antoine de Lève, who with his mature insight, was able to hold off Francis I's assault on Pavia in 1524 until reinforcements could come from Germany. The result, of course, was the defeat of the French and the capture of Francis I. Another example given by Monluc is that of Francois de Lorraine, duc de Guise who was instrumental in halting an invasion by the Holy Roman Emperor: "De fraische memoire ce vaillant duc de Guyse à Metz fit souffrir une honte à l'empereur Charles, qui fut contraint lever honteusement son seige, de sorte que ceste grande armée s'esvanouït par la seule vertu de ce chef qui s'y opposa."⁵² Monluc is alluding to the siege of Metz which took place from October 19, 1552 to January 1, 1553 and at which the Emperor Charles had amassed the largest army in the history of his reign. If the victory had gone in his favor, it would have seriously jeopardized French security to the point of possibly losing the entire country. These incidents exemplify the need for veteran officers in key positions throughout the kingdom. By establishing a need for competent leaders as opposed to incompetent sycophants Monluc gives his reader a reason to reflect on future selections and maybe even consider

reinstating those like himself who had lost their positions to favorites of the court.

Monluc also furnishes the king with advice on the art of war where he reiterates the essential qualities of a good leader; namely experience, courage, decisiveness, and a capacity for accomplishing menial tasks. Leadership qualities include knowing when to lodge the troops and where to place the cavalry during a battle; assessing the movements of the enemy and the geographical location of where a battle should be fought; placing the best officers in strategic locations; and even being able to know where to establish the guards and sentinels. Monluc assures the king that when an officer can perform all such duties effectively, then he is able to contribute to the orderliness and therefore to the strength of the entire army: "Quand ceux-là, avec celui qui commande en l'armée, savent tout cela et le font bien à propos, elle ne pourra estre surprinse: car ils auront si bien discouru ce qui sera necessaire qu'il n'y aura nul de tout l'armée qui ne sçache ce qu'il faut faire."⁵³ Thus a qualified officer contributes to a state of preparedness essential to the preservation of the kingdom. This advice on the qualities of competent officers is extended to Charles IX as a guideline for selecting officers for the royal army. Unlike the remonstrance to Henri d'Anjou in which Monluc plays the role of a personal advisor to an admired lord whom he expects to attain great fame, the advice in this remonstrance is not offered in demonstration of his loyalty to the king

but primarily because he would like to improve the deteriorated state of the army.

Monluc has shown great diversity in his addresses to kings in the Commentaires. First as a polemicist in the presence of Francis I where he demonstrates an oral persuasiveness surpassing that of the king's own advisors and then in the letter to Charles IX where, incensed by the revocation of his governorship in Guyenne, he recounts his former contributions to the French crown in an effort to convince the reader of the injustice against him. The comparison between the Préambul addressed to Henri d'Anjou and the letter to Charles IX reveals the evolution of Monluc's self-justification from one of impassioned complaint in the letter to a more structured system of argument in the Préambul.

Equally important is Monluc's remonstrance to Charles IX in which he presents counsel on the selection of competent officers, the dangers of favoritism and military strategy against the Huguenots all of which is designed to improve his own image in the eyes of the king. A comparison of the italicized and unitalicized portions of the remonstrance discloses a marked variance in tone which is attributable to Monluc's irascible nature and to his attempt to enhance the literary value of the narrative.

Notes

- ¹ Referred to by Monluc as monsieur Anguien, or Anguyen.
- ² Commentaires, p. 142.
- ³ Courteault confirms the absence of any official documents concerning Monluc's visit to the court or participation in a polemic as found in the Commentaires. See Blaise de Monluc, historien, pp. 153-154.
- ⁴ Commentaires, p. 142.
- ⁵ Commentaires, p. 142.
- ⁶ Jacques Ricard, Sieur de Genouilhac.
- ⁷ Commentaires, p. 142.
- ⁸ Commentaires, p. 143.
- ⁹ Defeat of Imperial troops near Cavellermaggiore November, 1543; defeat of the Spanish at Barges December, 1543.
- ¹⁰ Commentaires, p. 144.
- ¹¹ Commentaires, p. 145.
- ¹² Commentaires, p. 145.
- ¹³ See this dissertation p. 103.
- ¹⁴ Commentaires, p. 145.
- ¹⁵ Commentaires, p. 145.
- ¹⁶ Commentaires, p. 145.
- ¹⁷ Commentaires, p. 146.
- ¹⁸ Commentaires, p. 146.
- ¹⁹ Commentaires, p. 146.

- 20 Commentaires, p. 146.
- 21 Commentaires, p. 147.
- 22 Commentaires, p. 147.
- 23 Commentaires, p. 148.
- 24 Commentaires, p. 147.
- 25 Commentaires, p. 148.
- 26 Commentaires, p. 150.
- 27 Commentaires, p. 166.
- 28 Commentaires, p. 166.
- 29 Commentaires, p. 578.
- 30 For details on Charles IX's displeasure with Monluc's
Conduct see Commentaires, p. 610.
- 31 Commentaires, p. 617.
- 32 Commentaires, p. 617.
- 33 Commentaires, p. 617.
- 34 Commentaires, p. 7.
- 35 Commentaires, p. 789.
- 36 Commentaires, p. 484.
- 37 Commentaires, p. 732.
- 38 Commentaires, pp. 656-657.
- 39 Commentaires, p. 793.
- 40 See this dissertation p. 145.
- 41 See this dissertation p. 154.
- 42 Commentaires, p. 570.
- 43 Commentaires, p. 800.
- 44 Commentaires, p. 800
- 45 Commentaires, p. 800.

- 46 Commentaires, p. 801.
- 47 Commentaires, p. 810.
- 48 Commentaires, p. XXVIII.
- 49 Commentaires, p. XXIX.
- 50 Commentaires, p. 801.
- 51 Commentaires, p. 802.
- 52 Commentaires, p. 805.
- 53 Commentaires, p. 809.

Chapter VII

CONCLUSION

Blaise de Monluc was first a soldier and second a writer. It was not until late in his military career that he decided to dictate what he termed the "discours de ma vie" and what we know today as his Commentaires. He recognized his own proficiency in military affairs and conceived of the Commentaires as a means of propagating his soldierly knowledge to others, thus a didactic purpose. He thought also that by writing a history of his life in the king's service he could popularize his feats of valor, his military contributions to the crown and thereby enhance his reputation.

While a historical narrative alone might have earned a place for Monluc among the annals of the military and historically great, it was insufficient as a medium of expression; it had a limited effect on the reader, because it was primarily oriented toward the descriptive presentation of past events instead of moving the reader to reflection or action. Therefore, in addition to an account of his military deeds, Monluc decided to use a form which could serve as a tool of persuasion and one that would extend the scope of the Commentaires beyond the bounds normally attributed to military histories, thus falling within the realm of literary as well

as historical narrative. This he achieved through remonstrance and oratory.

As confirmed in the remonstrances where he counsels his reader to profit from a familiarity with histories written by great men, Monluc himself places a significant value on history. Viewing it as a teacher of practical lessons, he tries as much as possible to benefit from the advice he finds in other military histories. He feels that an eyewitness account is usually superior to the professional historian's rendition because the latter tends to be factually deplete. Personal histories, like the Commentaires, which are based on first person descriptions, are potentially more accurate than general histories so long as the author relates the truth of his experiences--Monluc, needless to say, avows a totally honest account.

Monluc's history, according to Paul Courteault, is extremely accurate when compared to official documents of the period. Nonetheless, there remains a question of invention, particularly with regard to the remonstrances and speeches. Is Monluc's record of what was actually spoken on a given occasion (e.g. a remonstrance or discourse) accurate or did he invent material sufficient to render his account more attractive to the reader? In Courteault's attempt to verify the accuracy of Monluc's orations, as contrasted to the accuracy of the historical narrative, he found practically no evidence to support Monluc's statements. There is, however, no reason to place them in doubt, at least as to

their actual occurrence--the doubt lies in the end product, the written form as it appears in the Commentaires. The original dictation of the Commentaires, largely an exposition of his military achievements, forms the core of the general narrative. A number of remonstrances and discourses were included in this first redaction but later, in the second rendition, some of them were revised in order to conform to Monluc's growing need to render his work appealing; the second text also saw the addition of many entirely new remonstrances and speeches. The ongoing task of reworking, improving, and supplementing the Commentaires, which took place between 1571-1577 and which increased the literary value of the work, also gave rise to a marked disparity in content and tone between the original narrative and the subsequent changes. This dissimilarity, along with evident changes in certain remonstrances and discourses from the first redaction to the second, suggests a considerable amount of invention--primarily for the purpose of literary enrichment.

The remonstrances and discourses are found in the Commentaires as interruptions in the historical narrative or, especially in the case of oratory, as an integral part of a given historical situation. In the first instance, Monluc suspends the narrative while he presents his personal views on such events as the Treaty of Saint-Germain, offers retrospective advice on a battle, or expostulates on military strategy in general. The lengthy remonstrances are usually

addressed to individuals such as the king or the Duke of Anjou and are particularly structured toward a given purpose, this purpose most often being self-justification and/or exhortation and instruction on military affairs. In the second instance, remonstrance and oratory fit within the historical context as exemplified during the defense of Siena where he plays the role of an omniscient counselor. Monluc successfully counteracts the Marquis of Marignan's threat to the city through well-timed discourses in which he presents convincing arguments to the Consistoro on why they should resist the siege and on another occasion forestalls the execution of a falsely accused nobleman. An equally assuring example is Monluc's discourse to the Bordeaux Parlement in which he solicits the personal involvement of its members in the military conflict at hand by appealing to their personal safety and liege relationship to the king.

Monluc's application of remonstrance, then, corresponds closely to the sixteenth century definition of the form-- that is to say a complaint, exhortation, or counsel. A prime example of remonstrance being used as a complaint is the introductory portion of Monluc's letter to Charles IX in which he murmurs his discontent over the loss of his governorship in Guyenne. Also in the first remonstrance to Henri d'Anjou, Monluc's complaint takes the form of systematic and preconceived arguments which establish his innocence with respect to the divestiture of his position in

Guyenne and the appendant investigation. Monluc finds in the future Henry III a sympathetic reader and his last bastion of hope against the hostile elements at the court (Damville's influence especially) which are trying to ruin any possibility of his returning to influence in Guyenne. And yet Monluc does not take Henri d'Anjou's support for granted. In the Préambul, he reasons against treason as a possible vice and other accusations by offering living witnesses to his loyal and irreproachable conduct, witnesses whose own reputes add weight to his argument.

In this same remonstrance, Monluc places himself in the position of a sagacious instructor to Henri whose qualities he praises and who, he claims, will eventually attain great celebrity; he even compares him to Alexander the Great. Although Monluc could never hope to equal Aristotle's role in the Greek conqueror's education, he nonetheless envisions himself in a similar if somewhat inferior capacity. Monluc counsels the Duke of Anjou to give more consideration to military officers in contrast to the favors offered to idle courtiers, to write letters to his officers, to maintain a standing army, to appreciate the value of what he calls "de sçavoir discourir", a reference to remonstrance and oratory, and to respect his position as the king's lieutenant.

Much of what Monluc expostulates in his remonstrances has a direct connection with his military expectations-- anything that hinders the free exercise of a military officer's responsibilities or that unjustly maligns his

reputation is considered illegitimate and/or evil. At times then, remonstrance becomes an expression of Monluc's wrath against these evils; this can be seen in the remonstrance to Charles IX where Monluc voices his displeasure over the female influence at the court and petitions the king to subvert the scandalous influence that had cost Jean de Tais, François de Vivonne and others their military positions.

Monluc's addresses to Henri d'Anjou and to kings are, with a few exceptions, primarily conceived in light of the author's need to justify his former actions to the reader while those directed toward military officers and governors are given more to exhortation and counsel in a strictly military sense. Even when Monluc plays the role of a moralizer, his moral code is principally confined to military conduct. Monluc's definition of virtue parallels the Latinized concepts of courage, justice, and excellence in contrast to the Christian concepts of faith, hope, and chastity. He does not label sexual promiscuity, drinking and gambling as vices because they damn an officer's chances for heaven but instead because they hinder his effectiveness as a military leader. The remonstrances permit Monluc to make the Commentaires into a manual for military success; in them he presents diverse instructions to the contemporary reader based on his own experience as a "vieux soldat". Experience becomes the master teacher as Monluc exhorts his reader to practice courage, the greatest of all virtues, because it is requisite to being victorious in battle; he counsels them on

the value of physical fortitude, a special virtue necessary for forced marches and the rigors of military life in general; he also emphasizes optimism, a characteristic of good leaders and an essential deterrent to panic and desertion during critical military situations; and finally, he gives substantial advice on military strategy including the need for decisive action, deceptive tactics and withstanding a siege. Much of Monluc's own philosophy on military strategy is borrowed from Julius Caesar's commentaries on the wars in Gaul, a model which he acknowledges in the Commentaires. Indeed, Monluc's praise of the Roman general leaves one to assume that he too would have liked to attain a similar military grandeur. Other Roman, Greek and Italian military histories also somewhat influenced Monluc, and yet he avoids plagiarism by infusing his own history with the spirit of the sixteenth century and validating it with his experiences during the Italian and religious wars.

Almost without exception the advice Monluc gives his reader is militaristic and empirical in nature because he lacked any significant cultural heritage and, military histories excluded, had no background in humanistic works of the period. He is therefore forced to give value judgements based on personal experience rather than on the philosophies of the ancients; thus he displays a perspective somewhat lacking in scope--men's actions and even religion are tainted by this militaristic viewpoint. This is evidenced by the remonstrance to the governors where Monluc, placing

the preservation of the state (the king) above all other considerations, counsels his readers to cover up and even falsify information in order to fulfill their duty. Dubious practices of all types become acceptable as long as they are circumscribed within the bounds of military expediency. Likewise, Monluc tailors religion to fit the needs of a particular military situation as when he uses "la querelle de Dieu" to incite the Spanish troops against the Huguenots at Vergt and when, having been "miraculously" healed on two different occasions, he plays the part of God's emissary to the Sienese people.

Monluc's talent for oratory appears as an inherent trait of his Gascon inclination to talkativeness. His oratory is not the eloquence of Cicero nor the wisdom of Aristotle, it is a personal oratory, one based on his inner self which in turn finds its source in the multiple experiences of a rich military life. He admits that his style is "mal polis" and yet both his remonstrances and oratory, although unpolished, are characterized by a spirited expression of thought and a subtle awareness of human psychological needs. His discourses consistently move the audience to action as in the case of the Spanish and Gascon troops prior to the battle of Vergt. This same persuasiveness surfaces in the polemic before François I where Monluc establishes himself as an orator of first rank by convincing the king to reevaluate his position on the Piedmont question. It is in connection with oratorical occasions that the vibrancy of Monluc's

personality shows forth and elicits both commitment and affection from the audience; the tears shed by his colleagues after his speech at Rabastens demonstrate the emotional fervor that he was capable of infusing into his speeches. And yet it must be remembered that this affectivity and apparent persuasiveness are, for the most part, products of Monluc's literary inventiveness. Indeed, it is this movement in the remonstrances and speeches that helps enliven the Commentaires and which adds character to what might have otherwise been a rather commonplace style.

The literary value of the Commentaires, then, lies primarily in the application of remonstrance and oratory to historical narrative. The work is unique in that few histories of the period use remonstrance and oratory for the purpose of self-interested exhortation and justification. In addition, Monluc's own personality, which he describes as a "meschant naturel aspre" derived from his Gascon heritage, permeates the remonstrances and speeches and helps set the Commentaires distinctively apart as something more than history; they now become literarily appealing because they represent a particular application of forms that can be interpreted, discussed and analysed as literature. Just as one might study the historiography in Ronsard's Françïade, a literary approach to Monluc's Commentaires reveals a dimension other than an absence or presence of historical fact. This study has uncovered a Monluc who is no longer to be viewed simply as a cruel and relentless soldier-historian

but as an orator and polemicist who, considering the time period and the purposes for which he wrote, achieved great success in the forms of persuasion that he chose to use.

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