CHILDREN OF THE REVOCATION:
THE REEDUCATION OF FRENCH PROTESTANTS AFTER 1685

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Children of the Revocation: The Reeducation of French Protestants after 1685

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This dissertation examines the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in late seventeenth-century France and its connections to the absolutist monarchy of Louis XIV and the shifting educational ideals of the period. Focusing on the detailed implementation of the edict in Paris, it discusses the importance of the development of a new bureaucratic structure that allowed Louis XIV to remain relatively involved in the details of implementation, while entrusting the daily operations to individuals loyal to the crown. Placing the Revocation in the context of administrative expansion, growing central control, and idealized Christian kingship, Louis XIV’s decision to end toleration of Protestantism in France becomes clearer.

It also argues that education and social reform were central in the conception and execution of this edict, and that the Revocation was part of a moment in which conversion through education appeared possible. In combining religious conversion and education in an effort to form Protestants into French Catholics, Louis XIV built upon an absolutist vision of education and connected his efforts to a flourishing debate. For the Protestant families affected by this edict, particularly the children, this approach shaped their experience of the Revocation. This study of the interaction between state and society, ideals and practices, in 1685 allows a new and more complicated understanding
of Louis XIV’s kingship, the meaning of conversion in the late seventeenth century, and
the place of the Revocation in French history.
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remained: my family. Their love and support throughout this process have sustained me, and I dedicate this project to them. My parents, Greg and Deb Perry, and my husband, Zach. You have pushed me to think, to work hard, to reach high, to not be afraid of falling. Thank you.
# Table of Contents

Abstract ii  
Acknowledgement iv  
Introduction 1  
   
Chapter 1  
France in 1680: Approaching the Revocation 10  
   
Chapter 2  
The Idea of Education in the 1680s 41  
   
Chapter 3  
The Years of Revocation 93  
   
Chapter 4  
The Revocation for the Nobility 140  
   
Chapter 5  
The Revocation for Parisians 204  
   
Chapter 6  
Social Education, Religious Control 268  
   
Conclusion 302  
   
Bibliography 307
List of Illustrations

Map I. Quartiers of Paris, 1685. 212

Map II. Relative Concentrations of Protestants in Paris by quartier, 1685. 213
Introduction

As Louis XIV approached his forty-second year of kingship in the fall of 1685, he was at the height of his reign. His palace at Versailles was nearly finished, and the new aristocratic system it established, full of spectacles and rules, maintained at least the appearance of a nobility in the service of their king. Years of war had come, at least temporarily, to an end, with Louis XIV as the victor, and France was now seemingly more powerful than it had ever been. Looking back nostalgically at this period, Voltaire wrote, “Louis XIV in his court, as in his reign, was so full of brilliance and magnificence that the smallest details of his life seem interesting to posterity, much as they were the object of curiosity of all the European courts and of all his contemporaries. The splendor of his government was spread over his smallest actions.”

Within this spectacular tableau, Louis’ model of Christian kingship loomed large. Presiding over a confessionally divided kingdom, Louis XIV struggled both personally and politically with allowing Protestantism to remain a part of French society and culture while asserting his ideal as “most Christian king.” In October 1685, he boldly addressed this concern, revoking the century-old Edict of Nantes and eliminating the official toleration of Protestantism in France. Alongside this strong statement of his vision of Christian kingship, he laid out a grand plan for refashioning French society, beginning with the conversion and reeducation of French Protestant children. What Voltaire called

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“one of the great misfortunes of France” was, to Louis XIV, the highest ideal of religious unity, an ideal worthy of the grandeur of his court and reign.²

The Revocation has been studied by many historians, beginning with Voltaire, and has a storied place in the historical memory of Louis XIV’s reign. Its relation to the confessional warfare of the seventeenth century and the ensuing emigration and concurrent rise of the Enlightenment have dominated historical discussion of the edict. Classic studies of the Revocation, such as that of Elisabeth Labrousse, interpret the policy as, above all, a political calculation, couched in the language of Christian kingship, but rooted in an understanding of the state as persecutor throughout the seventeenth century.³ Studies of the military power inherent in the dragonnades, and the violence they brought with them, emphasize similar points, as the king’s interest in conversions becomes a discussion of force and royal will.⁴ Beginning immediately after 1685, histories of the Revocation and its ensuing emigration emerged, primarily from the pens of Protestant exiles themselves, casting the Revocation as disastrous for the French economy.⁵ This understanding remains important in contemporary studies of the Revocation, with the theories Warren Scoville⁶ about the economic crisis following the Revocation continuing

² Ibid., 456.  
⁵ The most well known of these works is that of Pierre Jurieu, Reflexions sur la cruelle persécution (1685), and a similar sentiment can be found in many contemporary documents.  
⁶ Scoville focuses on economic models, comparing tax, interest and production rates before and after the Revocation. He sees the economic decline of the late seventeenth-century as a Malthusian crisis, thus disconnecting it from political and religious influences. Many have since critiqued Scoville’s work, but his decentering of the economic destruction was pivotal. W. Scoville, The Persecution of Huguenots and French Economic Development, 1660-1720
to influence questions of diaspora and sustained communities. Together, this historiographic tradition emphasizes questions of Huguenot survival in the face of violence, but the Revocation itself—as a policy and an ideal—is often lost and underexamined.

The promulgation of the Revocation in 1685, at a time when so many countries and intellectual arguments were shifting towards policies of toleration, has also merited considerable historical attention. Louis XIV’s wars with his European neighbors had inflamed tensions within Europe, particularly with the Dutch Republic and the Hapsburg Empire, for several decades, creating an atmosphere of mutual distrust and animosity that defined international relations in the period.8 The Revocation was issued during a lull in overt hostility, but clearly was intended to garner support from Louis’ Catholic allies and remind his Protestant foes of his strength and power.9 The work of Geoffrey Adams has directly explored the connections between the Revocation and the Enlightenment debate

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9 Louis was in particular need of papal support following the Gallican and Jansenist controversies, and the Revocation can be interpreted as speaking to that need. L. O’Brien, Innocent XI and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1930); Orcibal, Louis XIV et les Protestants.
on toleration, arguing that eighteenth-century understandings of religious toleration were largely informed by this experience of royal policy.\textsuperscript{10}

In the context of the burgeoning debate in favor of religious toleration found in the Netherlands and England, Louis XIV’s decision to reinforce Reformation ideals appears out of place.\textsuperscript{11} Acknowledging the distinct difference between Louis XIV’s approach to religious disunity and the general trend of European toleration prompts questions of religious belief and meaning that need to be addressed more fully, something this project attempts to do. While at odds with his European neighbors in so many ways, Louis XIV intentionally chose to promulgate the Revocation, setting himself against the growing international emphasis on toleration.

The year 1685 was clearly an important breaking point for the history of French Protestantism, yet histories of this community also often begin or end with this formative event. Social histories of the Protestant community have abounded in recent years, with the regional work of scholars like Keith Luria and Raymond Mentzer dominating this


new approach. Their focus on the interconfessional relationships formed in the seventeenth century limits their studies to before the Revocation, whereas studies of the period that followed largely concentrate on the massive emigration that followed and the formation of expatriate Protestant communities. In examining the Protestant community of Paris at the moment of the Revocation, my study introduces important questions about the social and cultural implications of this edict for studies of French society, and emphasizes the Protestant experience in this unique period of transition.

The Revocation is most often examined as part of the arc of Louis XIV’s reign, with many historians designating it as a turning point in the king’s mentality. In biographies of Louis XIV, descriptions of this period are dominated by idea of the aging king, and by the Revocation. The interdependency of these events is not always emphasized, but becomes evident in the interpretations of many historians. Studies of the burgeoning state bureaucracy and growing centralized control of the French state during Louis XIV’s reign often depict the Revocation as an aberration in a long-term

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modernizing trend. In the majority of these studies, the place of the Revocation in the administrative and political history of the realm overshadows its interest as a piece of religious history. The Revocation was, however, simultaneously political, social, and religious, complicating the story of its creation and development.

Louis XIV’s decision to revoke the Edict of Nantes and end toleration for Protestantism in France has perplexed historians since the eighteenth century. Yet, as I argue in this dissertation, placing the Revocation within the late-seventeenth-century discourse on religion and education and the expanding French bureaucracy gives the edict new meaning. I argue that the role of education and social reform was central in the conception and execution of this edict, and that the Revocation was part of a social moment in which conversion through education appeared possible. Focusing on the detailed implementation of the edict, rather than its symbolic place against the trend of a modernizing France, allows us to see three central themes that inspired and enabled the edict: new ideas about education and its ability to influence religious belief, Louis XIV’s deeply-held beliefs in the meaning of Christian kingship, and the development of a state bureaucracy able to carry out the king’s demands. Particularly in the execution and implementation of the Revocation, the bureaucracy established in the earlier parts of Louis XIV’s reign played a central role in the Revocation in Paris for noble and non-aristocratic families alike. My study of the interaction between state and society, ideals

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Introduction

and practices, as the Edict of Nantes was revoked in 1685 allows a new and more complicated understanding of Louis XIV’s kingship, the meaning of conversion in the late seventeenth century, and the place of the Revocation in French history.

To best explain the multifaceted nature of the role of the Revocation in French society, this dissertation is divided into six chapters. Beginning with the cultural milieu in which the Revocation was conceived, I then proceed to detail the cultural history of the Revocation in Paris, focusing on several Protestant families. In chapter one, I explore the state of Protestant and court society on the eve of the Revocation. The changes inherent in each, particularly the increasing religiosity of the court, have a profound impact on the conception and execution of the Revocation. Chapter two explores the ideals of education that dominate in the 1680s, particularly at the court of Versailles. The interests found in the educational treatises of the period reveal a unique educational moment in this period, distinct from those which precede and follow it. Chapter three focuses on analysis of the edicts and bureaucratic tactics that brought about the publication of the Revocation, examining its connections to increasing force and royal religious idealism throughout the 1680s. The immediate implementation of the edict in the city of Paris, particularly at the temple of Charenton, signified the king’s devotion to the edict and its execution. In chapter four, I follow the implementation of the Revocation for noble families in Paris, particularly that of the Duc de la Force and the Comte de Roye. Their experience of the Revocation was defined by their noble status, and the king took particular interest in the conversion of their families and the reeducation of their children. I further this investigation in chapter five by examining the impact of the Revocation on artisanal and bourgeois families of Paris, including those of Jacques Muisson, Jean de Beringhen, and
Matthieu Amonnet. For these families, the king’s interest in their conversion was slightly more detached and routed through his bureaucracy, though social and economic status in Paris would increase his attention. In chapter six, I examine three distinct case studies of the educational tactics of the Revocation: the female community of the Nouvelles-Catholiques, the Jesuit system of colleges, and a state-sponsored program to distribute books to new converts. The successes and failures of these institutions reveal the ability of Louis XIV to effect reeducation in the wake of the Revocation.

This study focuses exclusively on the city of Paris, and the implementation of the Revocation in that city. All experiences of the Revocation were different in Paris than anywhere else in France, largely as a result of the direct intervention available to Louis XIV. The king had a larger vested interest in the maintenance of order in his capital, as is seen by the creation of the Parisian police force (which was without parallel elsewhere in France) and the more subsidiary role of the Intendant of Paris. Whereas elsewhere Louis XIV was content to rely upon those bureaucrats he had empowered to represent the central government’s interests in the provinces, in Paris, the availability of daily, direct communication and the place of Paris as the French capital gave it heightened importance for the monarch. The edicts emanating from the king in the 1680s, particularly the Revocation, were reflections of the king’s wishes, and their enforcement in his capital city reflected, in his view, the ability of his state and bureaucracy to accomplish these wishes. Throughout his communication with his police chief and, to a lesser extent, the Intendant in 1685, Louis XIV continually referred to “my good city of Paris,” a designation unseen in other edicts or communication. While his goals and ideals remained constant throughout France, including his reliance upon newer bureaucrats, the
execution of these goals and his personal involvement therein was more focused in Paris itself. Through this detailed study of the capital city and some of its inhabitants, one can see the direct impact of Louis XIV and his Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.
Chapter 1
France in 1680: Approaching the Revocation

Having become the permanent home of Louis XIV and his court in 1682, Versailles served as, in the words of Louis Marin, “another manifestation of the prince’s representation and power, of his representation as power and of his power as representation.”\(^{16}\) Crucial to that representation of princely power was Louis XIV’s image of a Christian king, and the halls of Versailles were filled not only with courtiers, but also with priests and religious leaders. In the 1680s, this court was the heart of France, guiding not only the king’s personal actions, but also those of his functionaries around the realm. Any attempt to understand Louis XIV’s religious kingship must therefore start with Versailles, and the deepening religious impulse found there in the early 1680s.

Within the court, religion played an ever-growing role in the 1680s. Louis XIV’s religious beliefs were deeply connected to his understanding of Christian kingship, and therefore were enacted within the court on a regular basis. Daily events were infused with religious meaning, as the king merged the demands of political and religious leadership. Emphasizing the religious tenor of a court known for its lavish extravagance may complicate the traditional picture, but is essential to understanding the balance of political and religious intentions within Louis XIV’s actions. His emphasis on the place of religion in the education of his son, and his stress on the importance of education on the whole, underscores Louis’ sense of social awareness that is often also missing from historical depictions of the court of Versailles.

\(^{16}\) L. Marin, *Portrait of the King*, trans. M. M. Houle (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota, 1988), 193.
The Protestant community in Paris in 1680 was equally vibrant, thriving upon institutions that had fostered Protestant and Catholic coexistence for the previous century. The foundational Edict of Nantes, issued in 1598, had established a tenuous coexistence for the Catholic majority and Protestant minority. By 1680, Protestant families and institutions were positioned throughout French society, constituting an important subgroup in French culture. Their emphasis on separate education, as seen in the development of the Protestant academies, paralleled a concurrent interest in education in the rest of French society while representing their definitive interest in some separation from the Catholic-dominated society.

This chapter will focus on Louis XIV’s views on religion and education in the 1680s and the role of his expanding bureaucracy in Paris, and will set out the basic structure of Protestant religious and educational practices before the Revocation. It will explore the central place of Louis XIV’s own interpretations of the king’s paternal role in both educating and ensuring the salvation of his subjects, as well as the changing roles of ministers and bureaucrats at court. These changes, as well as the rise of the king’s second morganatic wife, Madame de Maintenon, shaped the court system of the 1680s, and the king himself. Although modern historians often juxtapose bureaucracy and spirituality, the bureaucratic system Louis XIV had established in Paris by the 1680s reflected not only Louis XIV’s deep personal interest in the administration of his capital city, but also his interest in paternally guiding the people of Paris. By examining the state of Protestant and court society in 1680, and the place of education and religion within those communities, the meaning and development of the Revocation becomes increasingly clear.
A Century of Coexistence

The Edict of Nantes brought an end to the French Wars of Religion and laid the groundwork for a system of coexistence in the seventeenth century. With its institutional innovations and social regulations, it allowed the Catholic and Protestant communities to flourish concurrently. By the reign of Louis XIV, beginning 45 years after the edict’s promulgation, French society had largely reorganized around these negotiated principles. The structure of the Protestant community as a minority group within France had solidified in public and private life, complete with its own institutions and ideals. To be Protestant in 1680, on the eve of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, was to be part of a relatively vibrant community, confident in its place in French society and interwoven into the social fabric.

The Edict of Nantes not only allowed for simultaneous toleration of both Protestant and Catholic religious practices, it established a series of institutions and regulations aimed at protecting both communities. Following decades of religious civil war, from 1562 to 1598, the edict represented not only political conciliation and religious toleration, but a chance at remaking French society. It created spaces for worship for both religious congregations, and allowed Protestants to form the institutions associated with religious practice, but did not address any theological issues.17 Of the 92 articles and 56 secret articles in the document, the vast majority concerned the reintegration of Protestants and Catholics in French society and the means by which their roles could be

balanced throughout the realm. In focusing on the social and political ramifications of religious practice, the edict set the tone for the following century.\textsuperscript{18}

Protestant and Catholic coexistence in seventeenth-century France was a constant struggle, punctuated with bouts of political and social unrest. Yet, on a personal level, many families interacted across confessional boundaries on a regular basis. Keith Luria, in his study of what he terms “sacred boundaries,” has described this interaction as taking several forms, dependent upon the varying priorities of families, communities, and religious allegiance.\textsuperscript{19} The dependence on communal regulation created unique situations around the realm,\textsuperscript{20} and the city of Paris experienced coexistence as a capital, archiepiscopal city. The reality of its status as a center of royal and episcopal government prohibited the practice of Protestantism within the city limits, forcing the construction of a Protestant temple in the nearby suburb of Charenton. The concentration of wealth and power in the city, however, allowed the Protestant community in Paris to flourish, and function as a leader for French Protestantism through its interactions with the centralized crown.\textsuperscript{21} The Edict of Nantes remained a dominant force within these confessional agreements, the touchstone by which further edicts and agreements were negotiated, and


\textsuperscript{19} Luria, \textit{Sacred Boundaries}.

\textsuperscript{20} Luria’s study focuses on the city of Poitou, while the work of Hanlon studies Layrac, and Wilson studies Loriol. Hanlon, \textit{Confession and Community in Seventeenth-Century France: Catholic and Protestant Coexistence in Aquitaine}; Wilson, \textit{Beyond Belief}.

the monarchy continued to be highly involved in the administration of this coexistence, issuing edicts and declarations regularly throughout the century.22

In a long edict promulgated February 1, 1669, Louis XIV attempted to clarify the Edict of Nantes’ regulations on the interactions between Catholic and Protestant societies and their members, setting new rules for the duties of Protestants living in co-confessional towns. The forty-nine articles dealt extensively with issues such as Protestant respect for the host and their singing of Psalms in public areas, traditional areas of religious conflict, but also attempted to codify the social obligations of Protestants and the avenues for Catholics within their society. Protestant hospitals were required to take in both Protestants and Catholics, Protestant poor relief was subjected to the same requirement.23 Funerals and burials were required to take place outside of Catholic notice, though be regulated by the Protestant ministers, who were also charged with ensuring marriages were recorded and interconfessional marriages approved by all parties.24 The social regulation attempted by this edict exemplified Louis XIV’s approach to the Protestant community throughout his reign. All forty-nine of the clarifications and new regulations were concerned, in one way or another, with the maintenance of social order and the subsidiary place of Protestants within that order. This edict became an equally important foundation for the Protestant experience in the late seventeenth century, as the basis for both royal action and Protestant response.25

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22 Mentzer, "The Edict of Nantes and its Institutions." Mentzer argues the legalistic nature of the relationship to the crown was ultimately detrimental to the Protestant community, as the monarchy controlled the courts.
23 “Déclaration du Roy portant Règlement des choses qui doivent être gardées et observées par ceux qui font profession de la Résignion prétendue reformée,” 1 February 1669, articles 44 and 45.
24 Ibid, articles 9, 10, 22 and 23.
25 This edict was regularly cited by Protestants in their grievances about new edicts in the 1680s, as will be explored in chapter 3.
Alongside the formal edicts regulating French society, a system of religious regulation took shape to unite religious practice and doctrine throughout the realm, and connect the communities to their transnational counterparts. For the Protestant minority, the synodal system coordinated the political and religious policies of the French Reformed Church. The consistories of local churches were essential for everyday administration, but the provincial and national synods served to regulate ministry, practice, and obligations. In this way, they moderated the church’s official policies in a way concordant with the Edict of Nantes while allowing diffuse Protestant communities to remain connected to a larger whole. The Catholic Assemblies of the Clergy, established during the French Wars of Religion, remained the dominant political and doctrinal force of the Catholic majority throughout the early modern period. The election of representatives from each diocese for this regular convention allowed a direct connection between provincial Catholicism and the official stances of the French church. The financial power held by these assemblies, and their ability to moderate the Church’s position on political issues, made them a dominant force in French politics. In contrast with the Protestant synods, these Assemblies were directly connected to the French crown and political system, granting them additional power over ostensibly non-religious decisions. Additionally, the wide spread of the Catholic bishops—over 120, as

26 Parisian Protestants were part of the Ile-de-France province, the most extended of all French provinces. D. Ligou, Le Protestantisme en France de 1598 à 1714 (Paris: Société d'éducation d'enseignement supérieur, 1968), 122-40 For a history of the Protestant synods in the seventeenth century, see (Deyon, 1976 #212.
27 Each diocese sent four deputies to the Assembly, though the larger dioceses dominated the political power.
28 The Assembly of the Clergy met every five years, and their “gift” to the French monarchy every ten years was an established part of the state’s income. The status of clergy as the Second Estate in French politics also granted them innate political power, even though the Estates
opposed to the 16 Protestant provinces—allowed the detailed attention of the Catholic Church on a scale unattainable by Protestants, often affording them greater influence over rural areas.

Protestant academies, founded and administered by the Protestant community, were another key part of the institutional framework developed in the wake of the Edict of Nantes. The religious nature of early modern education necessitated a separate system for Protestant young men and eight Protestant academies were opened in France before the end of the sixteenth century. The priority given to these foundations, and the support they garnered throughout the seventeenth century, speaks to the centrality of educational difference for the Protestant community. These academies functioned similarly to the growing Jesuit colleges, welcoming all levels of study and including theological formation alongside broader literate education. In the seventeenth century, royal limits on these institutions expanded, forbidding contact with foreign academies and ending their financial support. In response, Protestant communities funded the academies, with each provincial synod paying a share. The priority put on maintaining these schools, even when faced with increasing limitations from the state, underscores both the vitality of the Protestant community in the seventeenth century and their interest in preserving their autonomy. Like for their Catholic counterparts, education was deemed an important component of society.


In 1680, the Protestant population of France was around 700,000, concentrated largely in the South. After the conclusion of the Wars of Religion, this number had topped 1,000,000, but continued political struggles and emigration in the 1670s took a toll on the community. Estimates of the size of the Parisian Protestant community are slightly more complicated, due to the loss of all archival records from their temple, but conservative estimates place the population around 8,000. Compared to the concentrations of population in other areas of France, the capital city was relatively Catholic, with Protestants only constituting a slim percentage of the 400-450,000 inhabitants. This minority status defined the Protestant experience in France, particularly in northern areas, as all negotiations of public and private rights began from a place of relative weakness.

To be Protestant in France in 1680 meant an experience shaped by nearly a century of coexistence, and the institutional framework that came with it. Protestant families were long established in their communities, often having intermarried with the local Catholic population. Yet they remained a distinct minority, with their own traditions and practices that drove the communal experience. The family structure of Protestantism, with its emphasis on patriarchal authority, reinforced traditional expectations of the household and gender roles, while redefining the place of the family within the church.

32 Léonus-Lieppe, "À la redécouverte des réformés parisiens au XVIIe siècle."
33 Luria, *Sacred Boundaries*. 
structure.\textsuperscript{34} The similarities between Catholic and Protestant families overshadowed their differences, yet the fundamental division on confessional lines remained dominant. As restrictions increased on this community in the 1680s and the crown emphasized the importance of this confessional division, the experience of coexistence became a thing of the past, and the Protestant population of France was forced to dismantle the institutional structures that defined their place in French society for the past century.

The Court

The court of Louis XIV moved to Versailles in 1682, at which point the court system took its definitive shape. Louis XIV was forty years into his reign, and had moved beyond the necessary negotiations that pervaded his early years to a system that reflected his personal interests and his status as king. The palace of Versailles itself was a key instrument in this process; as historian François Bluche describes, Versailles was more than a palace, it was an integral part of the king’s “plans for a more ordered, more distinct and more resplendent court.”\textsuperscript{35} In the 1680s, Louis XIV strengthened the system he had worked to create, even as many of the key components shifted around him. The death of his queen, Marie-Thérèse, and his lead minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, in the first part of the decade forced the king to consolidate power even more to himself. His own aging and shifting priorities were reflected in the changing nature of the court in this decade, where the constructed image of the king became even more important. In this period, between the tumult of the mid-seventeenth century and the Parisian-centered society of the


\textsuperscript{35} Bluche, \textit{Louis XIV}, 347.
eighteenth century, Louis XIV and his court at Versailles led the country in a highly-ordered fashion.

For Louis XIV, his power as king was directly tied to his central role in this court. The cult of the Sun King developed beginning in the 1660s, and Louis XIV used various images and events to cultivate this persona and the system around it.\(^\text{36}\) His court, and his presence within that court, remained the most important aspect of this public persona, as it had a direct effect on the administration of the state and his control of the nobility. Norbert Elias’ seminal study of this court and the effect it had on surrounding society emphasized how etiquette and small privileges became a self-perpetuating system of control, wherein the attention of the king held immense value.\(^\text{37}\) By the mid-1680s, this system had been largely formalized, and Louis XIV operated on a rigid daily schedule that included both ceremonies and council meetings, reflecting the duality of his roles as head of state and head of the court.

In 1683, his first full year at Versailles, Louis XIV was forty-five years old. He was no longer the king who danced alongside a ballet performance, but rather a king who commanded them. The spectacle of the court remained vitally important to the monarchy, and the key means by which politics and policy were accomplished, but Louis XIV’s interests had changed. He had won the majority of his political battles, and subdued (for

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\(^{36}\) P. Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1992). Burke focuses on the use of images, coins, and rituals to create the cult of the king, from his ascension to his death.

the time being) his enemies on the continent.\textsuperscript{38} His son had reached his majority, and was holding his own court alongside the king, complete with his new wife and children.\textsuperscript{39} These small shifts in power and priorities brought larger shifts in the role of the king, as Louis XIV negotiated his own physical frailties while continuing to maintain the presence of the king. His illness and operation in 1686 is emblematic of this change: a radical medical procedure was done to the body of the king, while the Dauphin enacted the persona of royal power.\textsuperscript{40} While he remained definitively in charge of the entire system—bureaucratic, politic, and courtly—his personal life began to impinge on the kingly ideal he had established earlier in his reign.

The rules of court were increasingly codified as Louis XIV aged and fully exercised his power. The established roles for king and courtier became even more important as Louis XIV attempted to partially withdraw from court while maintaining his regular presence as the head of the system. The development of the administrative and bureaucratic system that originated under Colbert allowed this retreat, as noblemen were forced to interact more with the system of monarchy than the monarch himself.\textsuperscript{41} While Louis XIV remained the font of patronage and the ultimate source of many decisions, the rise of intermediaries allowed both king and courtier to participate in court without true interaction. Louis had developed a firm understanding of what he interpreted to be the “métier” of the king, and in what administration his participation was less necessary. For

\textsuperscript{38} The Dutch wars had wrapped up, at least temporarily, in 1678 with the Treaty of Nijmegen. While Louis XIV continued his efforts to expand the French borders through the 1680s, mostly importantly in Alsace, the large-scale warfare of his earlier reign was, for the time, halted. D. Onnekink, ed. \textit{War and Religion after Westphalia, 1648-1713} (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009).

\textsuperscript{39} The Grand Dauphin married Maria Anna Victoria of Bavaria in 1680. They had three sons: Louis, born in 1682, Philippe, born in 1683, and Charles, born in 1686.

\textsuperscript{40} Wolf, \textit{Louis XIV}, 350-3.

\textsuperscript{41} Elias, \textit{The Court Society}, ch. 6.
many members of court, these decisions relegated their personal interaction with the king to ceremonial occasions, where the persona of the king was much more important than his person. The increasing disconnect between the personal interests of the king and the spectacle of his court gave the bureaucracy an important place in the execution of the king’s decisions, and emphasized the importance of spectacle for the maintenance of public order, two developments that would drastically influence the Revocation. This division would continue and expand as the eighteenth century progressed, with this period in the late seventeenth century standing as a dividing point, a transition between chivalric courtliness and the codified interactions for which Versailles became famous.

In the context of this progress towards a formalized court system, religious ceremonies and actions took on increasing importance. The nature of early modern Christian monarchy was grounded in a conflation of political and religious beliefs, and Louis XIV had been schooled in this relationship since his infancy. By the 1680s, his own understandings of religion had solidified together with his conception of court and kingship, and the Revocation and its surrounding edicts were not only reflections of the court and bureaucracy in 1685, but also of changes in Louis XIV himself.

There were three key aspects of Louis XIV’s religiosity: his conflation of church and state, with the king at its head; the paternalistic nature of the king’s politico-religious role; and his insistence on the necessity of outward devotion. All of these derived

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42 This division between the king as person and the king as body politic was first, and perhaps best, articulated in E. H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1957). Louis XIV would have been well aware of the theological and political meaning of the king as body politic, as the logic pervaded his church and court.
43 Roger Chartier sees progress towards desacralization in the formalization of court ritual and the increasing emphasis on the person of the king, connecting it to the political and cultural rupture of
primarily from the first, as Louis XIV consciously self-styled as “the most Christian
king.” The French monarchy had long claimed to be divinely established, dating from the
descent of the Holy Spirit with a chrism of oil to baptize Clovis in the fifth century. By
the early modern period, this tradition was firmly established in the anointing and
coronation of kings, which used oil from this sacred ampoule as part of the act of
consecration. Louis XIV took this charge of divine monarchy very seriously. In his
*Mémoires*, after describing many of the religious concerns in France, he charged his son
to “try to answer sincerely to our title of *très-chrétien*.” In his mind, this title was not to
be taken lightly, and signified a series of responsibilities to both the realm and its people.
In the religious controversies of Louis XIV’s reign—from Jansenism to Gallicanism to
the Revocation itself—Louis XIV’s abiding belief in his power and responsibility to
guide the French state, both politically and religiously, was consistently evident. His
own religious beliefs were undoubtedly formed by his awareness of his unique role as a
French king, and he believed strongly in the united nature of church and state.

As both a religious and political leader, therefore, Louis XIV exercised this role in a
highly paternalistic manner. This understanding arose from his first key belief, but
extended to the hierarchical and ritualistic manner of church and court under Louis XIV.
His belief in the sacred nature of the French throne placed him at the head of both church

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Episcopate under Louis XIV*; A. Sedgwick, *Jansenism in Seventeenth-Century France: Voices
from the Wilderness* (Charlottesville, VA: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1977); P. F. Riley, *A Lust for
Virtue: Louis XIV’s Attack on Sin in Seventeenth-Century France* (Westport, CN: Greenwood
and state in France, with all others under his care. This paternalism can be clearly seen in the ritual of the royal touch, as described by historian Marc Bloch. Louis XIV regularly went among people ill with scrofula, touching them, as it was believed that the king’s touch could miraculously cure this disease. In enacting his Christianity in such a manner, Louis XIV underscored his relative importance compared to all other Frenchmen while simultaneously reinforcing his care for those who were lesser. The paternalistic nature of his religious beliefs can also be clearly seen in his regular almsgiving, particularly for the people of Paris. Every month, Louis XIV gave 5,000 livres for the poor of Paris, and in the winter months, gave up to 25,000 livres. This charity was expected of the king, but was also reflective of his deep-seated personal belief in his responsibility to care for his subjects.

Perhaps the most important aspect of Louis XIV’s religiosity was not internal, however, but was his emphasis on the importance of outward devotion. As he wrote to his son, in his Mémoires, “the public respects that we pay to this invisible power could indeed justly be considered the first and most important part of our entire policy.” The emphasis here was not only on the importance of religious respect by the king, but on its public nature. Beginning with his coronation, Louis XIV’s religiosity was an important part of his political and religious power. In his study of Louis XIV’s personal piety, historian Bernard Hours emphasizes the role this public devotion played in the personal religiosity of the king. He argues that the inherent dual nature of kingship, the

49 AN G/7 884-6.
simultaneity of being at once king and private person, became more obvious to the king as he aged, and that his apparent religious rededication was primarily a political act, meant to cement the king’s relationship with both his people and the pope.\textsuperscript{51} While this explanation may take the public nature of Louis’ piety to an extreme, it serves as a reminder of the necessity of public religiosity for this most Christian king. Louis XIV, as an astute political leader, could not ignore the political implications of his religious actions and, furthermore, understood the deep implications one had on the other. His outward devotion reminded the world, as Hours wrote, “that nothing could trouble the serenity of the greatest of sovereigns.”\textsuperscript{52}

In the 1680s, religious actions and symbols permeated the king’s daily life at Versailles. From the prayers said at his rising, to his regular attendance at services, to more public appearances on feast days, Louis XIV’s participation in religious actions and services was an integral part of his persona. As historian Alexandre Maral writes, “at the meeting point of official religion, royal religion, and the personal religion of Louis XIV, Versailles offered the indispensable unity of place and action for the spectacle of the sovereign’s public devotion.”\textsuperscript{53} His personal understanding of the importance of public devotion, combined with his belief in the leadership role he held in both church and state, enabled him to use the spectacle of Versailles to reinforce not only his political control,

\textsuperscript{50} Louis XIV, \textit{Mémoires for the Instruction of the Dauphin}, 57.
but his religious devotion. The Revocation arose from this milieu, this daily concern with religious devotion and paternalistic leadership, and reflects the state of Louis XIV’s piety in the 1680s.

Understanding Louis XIV’s religious beliefs, and their place within his perception of French state and society, provides a foundation for understanding the Revocation. The construction of an idealized system at Versailles, with its political and religious spectacles, was only part of the ideal French society Louis XIV hoped to create. He envisioned complete social reform, a recreation of French society in its Catholic state that would complement the ideal he had created at Versailles. The performance of Catholic kingship was a central part of this model, as Louis XIV appears to have truly believed in a sacred monarchy and his role as the public leader of this Christian state. Approaching the Revocation from this place of belief, allowing Louis XIV’s simultaneous political and religious meanings to drive our interpretations, gives weight to these practices and ideals. Brad Gregory has repeatedly called for the importance of recognizing religious belief as a valid historical construct, one that would allow historical actors to recognize themselves. For Louis XIV, this requires an understanding of his religiosity as he professed it, with its public, semi-political, expression as a core component.

The changes at court must not be understood as drastic revisions of the king’s earlier court, but rather the development of Louis XIV’s religious and political leadership as he reached middle age. His growing interest in religious devotion reflected deeply held convictions about the nature of French kingship that came to light in his interactions with political figures in and out of France. The political and personal changes of the 1680s
spurred the evolution and codification of this court system and its religious rituals. The death of several key figures from his early rule forced Louis XIV to turn even more towards public devotion, including the Revocation, and solidified the paternalistic nature of his reign.

The death of Louis’ lead minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, in 1683 was a defining moment in his reign, one that changed the tenor of the administration. Colbert was responsible for the creation of much of Louis XIV’s bureaucracy and its administration. He had regularized the state finances, organized the system of Intendants, and generally managed the information flowing from the growing number of bureaucrats throughout France to the king himself. With this control over the state’s organization, Colbert had also accumulated great personal power. His network extended well into provincial France, and families associated with his own dominated many of the state’s higher offices. His death in 1683 therefore not only destabilized the highest level of government, but also called into question the continued functioning of many lower associated bureaucrats, and the Colbert system in general. What had been a system run in every way by a firm, powerful political leader was now devoid of that commanding presence, leaving Louis XIV once again largely alone at the helm of his state. Yet, as historian Jacob Soll explains, “while Louis was clearly upset to lose an old friend and his closest political confidant, he had become increasingly irritated with this harbinger of bad

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news.” Colbert’s insistence on financial and administrative responsibility had become increasingly at odds with Louis’ desire to do as he pleased, and his toleration for Protestantism for its positive effects on the French economy was distant from Louis XIV’s ideals of Christian kingship. His death served, in many ways, as a tacit permission for Louis XIV to regain some control of his bureaucratic state.

After the death of Colbert, Louis XIV split power between the two largest bureaucratic families, the Colbert and the Le Tellier. The Marquis de Seignelay, Jean-Baptiste Colbert’s eldest son who had long been groomed as his successor, took over his father’s positions as secretary of the Marine and secretary of the King’s Household. The position of controller-general of finances, however, went to Claude le Peletier, a member of the Le Tellier faction, and that of superintendent of the king’s buildings went to the Marquis de Louvois, Le Tellier’s son. While Louis XIV clearly valued the work the elder Colbert had done to enable his monarchical control, he was also determined that no one should again have such centralized power. This effort to loosen the power of his key ministers, usurping some of that accumulated power for himself, reflected the mature priorities of Louis XIV. Whereas earlier in his reign, he tolerated, even welcomed, Colbert’s guidance and reforms, by 1683, he placed more value on the retention of those

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57 Soll, The Information Master, 153.
58 L. Dingli, Colbert, Marquis de Seignelay (Paris: Perrin, 1997), 238-44. Dingli credits the Le Tellier family for encouraging the Revocation and describes the Colbert as disinterested in enforcing the king’s religious plans.
reforms already enacted and his own ability to direct and enact any future social, political, economic, or military endeavors. Heightened tension within the highest council led to an increased reliance on the king’s own leadership, a change that defined the religious edicts to come.

Simultaneously more, and less, important to Louis XIV was the passing of his wife, Queen Marie-Thérèse, in July 1683. She had never played a large role in statecraft, and had largely kept to herself and her personal friends at court, but she remained the titular queen and closely tied to Louis XIV’s personal life and development. Their marriage in 1660 came at a formative moment in Louis’ reign, right before the death of Mazarin and the beginning of his period of personal rule. Marie-Thérèse was an Infanta of Spain, his first cousin on his mother’s side, and had been raised in the Spanish Catholic tradition. Upon her arrival at the French court, she followed closely alongside Anne of Austria, Louis XIV’s mother, and established herself as a highly religious person. She had a taste for visiting convents, and founded the Parisian house of the Discalced Carmelites not long after her marriage. While Louis XIV was also raised in this tradition of religiosity, thanks to his mother, his preference for worldly amusement placed him at odds with his new bride. Perhaps more importantly, his continued interest in other women placed the new queen in an unenviable position: while revered, particularly after the birth of the Dauphin in 1661, she was not the sole object of Louis’ affections. Marie-Thérèse’s tolerance for Louis XIV’s mistresses allowed a disconnect to form for the king between duty and personal pleasure, one that pervaded his life from the 1660s on.

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60 Dingli, *Colbert, Marquis de Seignelay*, 86-98.
61 Mazarin was instrumental in arranging the marriage. Wolf, *Louis XIV*, ch. 10.
In 1680, Louis’ eye strayed from his most recent mistress, Madame de Montespan, with whom he had seven children, to their governess, Madame de Maintenon. Françoise d’Aubigné had entered Parisian society at the side of Paul Scarron, a prominent writer patronized by Anne of Austria,63 and had remained there courtesy of the patronage of Madame de Montespan, who continued her royal pension and trusted her with the discreet care of her illegitimate children with the king.64 She bought a large piece of land at Maintenon, near Versailles, in 1675 with money given to her as a reward for this discretion, and Louis XIV named her the Marquise de Maintenon in 1678. She came to court full-time in early 1680, when Louis XIV placed her as a mistress of the robes to the Dauphine. From there, her influence only grew, with its height coming at her morganatic marriage to Louis XIV in the winter of 1683-4.65

Madame de Maintenon was known for her religiosity, a position that was at once compatible with Louis XIV’s vision of himself and an abrupt departure from decades of debauchery. Maintenon had been baptized Catholic, but raised Protestant, in the tradition of her father and famous grandfather, Agrippa d’Aubigné.66 Yet, she had been baptized Catholic, and after a tumultuous early childhood, was placed in the care of her Catholic aunt and spent her young adulthood in Catholic education. The differences between her

63 Scarron was 25 years older than her, and permanently paralyzed. They married in 1651; he died in 1660.
64 The first child of Louis XIV and Madame de Montespan was born in 1669 in secrecy, and the discretion of Madame de Maintenon was paramount. After Louis XIV legitimized his children in 1673, this discretion was less essential, but Madame de Maintenon remained the caretaker for all of his children. J.-P. Desprat, Madame de Maintenon (1635-1719), ou le prix de la réputation (Paris: Perrin, 2010), 127-88.
65 This marriage was never official, and never public, but is generally accepted by historians as having occurred sometime in the winter of 1683-4. The king’s confessor, Père de la Chaize, and the Archbishop of Paris were in attendance. Ibid., 223-30.
66 Agrippa d’Aubigné was a close personal friend to Henry IV, and fellow Protestant general, but did not follow him to court in order to remain Protestant. His son, Constant, was imprisoned for
early Protestant education and her experiences as a young woman in Catholic convents and households provided her with clear distinctions between the two belief systems that would carry through her adult life. Her personal religiosity was greatly shaped by these experiences, and resulted in both a spiritual sense of religious toleration and a strict idea of conformity to Catholic teachings. For Louis XIV, these twin responsibilities brought about a new appreciation of religiosity, as he was encouraged by Maintenon to pay greater attention to his personal and religious obligations. She saw her role as one of a spiritual guide for the king, inspired by her own confessor’s examples of saintly women assisting their sinful husbands. In emphasizing his spiritual responsibility to the people of France, Maintenon spoke to Louis XIV’s understanding of his role as a Christian monarch.

Her rise to prominence as an educator of the king’s children also greatly shaped her place at court, and her personal understanding of the importance of education. Before she was Louis XIV’s wife, before she was even a favorite of the king, she was an educator, charged with the king’s own children. Historian Théophile Lavallée reminds readers that “the post of governess to the king’s natural children was regarded not as a degradation, but as a favor,” that Madame de Maintenon had “sanctified her character by the passionate tenderness she had for the children of Madame de Montespan, by the infinite working against Cardinal Richelieu and banished to Martinique. He and his family did not return until 1647, when Françoise was 12.

67 Desprat, Madame de Maintenon, 198-214.
68 Riley, A Lust for Virtue, 97-105. Maintenon’s religiosity and religious network is discussed at length in chapter 2.
69 The combination of Maintenon’s Protestant background and her growing influence on the king in all matters, including religious affairs, in the 1680s, has led many historians to attribute the Revocation to her conniving. While she clearly did shape Louis XIV’s spirituality in some ways, this interpretation can be largely discredited. Orcibal, Louis XIV et les Protestants; O. Douen, La Révocation de l’Édit de Nantes à Paris, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1894).
pains she took to raise them.”70 Even once she was installed at court, after the legitimization of the king’s children in 1673, Maintenon’s role was primarily one of care and education, even as her favor continued to rise.71 Her frequent disagreements with Madame de Montespan over the care and education of the children placed her in the role of their advocate, interested in their Christian upbringing. Writing to her confessor after one such disagreement, she declared, “I have resolved to not be so intense in what I do and to leave these children to the management of their mother, but I have qualms about offending God by this abandonment.”72 Her differences with Madame de Montespan arose primarily from her desire to keep the children away from what she saw as the follies of court life, and she clearly saw her role as moderating the worldly influences with Christian education. Intentionally or not, her regular presence near the king established the primacy of her versions of religiosity and educational imperatives, ideals that spoke to and reinforced Louis XIV’s own inclinations. With her presence, and the shifting priorities and personalities around the king, the court of the 1680s was fundamentally changed from that which came before.

The Bureaucrats of the Revocation

Louis XIV’s choice of particular individuals and ministries for the Revocation illuminates his personal preferences in the 1680s, and the contemporary status of the nobility and the bureaucracy. As has been well documented by works such as Roland

71 She was not charged with their literate education after the age of seven, but her experience in this field allowed her teach the basics of reading and writing, as well as care for their personal needs. Desprat, Madame de Maintenon, 147-89.
72 Letter to the Abbé Gobelin (discussed in chapter 2), 27 February 1675, cited in ibid., 159.
Mousnier’s, the structure of the Old Regime government was overlapping at best, and contradictory at worst.73 In the case of the Revocation, Louis turned first to his personal household, run by the Marquis de Seignelay, the Parisian police, and the Church hierarchy. The noble governors and venal officers of Paris were involved to a lesser extent, although they and the Intendants played a larger role outside of the city. His choice of these ministries and individuals reflected the evolution of Louis’ bureaucratic system after Colbert’s death, when a system built upon clientage networks began to subsume those networks into the bureaucratic structure itself.74

Amongst these officials, the one in most regular contact with the daily wishes and whims of the monarch was Jean-Baptiste Colbert, the Marquis de Seignelay. He was the eldest son and heir of Louis’ influential minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert, and succeeded his father as secretary of the Navy and leader of the king’s household upon his death in 1683. The elder Colbert had groomed his son from a young age to succeed him, emphasizing the importance of information in the running of the state.75 The daily correspondence from the king’s household to intendants and officials around the realm, particularly those in Paris, demonstrates the extent to which this belief was inculcated in Seignelay, as it served as a connection between the king’s wishes and the actualities of the kingdom. Clearly, Seignelay acted as a filter for Louis XIV, sending and receiving the majority of the correspondence himself, but he always phrased this correspondence as produced on behalf of the king. His role in the Revocation is both essential and invisible; his work and

correspondence effectively coordinated the Revocation throughout France, but he left no personal letters other than those found in royal records.

With Seignelay, Louis XIV had an administrator who continued to oversee the massive Colbert clientage system while prioritizing his role as the king’s lead minister. The interaction between these two functions — the head of the one of the largest patronage networks in France and the head of the king’s personal household — defined Seignelay’s experience as a minister. As Laurent Dingli describes, “his roles brought him close to the monarch, from his rising to his sleeping. He knew his tastes, knew how to anticipate his desires, suspected that which he would wish to hear or would prefer left unsaid.” He later clarifies that these same roles “allowed him to suggest to Louis XIV to accord payments, sometimes substantial, to loyal and deserving subjects. Seignelay’s protégés were at the head of the list.” This essential, everyday interaction placed Seignelay at the heart of the religious reform and simultaneously included his extensive network in its execution.

In Paris itself, the role of these bureaucrats and clients linked closely to the Marquis de Seignelay and Louis XIV was essential. The execution of all of the edicts of the 1680s, as well as the Revocation itself, relied upon these functionaries to precisely enforce the ideals and actions at the heart of Louis XIV’s reforms. The main player in the religious events in Paris was Gabriel-Nicolas de la Reynie, the chief of the Parisian police force. He was appointed to this position in 1667, after its creation by Jean-Baptiste Colbert. The institution of a dedicated police force, and a police chief, was part of the larger reforms undertaken by Colbert in the late 1660s, reinserting monarchical control

76 Dingli, Colbert, Marquis de Seignelay, 67.
77 Ibid., 84.
while reorganizing the overlapping systems of justice in the capital city.\textsuperscript{78} The appointment of La Reynie to its head post spoke to these larger concerns, as he had proven his loyalty to the monarch during the Fronde in Bordeaux and had since remained a part of the Colbert network, moving up the bureaucratic ranks. He was at heart a career bureaucrat, coming from minor robe nobility, and entirely reliant on Colbert’s patronage for his ascension.\textsuperscript{79} This patronage came as a result of Colbert’s belief in La Reynie’s specialized knowledge of both juridical and economic concerns, and reflected the larger plans of Colbert to insert such specialists into the French bureaucracy.\textsuperscript{80}

The post created for La Reynie, therefore, encompassed many areas of social, juridical and cultural concerns while remaining separate from the existing courts and judicial systems. He was charged with the overseeing of the book trade and the theaters, abandoned children and the hospitals, public health and the food supply, Parisian commerce and the streets it relied upon. The security of Paris, writ broad, fell under his purview.\textsuperscript{81} To accomplish such a broad goal, he built upon the existing Parisian \textit{quartier} system and its commissioners, adding overseeing commissioners to those already present to encourage the uniformity of each \textit{quartier}’s enforcement. A separate tribunal of the police was established at Châtelet, held weekly, and he centralized the reports of these

\textsuperscript{79} Ibid., 25.
\textsuperscript{80} Collins, \textit{The State in Early Modern France}, 90-93.
commissioners there. The establishment of this police force in Paris was an essential part of the rebuilding of the capital after the Fronde, and the reestablishment of the monarch’s trust in the city and its inhabitants. La Reynie, as a trusted confidant of the monarch and his main ministers, was able to utilize this bureaucratic structure to enact the monarch’s wishes, and his reliance on Colbert and Seignelay as patrons helped solidify the connections between the administrations of the capital and that of the realm.

In religious matters, this connection was indispensable. Seignelay and Louis XIV relied upon La Reynie’s discretion at various points in the execution of the Revocation, as well as his ability to call into action the commissioners and bureaucrats connected to the police force. Amongst these numerous commissioners, Nicolas Delamare became his most trusted collaborator, charged with the most delicate matters, including many religious affairs. Described as a “fervent Catholic,” he was the commissioner of the most important of the Parisian quartiers, the Ile de la Cité. Throughout the 1680s, and particularly in 1685 and 1686, Delamare’s reports on Protestants and new converts in Paris were a key source of information for the royal household, and the daily communication between Seignelay and La Reynie often revolved around the execution of the king’s wishes following Delamare’s report. As a result of his ability to quickly communicate this type of essential information to the king, and his ability to respond with equal speed to the king’s demands, La Reynie and his police structure served as the most direct link between the people of Paris and Louis XIV during the implementation of the Revocation.

82 Saint-Germain, La Reynie et la police au grand siècle, 34-5.
83 Ibid., 42. Nicolas Delamare was also the author of Traité de la Police, published in four volumes starting in 1705, and discussing in great detail the formation of the Parisian police and their administration in the late-seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.
This is not to say that older institutions, such as the Parlement of Paris, were ignored, nor that their role in processing the king’s legislation had abated. All of the edicts of the 1680s went through registration in the Parisian Parlement, as was expected by French legal tradition, most with little to no delay. The king’s officials in Parlement, the procureur general and the procureur du roi, represented the king’s interests in court, advocated his legislation and worked to further his agenda, ensuring the passage of these edicts among many other activities. In 1685, the procureur general was Achille III de Harlay, a member of a preeminent judicial family in Paris and the cousin of the archbishop of Paris, François de Harlay de Champvallon. The procureur du roi came from a much more humble background, and is known in the records simply as Monsieur Robert. Robert reported to Harlay, who was in regular contact with Seignelay and other members of the king’s inner council. This communication accelerated in the months surrounding the Revocation, when Harlay was considered an essential player in the execution of the king’s royal edicts. Traditionally, the role of policing Paris had belonged to the Parlement, at least in name, and the power of confirming the ordinances issued by the active police force remained in their hands. Thus, Harlay and, to a lesser extent, Robert were required for the progression of Louis XIV’s social reforms and their execution within the city of Paris.

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85 ———, The Parlement of Paris, 43.
86 Mousnier, The Institutions of France, 1, 574.
The official heads of Parlement, such as the premier président, were in much less direct contact with the king and Seignelay than the king’s officials. This lack of interaction speaks as loudly as the regular correspondence between the king’s officials and Seignelay, demonstrating a sort of subsidization of Parlement to the king’s wishes by this period. John J. Hurt describes this as stemming from Louis XIV’s discipline of the Parlements after the Fronde, and demonstrative of the ability of the monarch to enforce his wishes upon the ‘constitutional’ body of the Parlement in the late seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{87} For our present concern, this monarchical strength with regard to the Parlement of Paris and the reliance of Louis XIV and Seignelay on the king’s officials in Parlement, rather than the présidents, reemphasizes the placement of the enforcement of the Revocation and its ensuing edicts in the hands of Louis XIV’s chosen bureaucracy, with subsidiary roles for the other traditional seats of power. While Harlay may have been outside of the Colbert network, he was directly responsible to the king as his procureur in Parlement and therefore relied upon as a member of the state bureaucracy.

This theme continues when considering two other traditional seats of power in the capital and their roles within the enforcement of the Revocation. The Intendant of Paris, the Marquis de Menars (Jean-Jacques Charron) was directly connected to the Colbert network as the brother-in-law of the elder Colbert, yet played a minimal role in the execution of these edicts. The military governor of Paris, the Duke de Créquy (Charles III de Blanchefort-Créquy), received similar treatment, notwithstanding his noble status. Even the lieutenant civile of Paris, traditionally charged with the administration of justice and police work in Paris, Jean Le Camus, was not so subtly asked by Seignelay to leave

\textsuperscript{87} J. J. Hurt, \textit{Louis XIV and the Parlements: The Assertion of Royal Authority} (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 2002).
the enforcement of the Revocation to La Reynie. The role of the Intendant was a relatively new creation, established under Colbert, but that of the military governor dated back to the Middle Ages. Yet, both were subsidiary to La Reynie and the Parisian police force in the execution of these socio-religious edicts. This suggests that Louis XIV trusted the understanding and loyalty of career bureaucrats such as La Reynie over that of noble titleholders, relying upon their discretion and efficiency to a higher degree. Official statements from the king were addressed to these figures, but daily correspondence was not. In the time-sensitive execution of the Revocation, daily correspondents prevailed.

Paralleling the reliance upon newer bureaucrats, who were perhaps more likely to be personally loyal to Louis XIV and the throne, the Revocation outside of Paris was led by the Intendants. These figures reported directly to Louis XIV from the provinces around the country, and have often been described as symbolic of the changing bureaucratic structure of France under Colbert and Louis XIV. In the period of the Revocation, the Intendants from the southern provinces in particular were in regular contact with the king’s household discussing the recently promulgated edicts and their enforcement. They also interacted regularly with the king’s Secretary for Protestant Affairs, Balthazar Phélypeaux, the Marquis de Châteauneuf. This role was created under

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88 The creation of the role of the lieutenant de police in 1667 removed the police role from this lieutenancy, but the lieutenant civile remained technically above the police, even though all authority was removed from him. Mousnier, *The Institutions of France*, 1, 575.
91 AN TT 433-438. These boxes are full of correspondence primarily with southern Intendants on the execution and interpretation of the king’s edicts. These include discussions of individual cases as well as broader questions of the king’s intentions.
Henri IV and had been maintained by the Phélypeaux family since 1610.92 Charged with twenty-three internal provinces, primarily those with large concentrations of Protestants, this Secretary played an integral role in the administration of Protestant concerns, particularly in the early seventeenth century.93 By the 1680s, however, Phélypeaux was relegated to a secondary role, relying upon the Intendants to effectively end the importance of his position on the king’s councils. His correspondence with these figures and with the provincial bishops does demonstrate, however, the extent to which these figures were left to discuss the king’s wishes amongst themselves, without the regular, direct intervention of the king himself or the Marquis de Seignelay. In comparison with the direct involvement Louis XIV had with the bureaucrats of Paris, this reliance on the systems established by Colbert and the more traditional provincial structure underscored the greater personal interest Louis XIV had in the city of Paris and the greater connection he had with its administrators.

The court of Versailles in the 1680s was much more than a splendid representation of the king’s power, it also reflected Louis XIV’s deep-seated interests in the place of religion in society and the role of education in forming and sustaining both religious and political allegiance. The changes that pervaded the early 1680s separate this period from the years of kingship that preceded it, most importantly in the change of ministerial and

92 S. E. Chapman, Private Ambition and Political Alliances: The Phélypeaux de Pontchatrain Family and Louis XIV’s Government, 1650-1715 (Rochester, NY: Univ. of Rochester Press, 2004). Chapman’s study of the Phélypeaux de Pontchatrain family only discusses the La Vrilliere branch briefly, but suggests that a family controversy over the inheritance of this position was the cause of a rift between the branches. Balthazar Phélypeaux was a member of the La Vrilliere branch, as was his father.

female power around the king. In the city of Paris, Louis XIV grew increasingly reliant on the figure of La Reynie, and the bureaucratic system he had developed there in order to directly monitor the happenings in his capital city. Alongside these bureaucratic changes, the institutions of the Protestant community that had flourished under the Edict of Nantes were also in flux, as the coexistence that had dominated the seventeenth century became increasingly tenuous. Together, these changes in interests and institutions signaled a profound shift in the priorities and questions dominating the heart of France, one that would play out in the years to come.
In the 1680s, the question of education and its role within the French state was intricately connected to questions of religious unity. Pierre Coustel, a Jansenist thinker active in the Little Schools of Port-Royal, summed up many contemporary thoughts on religion and education in his 1687 treatise, writing, “when children were well educated, they were normally pious towards God, submissive and obedient to their Prince, respectful towards their parents, and civil to everyone.” The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes brought these ideals of social and political loyalty to the forefront, as Louis XIV embarked on his plan to convert and reeducate the Protestant minority. These efforts towards reeducation arose not only from Louis’ own ideas about religion and education, but were part of a broad discussion of religious education and social formation in late seventeenth-century France. The role of religion in education, and the importance of educating a child to be a pious, obedient subject, dominated educational discourse in this period, setting a tone that relied upon and reinforced the absolutist ideology of the era. In its connections to the state’s ideals, this period stands distinct from the educational debates of the Reformation and the Enlightenment that preceded and followed it.

The discussion of education in 1680s France reflects a transitional phase between the educational ideals of the Reformation and newer ideas of childhood and education that would arise with the Enlightenment. In its interest in the innocent, unformed nature of a child, it foreshadows the theories of childhood raised by John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and their contemporaries. Yet, in its decided emphasis on the importance of
forming Christian children, well versed in piety and doctrine, it is decidedly influenced by the problems of Reformation Europe. Education in the 1680s was therefore a topic that balanced the demands of social religion with burgeoning interest in the self, a topic that reflected changing ideals and traditional values. This tension between the old and the new makes itself evident in both programs and literature in this period, as French society and its king assimilated these changes into their own sets of ideals.

In this chapter, I examine three major influences on Louis XIV’s understanding of education in the 1680s: his own experience of royal education, the foundation of a girls’ school at Saint-Cyr by Madame de Maintenon, and contemporary publications on the place and meaning of education. Each aspect of this contemporary debate formed an important part of Louis XIV’s absolutist vision of education, shaping the experience of education that arose after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The emphasis he placed on a deep connection between religion and education, and on the ability of education to form political and social sensibilities, came from these practices and discussions. Together they created the unique atmosphere of educational thought found in France in the 1680s, and directly influenced the practice of education after the Revocation.

The French tradition in education stretches back to the foundation of the universities in the middle ages, and was predicated on the foundational connection between education and religion throughout the medieval and early modern periods. The rise of humanism in the Renaissance spurred a move towards educational systems that better reflected the changing social systems of the period, and the growing centralized

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94 P. Coustel, *Les règles de l’éducation des enfants: Où il est parlé en détail de la maniere dont il se faut conduire, pour leur inspirer les sentimens d’une solide pieté; et pour leur apprendre...*
political authority. The emphasis on ancient texts and thinkers reflected the values of the
Renaissance on the whole, and the desire to base contemporary social and political
systems on the Roman model. The use of Latin throughout these schools allowed for a
unified intellectual population across Europe, helping to solidify the social boundaries of
the intellectual and political elite. By the sixteenth century, the humanist approach
dominated the university system, and had spurred the foundation of a system of public
schools throughout France. In the seventeenth century, this humanistic tradition was
firmly ensconced in French educational institutions. Latin was the definitive language of
instruction, dominating the university experience, and the texts studied were almost
exclusively classical. The majority of the young men destined for the political and social
elite attended a school focused on this now-traditional training, providing them with a
common foundation in classical texts and rhetoric.

The increasing influence of seventeenth-century philosophers and scientists like
Réné Descartes, however, forced continual adaptation of these ideals throughout the
century. Descartes’ emphasis on a rational, objective, means of knowledge decentered the

95 A. Grafton and L. Jardine, From Humanism to Humanities: Education and the Liberal Arts in
Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Europe (London: Duckworth, 1986); A. Grafton, Defenders of
the Text: The Tradition of Scholarship in an Age of Science, 1450-1800 (Cambridge: Cambridge
Univ. Press, 1991); C. G. Nauert Jr., Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe
(Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995); P. F. Grendler, "The Universities of the Renaissance
and the Reformation," Renaissance Quarterly 57, no. 1 (2004); R. Chartier, D. Julia, and M.-M.
Compère, L’Éducation en France du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle (Paris: Société d'Édition
der Enseignement Supérieur, 1976).
96 G. Huppert, Public Schools in Renaissance France (Urbana IL: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1984).
Huppert attributes the decline of this public educational system to the incursion of the Jesuits and
the crown’s desire to administer these schools through religious orders. For the humanistic
approach to public schools, see P. F. Grendler, Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and
Learning, 1300-1600 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1989), part II.
97 L. W. B. Brockliss, French Higher Education in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: A
Cultural History (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); M. Fumaroli, L'Age de l'éloquence:
humanistic focus on ancient texts, and opened a path for discourses on gender, morality, and external reality that relied upon contemporary experiences and innovations.\textsuperscript{98} In addressing the increasing influence of new philosophy and the Scientific Revolution, seventeenth-century schools helped to define French thought at the highest levels. As historian Laurence Brockliss claims, “Cartesian and later Newtonian science became as much a part of dominant culture in France as Gallicanism or absolutism…part of the mental set of the institutionally educated Frenchman.”\textsuperscript{99} This educational tradition was, by the late seventeenth century, part of the framework of all discussions of education, providing a stable background for debates over the place and value of education.

The contemporary debate on education also had formative roots, however, in the traditions and questions that had permeated the Reformation and the ensuing Catholic Reformation. With Luther’s writings on the meaning of education, and the rapid expansion of Protestant reformers into European cities, Protestant schools erupted as a means of spreading literate and religious education. The necessity of a basic literate education for access to the Bible, a central tenet of Protestant belief, heightened its importance.\textsuperscript{100} In the wake of this expansion and in an effort to spread the reforms of the Council of Trent, the number of Catholic primary schools increased substantially as well.


\textsuperscript{99} Brockliss, \textit{French Higher Education}, 452.

\textsuperscript{100} G. Strauss, \textit{Luther’s House of Learning: Indoctrination of the Young in the German Reformation} (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1978). In France, Lutheran schools were
Both religious traditions emphasized education infused with religious teachings and beliefs, incorporating secular education into a program designed to create loyal religious believers.

In seventeenth-century France, the effects of Reformation and Catholic Reformation education were felt primarily in the extension of primary schools and the development of new catechisms. Missionary movements throughout the countryside established schools in areas where access to education had been limited, spreading the reforms of the Council of Trent and fortifying believers in their faith. The creation of these schools was driven by a desire to reinforce doctrinal Catholic belief throughout France, and was led primarily by religious orders committed to Tridentine Catholicism. Education in basic literacy, while important, was secondary to religious training.

Alongside the growth in schools, the development of new catechisms for children and adults spurred a rise in the catechetical form of education throughout Europe. These new catechisms expounded upon the teachings of Trent, and allowed some regularization throughout the widespread schools. The use of these texts as the primary means of instruction within these schools enshrined the importance of religious learning. In the debates over education in the 1680s, the background of this educational tradition and the


102 The Jesuits were an important part of this missionary activity, but it also included many smaller groups, including the Capuchins and the newly formed Brothers of Christian Doctrine. Ibid.

expansion in educational access formed an important context within which educational reform and initiatives could be discussed.

**Royal Education in the Seventeenth Century**

The education of royal children had always been a priority to the king and the royal family, but in the seventeenth century the question of the education of the dauphin came to the forefront of public discussion of education as well. The ascension of Louis XIV as a young boy, the birth of his son twenty years later, and the birth of his grandson in 1682 all occasioned an increase in publications on the importance and practice of education. Louis XIV himself was greatly concerned with the role of education for his heirs, following what he saw as an inadequate education on the part of his tutors, and emphasized the role of leading intellectuals and educational theorists in the education of his son and grandson. The practice of education at Versailles served as an avenue for the articulation of political and religious educational ideals, setting the standard for elite education both at Versailles and outside of it, and shaping discussions of the role of education in French society.

More than anything, Louis XIV’s early views on education were shaped by the education he himself experienced, and his dissatisfaction with it. As a young king (he ascended at the age of five), his formative years were spent balancing the requirements of political and traditional education. Under the supervision of Cardinal Mazarin, a battery of instructors, led by the clergyman Péréfixe as preceptor, instructed Louis in language, mathematics, and literature, as well as the traditional pursuits of the king: horsemanship,
marksmanship, and diplomacy.\textsuperscript{104} Yet, later in life, Louis XIV bemoaned the lack of education he received as a child. In his memoirs to his son, he wrote, “it was truly a kind of shame to return so late to studies,” but that he felt deprived of the education that so many men had received, and so “it was better to learn late than to ignore that which one is required to know.”\textsuperscript{105} While some historians have blamed the personal ambitions of Mazarin for his limitations on the king’s education, or the disruptions of the Fronde for its harsh political lessons that distracted from the classroom, from Saint-Simon to modern historians, Louis XIV’s lack of education has been a subject of debate.\textsuperscript{106} Perhaps most importantly, however, the negligent attitude that pervaded his own education reinforced his later predilection for the education of others, and his attention to detail in the education of his own children.

In religious beliefs and attitudes, Louis XIV was educated by his mother, Anne of Austria. A Spanish princess herself, she brought her traditionally Spanish religious practices to the French court, and passed many of them on to her son. Chief among these was the respect for the performed aspect of religion, rather than the details of theological debates. While Anne of Austria respected the theologians at court greatly, and Louis XIV was known for quoting their sermons, the emphasis in education was on the performance of religious belief. The Queen Mother regularly visited convents with her young son all around France, and was highly aware of the benefit of religious ceremonies involving the

\textsuperscript{104} Wolf, \textit{Louis XIV}, 23-5.
\textsuperscript{105} \textit{Memoires} of Louis XIV, quoted in Lacour-Gayet, \textit{L'éducation politique de Louis XIV}, 68.
\textsuperscript{106} Voltaire, \textit{Le siècle de Louis XIV}; H. Druon, \textit{Histoire de l'éducation des princes}, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Paris: Lethielleux, 1897); Lacour-Gayet, \textit{L'éducation politique de Louis XIV}. Saint-Simon blamed the king’s lack of education for many of the failings of the king and his ministers, and Voltaire commented on the king’s scanty formal education as an aftereffect of the Fronde and Mazarin’s rule. This trend continued through the Third Republic, when the most detailed of these studies appeared.
These experiences were formative for the young king, and created a set of religious expectations that followed him well into adulthood. His understanding of the public nature of his Christian kingship, in particular, was derived in part from his mother’s influence.

Louis XIV understood his primary educational responsibility to be towards his son, the education and formation of his heir. To this end, he was actively involved in the choosing of the Dauphin’s preceptor and educators. He chose the most learned men of the realm to serve as the educators for his eldest son, and placed the prelate Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet at their head. Bossuet had been trained in the Jesuit college of Navarre and the Sorbonne and, by 1670, was one of the leading preachers at court. His nomination to the preceptorship reflected Louis’ intentions to place learned churchmen around his son, and to reinforce French Catholic principles in his education. He wrote to Bossuet in 1676, when the Dauphin was fifteen, saying, “… regarding my son, I recommend to you always to cultivate his mind with the necessary care for him to understand his duties towards himself, toward me, and above all toward God.” This trifectate of responsibilities dominated the king’s understanding of his son’s education; the Dauphin was not only his personal responsibility, as a father, he was also heir to the throne, and Louis XIV was heavily invested in using his education in order to form the best possible monarch. In a letter to Pope Innocent XI in 1679, Bossuet elaborated on the king’s ideals for the Dauphin’s education, writing how Louis XIV wanted that his son

learned first the fear of God... and then all of the knowledge fitting to such a great prince, that is to say those which can serve for government and to maintain a kingdom, and at the same time those which can in any way perfect the spirit, produce politeness, attract to a prince the esteem of learned men.\textsuperscript{110}

This description demonstrates the comprehensive nature of the education Louis XIV expected for his son, and the attention Bossuet and the other tutors were required to pay to not only the traditional education of a young nobleman, but the formation of a king.

Louis XIV’s personal memoirs, begun in 1661, were intended as a guide for his son, and are the clearest explanations of the king’s own beliefs on education for kingship. In these memoirs, written over a seven-year period, Louis XIV explained the successes and failures of his first years as king, and the place of various figures and institutions within his realm. He hoped, as he explained in his opening paragraphs, to fulfill “the common and natural obligation of fathers to instruct their children by example and by counsel.”\textsuperscript{111} In his case, this counsel included discourses on the trials of war (and his successes), on international policy, on court politics, and many other considerations that would have only pertained to the highest nobility. In writing these memoirs, Louis XIV acknowledged the unique position of the French king, both divine and absolute, and attempted to codify what he saw as its most important elements. This self-reflection in the name of education was perhaps egoistic, but also underscores the central place Louis XIV saw for education in the formation of his son as king. He relied upon the tutors to teach him as a nobleman, but took it upon himself to truly instruct him to be a king. The power of education clearly extended, in his perception, well beyond traditional forms to


\textsuperscript{111} Louis XIV, \textit{Mémoires for the Instruction of the Dauphin}, 21.
include the practical and historical knowledge Louis XIV saw as essential to the practice of kingship.

In Bossuet, Louis XIV found an educator deeply invested in the Christian foundations the French state and seventeenth-century society. His allegiance to the absolutist understanding of monarchy was unquestioned, and he played a prominent role in justifying Louis XIV’s political authority. Bossuet wrote and spoke on the education of princes on various occasions, with his *Politics Derived from the Words of Scripture* most illuminating his educational philosophy.\(^{112}\) Not published until after his death, this work justified absolute monarchy in early modern society and discussed in detail the way in which royal, paternal, powerful leaders could be developed. As historian Henri Druon explained, Bossuet believed that “to give, as he proposed, truly useful lessons, it would be necessary to teach the Dauphin that, as grand as his power one day would be, there would be rules to follow, obligations to fulfill.”\(^{113}\) Bossuet’s balance of ruled expectations—guided primarily by scripture—and unbridled possible power created an atmosphere in which the Dauphin could be at once cognizant of his place in society and aware of the responsibility it entailed. In this way, Bossuet’s description of an ideal princely education dovetailed nicely with Louis XIV’s practical expectations for his son’s education.

The religious focus of all of Bossuet’s work, including his understanding of monarchy, directly influenced the education of the Dauphin. Bossuet emphasized religious devotion and an understanding of Catholic teachings above all other things, infusing all levels of the Dauphin’s education with an appreciation for Christianity. His

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belief the sacred nature of kingship, and the responsibility of the prince to respect this
power and use it for the good of his people, created an educational atmosphere in which
forming the Dauphin’s nature was the central goal.\textsuperscript{114} Bossuet was heavily influenced by
the Catholic doctrine of original sin, washed away by baptism, and approached the
education of the young Dauphin as an essential tool to distance the Dauphin from worldly
temptations and shape his Christian nature.\textsuperscript{115} Bossuet’s impulse towards entirely
Christian education defined the both the secular and religious subjects taught to the
Dauphin for, as Druon explained, “in forcing himself to form his student in belles-lettres,
Bossuet never lost sight of another design: the Latin explications should serve also to
inculcate solid principles of piety and of virtue.”\textsuperscript{116} In all subjects, the fundamentals of
Catholic teaching underscored more secular subjects.

The secular aspects of the Dauphin’s education were rooted in the humanistic and
Cartesian traditions of seventeenth-century France, adapted by Bossuet to fit the needs of
the prince. Lessons in philosophy, rhetoric, logic, and history were all infused with an
appreciation of the Christian authors above all others, and classical pagan texts were only
used when they could be edited with a Christian focus. He employed the talents of
contemporary intellectuals to produce editions of classical literature, both Christian and
Roman, for the Dauphin—a collection of works that influenced educational and
intellectual discourse much more broadly, as they were also sold for public use.\textsuperscript{117} These

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{113} Druon, \textit{Histoire de l’éducation des princes}, 1, 326.
\item \textsuperscript{114} Ibid., 255-6.
\item \textsuperscript{115} For Bossuet, this was inexorably linked to his understanding of government’s role in
overcoming personal failings.
\item \textsuperscript{116} Druon, \textit{Histoire de l’éducation des princes}, 1, 262-4.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Ibid., 266-71. Druon argued this collection had little effect on the Dauphin himself, but great
influence on the educational community. His belief in an overall disinterest on the part of the
Dauphin in higher education clearly influenced this opinion.
\end{itemize}
texts were not limited to classical editions, but covered the range of intellectual programs. Hubert Jaillot, the famous mapmaker, produced an introductory geography text;\textsuperscript{118} Jean Roy, a member of the Parisian Parlement, created historical tables of all of the royal houses of Europe;\textsuperscript{119} Claude-Oronce Fine de Brianville, a historian and a member of the Dauphin’s educational team, published collections of historical and sacred paintings.\textsuperscript{120} Together, these works introduced the king’s educational program to French intellectual society, underscoring the importance placed on education in the royal household and the place of literate education within a more general educational framework.

One of the most interesting productions from this series of works designed for the Dauphin was a Latin grammar written by Bossuet himself. The work was never published, but its existence was widely known, and it was used for multiple princes after the Dauphin.\textsuperscript{121} While a Latin grammar in itself was perhaps not noteworthy, Bossuet composed the text in French, not Latin. This deviation from the traditional texts reflected Bossuet’s modernist leanings, and his acceptance of the virtues of the French language. He explained the choice as a pragmatic one, intended to ease the Dauphin’s learning of the new language, but the consideration of the equality of the French language as a teaching instrument spoke to Bossuet’s connections to new French intellectualism.\textsuperscript{122}

Interestingly, the first Latin grammar published in French was connected to the Jansenist

\textsuperscript{118} H. Jaillot, \textit{Nouvelle introduction à la géographie, pour l’usage de Monseigneur le Dauphin}, 1663.
\textsuperscript{119} J. Roy, \textit{Nouvelles tables historiques, par ordre du Roy, par l’usage de Monseigneur le Dauphin}, 1675.
\textsuperscript{121} Druon, \textit{Histoire de l’éducation des princes}, 1, 260. Fénelon and Fleury both used this Latin grammar in the late 1680s.
schools at Port-Royal, an affiliation that would have greatly disturbed Bossuet and his royal patrons. Yet both grammars spoke to the contemporary desire to connect education more directly to French culture and society, an impulse found throughout Bossuet’s approach to the education of the Dauphin.

The approach taken to the education of the Dauphin exemplified the absolutist vision of education Louis XIV professed, while influencing that vision itself. Bossuet had, in the education of the Dauphin, a unique opportunity to shape French discourse on education and he used it to emphasize the connections between state, society, and religion that he found essential to the construction of the French monarchy. In doing so, he created a practical experience of education for Louis XIV that conformed to his ideals. The education of the Dauphin was, in many ways, an experiment in the educational approach of the late-seventeenth-century, one that built upon contemporary understandings of religion and monarchy while furthering the king’s understanding of the power of education.

While the actual education of the Dauphin was of key concern to Louis XIV, it also existed as a means by which education could be discussed in early modern France. In addressing this highest concern, these writers were able to address both the realities of formative education and questions of political and religious meaning behind this education. Pierre Nicole’s *On the Education of a Prince*, published in 1670, was emblematic of this trend. Nicole was a known Jansenist, affiliated with the convent at


Port-Royal that had plagued Louis XIV in the 1650s. His publication in 1670 was of a different vein, however, significantly more focused on the religious requirements of princely behavior. While Nicole had little, if any, contact with Bossuet and others charged with the education of the Dauphin, the publication of this treatise was an effort to bring his educational ideals into the public discussion of education in general, framed by the Dauphin’s education. In assessing the traits necessary for a prince, and the means by which these traits could be established in a young boy, Nicole spoke in general terms about his ideal monarch and his place in society. This treatise clearly underscored the importance of education in forming this ideal monarch, and the importance of balanced religious and secular portions of that education. In writing as such, Nicole brought attention to the religious meaning of the education of a prince, and the central goal of creating a prince whose conscience and education equipped him to lead a country. The ideal monarch Nicole described was similar in many ways to the Dauphin himself, but the abstract nature of Nicole’s treatise allowed him to comment more generally on the role of princes as political and religious authorities.

Alongside this discussion of ideal education came discussions of the practice of education, and publications of texts and grammars dedicated to the Dauphin. The majority of these texts were written by educators not affiliated in any way with the education of the Dauphin himself, yet who saw their educational works as contributing to the educational discussion. Latin grammars, translations of Virgil, introductions to geography and history, and catechisms were all dedicated to the Dauphin in the 1660s.

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and early 1670s, allowing the authors to connect their work and expertise to the most well-known educational prospect in the country. The truly educational quality of these works reinforces the centrality of actual pedagogy in all discussions of the Dauphin’s education, and the importance with which it was considered in French society.

In the 1680s, the discussion of princely education reemerged forcefully with the birth of the king’s grandson, the Duc de Bourgogne. The continued prominence of discussions of education within public forums speaks to the importance of the discourse on education at the time of the Revocation, and the simultaneous public and royal interest in educational theory and practice. In 1684, for example, an unknown author included a treatise on princely education in his larger work on the moral teachings of great men, both religious and classical, combining self-reflection with educational goals. Gabriel Morelet, an abbot affiliated with the king’s brother, published a treatise on moral education in 1686, drawn from the royal galleries at Saint-Cloud. Perhaps most importantly, Claude Fleury, an educator at court who had worked with both the princes de Conti and the king’s illegitimate son, the count of Vermandois, published his *Treaty*...

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These writers continued to express the importance of education for the formation of men and their society, focusing on the continued importance of religious education within secular studies. Claude Fleury wrote, “among all the instructions necessary for mankind, the care of the soul is the most pressing...the first study must therefore be of virtue.” He emphasized the importance of internal piety to a greater extent than Bossuet, but built upon the royal tutor’s interest in the religious overtones of all education, and the necessity of education in moral formation above all else. By continuing the discussion begun with the education of the Grand Dauphin, these authors and tutors kept the importance of education at the forefront of intellectual discussion, both at court and outside of it.

Royal education was not only a priority within the royal family, therefore, but also one means by which education was discussed in French intellectual circles. The primacy of this question derived partially from the emphasis Louis XIV placed on education, and partially from its ability to serve as a point of discussion for questions of morality, the place of religion, and the meaning of monarchy. In the 1680s, this discussion was formative in reinforcing the place of education in Louis XIV’s social policies. The educative measures he took in the Revocation were informed by an understanding of the innate connection between education and political and religious formation, and his experience of the education of his son allowed him practical experience of the utility of such education. Education was, in many forms, an essential part of Louis XIV’s court at Versailles.

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129 C. Fleury, *Traité du choix et de la méthode des études* (Paris: P. Auboin, 1687). While Fleury’s work was ostensibly for a wider audience, it was defined by his experience in princely education.
130 Ibid., 111.
Madame de Maintenon and Saint-Cyr

Louis XIV’s morganatic wife, Madame de Maintenon, held an important place at the court of Versailles and, because of her personal interest in education, discussions of education at court increased under her influence. She had risen to prominence as the governess of the king’s illegitimate children, and continued this interest in education long after she became Louis’ wife. In the 1680s, the foundation of the royal school at Saint-Cyr was one of her chief occupations. This school, designed for the poor daughters of noble families, dominated her time in the mid-1680s, and therefore was important to Louis XIV, who took an interest in the foundation from the beginning. The daily experience of education that Saint-Cyr provided kept education at the forefront of Louis XIV’s attention in the 1680s, as Madame de Maintenon worked to open a school that reflected many of the new norms of education pervading France in the late-seventeenth century. This school, and its ideals of recreating French society through education, represented the possible place of education in French social reform, serving as a model for the type of regeneration Louis XIV envisioned with the reeducation programs of the Revocation.

The focus on non-wealthy daughters of nobleman was a particular project of Madame de Maintenon’s, arising from her own less fortunate heritage. Her youth had been spent in French colonies, as her father tried to remake his fortune after squandering his father’s inheritance. After her return to France at the age of eleven, young Françoise was raised by her Catholic aunt and educated in the convent system.\(^{131}\) Not only did this education provide her with the literary basis to enter Parisian society as a young woman,

\(^{131}\) Her parents died shortly after their return to France, leaving Françoise d’Aubigne in her family’s care.
but affirmed her Catholic faith and provided her with the opportunity to firmly renounce her family’s Protestant heritage.\footnote{Desprat, Madame de Maintenon.} This experience left Maintenon with a deep sense of the inequalities inherent in the French noble system, and the importance of education for less-wealthy noble families. She believed that a school like Saint-Cyr, outside of the convent system but for young girls, would simultaneously reinforce these girls’ religious beliefs and prepare them practically for their lives as provincial noblewomen.

The inspiration for the school at Saint-Cyr came not only from personal experience, but also from Maintenon’s vast correspondence with religious, educational, and literary scholars around France. As a member of the Parisian intellectual scene in the 1660s and 1670s, she forged connections with many of the leading minds of the time, and continued these interactions after her introduction and placement at court. Her discussions with these leading men and women of the French intellectual scene allowed her to fully form her own ideas about the place of women and education in French society, and granted her access to a variety of opinions. The birth of salon culture in the 1660s and its evolution throughout the late seventeenth century, as well as the continuation of French religious revivalism in the form of Catholic Reformation thought, deeply influenced her ideas on society and education.

Chief among these influences were her own confessors, the abbots Gobelin and Godet de Marais. The Abbé Gobelin became her confessor and spiritual director in 1668, counseling her as she moved from a participant in the Parisian intellectual scene to court.\footnote{Ibid., 123-5.} Her regular correspondence with the abbot dealt with all manner of personal and spiritual matters, and his advice on her interaction with the court and its worldly pursuits
was a defining force in her life. In emphasizing the contrast between her religious devotion and her actions at court, Gobelin forced Maintenon to consider the larger implications of her role as the king’s confidant and spiritual model. Her many letters to him emphasize the new pressures she felt as she rose in the court, and her efforts to reconcile her personal spirituality with the worldly demands and temptations of her newfound position.\footnote{M. d. Maintenon, \textit{Lettres, volume 1 (1650-1689)}, ed. J. J. Conley S.J. (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2009).} Her early involvement in education, and her later dedication to the school at Saint-Cyr, can both be seen as emerging from these efforts to find her own place, and her own religious center, at the court of Versailles.

In 1684, she turned to a younger confessor to supplement the work of the Abbé Gobelin: the Abbé Godet des Marais, a rising star in French religious circles.\footnote{Desprat, \textit{Madame de Maintenon}, 234. She remained in close contact with the Abbé Gobelin as well.} Known for his more temperate line on worldly influences, Godet des Marais was deeply connected to the leading court preachers of the day, and much less interested in separating her from the worldliness of court life. His presence and correspondence reinforced Maintenon’s quest to find a balance between the court and her religious devotion.\footnote{Maintenon, \textit{Lettres, volume 1 (1650-1689)}.} Much more than Gobelin, Godet des Marais was also intimately involved in the foundation and administration of Saint-Cyr. Maintenon corresponded regularly with him throughout 1685 and 1686 regarding the details of the school and continued this advisory role more formally after the foundation of the school, later naming him its confessor and director. By connecting Madame de Maintenon’s personal spiritual life and her interest in the school, Godet des Marais served as a multi-faceted guide, allowing her
continued interaction with worldly concerns while maintaining a high level of religious devotion.\textsuperscript{137}

Madame de Maintenon was also connected to the burgeoning salon culture in Paris, having spent her early life there. Her connections to the literary world began with her introduction through her first husband, the writer Paul Scarron, but she quickly became known for her own wit and charm. She formed friendships with many of the leading *salonnières*, including Madame de Scudery, who based a character in *Clélia* after her, and Madame de Lafayette.\textsuperscript{138} These friendships continued into her time at court, as she maintained a correspondence with many of them.\textsuperscript{139} The focus on practical wit and charming interaction emphasized in the salons can easily be seen in the initial inspiration for Saint-Cyr, even though the school moved away from the courtly and salon influences in the early 1690s. Madame de Scudery’s *Conversations* was used in the school until 1691, when it was replaced by one written by Maintenon herself.\textsuperscript{140} The idea of an independent woman, able to manage her own affairs and that of her household remained a central goal throughout the life of the school, however, and was highly influenced by Maintenon’s correspondence and interactions with such women in Paris. Together with the religious influence of her confessors and correspondents, Madame de Maintenon formed a unique school that differed from the traditional convent school education.

\textsuperscript{137} A. Berthier, ed. *Lettres de Messire Paul Godet des Marais, Evêque de Chartres, à Madame de Maintenon* (Paris: Dumoulin, 1907). Letter 15 is particularly illuminating of his approach towards courtly life. The other major influence on the spiritual life of Saint-Cyr was François de Fénelon, who will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

\textsuperscript{138} M. Bryant, "Françoise d’Aubigné, Marquise de Maintenon: Religion, Power and Politics - A Study in Circles of Influence during the Later Reign of Louis XIV, 1684-1715" (University of London, Queen Mary and Westfield College, 2001), 30-1.

\textsuperscript{139} Maintenon, *Lettres, volume 1 (1650-1689).*

prescribed for young noblewomen and reflected the influence of these contemporary modern women.

Madame de Maintenon viewed the establishment of a school at Saint-Cyr as one of her crowning achievements as an educator. Beginning in the early 1680s, she worked within her network of educational thinkers and religious leaders to establish the best form for such a school. She began a regular correspondence with Madame de Brinon, an Ursuline nun who had founded schools at Rueil and Noisy, and became heavily involved in the administration of these schools. Letters from her to Madame de Brinon in 1684 and 1685 were filled with administrative details: the procurement of various foodstuffs, the arrangement of young girls’ entrances into the school, and instructions on the education they would receive there. ¹⁴¹ Clearly the school and the girls occupied her thoughts, and took much of her time. This growing involvement did not go unnoticed by the king, and Maintenon’s interest in regular involvement spurred a decision to establish a school closer to Versailles that would allow her to remain active both in court life and in the school’s educational ideals. In late 1684, Louis XIV announced his decision to establish a school at Saint-Cyr to the royal council, and worked for its foundation throughout 1685. ¹⁴²

Louis XIV formally established the house and community of Saint-Louis, at Saint-Cyr, in June 1686. The school was part of a larger community of professed sisters, who served as instructors and religious guides for the girls. In the official letters of foundation, Louis XIV praised the work done throughout his kingdom to educate young gentlemen, but stated his belief “that it is neither less just nor less useful to provide for the education

of young girls of noble birth.” He continued to explain the school’s focus on the daughters of deceased noblemen, particularly those whose fathers had died in royal service. This school was intended to ensure these girls were “raised in the principles of a true and solid piety, and receiving all the instructions fitting to their birth and their sex” so that they may be “examples of modesty and virtue” throughout the kingdom. The dual emphasis on piety and instruction pervaded the ideals of Saint-Cyr, and reflected not only the involvement of Madame de Maintenon, but that of Louis XIV. In insisting that these girls not only received this instruction for their own edification, but that this instruction would benefit the realm at large, Louis XIV made the school at Saint-Cyr into a small model of his vision for the role of education in seventeenth-century France.

Louis XIV’s personal involvement in the foundation of the school was not limited to the issuance of formal letters, but extended far beyond. A note written in Louis XIV’s own hand sometime in early 1686 demonstrates his deep-seated interest in the details of the foundation, as he listed out the required steps still needed to ensure the foundation of the school. From the high level need to “issue the lettres patentes” to the details of “furniture of all sorts,” including the “choice of a state councilor to assist with the accounts,” the list reveals a man highly involved in every stage of the foundation. Not only did he see his role as king, founding and funding the school, but he was interested in the men and women who would run and staff it, the subjects the girls would study, and the rules and constitutions they would follow. This in-depth experience of education

142 Ibid., 23.
143 Archives départementales de Yvelines (ADY) D 93.
144 ADY D 93.
145 ADY D 93.
gave Louis XIV an avenue to explore the practical details of education, allowing him to consider the power of education in a tangible way.

One of the main ways Louis XIV was able to show his support for the school was in its funding, which was entirely granted by the king himself. In their letters of foundation, Louis XIV explicitly required that the school and its superiors “receive no gift or inheritance, if it is not from the kings our successors, or from the queens, nor acquire any such funds.”\textsuperscript{146} In the place of this regular form of funding, Louis XIV established a series of revenues from the crown that would allow the school to run without financial concern, and receive its charges without charging their families. The entirety of the land around Saint-Cyr was ceded to the school, with all of its incomes, and they were granted a yearly pension from the crown itself of 100,00 \textit{livres}. In case this amount would prove insufficient, Louis XIV also provided that the old, rich, abbey of Saint-Denis would be united, financially, with the new school.\textsuperscript{147} All of this support underscored the interest of the crown in the school, and ensured its survival long past the personal lives and interests of Louis XIV and Madame de Maintenon.

While the role of the king was essential and indisputable, the school itself—its values, goals, and administration—were shaped primarily by Madame de Maintenon. Nearly simultaneously with the issuance of the official letters of foundation, Louis XIV issued another brevet establishing Madame de Maintenon as the founder of the community, and thus entitled to continual access to and support from the community.\textsuperscript{148}

In light of the movement towards clausura in seventeenth-century France, and the religious

\textsuperscript{146} ADY D 93. The only exception to this rule was granted to Madame de Maintenon, in her role as founder and patroness of the school.
\textsuperscript{147} ADY D 93. Lettres patentes, June 1686.
\textsuperscript{148} ADY D 93. Brevet, June 18, 1686.
nature of the foundation,\textsuperscript{149} Louis was granting access on the level of a queen to his morganatic wife,\textsuperscript{150} while acknowledging her centrality to the school and its sisters. This status was reiterated by the bishop of Chartres, who, with papal approval, named her the “spiritual superior” of the community of Saint-Louis.\textsuperscript{151} These formal documents reiterate the lived reality of Madame de Maintenon’s central role in founding, running, and shaping the community at Saint-Cyr. Maintenon herself was completely aware of the power she held over the school. A letter from her to one of the teachers at Saint-Cyr in late 1686 reminded her how they had “all the spiritual and temporal authority in our hands, the King and the Bishop [of Chartres] are ready to do all that we could desire; it is upon us to place things in a state of perfection.”\textsuperscript{152} For her part, Maintenon appeared determined to use this power to firmly establish the school and its goals long after her own life; the acknowledgement of both Louis XIV and the church’s hierarchy ensured the survival of the institution and allowed for Maintenon’s continued prominence.

Maintenon’s role in establishing the school at Saint-Cyr extended far beyond financial and political support; she was instrumental in shaping the school’s goals and educational approach. The school’s attention to the daughters of impoverished nobility was a clear gesture towards her own educational experiences but, perhaps more importantly, her interest in forming women who were able to perform their roles within seventeenth-century noble society fundamentally shaped the educational atmosphere at Saint-Cyr. In her many writings for and speeches to the classes at Saint-Cyr, she stressed

\textsuperscript{149} The community of sisters was formally a secular one, unaffiliated with any religious order, until 1692, but remained under the supervision of the Bishop of Chartres.
\textsuperscript{151} Lavallée, \textit{Madame de Maintenon et la maison royale de Saint-Cyr (1686-1793)}, 67.
the place of the virtuous woman within society, influenced by her experiences in salon culture, at court, and as a fervently religious woman. In contrast to the convent schools that dominated the educational sphere for young noblewomen, Madame de Maintenon envisioned a school that was simultaneously practical, worldly, and deeply interested in religious virtue. Classes were taught in reading, writing, history and arithmetic, but the students were also expected to attend daily Mass. They were instructed in the noble pursuits of art and dance, but also in religious history and moral reasoning. The duality of these instructional goals reflected Madame de Maintenon’s ideal noblewoman, who was at once religious, hardworking, and able to participate in the highest circles. In an address to the students, she explained their “moral and religious education is the principal end of the Institute,” although the more temporal elements of this education would allow a woman to “overcome her natural weakness and delicacy in order to take care of her household.” Maintenon saw their success in French society as contingent upon the mastery of all of these skills; a properly pious, useful, French noblewoman would be welcomed anywhere. The creation of this ideal noblewoman served as an example for Louis XIV’s plan for social reform through education, and Maintenon’s educational plan,

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152 Letter to Madame de Pérou, October 25, 1686, cited in Prévot, La première institutrice de France : Madame de Maintenon, 78.
with its emphasis on religiosity, underscored the centrality of religion in all educational endeavors.

For all her involvement, Madame de Maintenon relied on a series of men and women to run the daily operations at Saint-Cyr, and to help with the educational goals. Chief among these was Madame de Brinon, the superior of the community and the daily administrator of the school. She and the Dames de Saint-Louis were charged with executing Maintenon’s vision, and Brinon’s reports on the progress of various girls and programs were essential to Maintenon from the beginning.156 In the establishment of the school, Maintenon was adamant that it not be a traditional convent school, but rather an ostensibly secular institution dedicated to education. She believed that this setup would ensure that “nothing would prevent the Dames from giving themselves completely to the educational needs of their students,”157 rather than splitting their focus between devotional activities and educational demands. Brinon’s letter of commission from the Bishop of Chartres, in June 1686, cited not only her obedience as a professed sister, but also “her experience in governing a secular house and in the education of young girls” as reason for her nomination as superior of the new community.158 In defining the community as outside the traditional convent model, Madame de Maintenon hoped to separate it from the form of convent education that she believed could not adequately prepare noble girls and retain control of its educational ideals, rather than cede them to a centralized order.

156 ———, Lettres, volume 1 (1650-1689).
158 ADY D 155.
The most important roles within the Saint-Cyr community may not have been the sisters, however, but rather those of her inspirational colleagues: her confessor, and the religious thinker François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon. The Abbé Gobelin was named the first spiritual superior of the house, placing him in a position to guide the religious devotions and beliefs of the sisters and students. François de Fénelon was a Parisian-educated priest who, by the mid-1680s, had become a leading religious figure at court. He had worked closely with the archbishop of Paris and Bossuet on the conversion of Protestants in Paris, placing him in the king’s view, and his connections to court life had ensured his quick rise at Versailles. He was recognized by Louis XIV and the Dauphin as a leader in education, and he was named preceptor to the king’s eldest grandson, the Duc de Bourgogne, in 1689. Louis XIV’s later acknowledgement of Fénelon's educational ideals, in the shape of this nomination, reinforces the central place Fénelon and his works held at court. With Fénelon and the other religious men associated with the house and school, Maintenon both reinforced the religious and educational aims of the school and more closely connected it with court life and the ideals of education circulating around the king.

Fénelon was deeply interested in the question of education, both on a princely level and for the general nobility, and had composed a treatise *On the Education of Girls* in the early 1680s. He, like Maintenon, valued an intertwined moral and intellectual education that would prepare noblewomen for a practical life. His ideal educational

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159 ADY D 154.
160 Fénelon was named spiritual advisor to the convent of the Nouvelles-Catholiques in 1676, and also went on a conversion mission following the Revocation.
161 Claude Fleury was named sub-preceptor. Fleury’s 1686, *Traité du choix et méthode des études*, follows many of the same precepts as Fénelon's.
162 The treatise was first published in 1687, but is widely believed to have been written earlier.
program brought together “practical economics, basic religious training, and a safe dose of carefully selected classical and modern literature.”\textsuperscript{163} This combination would ensure, in his view, the formation of women interested not in the worldly pursuits of the salon and court life, but in the proper management of their household and family. He took the opposition between the court and rural aristocratic life further than Maintenon in this belief, and connected the necessity of practical moral education to his disparagement of the centralized luxury of court life.\textsuperscript{164} In his emphasis on the religious and moral nature of this education, however, his treatise espouses beliefs that closely mirror Maintenon’s ideals for the school. He emphasizes early instruction in religion, primarily through the use of stories and imitation,\textsuperscript{165} and the importance of “rules of Christian modesty” in the training of girls in particular.\textsuperscript{166} Fénelon’s religious instruction clearly relied upon the intertwined nature of secular and religious pursuits, so that a child did not feel pushed towards religion, but rather drawn towards it. In this way, the school at Saint-Cyr can be seen as an articulation of these ideals, and of the emphasis on religious instruction found in the absolutist vision of education.

Fénelon’s interest in the education of girls, like that of Maintenon’s, diverged from the popular discussion of princely education, making his work particularly useful for Maintenon and Saint-Cyr. His treatise argues for the necessity of educating girls from a very young age, even though he believed them intellectually inferior and ill-suited for any sort of leadership, primarily because of their supporting roles in the household. As he

\textsuperscript{163} Lougee, \textit{Le Paradis des Femmes}, 175.
\textsuperscript{164} Carolyn Lougee Chappell connects Fénelon's educational and philosophical writings, arguing that his approach to female education was inexorably shaped by his ideas of social reform. Ibid., 173-87.
\textsuperscript{165} \{Fénelon, 1966 #173@chs.6-8
\textsuperscript{166} \{Fénelon, 1966 #173@73\}
wrote, “the limits of a woman’s learning—like that of a man’s—should be determined by her duties” to her household and her family, and should not extend beyond that realm. \footnote{F. d. l. M. Fénelon, \textit{The Education of Girls}, trans. H. C. Barnard (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1966), 75.}

His articulation of these duties and obligations dominated the second half of the treatise, suggesting that his interest in female education was derived from his larger understanding of noble society as reliant on these idealized French noblewomen. In this collation of social idealism and interest in education, Fénelon closely mirrored the interests of Madame de Maintenon, and the king himself. While his focus on a revitalized noble society away from the court was entirely contrary to the king’s own interests, Maintenon’s connection with Fénelon over educational ideals was obvious. He watched the formation of the school closely, and was named confessor and spiritual advisor at Saint-Cyr in 1689. His nomination at this time, shortly after the first publication of \textit{De l’éducation des filles}, was a reaffirmation of the agreement between Maintenon and Fénelon and of his central role in the formation of the school. \footnote{From 1689 forward, the tenor of the school shifted away from the court involvement discussed below and towards a greater religiosity. Fénelon’s disgrace in 1697, however, led to some creative rewriting of his intervention. While the shift cannot be attributed solely to his nomination and increased involvement, it clearly points to his central role in the ideology of the school.}

When compared to the daily involvement of Madame de Maintenon, François de Fénelon, and the other leaders of Saint-Cyr, the involvement of Louis XIV after the school’s foundation seems paltry. Yet, as the king, any involvement at all was patronage, and his regular interest in and visits to the school afforded it special status at court. Shortly after its opening, the school received visits from many of the leading women at court, all interested in Madame de Maintenon’s newest creation. Louis XIV’s first official visit did not occur until September, due to his health, but the fact that he came, in person,
to speak with the sisters and visit the girls, spoke volumes to the court of his commitment to the school. His patronage, both financial and personal, afforded the school immediate status for the noble girls it educated and for the type of education practiced there.

Court society at Versailles followed Louis XIV’s moves voraciously and, accordingly, Saint-Cyr quickly held a place in court life. In the memoirs of court, Saint-Cyr was, in the 1680s, an extension of court life, understood as an essential piece of understanding the king’s wishes. The king’s frequent visits to establish the school in early 1686 were recorded by the Marquis de Dangeau with the same interest as were the king’s hunting trips, as part of the daily record of the king’s interests. One of the more striking examples of the court’s participation in the life of Saint-Cyr was the performance of the play *Esther*, written by Jean Racine, in January of 1689. The subject was considered properly edifying and moralizing by Madame de Maintenon, and the king himself attended the premiere of the play. The presentations of the play that followed were spurred by the king’s recommendation of the play, and the court’s desire to attend and participate in anything commended by the king. The continued showings of the play were driven entirely by this interest, and reflect the place the community at Saint-Cyr held at court in the late 1680s.

The role of Saint-Cyr changed drastically in the 1690s with the union of the community with the abbey of Saint-Denis and the dismissal of Madame de Brinon. The school became further removed from court life and its intrigues, and its educational

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principles began to adhere slightly more to the tradition of convent education. Madame de Maintenon remained heavily involved, but the regular visits of courtiers ceased as the community became more traditional. This shift was largely a result of the Quietism scandal that rocked French religious circles in the early 1690s. Fénelon’s involvement with the religious movement, and its concurrent entrance into the school under the influence of Madame de Brinon, spurred Louis XIV and Madame de Maintenon to work to distance themselves, and their school, from the condemned theological theories. Its initial role in court society, and the heavy personal involvement of Louis XIV, came to an end. Nonetheless, the formative influence it played on the educational discussions of the 1680s, particularly in the royal household, remain central to our understanding of the idea of education in the 1680s. This school, and its close connections to Louis XIV himself, represented a moment of educational clarity for Madame de Maintenon and her community, providing a practical model of religious education for social reform.

An Educational Moment

The literature published on education in the 1680s and early 1690s reflects the transitional nature of this era and its delicate balance between nascent notions of childhood and traditional ideals of fidelity to the prince and forced social religion. In this period, between the Catholic Reformation and the Enlightenment, new ideas about education and childhood were discussed with some regularity in the intellectual world,

171 Lavallée, Madame de Maintenon et la maison royale de Saint-Cyr (1686-1793), 89-93.
172 Quietism advocated a full retreat from worldly interaction, in order to best interact with God. Its main advocate in France was the writer Madame Guyon, who became close to both Madame de Maintenon and Archbishop Fénelon. Her condemnation by papal bull in 1687 resulted in her incarceration in France, and Maintenon and Fénelon both had to distance themselves from the movement.
with a number of treatises published in the decade. Each of these works spoke to a
distinct set of concerns for French society and its political and religious overtones, but
together they present an image of an educational moment, a moment in which the
creation of a Catholic society was possible and education was the means by which it
could be achieved. Examination of several of the key questions of this genre—the
meaning of childhood and gender, the role of educational institutions, and the place of the
state and religion within them—illuminates the nature of education in this period.

As writers of all educational treatises took care to remind us in their introductions,
education was vital to social, moral, political, and personal success. In the opening
paragraphs of his treatise, Abbé Laurent Bordelon entreated parents, “regard the
education of your children as one of the principal objects of your work and your care.”
Pierre Coustel proclaimed a similar sentiment in his 1687 work, laying out the utility of a
good education for parents, students, the Church and the state. His summation, “when
children were well educated, they were normally pious towards God, submissive and
obedient to their Prince, respectful towards their parents, and civil to everyone,”
clearly united personal and societal goals. This connection was echoed by David
Porcheron, who wrote, “everyone knows that it is no less important to the state than to
individual families that young people, particularly those of an illustrious birth, receive a
good education.”

This emphasis on education was not unusual for the writers of
educational treatises, but their descriptions of the worldwide valuation of such education
emphasizes the larger relation of these works to French society. The sentiments expressed

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175 D. Porcheron O.S.B., *Maximes pour l’éducation d’un jeune seigneur, avec les instructions de
so clearly here pervaded the works written in this period, expressing a sort of educational moment in social consciousness in the late seventeenth century. Whereas earlier works pushed their relevance more forcefully, these authors assumed an audience receptive to educational theories and interested in educational methods.

One constant throughout these treatises was the use of the verb *élever*, to raise, as the main description for the act of educating. This choice of language is significant, reflecting a multi-dimensional understanding of the place of education. The verb *instruire*, to instruct, was used alongside *élever*, providing a legitimate contrast to the less tangible goals addressed in the question of raising a child. Where lessons in literature, Latin, and even Church history were discussed in terms of instruction, the overarching goal of Christian education, with all its moral and religious overtones, was to raise a child properly. In the 1687 treatise by Pierre Coustel, for example, he opened the work contrasting pagan education with Christian. He used the word *instruire* to describe ancient educational systems and the word *élever* to describe the ideal Christian relationship to literate learning. Two meanings of *élever* are invoked simultaneously: Christians are to be above, spiritually, basic humanistic skills, and are to be educated in a way that allows for this type of formation. The choice of vocabulary that was omnipresent within these treatises underlines the deep meaning and purpose of education in the late seventeenth-century.

Ideas of the child and of childhood were evolving in the late seventeenth century, and discussions of early education reflect this shift. In addressing the education of

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children in particular, writers were clearly aware of the distinct nature of childhood and
gave it particular care. This period of life was the focus of many religious and humanistic
treatises, as the child became an object of interest in discussions of society.\textsuperscript{177} In a 1687
treatise on the education of girls, one author argued, “childhood, where the passions are
the most in motion and most impetuous…is the best time to cultivate children” for it is
“the age that is most susceptible to good or bad impressions, and the best for creating
holy habits.”\textsuperscript{178} Here, the child’s perceived innate nature made it an ideal time for
education. Another author furthered this argument, writing, “young people, if they are not
well raised and well taught, easily let themselves follow the pleasures and diversions of
the time… if they are not formed in piety and religion from their youngest age, before
habits and vices possess them entirely.”\textsuperscript{179} The religious necessity of childhood education
became ever clearer, as not only were children prone to immorality, but were able to be
shaped into pious Christians with the effort of education.

The question of early childhood formation arose at least in part from the Catholic
belief in original sin, and the idea that man tended towards immorality. While baptism
absolved believers from this original sin,\textsuperscript{180} leaving children in a state of innocence, the
world was viewed as a corrupting place. Pierre Coustel opened his 1687 treatise

\textsuperscript{177} H. Cunningham, \textit{Children and Childhood in Western Society since 1500} (New York:
Longman, 1995). The creation of the idea of the child was most famously discussed by Philippe
Ariès, but more recent scholarship has largely discredited his thesis. P. Ariès, \textit{Centuries of
\textsuperscript{178} \textit{Instruction Chrétienne pour l'education des filles, tirée des Maximes de l'Evangile, des Saints
\textsuperscript{179} \textit{De l'eduation des Ecclesiastiques dans les Seminaires; Où sont contenus diverses pratiques
de pieté convenables à toutes sortes de personnes seculieres et regulieres, pour remplir
saintement leur journée}, (Paris: Claude Barbin, 1699), 27.
\textsuperscript{180} Catholic baptism was still practiced at birth, though Protestants tended towards adult, or older
child, baptisms. This schism did not remove the idea of original sin, but placed greater emphasis
on knowing belief.
distinguishing between two sorts of birth: physical birth descended from Adam and touched by original sin, and a spiritual rebirth with baptism and an acknowledgement of Jesus. Alongside this separation comes two types of education, physical, or worldly, and spiritual. Tellingly, Coustel used the verb “to teach” when referring to worldly education and “to raise” when discussing spiritual education. This duality allows Coustel to emphasize the importance of pious, religious education, even as he lists “virtue, sciences, and civility” as the three main goals of education. Without religious understandings of sin and devotion, this education would have taken a very different shape. In a treatise on Christian marriage and the education of children published in the same year, another author emphasized the role parents must play in keeping this worldly influence away from their children, writing,

When children begin to speak and walk, one must quickly apply oneself to forming them; and the first thing one must guard against is to work early on to uproot this ostentation, and the stubbornness that comes naturally to children, even to those who are well-born.183

He continued to say, “one must regard them as capable of committing a great sin before God, for by a bad example, or by poor counsel, one corrupts the innocence of a child, and brings them to sin.”184 This belief in the ability of early influences and examples to shift a child’s morality gave the writer the imperative to insist on good behavior and parenting skills while simultaneously emphasizing the inherent negative influence of the outside world. The concept of a sinful world shaped the writer’s choices, both in the type of education he proposed and in his approach to childhood.

182 Ibid., 7.
183 Instructions Chrestiennes sur le Sacrement de Mariage et sur l’Education des enfans, (Paris: Josset, 1679), 231.
184 Ibid., 233.
The question of a child’s innate nature is one of the most illuminating issues confronted by educational writers, as it demonstrates the transitional state of educational thought in the 1680s. While the discussion remained shaped by an understanding of human nature formed before birth, most writers were also exploring the importance of education and environment in shaping this nature. In a treatise published in 1687, this tension was obvious. Beginning with an admonition, “Christian Mothers should observe to raise their daughters in a Christian manner from their earliest childhood, when their nature is not yet hidden by dissimulation, nor corrected by prudence,” the author continued to explain, “when their nature is flexible one must give them the first tendency to good affections and commendable habits that one should have.”\textsuperscript{185} Here, the innate nature of a child required early intervention, so as to best see their tendencies, yet was simultaneously flexible and in need of shaping. In a similar work from 1690, David Porcheron extolled the necessity of working within the confines of a child’s nature, writing, “one must oneself conform to Nature, which providence has shattered in all its works, and without searching elsewhere for new plants, content oneself with carefully raising those which are placed in us.”\textsuperscript{186} His emphasis on self-knowledge allowed him to then emphasize the importance of a proper education and environment for forming this young nature, again balancing between an understanding of the child both formed before birth and shaped by society. By 1694, in a different treatise, the Abbé Bordelon was more confident in his assessment of the importance of education, writing that the first impression you give your children “is so strong, that it even becomes mistress of nature.

\textsuperscript{185} Instruction Chrétienne pour l’education des filles, tirée des Maximes de l’Evangile, des Saints Peres, et des Conciles, 35.
\textsuperscript{186} Porcheron O.S.B., Maximes pour l’éducation, 6.
Nourishment, one says, passes nature.”\(^\text{187}\) His writings on the ability of education to shape a life, from business pursuits to piety, emphasized the formative role of the people and ideas around a child much more than his innate nature. In the 1680s, this understanding was still nascent.

The role of the mother within a child’s education also points to the transitive nature of educational literature in the 1680s. Education was consistently described as beginning at a very young age, while still at home, and therefore part of the responsibility of a Christian mother. Many authors made a clear distinction between the education given at home, and that of preceptors or in schools, emphasizing the more personal nature and greater responsibility of parents, even if their children attended schools. In a 1687 treatise, one author wrote,

> the Holy Spirit presses home the interest that Fathers and Mothers have in instructing their Children, when he said that he who raised his Son well, would be extolled, and that he would be his crown and his glory… A daughter well-raised and well-instructed by her Mother would be the joy of her house, the crown of her family, the ornament of her friends and the happiness of her city.\(^\text{188}\)

Citing the Bible, the author united educating one’s children with one’s own personal salvation, making the importance of parental guidance (in a gendered fashion) clear. The author’s earlier admonition that only a “cruel and unnatural”\(^\text{189}\) mother would be disinterested in the education of her children played upon this Christian imperative and united it with questions of human nature. In his interpretation, a mother was naturally inclined to educate her children, yet her actions in that vein also aided her own religious salvation. This sentiment was in clear contrast to the responsibilities of preceptors, whose

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\(^\text{188}\) *Instruction Chrétienne pour l'education des filles, tirée des Maximes de l'Evangile, des Saints Peres, et des Conciles*, 5.

\(^\text{189}\) Ibid., 4.
role in forming character remained, but was discussed largely without reference to natural actions and personal interest. This idea of a natural connection and responsibility between parents and their children is at once religious and physical, a balance between worldly and devotional.

The physical connection between a mother and her child in the form of breastfeeding was often associated with the mother’s proscribed educational role. One author wrote, “the entire nature of a newborn child depends almost entirely on the meal of she who gives him milk. Do you want, therefore, that your child take after you? Do not give him a stranger’s breast, nourish him yourself.”\(^{190}\) The presumed transfer of character traits through breastfeeding underscored an understanding of the mother as inherently tied to her child, while admonishing parents to emphasize this connection through their actions. In a 1679 treatise on the education of princes, another wrote of the differences between princely education and that of regular children, arguing “the greatest advantage of the peasant is that his wet nurse is his mother, who loves him with a natural affection, and whose milk is not subject to be altered like those of a Prince’s wet nurse.”\(^{191}\) Later in the treatise, he continued this argument in a discussion of a mother’s authority, “because we are in the years where children are governed by women, and where they are in effect more proper than men in the conduct of childhood, which because of its weakness needs the tender care of a mother.”\(^{192}\) The mother’s intrinsic connection to her children was linked to her ability to best raise and educate her children, exploiting ideals of female nature and creating an educational role based on these principles. This type of education,

\(^{190}\) *Instructions Chrestiennes sur le Sacrement de Mariage et sur l'Education des enfans*, 195.

\(^{191}\) *De l'Education des Enfans, et particulièrement de celle des Princes*, (Amsterdam: Daniel Elsevier, 1679), 3. He continued to argue that a wet nurse’s tendency towards anger and pride would be transferred in her milk.
informal and natural, directly connected to the question of character formation that pervaded the 1680s. Again, the balance between predestined character traits, those that could be reinforced through breastfeeding, and the importance of environment and education must be negotiated.

Within this literature, a subset of treatises was particularly interested in the education of girls and the question of their place within society. While the concerns about character formation and the environment surrounding a young child remained central, discussions of modesty and restraint increased substantially. Quesnel’s letter regarding the education of girls in convents focused heavily on the ability of women to sustain or destroy the institution of Christian living in what he saw as a period of decadence. His insistence that girls were more susceptible to these temptations had its roots in the role of Eve as the first temptress, even as he discussed in detail the purity and modesty of which girls were capable.193 A 1687 treatise on the education of girls expressed a similar sentiment, writing, “as their nature is more gentle, they are also more accommodating and docile. It is necessary, therefore, to inspire a love of virtue in them early, and remove from them the air of vanity that they so easily acquire.”194 The question of nature for girls was still linked to an understanding of separate genders and traditional beliefs about feminine docility and susceptibility to temptation. Alongside these concerns for the formation of girls themselves was an equally important strain of argument that focused on their roles as future mothers. Quesnel closed his exhortation with the reminder that “their houses will become Christian homes, and the modesty, reserve, chastity, and all the

192 Ibid., 201.
193 P. Quesnel, Lettre d'un Ecclesiastique aux Religieuses qui ont soin de l'éducation des Filles (Brussels: Eugène Henry Friex, 1685), 1-10.
virtues that Jesus Christ teaches us will make many Christian families.”\textsuperscript{195} The responsibility for female education was therefore not only due to their nature, but also to their roles within French society. While direct interest in the education of girls can be seen as a harbinger of the educational interest of the Enlightenment, the emphasis placed upon their innate female nature and their roles as Christian mothers clearly connected this impetus to the more traditional discussions of previous periods.

The Christian, Catholic, nature of the education discussed in these treatises further emphasizes the education of the whole person, body and soul. Education, in this interpretation, is not only for worldly knowledge, but also for building piety and the self-awareness necessary for a Catholic life. As David Porcheron wrote,

\begin{quote}
our care tends towards two ends, which unite and end with the design of making an honest man. The first regards the body, and the other regards the soul, for these two parts are reciprocally dependent, and convergent together with actions, they both need to be cultivated.\textsuperscript{196}
\end{quote}

This sentiment was echoed in the organization of his treatise, as well as in that of the majority of these works. Alongside discussions of the proper teaching of science, philosophy, and literature, the necessity of creating “true piety” and Christian virtues held an important place. The Abbé Bordelon went as far as to caution parents to “beware of the success of all the education that you will give [your children], if you have not filled their spirit with solid principles of Religion.”\textsuperscript{197} The perceived dichotomy between worldly life and its immorality and a truly Christian life informed much of this

\textsuperscript{194} Instruction Chrétienne pour l'education des filles, tirée des Maximes de l'Evangile, des Saints Peres, et des Conciles, 12.
\textsuperscript{195} ———, Lettre d'un Ecclesiastique aux Religieuses qui ont soin de l'education des Filles, 22.
\textsuperscript{196} Porcheron O.S.B., Maximes pour l'éducation, 58.
\textsuperscript{197} Bordelon, La Belle Education, 41.
discussion, and education was discussed as a means by which to encourage a child
towards the ideal Christian life.

This impetus towards religious education had its roots in the educational principles
of the Catholic Reformation as a means of combating religious “heresy.” In the wake of
the Reformation, both Catholics and Protestants established schools throughout Europe
designed to expand their following and solidify the understanding of believers. For
Catholics, this meant a large-scale expansion into areas previously ignored in an effort to
strengthen their rural base.\(^\text{198}\) In the educational literature of the 1680s, this sentiment
pervaded, in both the language used and the type of piety encouraged. In a 1687 treatise
dedicated to Madame de Maintenon, one author correlates the religious education
extolled in his treatise to Louis XIV’s effort to exterminate heresy in France, describing
both as fundamentally Christian actions.\(^\text{199}\) In Pasquier Quesnel’s 1685 treatise, he called
upon papal authority as a means of justifying his educational agenda, asking religious
women to devote themselves to retaining Catholic ideals and virtues in young girls.\(^\text{200}\)
These written allegiances, connecting the authors to the Catholic Church, helped sustain
the importance of religious-based education. In connecting the education of children with
the formation of Catholic adults, the treatise writers were able to create a larger
significance for their work, giving it broader meaning than the basic literate education of
children.

\(^\text{198}\) The Catholic impetus towards educational expansion has been widely discussed, most
Press, 1989); ———, *The Religion of the Poor.*

\(^\text{199}\) *Instruction Chrétienne pour l’education des filles, tirée des Maximes de l’Evangile, des Saints
Peres, et des Conciles.*
Many of the treatises emphasized subservience to the Catholic Church and the importance of sacraments in childhood formation within their educational program, further connecting education to religious practice. Pierre Coustel wrote of the benefits of education for parents and children, as well as for the Church and the state, “for it is from [a good education] that comes the consolation of parents, the peace of families, the tranquility of the State, and finally all the glory and honor of the Church.”

Coustel’s Jansenist leanings shine through in closing his discussion on the necessity of education with a citation from Augustine, claiming the pressing necessity of education for the State and the Church in this particular time, full of immodesty and disorder, yet he too emphasized the importance of baptism and sacramental rites as a formative influence on children. He wrote of the importance of preparing children for their sacraments of communion and confirmation, so they might receive the entirety of God’s grace at that moment. For baptism, he emphasized the importance of explaining the rite to children as they grew, alongside explanations of the fundamentals of Christian belief. The Abbé Bordelon clearly laid out the goals of religious education, instructing teachers to

accustom them to venerate all things regarding Religion, like the Books of Holy Scripture, the councils, the Traditions, the works of the Fathers, the Decisions of Higher Clergymen, the Ceremonies, and finally for all people consecrated at the Altar. That they may never dispute without necessity the Mysteries and points of Religion, but they will believe with a simple, firm, and respectful faith; that they submissively receive and faithfully observe that which the Church teaches and orders.

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200 Quesnel, *Lettre d’un Ecclesiastique aux Religieuses qui ont soin de l’education des Filles*. Quesnel published in exile in Belgium for his Jansenist beliefs, which may account for the ferocity of his professed allegiance to the Pope.


202 Ibid., 32-3. Coustel was a teacher at the little schools of Port-Royal, and his writings were based off that experience, as discussed below.

203 Ibid., 201-17.

204 Bordelon, *La Belle Education*, 42.
This list of religious observances, and its stated educational goal, reveals the depth of Catholic formation many writers believed possible with the proper education. Even towards the end of a period focused on religious divisions, the fundamental goal of religious education remained adhesion to one set of beliefs. In the years following the Revocation, this educational intent remained essential.

The educational work of seminaries and convents was idealized in many educational treatises, partially as a result of their innate ability to focus on religious, Catholic, education. In a treatise first published in 1688, one author analyzed the daily work and educational approaches of seminaries as examples for both religious and secular institutions. The seminary’s place as a respite from the world, described as “a school for all sorts of virtues, a refuge for innocence, a safe port, a tranquil spot far from the world and its noise,” made it an idealized spot for restoring Catholic virtue and correcting any faults.205 The author’s purported goal of influencing education both inside and out of the seminaries, and the reprinting of this work at least once, demonstrates a level of interest in expanding religious education to those who were not joining the religious life. In his exhortation to convents and nuns, Pasquier Quesnel put even greater emphasis on the value of religious education, calling upon religious women,

to say to you that this obligation most directly regards those whom, like you, have professed to raise and instruct young girls in Christian piety, because not only does the Pope address himself directly to them, but the public rests on their care and their application to the education of these young children.206

205 De l’eduation des Ecclesiastiques dans les Seminaires; Où sont contenuës diverses pratiques de pieté convenables à toutes sortes de personnes seculieres et regulieres, pour remplir saintement leur journée. The author for this work is unknown, but the printing privilege was granted to an unnamed Oratorian preacher, for a first publication in 1688.
206 Quesnel, Lettre d’un Ecclesiastique aux Religieuses qui ont soin de l’education des Filles, 9.
He clearly saw public, secular, education as failing in its education of young girls, and education in a convent as the primary means of forming Catholic women. In both of these works, as well as in others that discuss education outside of the home, education within a religious setting was the best way to ensure a child became a religious adult, well-versed in theological differences and Catholic beliefs and practices.

Even as religious dogmatism and religious institutions held a central place in many educational treatises, the formation of pious, virtuous children remained the main point of discussion. An understanding of the secular world and its vices and the benefits of a religious education pervaded most treatises, with discussions of religious formation regularly coming before any discussion of literate or social education. In Pierre Coustel’s work, for example, it was not until the third book of four that any discussion of reading, sciences, or languages entered in; in contrast, his entire second book was devoted to the development of virtues and the avoidance of vices. A 1679 treatise had a similar set of priorities, with five chapters devoted to literate education and seventeen to the development of virtues and the suppression of vices. As the Abbé Bordelon advised students, “work above all things to make yourself a good Christian. Christianity being right renders reason right. One cannot know how to be a perfectly honest man, if one is not a good Christian.” This focus guided the educational literature of the period; none of these treatises discussed education without discussing its Christian nature and otherworldly goals. In concentrating to this degree on religious education, the literature of the period reaffirmed its affinity with previous educational ideals and its transitional nature on the edge of the Enlightenment.

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208 *De l’Education des Enfans, et particulièrement de celle des Princes*.
Political allegiance played a much smaller role in these educational writings, even as the political importance of education was emphasized. For David Porcheron, politics was another art or science to be taught, alongside polite manners and literature. Placing it within this smaller part of the treatise demonstrates its relative worth, a part of worldly life that is both necessary and less important.\footnote{209} In these treatises designed for non-princely audiences, the most interesting discussion is of the importance of education for political gain. Pierre Coustel emphasized the role of princes in ensuring education for their subjects, writing, “When injustice and vice predominate in a country, and when corruption becomes widespread and public; it comes from a fault in good education. It is for this reason that Christian princes always have taken great care to apply themselves to that which concerns their subjects.”\footnote{211} In this explanation, as part of Coustel’s description of the utility of education for the State and the Church, princely interest in furthering education will ensure the Christian behavior of his subjects and, therefore, the allegiance of God in all of his endeavors. Abbé Bordelon expressed a similar sentiment in 1694, writing, “it works equally for the interests of individuals as for the interest of the public, that Children will be well raised.”\footnote{212} By emphasizing the public interest in supporting the education of children, these authors appealed to the notion of a Christian state while playing with the idea of general public interest. The political gains possible through widespread education were deemphasized in favor of an understanding of princely, Christian states, supported by a thoroughly Catholic society.

\footnote{209} Bordelon, \textit{La Belle Education}, 139.  
\footnote{210} Porcheron O.S.B., \textit{Maximes pour l'éducation}, 113-23.  
\footnote{211} Coustel, \textit{Les règles de l'éducation des enfants}, 1, 18. This argument immediately follows a recounting of the story of Achan from the Book of Joshua, in which the sin of one individual threatens God’s support of the Israelites.  
\footnote{212} Bordelon, \textit{La Belle Education}, 6.
While many of the texts discussed above have no given author, those that do illuminate the connections between various religious and political currents in late seventeenth-century France. Pierre Coustel and Pasquier Quesnel, two authors frequently discussed above, were avowed Jansenists and connected to the Jansenist experiment in education at Port-Royal. This school for young boys was founded in 1643 as a response to the Jesuit dominated schools of Paris, and affiliated with the convent at Port-Royal that served as the center for Jansenist thought. With the destruction of this convent in 1661, Louis XIV attempted to put an end to the Jansenist controversy. While this was ultimately unsuccessful, the schools did close. Pierre Coustel taught at these schools in the 1650s, and was therefore intimately connected to the newer ideas of education found there. The emphasis on instruction in the French language, and the inclusion of thoughtful religious education throughout the day were both hallmarks of this educational system. While Pasquier Quesnel was not directly affiliated with these schools, he was, by the late seventeenth century, one of the leaders of the Jansenist movement. His close friendship with Antoine Arnauld, one of the founders of Jansenism and of the little schools at Port-Royal, definitively influenced his ideas on education, as seen in his letter on the education of girls. The effort on the part of these authors to be a part of the French debate on education underscores the connection between religious discussions and educational approaches. The little schools of Port-Royal closed quickly, and the Jansenist controversy was a continual problem for the monarchy, but Jansenist writings on

214 Barnard, *The Little Schools of Port-Royal*.
education, particularly their emphasis on instruction in French, helped shape the idea of education in the 1680s.

David Porcheron and Laurent Bordelon, also publishing and discussing education at this time, in many ways represented the opposite side of the educational debate. They were both traditional intellectuals, trained in the university system, and affiliated with prominent noble households and religious foundations. David Porcheron was a Benedictine monk, and the librarian at the Abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Près, one of the largest in the Parisian region, well-educated in history, literature, and theology.\footnote{Dictionnaire des lettres françaises: Le dix-septième siècle, 808.} Laurent Bordelon was the preceptor of a noble family, and published broadly on religious, philosophical, historical, and scientific questions. One literary compendium described him as a representative of the late seventeenth century, writing, “as mediocre of a writer as he was, Bordelon remains a rather good witness of the tastes and literary modes of his time.”\footnote{Ibid., 177.} These two men, in contrast to the Jansenist writers, can quite easily be described as part of the mainstream court and Parisian culture, connected to leaders in both places. Their work represented an intellectual opinion on educational approaches, as filtered through the highest circles, and their religious affiliations nearly guaranteed the approval of the Catholic Church. The broad consensus between their work and that of Quesnel and Coustel, therefore, demonstrates an interesting arrangement of intellectual opinion. These men, so different in many ways, did not disagree on the general shape and meaning of education.

The unique agreement here about the importance of education, from all edges of the political and religious spectrum, marks this ten-year period as distinct. Historians have
long looked at the 1680s as the beginning of the so-called pre-Enlightenment, a moment in which the intellectual shifts of the eighteenth century began to take place. Paul Hazard saw the “ferment” of the late seventeenth century as a harbinger of the disorderly intellectual development to follow, a sign of the impending changes in society, politics, and culture.²¹⁸ More recently, Joan de Jean analyzed the debate over modernity found in contemporary publications to describe a “fin de siècle” culture on par with more modern experiences, connecting it with the formation of literary debates and cultures that would define the coming century.²¹⁹ Yet this interest in the disorder of the 1680s and early 1690s minimizes the unity found in the educational debate from such disparate sources. The consensus found here, between intellectuals, religious figures, and the king himself, on the importance and meaning of education speaks to the ideal of French Catholic society and the relative optimism that education was the means by which it could be achieved. As the seventeenth century came to a close, and newer, more radical ideas about the childhood and religion entered the debate, this agreement would disappear. The 1680s, with all its religious questions, allowed for this rare unity.

The temporal comparison between the general consensus of the 1680s and the intellectual debates that followed is most evident in a study of one of the most important Enlightenment texts on education, published nearly simultaneously with these treatises: John Locke’s Some Thoughts Concerning Education. Based upon his earlier Essay Concerning Human Understanding, in which he argued for the natural blank slate (tabula rasa) of man, his treatise on education expounded on the importance of education within

²¹⁹ DeJean, Ancients against Moderns: Culture Wars and the Making of a Fin de Siècle.
Chapter 2

this philosophy.\textsuperscript{220} In this work, Locke laid out his understanding of the role of education in forming sensibilities and the means by which these educational could, and should, be introduced to young minds. He emphasized reason as the guiding principle of education, arguing for the importance of childhood curiosity and leaning by doing as means by which children could experience the world and escape ignorance.\textsuperscript{221} This rational thought was rooted in a religious understanding of rights and laws,\textsuperscript{222} yet was more interested in the formation of virtue than traditional religious education.

Locke’s philosophy was perhaps a natural extension of the ideas nascent in contemporary French educational writings, yet represents a fundamental shift in the place of religious education within this theoretical ideal. Locke’s discussion of virtue was separate from questions of religious devotion, as he did away with the concept of innate human nature and the need to atone for original sin. Instead, the formation of the self and the formation of a child were self-evidently important, necessities for a moral man within contemporary society.\textsuperscript{223} He continued the discussion of the centrality of forming a virtuous man, writing, “learning must be had, but only in subservience to greater qualities,”\textsuperscript{224} while connecting reason and morality on a scale unseen in previous writings.\textsuperscript{225} The importance of early education seen in French treatises was also found in Locke’s writings, as he described the necessity of learning early in life to “submit his will


\textsuperscript{223} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{224} Locke, \textit{Some Thoughts Concerning Education}, 115.

\textsuperscript{225} Yolton, "Locke: Education for Virtue."
to the reason of others, particular to patriarchal authority in education. Yet, as historian Nathan Tarcov explains, this patriarchal authority was decidedly separate from political or religious authority for Locke, even as his methods for governing children can be extrapolated to hold political meaning in the governing of men and human nature. The overall nature of Locke’s writings therefore can be understood to be much more of the philosophical climate that followed in the Enlightenment than of the educational debates that arose from the religious questions of the seventeenth century.

As the eighteenth century began, and progressed, many of the ideas expressed in Locke’s writings found fruition in the ideals of the Enlightenment. In contrast to the meaning of education and the educational environments discussed above, a simultaneous rise in the role of the nuclear family in forming children and the idea of preparing children for worldly activities outside of the home led to the development of schools with less religious affiliation and greater attention to the child as a distinct member of society. Historian Natasha Gill summarized the philosophical differences towards education, writing,

> the difference between traditional and Enlightenment ideas concerning habit and the social environment is that during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries habits shift from being experiences that can negatively or positively affect an already determined nature, enhancing or suppressing vice or virtue, to being the essence of nature itself, the fundamental channel through which character and identity are formed.

This shift was concurrent with a move away from the dominance of Christianity, a move that historians have often discussed as one of the defining factors in Enlightenment
thought. In comparison to the educational ideals expressed at the time of the
Revocation, this was a wholly different world. The overarching interest in the formation
of a Catholic society through education that dominated in the treatises of the 1680s and
early 1690s in France fell aside, separating the debate and ending this educational
moment.

The debate on education in the 1680s expressed the unique set of social concerns
and religious responsibilities felt at the time of the Revocation. French educational
traditions, from the humanistic universities to the Catholic Reformation, fundamentally
shaped Louis XIV’s understanding of education and its importance in French society,
providing the impetus for his own vision of education driven by social and religious
reform. Royal education was definitively his most personal experience of education, but
the rising influence of Madame de Maintenon brought the issue of education and even
more definitively into court culture. The formation of the school at Saint-Cyr, along with
the education of the Dauphin and his sons, forced Louis XIV to consider the place of
education in a practical way, and emphasized his personal involvement in these
questions. The intellectual debate on education—its shape, role, and meaning—took note
of these courtly shifts in publications on princely education, but also carved out a space
for discussions of social religion and educational practice that were at once connected to
Louis’ absolutist vision of education and forcing it forward. In this way, the debate
expressed a transition between the religious formation emphasized in the Catholic
Reformation and more secular, public, schooling found in the Enlightenment. At this

time, at the height of Louis XIV’s absolutist power, French educational ideals were
deeply connected to the king’s own goals and interpretations, and the experience of the
Revocation began to put them into practice.

\[230\] R. Darnton, "In Search of the Enlightenment: Recent Attempts to Create a Social History of
Chapter 3
The Years of Revocation

The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in October 1685, although often understood by historians as a moment of rupture for religious toleration in early modern France, was neither the first, nor the last, blow to Protestantism in late seventeenth-century. The early 1680s were filled with harbingers of the king’s attitude toward conversion and his displeasure with the contemporary state of religious coexistence. As Louis XIV systematically dismantled the social, religious, and political protection afforded to the Protestant community by the Edict of Nantes, he made clear his conviction that social unity could only exist alongside religious uniformity. In doing so, he not only limited the participation of Protestants in French society, he made it increasingly difficult for this community to protest these growing restrictions.

In order to best understand the Revocation and its aftermath, a clear picture of the progression of the early 1680s and the details of the Revocation is essential. In this chapter, I will discuss the series of edicts that led up to the Revocation, the edict of revocation itself, and its immediate aftermath in the city of Paris. These edicts, when taken together, portray a monarchy deeply invested in reform of French society through the conversion of all its Protestant members. Not only did Louis XIV see the growing number of conversions as a reinforcement of his ideals, but the continued public support through the Revocation allowed the progression of these social reforms from their early incarnations through a total revocation. The careful execution of these edicts, and the Revocation in particular, was closely monitored by the king, as the social, religious, and economic restraints on French Protestant society accelerated.
A Gathering Storm: Edicts of the 1680s

Louis XIV’s concerted efforts to restrict Protestant society began in earnest in 1680, with a series of edicts that would grow increasingly restrictive as the Revocation approached. Reflective of his larger concern with the creation of a Catholic France, these edicts were simultaneously a means by which Louis XIV could test the reception of his more ambitious reforms and a method of removing the ability of the French Protestant community to effectively respond to his limitations. His commitment to social reform through conversion permeated these edicts, as the government increasingly regulated every aspect of a Protestant’s life and cleared the way for Protestant conversions.

One of the earliest edicts issued restricting Protestants from any specific job removed Protestant midwives. Their presence at the birth of both Protestant and Catholic children gave them, in the eyes of the crown, undue influence over the question of baptism. This power was particularly important in light of the Catholic belief in the utility and necessity of infant baptism, and the role of midwives to perform emergency baptisms on infants who were not expected to survive. The king’s concern with the salvation of a mother or child who might be in danger from childbirth prompted an overall ban on Protestant midwives, at the births of Protestant or Catholic women.\(^{231}\) This edict represents a larger debate over the question of baptism, as it was viewed by Protestants as a means by which Catholic society could enter into their personal lives at the earliest moment and representative of the crown’s obvious preference for Catholic practice. In one response to this edict, a Protestant writer emphasized how the temporary baptism often given by Catholic midwives was “directly contrary to our religion,” yet a common

\(^{231}\) “Déclaration portant defenses à ceux de la religion pretendue reformee de faire les fonctions des sages-femmes,” 20 February 1680.
experience for Protestants using Catholic midwives. He described how such a baptism was also a sacrilege in the Catholic Church, as it was forced, attempting to call upon religious tolerance to his favor. Yet, he must also have known that this was futile, as the rest of the document cited the impracticability of the king’s restrictions on midwives, particularly in the southern regions where Catholic midwives were few and far between, and the freedoms given to Protestants in the Edict of Nantes and the following edict of 1669 to practice any profession they chose. Even with all these reasons, however, the back of this request has one word on it: “Neant.”

The French monarchy’s belief in the importance of infant baptism gave rise to a detailed response to these criticisms, appended to the previous request. It first stated that if the Protestants did not believe in lay baptism, then this Catholic baptism would not count, and therefore it was inoffensive. More importantly, it called upon the writings of St. Thomas to say, “that with regard to the children of heretics one can administer baptism to them without the consent of their parents; and the reason is that heretics who have given their name to the Church once through baptism are under their jurisdiction, and the Church has the right to exercise it over their children.” Even though by this point the majority of French Protestants were not converts from Catholicism but rather born into the faith, freedom of conscience was only granted by the king and “one cannot say that that which regards baptism is included in this freedom of conscience.” This distinction of ‘heretic’ is an important one, classifying the Protestant religion alongside the medieval heresies instead of as a distinct religion. Another contemporary document reminded Catholics that while not all theologians approved of the baptism of Jews or

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232 AN TT 431. The author of this request is not given, nor is any exact date, though it obviously follows the publication of this edict.
infidels against their parents’ wishes, as “fathers are by natural right the absolute masters of their children’s education,” heretics always fell under the jurisdiction of the Church. As such, “it is true that the child living in heresy will one day profane his baptism, but this does not concern the Church, who has done all that she should to save those who are under her care.”

This repeated invocation of theological support for the forced baptism of Protestant children demonstrates the spiritual and political centrality of this issue to both groups. By deeming the Protestants heretics, the monarchy was able to justify their incursion into baptism without directly violating the terms of the Edict of Nantes. Yet, obviously, the spirit of the law was not maintained, as was repeatedly pointed out by the Protestant minority. These theological and political discussions had real implications on the practice of baptism around France, cutting into an established program of coexistence. As such, Louis’ issuance of this edict and the resulting debate over midwives and baptism can be understood as an early testing ground for the social reforms he desired. While the Protestant community responded quickly with an argument based in theological and political custom, the edict stood. The question of baptism remained a source of tension in Protestant responses, forming the basis for subsequent debates as Louis XIV proceeded with his efforts to restrict Protestantism and force conversions.

Louis XIV issued two more important edicts restricting Protestant society in 1680: one on June 25 prohibiting Catholics from converting to Protestantism, and a second on December 2 forbidding interconfessional marriages. In the prohibition against Catholic

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233 AN TT 431. This is most likely St. Thomas Aquinas, but is not specified in the text.
234 AN TT 431.
conversion, Louis claimed “displeasure that Catholics availed themselves of the
concession of this freedom [of conscience] to pass to Protestantism, against our intentions
and those of our predecessor Kings,” clearly demonstrating his dissatisfaction with the
open conversion available to all of his subjects.\textsuperscript{236} The edict forbidding interconfessional
marriages stuck a similar chord, bemoaning the “public scandal and visible profanation of
a Sacrament” as well as the “continual temptation to pervert themselves” that Catholics
faced in these marriages.\textsuperscript{237} Intermarriage had long been opposed by both Protestant and
Catholic churches, with Catholics decrying the inclusion of Protestants in a Roman
Catholic sacrament and Protestants envisioning such incursions as the end of the
Protestant faith in France. They also created a whole set of problems for Louis’ view of a
unified French state: children and their education, inheritances and legal rights, and the
basic furthering of a state of coexistence.\textsuperscript{238} The issuance of this edict was therefore a
step in reinforcing the Catholic community’s views on intermarriage, while building upon
Louis’ own desire to restrict the growth of the Protestant community. Both edicts worked
within the framework of the Edict of Nantes, ostensibly, couching the king’s
dissatisfaction with interconfessionalism in a language of communal protection. Yet they
began the attack on Protestant social rights, starting with the family, the heart of any
society.

\textsuperscript{235} Luria, \textit{Sacred Boundaries}, 180–4. Luria shows baptism as a source of tension particularly
within interconfessional marriages, but also provides many examples of successful
interconfessional baptisms.

\textsuperscript{236} “Edit portant defenses aux Catholiques de quitter leur Religion pour professer la pretenduë
reformée,” 25 June 1680.

\textsuperscript{237} “Declaration portant defenses aux Catholiques de contracter Mariage avec ceux de la religion
pretenduë reformée,” 2 December 1680.

\textsuperscript{238} Luria, \textit{Sacred Boundaries}, ch. 4.
In these early edicts, however, Louis XIV did not, and perhaps could not, directly attack the Protestant faith. The December edict fell back upon the Catholic councils as the driving force behind the edict with their condemnation of marriage between Catholics and “heretics.” Louis evidently supported this decision, as evidenced by the existence of this edict, but his enforcement of it is stated as “for the discipline of the Catholic Church,” not of the state.\(^{239}\) The June edict was careful as well, reminding the reader of the freedom of conscience accorded to all subjects before bringing attention to the king’s true concern, that any such freedom happen “without troubling our Catholic subjects.”\(^{240}\) While fervent in his beliefs, Louis XIV was not yet fully confident in his ability to upset the tenuous religious coexistence; this confidence would only come when he saw the development of public support for these edicts. Yet, he did not hesitate in his punishment of these newly designated crimes. For both edicts, failure to obey would result in banishment from the kingdom and the crown’s confiscation of all goods. In his marriage ban, he further specified that no children born of these interconfessional marriages would be legitimate, and could not inherit their parent’s property. Louis’ understanding of the importance of socio-religious homogeneity made social and economic punishments for a religious “crime” inherently logical. While he was hesitant, in 1680, to denounce Protestantism in a religious sense, he had the ability to limit their social, political and economic power. The efforts at social control accelerated in 1681, particularly with regard to Protestant children. Louis’ interest in reeducation and the conversion of children first truly emerged in the declaration of June 17, 1681, wherein he lowered the age of allowed conversion to seven, and prohibited the education of Protestant children in

\(^{239}\) “Declaration,” 2 December 1680.
\(^{240}\) “Edit,” 25 June 1680.
foreign countries. In an edict of April 1665, Louis had formally established the long-held
collection that children would not be allowed to convert before the age of 14, for boys,
and 12, for girls.\textsuperscript{241} In the declaration of 1681, however, Louis allowed any child above
the age of seven—the age of reason, as had been set in previous edicts—to convert, and
required their parents and families to continue to support them even after conversion.\textsuperscript{242}
By lowering the age, Louis cleared the way for stronger conversion efforts of religious
groups and orders throughout France and eased their work. The prohibition of foreign
education also further strengthened the French state’s hold on these Protestant children.
Louis’ statement in the edict that these children “could gain ideas against the state and the
fidelity that is owed to us by their birth” by this education demonstrated the intertwined
nature of religious and political education, as Louis could not envision a foreign
education that did not turn his subjects against him.\textsuperscript{243} These two requirements, bundled
in one edict, greatly restricted the freedom of education held by Protestant families, and
were the first clear statements of Louis’ intent to reeducate Protestant children. He
officially recalled all children who were currently studying abroad, forbid those under the
age of sixteen to leave for studies, and opened up conversion efforts to anyone over the
age of seven.

This incursion into the heart of the French Protestant community was obvious, and
was not received without response. A request to the king sent from the Protestants of La

\textsuperscript{241} “Arrêt portant renvoi par devant les commissaires députés dans les provinces pour informer
des contraventions à l’édit de Nantes, de toutes les affaires concernant le fait de la Religion
Pretendue réformée, exercice d’icelle, temples, cimetières, et observations de l’édit de Nantes,” 24
April 1665. Articles in the Edict of Nantes itself allude to the required parental control of
education until the age of consent, but it is not formally set until 1665.
\textsuperscript{242} “Edit portant que les enfans des religionnaires pourront se convertir à l’âge de sept ans, et
faisant défenses aux religionnaires de faire élever leurs enfans à l’étranger,” 17 June 1681.
\textsuperscript{243} Ibid.
Rochelle began by invoking the Edict of Nantes as a “law, perpetual and irrevocable” that clearly prohibited the removal of children and their forced education. It continued to argue that

nature wishes in general for all to keep their children under the care to which they were given, not only until the age of seven… for the paternal authority for children’s education until the age of puberty is not only an authority or a right, it is an obligation, and one of the strongest.\(^{244}\)

With the invocation of the natural order alongside citations of previous edicts forbidding such actions, the writer attempted to call on the sense for order in the realm, both given by the king and by ‘nature.’ Paired with the humble prostrations required of a request of the king, the document took an almost plaintive tone. Later citations of Catholic canon law and the question of the baptism of heretics,\(^{245}\) however, reminded the reader of the informed debate taking place here, and the inherent disadvantage of the writer. By citing Catholic law and theologians, he demonstrated the necessity of bending to the king’s own faith and wishes even in a request for toleration. The “injustice and violence” he described was forced to be couched in the language of the debate, and those terms were set by the king and his edicts. The age of conversion was officially lowered, in spite of the Protestant response. The Protestant community’s immunity from the incursion of French Catholicism had begun to be whittled away.

With the edict of January 31, 1682, Louis continued his pressure on the Protestant community while emphasizing his self-definition as the father of all the French people. He decreed that all bastard Protestant children must be raised Catholic, regardless of the

\(^{244}\) Bibliothèque de la Société de l’Histoire du Protestantisme Français (SHPF) MS 711. No author is given for this request, as it claims to speak for the entire Protestant community of La Rochelle. It is most likely a response from the Protestant assembly at La Rochelle.
wishes of their parents; Louis thereby directly inserted royal power into the most central social structure, the family.246 The edict states “as they have been sadly abandoned by their fathers, and by this means have come under Our power, as the common father of Our subjects, we can only raise them in the religion that we profess.” It went on to clarify that this edict arose from the knowledge that these abandoned children had been raised Protestant in the past if they were known to be from Protestant families, but that this had been an “abuse” and “no one else could legitimately claim these children.”247 The language of this edict was a dramatic shift from the more discreet edicts of the preceding two years, and signaled an increased confidence on the part of the monarchy in its ability to intervene in the Protestant community. Its reliance on the language of fatherhood and the equation of kingship with national fatherhood also reinforces the ideology of social cohesion that Louis XIV believed was achievable through forced conversion. He called upon local judges as representatives of the French state in the provinces to enforce this new rule, and ordered fines on any member of the Protestant community who goes against his wishes. Here, in early 1682, Louis was already moving against the Protestant family and social structure in a defined way, removing the power of Protestant institutions to address their own social situations and inserting the royal bureaucracy as a substitute. When in 1683 he allowed for the instruction of Protestant children in the

245 The writer cited Catholic canon law as equivalent to the laws of France in their disapproval of conversion before puberty, but was not specific on which laws. He did directly cite Spanish laws, Thomas Aquinas, and Roman tradition in his ensuing arguments. SHPF MS 711.
246 A bastard, in the early modern understanding, was any child born out of wedlock. French law traditionally removed these children from the inheritances of their father, although Louis XIV had recently legitimized his own illegitimate children by Madame de Montespan, perhaps making bastardy a personal subject of interest. M. Gerber, Bastards: Politics, Family and Law in Early Modern France (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2012).
Chapter 3

Catholic faith, if their parents abjured,248 it would come as no surprise. The gradual, yet
definitive progression of Louis’ efforts to control Protestant children and their education
had become nearly certain.

Request and complaints were sent to the king throughout these years, calling upon
his justice to return to the laws set by previous edicts. Frequent citations of the Edict of
Nantes itself, as well as of Louis XIV’s edict of February 1669 can be found throughout
these requests, as the Protestant community attempted to use the force of law in their
favor. The citations in a request to the king from the early 1680s were typical of the
phrasing often found in these requests: beginning with a statement of his loyalty to the
crown, the writer began each following paragraph with a direct citation of one article in
one edict, and proceeded to describe how it was currently being violated. The blame for
this violation was always on those around the king — the clergy or his ministers — and
they assured the king that they knew “if one can present [their hardships] before his eyes,
it will be enough to gain them aid.”249 This conflation of reprimand and plea set the tone
for the Protestant response to Louis XIV’s edicts. While no direct author was ever
attributed, the majority of these requests have a legalistic tone that connects them to the
Protestant nobility of the robe and the distinct legal system developed in the wake of the
Edict of Nantes.250 Calling upon the previous laws and social conventions, they attempted
to stem the tide of forced social reform.

Alongside these requests of the king, members of the Protestant community also
produced statements intended for their community, reacting to these edicts. Responding

248 “Déclaration portant que les Enfans de ceux de la Religion pretenduë réformée qui auront fait
abjuraison seront instruits en la Religion Catholique, Apostolique, et Romaine,” 17 June 1683.
249 AN TT 431. This request has no author or date, but clearly comes from the early 1680s.
to the restrictions on education, one such statement called upon “each father of the family to perform the function of a minister in his own house, just as providence calls upon the faithful in the case of trouble or persecution. They shall instruct their children in the points of Faith and in the Catechism and the prayers of our Religion, impressing upon them above all else the desire of their salvation and the horror of Papism and of Babylon.” He continued to demand that “children never shall go to the school of papists under any pretext, nor to the priests’ Catechisms” and even if “some Prince’s law requires that Children go to instruction, it is necessary to defend against this as much as possible by domestic occupations, and to take care if some Child finds himself forced to go there, to show him upon his return the horror of that which has been taught to him against the Religion and to destroy the evil designs.”

251 This type of response clearly shows an awareness on the part of the Protestant community of the king’s plan for reeducation, as well as their own understanding of this plan as a piece of persecution, to be undermined at all costs. It also demonstrates the importance of education for the Protestant community, as it emphasized the importance of reeducating children after their reeducation and deputizing the fathers to maintain the family’s religiosity. These education-specific guidelines were only part of a larger exhortation to keep faith in the face of Louis’ new edicts, but an important part. By their inclusion alongside advice on how to deal with a lack of preachers, or the importance of keeping priests away from deathbeds, they became a part of the Protestant plan for avoiding the king’s restrictions without directly rebelling.

251 AN TT 431. Like the other pleas in this series, no author is attributed to this document.
These types of responses, couched in the language of the Catholic monarchy, were necessary for the Protestant minority, particularly given the restrictions placed on the community by royal edicts. On August 30, 1682, the king issued an edict forbidding the gathering of Protestants, except in their temples in the presence of a minister.252 This requirement ostensibly limited gatherings for prayer and reading outside of the temple, but it could easily be expanded to include any gathering of Protestants that the king or his ministers found offensive. A contemporary Protestant response pleaded with the king to allow these meetings, reminding him that limitations on religious gatherings were was counter to the Edict of Nantes. The author wrote, “if it is only a question of us fighting in the service of Your Majesty… the suppliants would remain inviolably attached to their respected Monarch, and would happily spill their blood in his service.”253 The inclusion of this statement of political loyalty within the plea for a reinstatement of Protestant gatherings demonstrates the depth of the correlation between religious and political allegiance understood by every member of French society. In limiting Protestant gatherings, Louis believed he could both restrict the religious practices he disliked and contain any possible disloyalty within the temple itself.

In May 1683, Louis XIV issued another edict requiring a designated space for Catholics in every Protestant temple. This incursion into the heart of Protestant worship, so “Catholics who would wish to go to the Temples to hear the Sermons preached there, could enter there and be received” could have been particularly damaging. The text of the edict itself encouraged this type of attendance “not only to refute [the preachers], if there is a need, but also to impede them from advancing anything contrary to the respect of

252 “Déclaration portant défenses a ceux de la Religion pretendu réformée de s’assembler, si ce n’est dans leur Temples, et en presence des Ministres,” 30 August 1682.
Roman, Catholic, Apostolic Religion, and damaging to the State, and to the good of our service.” In this way, Louis attempted to ensure that the Protestant community could not gather without his knowledge, and Catholics whom he believed consistently loyal to the faith and his state were able to be present at all gatherings to report on any insurrection. The punishment for violation of these edicts ran to 3,000 livres for each participant, and ministers found violating any of these edicts could have been banished from the realm. The limitations placed by these edicts hampered the ability of the Protestant community to effectively protest the changes to the current state of toleration, allowing Louis XIV’s restrictions to intensify and increase.

These restrictions not only limited the community gatherings, they limited the leadership roles and activities of Protestants as well. In August 1684, Protestant ministers were prohibited from serving in any area longer than three years on August 31, 1684. This edict explicitly cited “the large number of conversions throughout the realm” as an incentive to restrict the ministers’ actions, acting upon the information “that many people touched by the good example [of the converts], are held back from following them by the blind deference they have for the opinion of their Ministers.” To this end, ministers who had been in their position for more than three years were required to move at least twenty leagues away, and preferably to a new province. Disobedience resulted not only in the banishment of the minister from the ministry in France, but also in the destruction of the

253 AN TT 430.
254 “Déclaration portant que dans les Temples de ceux de la Religion prétendue réformée il y aura un lieu marqué où pourront se mettre les Catholiques,” 22 May 1683.
255 Labrousse suggests this was intended primarily for Catholic ecclesiastics to attend Protestant services. Labrousse, La Révocation de l’Édit de Nantes: Une foi, une loi, un roi?, 183.
256 “Déclaration,” 30 August 1682; “Déclaration,” 22 May 1683.
temple and prohibition of Protestantism in the disobedient location. The punishment of the community, not only the minister, may have increased the propensity to obedience, and clearly linked Louis’ religious reforms to his efforts at social control. Not only was he interested in conversions, which he believed increased when social continuity was removed, but he saw the religious and social meaning of obedience and disobedience as fundamentally linked. His prohibition of the practice of Protestantism in any location with less than ten Protestant families, promulgated in December of the same year, only furthered this correlation. Without the numbers to support a full community, religious practice could not exist; without a full, vibrant religious community, Protestants must be compelled to convert. Louis XIV understood religious practice as fundamentally social, as this edict demonstrated, and believed the limitations and prohibitions placed on Protestant temples and ministers would serve to end Protestantism on the whole.

Additionally, whereas the Edict of Nantes had expressly allowed Protestants to practice any occupation allowed to Catholics, the early 1680s saw the dismantling of this freedom and, with it, the socio-political influence of Protestants. In August 1680, they were barred from participation in the tax farms; in June 1682, they were barred from being notaries, prosecutors, bailiffs or sergeants. This removal from the small scale of government effectively removed their ability to use the bureaucratic system to their advantage, as they were forced to integrate more completely with Catholic society and

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257 “Edit portant que les Ministres de la Religion pretendue réformée ne pourront faire leurs fonctions plus de trois ans dans un meme lieu,” 31 August 1684.
258 “Déclaration portant defenses de faire Exercice public de la Religion pretendue réformée dans les lieux ou il y aura moins de dix familles,” 26 December 1684.
rely upon its functionaries. This intensified in 1684, when the edict of June 26 disallowed Protestants from asking for the recusal of any judge they deemed prejudicial without due cause, a restriction that intensified the Protestant disadvantage in the legal system.\textsuperscript{260} These restrictions, when combined with the limitations placed on Protestant worship and Protestant ministers, eliminated avenues for Protestant resistance. By slowly increasing the pressure felt on Protestant communities and slowly decreasing their means to resist these advances, Louis XIV effectively set the stage for the total revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The edicts restricting Protestant involvement in French society and the French legal system allowed edicts interested in the reform of French society through conversion and education to succeed, if not without reaction, at least without repercussions.

By 1685, therefore, Louis XIV had already issued an abundance of edicts restricting the Protestant community and attempting, through these acts, to reform French society. Yet, the most restrictive edicts were yet to come. Ministers were forced to pay taxes, an act counter to centuries of religious exemption from the tailles.\textsuperscript{261} Temples that admitted anyone “forbidden by the king,” or that allowed marriage to Catholics, were closed and the ministers punished.\textsuperscript{262} The practice of Protestantism or the home of a minister was forbidden within six leagues of any location where it had been outlawed, an effort by the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[260] “Déclaration concernant les Recusaions des Juges par ceux de la Religion pretendue réformée, tant en matieres Civils que Criminelles, etc,” 26 June 1684. The greatest legal protection for Protestants before the Revocation came in the creation of separate courts, the chambres de l’édit. With this edict, the attempt at royal justice divorced from religious beliefs clearly came to an end. Margolf, \textit{Religion and Royal Justice in France}.
\item[261] “Arrêt portant que tous les Ministres de la Religion pretendue réformée seront compris et employez dans les Rolles des Tailles a proportion des biens qu’ils possedent,” 8 January 1685.
\item[262] “Déclaration pour la punition des Ministres de la Religion pretendue réformée qui souffrent dans les Temples des personnes que le Roy a défendu d’y admettre, et pour l’interdiction desdits Temples,” 1 February 1685; “8 June 1685.
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king to clarify and expand the solely Catholic regions of the realm.\textsuperscript{263} Restrictions on allowed professions increased as well, continuing to limit the Protestant community not only in its faith life, but also in economic and social opportunities. It was no longer legal, by September 1685, for a Protestant to operate a bookshop or a printshop, to be a clerk to a Catholic judge, to be a lawyer in any court, or to be a physician, surgeon or pharmacist.\textsuperscript{264} Nor could they have any Catholic servants, maintain cemeteries in any city where Protestantism was no longer allowed, or keep their own records of baptisms, marriages and deaths.\textsuperscript{265} Each of these restrictions, alone, could be enough to incite a Protestant response. Together, in such a short time frame, they effectively shut down the French Protestant community and made it impossible for that community to actively resist the king’s new edicts.

Louis XIV had to have anticipated the results of these severe limitations on the community, although he overemphasized their possible effect on conversions and Catholic unity. In the limitation on holding Catholic servants, he cited information that

\textsuperscript{263} “Arrest portant defense aux Ministres et Proposans de la Religion pretenduë réformée de faire l’exercice de leur Religion dans les lieux ou les temples auront été demolis,” 30 April 1685. The Edict of Nantes had designated specific areas where Protestantism was allowed.

\textsuperscript{264} “Arrest qui fait tres-expresses inhibitions et defenses à tous Libraires et Imprimeurs faisant profession de la Religion pretenduë réformée de faire à l’avenir aucun fonctions de Libraires et Imprimeurs, à commencer du jour de la publication du present arrest,” 9 July 1685; “Déclaration portant defenses aux Juges, Avocats, et autres d’avoir des Clerces de la Religion pretenduë réformée,” 10 July 1685;

“Déclaration portant qu’il ne sera plus receu d’Avocats de la Religion pretenduë réformée,” 11 July 1685; “Déclaration portant qu’il ne sera plus recu des Medecins de la Religion pretenduë réformée,” 6 August 1685; “Arrest portant defenses a tous Chiurgiens et Apothicaires faisant profession de la Religion pretenduë réformée de faire aucun exercice de leur art,” 15 September 1685.

\textsuperscript{265} “Déclaration portant defense à ceux de la Religion pretenduë réformée d’avoir des Domestiques Catholiques,” 9 July 1685; “Arrest portant defense à ceux de la Religion pretenduë réformée d’avoir des Cimiteres dans les Villes, Bourgs, et lieux du Royaume où il n’y a plus d’exercice de ladite Religion pretenduë réformée,” 9 July 1685; “Arrest qui ordonne a toutes personnes qui ont les Registres de Baptemes, Mariages et Mortuaires des lieux ou l’Exercice de la
these Catholics “were often impeded by their Masters from following that which is required by the Church’s Commandments for the observations of Feast days and days of abstinence,” and that some were even required to “pass into foreign countries to abjure their Religion.”^266 Here, Louis styled himself as the protector of a Catholic realm, defending against those who were forcing conversion. In his limitations on professions, he took the same posture, claiming “the number of physicians professing the Protestant faith has increased so substantially, that few of our Catholic subjects will henceforth attach themselves to this subject.”^267 Therefore, it was the role of Louis, as the protective father of his Catholic subjects, to increase their opportunities in this, and other, fields. The language of these edicts and their concerned tone gives an air of justice to these increasingly unjust actions, styling Louis and his government as protectors and defenders of French society. In this way, Louis was able to justify these increasing measures of social control to himself and his bureaucracy as measures intended not to limit one community, but to strengthen the whole.

The natural extension of this increased social control, in an atmosphere infused with the idea of the power of education, was a series of edicts regarding the education of Protestant children. Louis expanded upon his earlier moves to lower the age of conversion and forbid foreign education for Protestant children, as he forayed deeper and deeper into the Protestant social structure. On July 12, 1685, he promulgated an edict claiming Protestant children whose fathers had died and mothers were Catholic for the Catholic faith, giving his overt rationale as the solace it would give these widows in their religion.*

^266 “Déclaration portant defense… d’avoir des Domestiques Catholiques,” 9 July 1685.

^267 Religion pretendue reformee a ete interdit, de les mettres aux Greffes des Baillaiages et Senechaussées,” 9 August 1685.
time of loss.\textsuperscript{268} While the number of children affected by this particular edict must have been low, it was a signal of the movement towards forced education that pervaded these edicts.

One month later, he solidified these plans with his edict forbidding Protestant guardians for the Protestant orphans. This edict described the ill intentions of Protestant guardians who “treat [the children] severely, refusing them even the most basic necessities, under the pretext that the state of goods or affairs from the inheritance of their parents does not allow them to be raised according to their condition,” and emphasized the usage of these tactics to impede the conversion of Protestant children. Henceforth, Catholic guardians would be in charge of the “care and education” of any Protestant children who had lost both parents.\textsuperscript{269} A memoire written around this time explained “this proposition appears just, because tutelage is a public responsibility” and Protestants were excluded from all public responsibilities.\textsuperscript{270} By continually increasing the restrictions on Protestants in French society, Louis XIV was now able to use previous limitations to justify even further exclusion.

In these edicts, his goals of reforming Protestant society through children and education became increasingly clear. Whereas in 1681 he only lowered the age of conversion, while simultaneously maintaining a semblance of parental rights to

\textsuperscript{267} “Arrest portant defenses a tous Chiurgiens et Apothicairees,” 6 August 1685. Similar language is found in all the limits on professions.
\textsuperscript{268} “Portant que les Enfans dont les peres seront morts dans la Religion pretendué réformée et dont les meres seront Catholiques, seront élevez en la Religion Catholiques avec défenses de leur donner des Tuteurs de la Religion pretendué réformée,” 12 July 1685.
\textsuperscript{269} “Déclaration portant qu’il ne sera point donné de Tuteurs de la Religion pretendué réformée aux enfans des peres et meres de ladite Religion,” 14 August 1685.
\textsuperscript{270} AN TT 431. This handwritten document is not signed or dated, but appears contemporary, pre-Revocation. The document also calls upon the king’s right and responsibility to name tutors for
education, by the fall of 1685 he had fully embraced the idea of himself and the Catholic state as the proper caretakers of Protestant children. His continued integration of ideals of a unified French Catholic society and limitations placed upon the parental rights deemed natural for Catholics, but heretical for Protestants, demonstrated a type of thinking that emphasized the place of children and education while rationalizing social limitations. This mode of operation was congruent with Louis’ political approach and firmly connected these social programs to his larger socio-political goals.

The social control that these edicts emphasized, and that forms the center of this study, must also be considered as a part of the violence experienced by the Protestant community in the years immediately preceding the Revocation. Amongst these restrictions on religious, cultural and economic life were massive efforts, particularly in the south of France, to use military strength to force conversions. These ‘dragonnades,’ named for the soldiers they involved, began with the stationing of troops in wealthy Protestant households in 1681. The troops were encouraged to harass their hosts, making life as difficult as possible, in order to increase the number of converts. While they were masked as the placement of burdens on the wealthy, their unsubtle aim was Protestant conversions, as a two-year exemption from these lodgings was granted to any new convert.271 International outcry ended this program in 1682, but it restarted in 1684 as Louis ramped up his conversion efforts.272 These more forceful efforts were concentrated in the South, under the direction of southern Intendants, but were an important part of the

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272 McCullough, *Coercion, Conversion and Counterinsurgency in Louis XIV's France*, 140. McCullough also attributes this resumption of force to the death of Colbert and the end of his moderating influence.
king’s policy towards conversion in the early 1680s. In the context of these edicts emphasizing social control, efforts such as these underscore the seriousness of Louis’ conversion efforts and the violence inherent in this entire program. Louis was serious about reforming French society into his ideal, Catholic, society, and was increasingly willing to use powerful means to achieve this goal. The social control seen in his edicts dovetails with this violent incursion into Protestant space, creating an atmosphere in which oppression, limitations, intimidation, and reeducation were all central parts of a larger socio-political plan.

**Revoking the Edict of Nantes**

Louis XIV sat at the head of a vast system of councils and councilors, each with varying degrees of input on edicts like the Revocation. At the beginning of his personal rule, alongside his choice to rule without one prime minister, he established a system of ministerial input with himself at the center. While Colbert and Seignelay held large amounts of power, so also did members of the Le Tellier and Louvois clan, helping to distribute influence and underscore the centrality of the monarch himself. Louis regularly attended meeting of many of his councils, presiding in person over the meetings of the high council, the council of dispatches, the religious council, the royal financial council and the royal council of commerce. This system allowed for his direct control over

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273 Gratton attributes the majority of the program to the personal interests of southern Intendants. J. Gratton, "The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the Role of the Intendants in the Dragonnades," *French History* 25, no. 2 (2011). While Louis XIV was clearly involved, letters directly from the king’s household focused much more on the efforts at social reform than the military push in the south.


much of the business of the realm, and his ideas drove forward the agendas of these

councils. Among these, the high council took precedence, as no one had the right to join
but rather an invitation to join was extended to those who held the king’s highest favor in
government. In 1685, this included Charles Colbert, Marquis de Croissy, the younger
brother of Jean-Baptiste Colbert and the minister for foreign affairs, Claude le Peletier,
the controleur général of finances, Michel le Tellier, the chancellor and keeper of the
seals, and his son, François Michel le Tellier, Marquis de Louvois, the secretary of war. It
was in this council, with these councilors, that the Revocation was conceived.

Yet, the impetus for the Revocation must be understood as originating from Louis
XIV himself. Discussions of his distribution of power lend credence to the idea that he
himself spearheaded this campaign to eradicate Protestantism, particularly when taken
alongside understandings of his personal piety and rising religiosity in the 1680s. Louis’
memoirs to his son, written in the early 1660s, reveal a link between his efforts to
gradually suppress the Protestants in France and his Catholic beliefs. His statement that “
the best means to reduce gradually the number of Huguenots in my kingdom was… to
implement what they had obtained from my predecessors but to grant them nothing
further” was followed shortly thereafter by a reflection on the value of his public piety
and the regularity of his religious devotions. He then warned his son to “not approach
religion with only this idea of self-interest” but rather embrace the idea “that all the
advantages that our post gives us over other men are undoubtedly so many new titles of
servitude to Him who has given them to us.”276 The correlation made here between
responsibility to the kingdom, religious behavior, and suppression of the Protestant

population is an essential piece of Louis XIV’s mentality at the time of the Revocation. While only the most vague of references to the full revocation of Protestant rights is made in this section, this early statement demonstrates the relationship Louis saw between religious rights and responsibilities. By the 1680s, therefore, in the context of his increased religiosity, this responsibility had expanded to include the Revocation.

The role of foreign influence on French domestic policy cannot be discounted in our understanding of the Revocation, as Louis XIV negotiated an increasingly Protestant Europe and his own relations with the papacy. In Elisabeth Labrousse’s study of the Revocation, she reiterates the importance of foreign affairs on the timing of the Revocation, emphasizing the good will it brought from Pope Innocent XI and the timing of various international treaties. While Louis XIV had largely recovered from the Gallican crisis of 1682 by the time of the Revocation, it had strained the French relationship with the Pope. A grand statement of Catholic fervency like this could help strengthen Louis’ allies in Catholic Europe. Similarly, Louis XIV feared a rising alliance of Protestant states. Historian Jacques Saint-Germain discusses this anxiety as stemming from the French conflict with the Dutch states, as Louis XIV envisioned a Protestant “fifth column,” mobilized against their native land. When taken with a worldview that emphasized Christian kingship, these foreign impetuses created an atmosphere from which the Revocation could emerge.

Above all, the Revocation was conceived of as part of a grand wish on the part of Louis XIV for French society. He appears to have truly believed that most Protestants

\[279\] Saint-Germain, *La Reynie et la police au grand siècle*, 300.
would convert to Catholicism with the slightest of pushes. The text of the Revocation itself cites, as part of its rationale, the fact that “the best and greatest part of our Subjects of the Pretended Reformed Religion have embraced the Catholic religion,” suggesting that those who had not yet converted were either useless to France or would convert soon. This interpretation reiterates the centrality of Catholicism and conversion thereto in Louis’ vision of French society, as he saw the forced conversions of the early 1680s as a sign that all Protestants would convert, if given incentives, thus rendering their religious beliefs secondary to their political allegiance. The multifaceted nature of the Revocation—religious, social, and political—gave weight to each of these influences, while responding most directly to Louis XIV’s own vision for France.

While edicts concerning Protestants in society continued to be promulgated until two weeks before the Revocation, knowledge of the impending Revocation was kept almost exclusively to the highest council. The secrecy present for the Revocation was not unexpected at Louis’ councils; he forbade the taking of notes or setting of written agendas in his highest council, and demanded absolute secrecy from them on all of his affairs. For this edict in particular, however, the deliberations within the inner council revealed a tension that informed the progression of this legislation. As Laurent Dingli describes, the Colbert clan (Seignelay included) emphasized a more pragmatic approach to the Protestant problem, reflective of man’s inability to know another’s conscience, even as they agreed with the religious impetus at its heart. Michel le Tellier, the aged and dying chancellor, had long been the most determined advocate of action towards the

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280 Edict of 22 October 1685.
281 Seignelay was one of the few exceptions until the week before the promulgation.
282 Wolf, *Louis XIV*, 158. This requirement of secrecy effectively eliminated all archival material regarding the discussions in this council.
Protestants, with his son and heir advocating similar policies.\textsuperscript{283} The conflict inherent in the council thus required the active leadership of Louis XIV and his personal advisors, including Seignelay, as the executor of Louis’ religious policies.

For religious decisions such as these, Louis XIV also turned frequently to his religious advisors. In 1685, the leading religious figures in Louis XIV’s advisory circle were Père de la Chaize, his personal confessor, and the Archbishop of Paris, François II de Harlay. Both had been appointed to their positions in the early 1670s and, by the time of the Revocation, were firmly ensconced in the bureaucratic and courtly maneuvers that defined power at Versailles. La Chaize was a Jesuit, brought to court in February 1675 from Lyon; Harlay a Colbert client, raised to the archbishopric in 1671 from his bishop’s seat in Rouen.\textsuperscript{284} They both met regularly with Louis XIV, and were closely, personally, tied to the monarch, his ministers, and his decisions. By the mid-1680s, their roles were clearly divided. As historian Joseph Bergin describes, “Harlay’s value lay mainly in his handling of the affairs of the French clergy generally, especially its assemblies, the Paris theology faculty and the religious orders, while the confessor’s brief mainly concerned church patronage, missions to the Protestant population, and so on.”\textsuperscript{285} This division of labor highlights the vast area that was religious affairs in the early modern French state, as well as the evolving reliance of Louis XIV on these two officials, individually. Both of their hands can be seen in the Revocation, and its enforcement.

The assembly of the clergy held July 9, 1685, sheds light on the clerical view of the impending Revocation and their role in furthering the social repression of Protestants in 1685. After this council, they submitted twenty-nine requests to the king for

\textsuperscript{283} Dingli, \textit{Colbert, Marquis de Seignelay}, 241-4.
\textsuperscript{284} Bergin, \textit{Crown, Church and Episcopate under Louis XIV}, 161-2, 207.
implementation, centering on the restriction of Protestant economic and social activities and the reclamation of Protestant rights for Catholics. The king’s response to these various requests shows the depth of accord between the two institutions in 1685: only four requests were flatly denied, nine others were taken under consideration, and sixteen were either accepted or believed covered under previous edicts. Among these were requests for the immediate notification of local clergy upon the birth of a Protestant baby, particularly in areas where Protestantism was no longer allowed, the Catholic education of the children of Catholic widows whose husbands had been Protestant, and a prohibition against foreign education for Protestant children. All of these were accorded, or had already been ordered. Harlay’s role as the king’s advocate in these clerical assemblies placed him in a unique position to request, approve, and enforce this type of social legislation, stemming from the king’s social and religious goals.

In the months immediately preceding the Revocation, while deliberations continued, the king and his advisors utilized La Reynie’s knowledge of Paris to better understand the details of Parisian Protestant society in 1685. They were interested in numbers, in the ‘quality’ of the remaining families and individuals, and in the reach of their intellectual networks. In mid-September, La Reynie dispatched Delamare, his leading commissioner, to the homes of the elders of the church at Charenton, most of whom resided in Paris, and to the courtyard of the church itself. There, he examined the books present and ensure their conformity with the rush of commands simultaneously

285 Ibid., 163.
286 AN O/1 29, fol. 319. These requests dealt most directly with Protestants; two other request sets were submitted simultaneously with political and economic requests and are not considered in this count.
287 Foreign education for Protestant children was forbidden under the edict of 17 June 1681.
288 Bergin, Crown, Church and Episcopate under Louis XIV, 207.
regulating the book trade and the Protestant faith. He proceeded to catalogue every book found in each location, complete with details on size, edition and language. His appended letter to La Reynie, apologizing for the delay in compiling the alphabetical catalogue, makes clear that La Reynie’s knowledge of the book trade informed this incursion.²⁸⁹ Delamare reported on the annotations present in the Bibles and New Testaments found, suggesting to La Reynie how they might have been used by the ministers and, therefore, any connections between the ministers and elders and the authors they were reading. He also ceded all comparisons of editions and translations to La Reynie, deferring to his much greater knowledge of banned books.²⁹⁰ La Reynie then took action, prioritizing various titles from this catalogue for banned status by the Parlement of Paris. His notes from September 28 reveal the delicate balance attempted by the police in this month; he demanded that the commissioners enforce these new edicts by entering the homes of the Protestant elders, perhaps with the support of a bailiff from Châtelet, prepare written statements on their visits, while showing the elders the respect a wealthy Parisian deserved, so as to create a minimum amount of notice.²⁹¹ This creation of paperwork and emphasis on subtlety and respect, all found within a largely invasive move intended to limit the intellectual networks of the Protestant elders seem at odds with one another but, when taken together, reveal a monarchy interested in social and intellectual control through bureaucracy. This visit and its reports also illuminates the level to which the French monarchy was interested in the inner workings of the Protestant leaders immediately preceding the Revocation. The police in Paris, led by La Reynie and

²⁸⁹ The monitoring of the book trade fell to La Reynie, and he took its management very seriously. Saint-Germain, _La Reynie et la police au grand siècle_, chs. 11-13; Soll, _The Information Master_, 130-9.
²⁹⁰ Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF) MS Français (MF) 7050, fol. 94.
directed by Seignelay, did not just want to shut down the Protestant community; they wanted to fully understand it and close it off completely.

These concerns with the spread of information and the protection of Paris came together in early October, when Louis XIV requested a list of all provincial Protestants currently residing in Paris. This “research should be done without noise and without a scene” but Seignelay insisted simultaneously on the accounting of all provincial Protestants in every quarter “not only in inns and public houses, but also in private homes where they could withdraw.” A second request, on the same day, asked for a list of all families regularly attending services at Charenton, to be obtained from the church “under some pretext.”292 This concurrent focus on thoroughness and discretion epitomizes the efforts of La Reynie immediately preceding the Revocation. The king’s concern with numbers of Protestants remaining in Paris appears to have derived from a concern for public order upon the publication of his edict of revocation, as well as a desire for reassurance that his capital city could function as an emblem of enforcement of Catholicism. In a letter to La Reynie from Louis XIV dated October 14, the king requested that La Reynie take the lead in enforcing his most recent ordonnance forbidding Protestants from all over France from entering “his good city of Paris… that their visit could only produce trouble, and rend those of the same Religion who have lived there for a long time, more difficult to convert.”293 This mass expulsion of provincial Protestants, exactly one week before the publication of the Revocation, could not have helped but raise interconfessional tensions and fears for the future of

291 BNF MF 7050, fol. 100.
292 AN O/1 29, 10 October 1685. The commissioner for Charenton was delegated for this task, to report to La Reynie so that La Reynie could edit the information for the king.
Protestantism in France. Yet, faced with the possibility of outsiders leading dissent against Catholicism in Paris itself, Louis chose to publish this ordonnance and ask La Reynie directly for its immediate enforcement. The stability of Paris and its population was his central concern.

It was in this atmosphere that Louis XIV alerted La Reynie of the Revocation on October 18, four days before its registration in Parlement and official implementation. A letter from Seignelay began by informing La Reynie of the existence of the impending edict, and immediately requested that he dispatch several commissioners to Charenton the day following the Revocation in order to implement the destruction of that temple, as would be required by the edict. In all, a rather normal letter between the two, until the final line “please, hold this information secret until Monday.” This request implies the intense need for secrecy felt by Seignelay, the councils, and Louis XIV on the eve of the Revocation. The correspondence between La Reynie and Seignelay always contained privileged information and rarely any requests for secrecy; this request, therefore, was exceptional. Not only was La Reynie one of the few to know of the Revocation before its publication, he was entrusted with its immediate execution. A letter from Seignelay two days later expressed the king’s approval for La Reynie’s measures “to ensure that no disorder occurs at the demolition of the temple of Charenton,” suggesting La Reynie’s submission of a detailed plan to the royal household immediately upon his receipt of this initial information.

La Reynie clearly understood the centrality of keeping social and public order in Paris upon the publication of this edict, and responded quickly to

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293 “Ordonnance contres les Gens de la Religion pretendue reformee non habituez dans la Ville et Fauxbourgs de Paris,” 15 October 1685.
294 AN O/1 29, 18 October 1685.
295 AN O/1 29, 20 October 1685.
On the eve of the Revocation, Louis XIV’s key bureaucratic figures were working to ensure the secure execution of the king’s wish for French society.

On October 22, then, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was officially promulgated and became the law of France. This relatively short edict, containing only eleven articles, ended the toleration of Protestantism in France for the next hundred years.296 It began by referencing the necessity of the original Edict of Nantes after the devastating Wars of Religion, heaping praise on Henri IV for establishing peace in order to, in the long term, reunite Protestants to the Catholic Church.297 However, it continued to say “as the intention of the King our Grandfather could not be effected because of his precipitous death,” and the efforts of Louis XIII were halted by Protestant rebellions and foreign wars,

God has finally allowed our People to enjoy a perfect rest, and that we ourselves are not occupied in the care of protecting them from our enemies, we can profit from this truce that we have achieved to give our entire focus to finding the means to reach the designs of the Kings our Grandfather and Father.298

In connecting his goals to the reigns of his father and grandfather, Louis XIV reinforced the longstanding nature of kingly power, and his right to wear this crown. By attributing the goal of the Catholic unification of France to Henri IV and Louis XIII, he also simultaneously deferred and strengthened his own position, positing his goals for society as part of a century-long intention following the Wars of Religion. His other edicts

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296 In contrast, the original Edict of Nantes contained 92 published and 56 secret articles. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, officially the Edict of Fontainebleau, stood as law until the Edict of Toleration promulgated in 1787.

297 The Edict of Nantes was, obviously, much more complicated, as was Henri IV’s personal religion. Holt, The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629; M. Wolfe, The Conversion of Henri IV (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1993); Garrison, L’édit de Nantes et sa révocation.
regulating parts of Protestant and Catholic life do not begin with this illustrious heritage, suggesting that Louis XIV was highly cognizant of the reach and ambition of this edict and the necessity of connecting it to the continual religious struggles within France.

While the most important article of this edict was the first one, revoking the Edict of Nantes and all privileges accorded to Protestants in the intervening years, the succeeding articles further illuminate the social nature of Louis’ goals. The first three articles outlined the official end of the practice of Protestantism in France, prohibiting any gathering of Protestants to worship in any location, even in the houses or on the lands of Protestant lords. The next three dealt with Protestant ministers, who were given the choice to either leave France within fifteen days of the publication or to convert, with the promise of a pension from the king and exemptions from troop garrisons and the taille for life. Ministers posed a particular problem for the monarchy due to their status in the Protestant church, and the allowance of voluntary exile reflected this consideration. They were not allowed to remain in France without conversion, however, for fear of the control they would continue to exert over their congregations.299 The reward for converting was high, but ministers were one of the few groups allowed to make the choice themselves after the publication of300 the Revocation.

298 “Edit portant Defense de faire aucune exercice public de la Religion pretenduë réformée dans son Royaume,” 22 October 1685.
299 This fear can be found through the edicts of the 1680s, with ministers’ control over their congregations described as a leading factor inhibiting conversions. It is particularly prevalent in the edict forbidding ministers from remaining in one parish for more than three years. “Edit portant que les Ministres de la Religion pretenduë réformée ne pourront faire leurs fonction plus de trois ans dans un meme lieu,” 31 August 1684.
300 The question of the right to emigrate (jus emigrandi) was common in religious edicts and treaties of the early modern period. The Treaty of Westphalia granted this right to any religious proponent living in a territory held by another religion. Labrousse suggests Louis’s allowance of any emigration originated from this international precedent. Labrousse, La Révocation de l’Édit de Nantes: Une foi, une loi, un roi?, 196-9.
The following five articles, however, attempted to reconstruct and restructure French society without the Protestant religion. Protestant schools were definitively closed. Children who were born Protestant were ordered to be baptized in the Catholic church, with a fine of 500 livres to be imposed on any parents who failed to do so. These children were “then to be raised in the Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church,” with all the social and religious education that entailed. By closing the schools, rebaptizing, and reeducating Protestant children, Louis XIV built upon the edicts of June 1681, January 1682, and July 1685, all of which emphasized the reunion and reeducation of these children. This incursion into Protestant society was evidently a priority for him, taking two of the eleven articles within the Revocation itself and forming a large part of the enforcement that followed. He also recognized, however, the realities of Protestant emigration, and the last three edicts gave clemency to any Protestants currently outside of the realm who wish to return (within a period of four months) and forbade the emigration of any Protestant men, women or children currently within the realm. These articles, taken together, outlined the vision of Protestant society Louis XIV held in October 1685, and his attempts to refashion it. He recognized the power of education to shape the future of French society, whether Protestant or Catholic, and took steps to harness that power within his own bureaucracy. He saw the beginnings of the Protestant diaspora that would shape the French Protestant identity in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, and also attempted to bring that back within his control, promising clemency for those who returned and seizure of property for those who left. This unified, French, Catholic society, in the eyes of Louis XIV, relied on the state forcibly bringing together those elements currently outside of it, both young and old.
The power inherent in these statements and beliefs, and in the Revocation as a whole, still relied in some part, however, on the registration of this edict in Parlement. While Louis XIV had largely subdued the Parlement of Paris, letters between the king’s household and the *procureur du roi* in the days preceding its registration betray a sense of urgency and secrecy regarding the registration. Le Tellier wrote to Harlay on the 20th, having been presented with the edict of revocation by the king for his seal as chancellor, asking if he was personally coming to his home outside of Paris to pick up the edict for its presentation in Parlement. He referenced his interactions with Seignelay, who ordered the process begun, and assumed that Harlay had been in contact with him as well. Clearly, at this point, the bureaucratic machine had begun to process this edict, and the key players were in constant contact to ensure the ease of its publication. A letter from the king to the Marquis de Menars, Intendant of Paris, on the 21st revealed a similar sentiment, officially advising him of the Revocation and asking for his particular care in expediting its enforcement in Paris. The attached letter from Seignelay, however, reveals the care for details inherent in this early information, as he attached a copy of the certificate of safe passage for ministers leaving the realm and reminded Menars to inform him of all that happened in the enforcement of the edict in his department. Clearly, Louis XIV and Seignelay were taking no chances with the registration and information of key officials in Paris, hoping to control the situation completely as it unfolded.

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301 Interestingly, this edict is registered and promulgated during the months of vacation for the Parlement of Paris, and therefore only has to be approved by the remaining members of the *Chambres des Vacations*, a significantly smaller and less oppositional group. Shennan, *The Parlement of Paris*.

302 BNF MF 17421, fol.144.

303 AN O/1 29, fol. 469
The sense of urgency and personal involvement found in these letters only intensified on the 22nd, the day of the registration of the edict, with letters to La Reynie and Harlay. After assuring Harlay that he believed he had everything under control, Seignelay informed him “that the King appears to me to have such a desire be informed of the little particulars that I believe it will be necessary that you send an express courier in the case that something occurs that is worth being informed of.” A similar letter was sent to La Reynie, asking for an immediate update. In all of these letters, the language suggests that Louis XIV himself was insisting on this regular communication, not Seignelay. This concern over registration and immediate implementation reinforces our understanding of Louis XIV’s personal involvement in sculpting this legislation, as well as his understanding of the large implications it held. He, in this moment of concern, required that his bureaucracy report regularly and in detail so that he could control developing events.

Within all of this regular communication, the destruction of the temple at Charenton, right outside of the Parisian borders, figured largely. The letter to Menars on the 21st asked not only for his cooperation in enforcing the edict within the city itself, but for his attention to the “prompt demolition of temples.” A letter to La Reynie from Seignelay on the 22nd asked for as much information as he could give on the destruction of Charenton, as the king was very anxious to hear. It is clear that this temple, as the heart of the Parisian Protestant community, was central to Louis XIV’s plans for enforcement in the city. Its immediate destruction, beginning the morning of the

304 BNF MF 17421, fol. 147.
305 AN O/1 29, 22 October 1685.
306 AN O/1 29, fol. 469.
307 AN O/1 29, 22 October 1685.
registration of the edict, was a symbol of the king’s dedication to the edict and its enforcement and a test of the ability of the Parisian police to enact his wishes. La Reynie’s notification on the 18th was partially to ensure that he had the people in place to effect this destruction on the 22nd, as Seignelay instructed him to “take care to ensure that nothing occurs there counter to [Louis XIV’s] service, and to this end you could assemble the brigades of the *Prevôt de l’Île* and even make use of their cavalry.” These forces were not normally at La Reynie’s disposal, as they were designated for the protection of the city, but their use here reveals both the correlation Seignelay saw between the destruction of the temple at Charenton and the safety of the city and the importance of ensuring this destruction without difficulties.

To oversee the demolition, La Reynie dispatched Delamare, his loyal commissioner. He met with Delamare on the night of October 19, immediately after he himself had been informed of the impending Revocation, and was in constant contact with him in the intervening three days. Delamare was charged with establishing the security of the temple in the face of the Revocation, and with physically demolishing it. He reported that when he arrived in the temple’s main square at two in the afternoon of the 22nd, the *Prevôt de l’Île* had already secured the grounds as requested, with twenty mounted men guarding the paths into the temple and twenty additional watchmen posted at all the gates. Upon his arrival, the concierge of the temple handed over the keys to all of the buildings, saying he had been instructed to obey all that was asked of him.

Delamare went directly to the main temple, and there gave orders to the workers.

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308 AN O/1 29, 18 October 1685.
309 BNF MF 21618, fol. 150.
assembled to begin taking apart the building.\footnote{BNF MF 21618, fol. 145} In the preceding three days, Delamare had worked with La Reynie to assemble a company of masters and journeymen for the physical destruction of these buildings, taking care to hire no one “that has not seen the \textit{Procureur General} and has not spoken with all of you.”\footnote{BNF MF 21618, fol. 150. This letter is from La Reynie, dated 21 October 1685.} To be able to begin the demolition of the temple on the 22\textsuperscript{nd}, Delamare had had to trust in the workers he hired to be present on the 22\textsuperscript{nd}, giving them the details of the job at least a day in advance of the promulgation of the edict. As La Reynie emphasized, the utmost care had to be taken to ensure secrecy. Yet, this care paid off on the 22\textsuperscript{nd}, when workers were able to begin immediately and work until 8 in the evening taking down the roof. For the following five days, Delamare remained at Charenton supervising a team of over 300 men intent on disassembling the entire structure. This cost over 2,100 \textit{livres}, paid for by the crown, and took a week of the commissioner’s time. Clearly, it had been deemed essential.

The land on which the temple was built and the materials taken from the physical building remained valuable and, in a move underlining his central priorities, Louis XIV gifted these to the order of the Nouvelles Catholiques and the Parisian Hotel Dieu.\footnote{The Hotel Dieu was dedicated to the care of the poor, sick and marginal figures of seventeenth-century France. It figures largely in the work of Michel Foucault (M. Foucault, \textit{Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Modern Prison}, trans. A. Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1977)) but was also simply an important part of Louis’ attempts at social policy.} The Nouvelles Catholiques, as will be explored later, were a female order devoted to the reeducation and conversion of Protestant women, and their convent in Paris was, as Seignelay told Harlay on October 25, much too small for the large influx of women and girls they were receiving after the Revocation.\footnote{BNF MF 21618, fol. 145} They received the building of the consistory itself, the lands of the cemetery, and a large portion of the surrounding estate.
as gifts from the king. The Hotel Dieu received a similar portion: the land where the
temple had been and its courtyard, as well as the lands from there to the consistory, and
the ownership of four houses within the enclosure.\textsuperscript{314} This reallocation of lands, from the
Protestant temple to a royal Hotel Dieu and an order devoted to conversion, was a
tangible demonstration of the goals of the French monarchy. On the grounds of a
Protestant temple, funding for the continued mission of the Hotel Dieu; in the building of
a Protestant consistory, a convent dedicated to conversion. While the Hotel Dieu ceded
its rights to this land in July 1686 in favor of the Nouvelles Catholiques, this religious
order filled the space with converted Protestant women almost immediately.\textsuperscript{315} The vision
of this immense change cannot be underestimated.

Not only the physical buildings of Charenton weighed heavily on the king in the
first week, but also its ministers and elders. The Revocation technically gave ministers
fifteen days to decide between conversion and exile, but in Paris, this timetable was
significantly reduced. Orders to La Reynie on October 21 asked that Minister Claude, the
main minister at Charenton, leave Paris within 24 hours, and that all other ministers leave
within 48.\textsuperscript{316} Ostensibly, the fifteen-day window would then apply to them in their
provincial exile, however, the king’s prioritization of their exile from Paris demonstrates
again the centrality of the destruction of this temple and its worship. The elders of the
temple were not mentioned in the Revocation, but did not escape notice. They had been
closely watched by Delamare and other commissioners from early 1685, leaving the
police in a ready state to attempt their conversion. Delamare paid each elder another visit

\textsuperscript{313} AN O/1 29, fol. 475v.
\textsuperscript{314} AN S 4668. The gift is dated 8 November 1685.
\textsuperscript{315} AN O/1 30, fol. 257. The original act of donation only allowed one group to cede their rights
to the other, no outside sales or donations were allowed.
in early November, after a request was sent from Seignelay to La Reynie to update the 
king on their status, and his reports reveal a focus on the financial well-being as well as 
the spiritual state of each of the twelve elders. Clearly, the monarchy was concerned with 
their ability to flee as well as their possibility for conversion.\footnote{BNF MF 7050, fol. 184.} Following this report, the 
king in issued orders for their exile from Paris in mid-November, relegating each elder to 
provincial towns, presumably where they or their families held land.\footnote{AN O/1 29, fol. 500.} In a letter to 
Harlay on October 27, Seignelay clarified the king’s concern with these elders, as he 
asked Harlay to ensure that they were not holding services or gathering funds for poor 
relief in the absence of ministers.\footnote{BNF MF 17420, fol. 149.} While the temple could be physically destroyed 
within a week, the elders and ministers must be converted or silenced to fully expurgate 
Protestantism from the capital, and Louis’ quick actions towards these ends reinforced 
their centrality.

Throughout all of this enforcement in the first week or two following the 
Revocation, the role of La Reynie and his police force remained central to the 
maintenance of order in Paris. The fear of unrest was very real for the king, as his letters 
to Harlay and Robert revealed. Following an act of pillage by soldiers in the city, he 
wrote to Robert asking him to ensure such “disorder” did not happen again.\footnote{AN O/1 29, fol. 481v. Dated 29 October 1685.} A later 
letter reminded Harlay of the king’s intention to keep his troops and their garrisons out of 
Paris, asking him to make use of the archers of the \textit{Prevôt de l’Île} in their place.\footnote{BNF MF 17420, fol. 197. Dated 21 December 1685.} 
Instead of these soldiers, as were used elsewhere in France, Louis chose to rely on the

\footnote{316 AN O/1 29, 21 October 1685.} \footnote{317 BNF MF 7050, fol. 184.} \footnote{318 AN O/1 29, fol. 500.} \footnote{319 BNF MF 17420, fol. 149.} \footnote{320 AN O/1 29, fol. 481v. Dated 29 October 1685.} \footnote{321 BNF MF 17420, fol. 197. Dated 21 December 1685.}
Parisian police. His daily communication with La Reynie afforded a very direct role for the monarch in the execution of his wishes, and La Reynie’s loyalty placed him high in the king’s opinion. The traditional role of the *lieutenant civile*, Le Camus, was largely supplanted as a result of Louis and Seignelay’s trust in La Reynie, and he was asked on several occasions to allow La Reynie to execute the king’s wishes without his involvement. A letter from Seignelay to Harlay illuminates this reliance on La Reynie, as he wrote that the king

> believes like you that the competition between the *lieutenant civile* and Mr de la Reynie over that which regards the work of the commissioners for conversions will be embarrassing… he has explained his intentions to the *lieutenant civile*… that the commissioners continue to work on this occasion solely under the orders of Mr de La Reynie and that they work on his part by all ways under his authority to contribute to the success of His Majesty’s good intentions.322

Le Camus was clearly displeased with the usurpation of what he saw as his role in Paris, but in Louis XIV’s bureaucracy, La Reynie predominated.

By early November 1685, therefore, the king had begun in earnest his efforts to fully convert the French people, with the support of his bureaucracy working at full tilt. This included not only the highest ministers, who were essential to the conception of the Revocation, but also the less senior members of the Colbert network and Louis Quatorzian bureaucracy active in Paris. La Reynie was foremost amongst these men, and he and his commissioners began work immediately to effect conversions in the capital city. These efforts differed based largely on social class, as will be explored in following chapters, but were uniformly directed by Louis XIV and the Marquis de Seignelay, as the head of the King’s Household. It was at this point that the edicts originating from the king became less critical than the bureaucratic realities of implementation.
Chapter 3

The First Year

The response to the Revocation in French culture was largely favorable. Louis XIV had anticipated the fast conversion of all remaining Protestants and the general acceptance of this edict in French society; on one account, at least, he was right. While edicts and letters continued to flow from the royal household to the police and main bureaucrats enforcing the details of the Revocation and clarifying the place of education in Louis’ social plan, the press welcomed and heralded these plans.

As Louis XIV constrained Protestant society before the Revocation, general appreciation followed these efforts. The monthly newspaper *Mercure Galant* republished the titles of Louis’ edicts of July and August 1685, giving a summary of the new restrictions on Protestants and echoing almost precisely the king’s rationale for each edict.323 Reporting on the edict of July 12, 1685, in which Catholic widows of Protestant men were guaranteed Catholic education for their children, the *Mercure* used the exact language from the edict itself to describe the “consolation” given to these women, adding “one follows by this the rules of Nature, that a widowed mother shall be Mistress of her Children during their minority.”324 This unquestioning reporting of the king’s edicts on Protestant gave tacit support to their progression. In the publication of harangues by leading Catholic preachers of the day, however, the *Mercure* went even further in their support for the king’s Protestant agenda. A published sermon by the Coadjutor of Rouen,

322 AN O/1 29, fol. 517.
323 This paper billed itself as a literary magazine, unconcerned with political and military affaires, but by the 1680s had become increasingly involved in printing news from the court. Its authors were never, however, direct operatives of the king’s propaganda and were widely criticized by the monarchy for their reporting of the king’s battles. *Mercure Galant* (Paris), July and August 1685. J. Klaits, *Printed Propaganda under Louis XIV: Absolute Monarchy and Public Opinion* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1976), 67-70.
324 *Mercure Galant*, July 1685.
the brother of Seignelay, in the September 1685 issue praised the “zeal and application
the King attaches to the flourishing of the Catholic religion” and discussed in detail the
myriad of efforts seen by the clergy as fundamental for the permanent erosion of the
Protestant faith and the support of the Catholic.\textsuperscript{325} The publication of his sermon was not
unique; sermons or speeches given by various clergy members can be found in nearly
every issue from this year. In all, support for the king and his socio-religious policies was
unquestioned.

With the publication of the Revocation in October, the \textit{Mercure} continued to
praise the glories of Louis XIV and his religious zeal. Following the regular discussion of
illustrious new converts, the editor wrote, “the king, seeing that conversions grow daily,
the majority of People of stable spirit have abjured… has finally given an Edict that deals
the last blow to the Heresy.”\textsuperscript{326} An undertone of the king’s own justifications and
rationales carried through this statement. The ensuing explanation of the reasoning
behind the Revocation followed the precedent of previous edicts, and was lifted almost
exactly from the preface to the Revocation. For this edict, given its importance, the editor
also saw fit also to reproduce the text in its entirety, not only the rationale and general
meaning as above. It is his comments following, however, that were most telling of the
public support for this edict. He wrote, “whatever difficulty that the Conversion of
Heretics may bring, we see today a France almost entirely purged. This miracle is due to
the zeal, to the piety, and to the care of the King.”\textsuperscript{327} This enthusiastic language and tone
reflected an atmosphere excited by the king’s decisive action and ready to glorify his
actions. Such commendation fed the king’s passion, and assured him that the public was

\textsuperscript{325} \textit{Mercure Galant}, September 1685.
\textsuperscript{326} \textit{Mercure Galant}, October 1685.
both willing and able to support his measures to end the practice of Protestantism in the realm.

Such praise continued through the early part of 1686, with regular reports of the number of conversions and details on illustrious ones sharing space with odes to the king and his religious zeal. An article from the December 1685 issue praised the care the king gave to his Protestant subjects, as seen in the edicts attempting to reregulate their social structures. It also expressed surprise at the large number of conversions effected since October, but attributed this to the growing repression of Protestants in France that led them to reconsider their religion for the previous nine or ten years, brought to culmination by the grand gesture of the king. The same report expressed appreciation for the efforts in Paris by La Reynie, Harlay, and Robert, but immediately refocused their work to highlight the goals of the king and their achievement. This unceasing support of the king and his policies may cast doubt on the veracity of this approval; yet, the editor’s reporting was constantly intermixed with literary submissions on the same theme. A discussion of the roles of various royal figures in continuing Louis’ grand plans, for example, was followed by an “Ode to New Converts” in the January 1686 issue. The language of the article, which honored the Dauphine for the “zeal that she brings to work without ceasing for the entire destruction of heresy,” and had similar praise for the Archbishop of Paris and several priests, paled in comparison to the ode. There, Louis XIV was described as touched directly by God in his efforts to convert all the French, a

327 Ibid.
328 *Mercure Galant*, December 1685.
“king who [God] gives to other kings as a model.” The February issue contained another ode on conversion, along with two dedicated directly to Louis. In the March issue, the first forty-four pages were devoted to such odes, with titles such as “For having destroyed Heresy” and “On the zeal that he has for Religion against his Enemies.” This unequivocal support of his work and unceasing praise of his glory created an atmosphere in which complete conversion of France seemed probable. While Louis XIV may not have been a monarch devoted to public approval, this monarchy was built on the notion of the glory of the “most Christian king,” and the existence of these odes and reports in one of the most prominent monthly newsletters speaks volumes for the intensely positive response at the time of the Revocation.

Yet, even with this general sense of approval, the Protestant problem continued to dominate the agenda for the royal household and its bureaucracy through 1686. A few edicts continued to be promulgated, further defining the two central themes of Protestant administration for the years following the Revocation. First were several edicts concerned with the reconstruction of French society without the Protestant religion and institutions and the ensuing reeducation of all former Protestants. Second were those concerned with the implications of the massive emigration that followed the Revocation, particularly the rewards for conversion and the punishment for families with emigrants. Together, these edicts reveal a king and administration obsessed with ensuring the proper results from this revolutionary edict; proper being, of course, those desired by the king.

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329 *Mercure Galant*, January 1686. This ode is credited to “M. Perrault of the Acadamie Françiase.” This is most likely Charles Perrault, the famous author of fairy tales, amongst other works.

330 *Mercure Galant*, March 1686.
At the heart of Louis’ Revocation was his desire for the reform of French society into a wholly Catholic society, and the edicts of 1686 continued this trend. On January 12, 1686, he promulgated an edict “concerning the education of the children of those of the Pretended Reformed Religion,” one of his most radical social propositions yet. In it, he ordered that all children between the ages of five and sixteen whose parents were still Protestant be removed from their families and placed with any other Catholic family members who would take them “to be raised in their houses or outside of them, by their own care, in the Roman, Catholic, Apostolic religion, and instructed in the Exercises fitting their sex.”331 If such family members did not exist, the children were to be removed from their families entirely and placed in the care of any Catholic person named by a local judge. This care and education was to be financed by the parents of these children, who were entirely responsible for the payment of their pensions in convents or colleges. The stated rationale for this harsh edict was given in terms of care for the Protestant children, as “we asses at present it necessary to procure with the same application the salvation of those who were born before this law” given that their parents, by remaining Protestant, could not “make but poor usage of the authority that nature has given them for the education of their children.”332 This was a drastic step, taking the king’s authority directly into the Protestant family in the name of reeducation.

The edict, or one similar to it, had been planned since the days immediately following the Revocation. A letter from Seignelay to Harlay on October 27, five days after the Revocation was promulgated, warned him,

331 “Edit concernant l’Education des Enfans de ceux de la Religion pretendue réformée,” 12 January 1686.
332 Ibid.
His Majesty intends to take on a resolution regarding the education of children of the Pretended Reformed Religion, but it is necessary to carefully examine the orders to be given on this subject. His Majesty will wait to decide upon his return to Versailles, however I think it would be good if you would prepare a report on what you think in this regard.\(^3\)\(^3\)\(^3\)

Harlay produced this report, evidently, as Seignelay wrote to him again on November 24, informing him that the king had taken his advice under consideration, but believed it necessary to wait a bit longer before sending declarations on the education of children.\(^3\)\(^3\)\(^4\)

This discussion, and the role of the king in determining when such an edict would be sent out, underlines the controlling power Louis had over the execution of the Revocation, particularly in areas such as these. The inclusion of text closing Protestant schools and forcing the rebaptism of Protestant children in the Revocation was neither the beginning nor the end of his insistence on using children to force the reintegration of Protestants into French Catholic society; rather, as this edict shows, it was part of a long-standing process.

Similar edicts came out in the following months, addressing social problems that emerged following the Revocation. On January 25, an edict concerning the wives and widows of Protestants whose husbands had converted was promulgated. “As this stubbornness divides families and inhibits or delays the conversion of their children,” Protestant wives and widows were required to convert within one month of the present edict, or be faced with disinheritance from all of their goods.\(^3\)\(^3\)\(^5\) In this edict, the expectation that a man’s conversion would spur his wife’s was evident, as was the reality that this was not always the case. This edict therefore sought to correct this social imbalance, which it deemed detrimental to the family as a whole, and children in

\(^3\)\(^3\)\(^3\) BNF MF 17420, fol. 149.
\(^3\)\(^3\)\(^4\) AN O/1 29, fol. 517.
particular. Its existence is an example of the royal meddling in conversion that permeated the year 1686; Louis XIV was “displeased,” as it says in the edict, to discover these inconsistencies, and enacted a series of edicts, believing in their ability to change social realities and effect additional conversions.

The king’s displeasure in this regard translated, as was often the case, into harsher prescribed punishments and an increasing focus on enforcement. A declaration of April 29 addressed the issue of new converts to the Catholic faith that were refusing the Catholic sacrament of Last Rites on their sickbed. In response, Louis ordered that any that passed away in such a state be treated as criminals, with no proper burial and all of their goods confiscated. Those that survived would still lose all of their goods, and be sent to either the galleys, for men, or into convents, for women.336 In a separate edict promulgated in January, those Protestants who remained as domestic servants to unconverted Protestant families were punished equally harshly, the men sent to the galleys and the women whipped and branded with a fleur de lis.337 The increase in consequences seen here, when compared with the edicts preceding the Revocation, reveals a monarchy increasingly determined to enforce its ideals, and increasingly harsh when faced with disobedience to them.

Underneath this increase in severity was a concern with flight that permeated the monarchy’s official dealings throughout 1686. While this study does not focus on those Protestants who succeeded in emigrating from France in 1685 and 1686, the monarchy’s concern with this emigration is important for understanding the context of Louis’ social

335 “Edit concernant les femmes et veuves de la Religion pretendu réformée,” 25 January 1686.
336 “Declaration contre les Nouveaux Catholiques qui dans leur maladies refuseront les Sacremens,” 29 April 1686.
reforms. Beginning just two weeks after the publication of the Revocation, several edicts concerned with ensuring converted and non-converted Protestants remained in France were promulgated. The declaration of May 7, 1686, summed up the king’s displeasure with an increasing trend, describing these émigrés’ return to Protestantism as in contrast to the “mercy of God” that effected their conversion and, as such, a crime of relapse. Not only was it counter to previous edicts forbidding such emigration, and thus subject to those punishments, this edict ordered perpetual condemnation to the galleys for all men who emigrated, and lifelong tonsure and reclusion in a convent for women who did so. This punishment was also extended to anyone who aided these Protestants or new converts in their emigration. The increasingly harsh punishments continued, and the monarchy’s concern not only with those who attempted to flee (or succeeded in doing so) but also those who aided them reveals the connection of these edicts with larger attempts at social reform. The efforts of French men and women to leave, and to help others leave, reflected strains in the social fabric that Louis XIV was unwilling to acknowledge and therefore punished. There was an underlying sense of betrayal inherent in these emigrations, as those who fled made evident their belief in a better life elsewhere. For a king who self-identified as the most-Christian and most glorious, this was both an affront to his honor and his kingdom.

Throughout the early 1680s, and into 1686, Louis XIV’s devotion to the refashioning of French society in an entirely Catholic manner dominated his interactions with the French Protestant community. It was his beliefs and ideals, as seen in the preceding edicts, that shaped the Revocation. By slowly increasing the restrictions on the Protestant community, Louis XIV limited their ability to effectively protest and respond to these edicts, thus allowing continued progression. With the edict of Revocation itself, Louis XIV laid out his conception of French society and expected his bureaucracy to respond. His attention to the details of the edict, its registration, and its enforcement betray the depth of his personal interest in these reforms. In the city of Paris, in particular, the devotion of Seignelay and La Reynie defined the edict and its implementation. As the ideologies and beliefs of the king became secondary to the realities of implementation, however, the response of Parisians themselves also began to shape the experience of Revocation.

Chapter 4  
The Revocation for the Nobility

The Parisian nobility faced the Revocation much as any other Protestants in France, with trepidation, yet their experiences were shaped by their social and political status as members of the Second Estate. In December 1685, when Louis XIV had ordered door-to-door efforts of his Parisian police force in order to find, count, and convert every Protestant in Paris, this status made itself evident. A hapless police commissioner knocked on the wrong door on December 16, and demanded to know the religious status of the household of the Comtesse de Roye, the wife of a military leader and known Protestant. She complained, and the commissioner was quickly reprimanded. The Marquis de Seignelay wrote to La Reynie to remind him that “people of quality merit particular distinction,” and, as such, “the King wishes that you order this commissioner to do nothing in the future without express orders, and to not confuse people of such rank with the bourgeois of Paris, with respect to whom they have orders.”340 The overt differentiation between the nobility and bourgeois of Paris expressed in this situation pervaded the enforcement of the Revocation in the capital city.

The unique treatment of noble Protestants was shaped by a long history of interaction with the crown, and reflected the state of this relationship at the end of the seventeenth century. The growing noblesse de la robe, and the attempts of the monarchy to move power away from provincial governments, led by the nobility, had created tensions both within the Second Estate and in relation to the crown. Louis XIV’s edict of revocation had been a strong statement of royal, centralized power, and the enforcement

340 AN O/1 29, 16 December 1685.
thereof for the nobility was determined by his ability to employ that power, in the form of his burgeoning bureaucracy. The interaction between crown and nobility has been studied by numerous historians, many of which have emphasized the importance of negotiation between the two parties in establishing what is often referred to as the absolutist French state.341 In the enforcement of the Revocation, however, this collaborative model largely breaks down, revealing the force inherent in the king’s wishes and demands. Louis XIV envisioned himself as a powerful leader, particularly in religious issues, and expected his nobility to follow his lead in this regard. While the aristocracy may have been modernizing themselves, as historian Jonathan Dewald has suggested,342 the monarchy’s modernizing tendencies were moderated with this sort of fervent and authoritative action. The resulting strife made itself evident in the enforcement of the Revocation, as nascent ideas of modern nobility directly collided with absolute conceptions of the monarchy.

Louis XIV initially tolerated some level of noble autonomy, exempting the aristocracy from the enforcement tactics of the first few months. The bureaucracy of Paris was intimately involved with the enforcement of the Revocation from the beginning, but was warned away from direct engagement with noble families. After this initial period, however, the tables turned. For the rest of the 1680s, the conversion of noble families preoccupied the royal household. The pseudo-freedom allowed to these families in late

1685 abruptly turned to direct royal interference in every part of their lives in early 1686. This shift emphasizes the importance of noble families in Louis XIV’s personal construction of his French Catholic state, and the level to which their conversions reflected the success or failure of the program as a whole. The remaining Protestant nobility in 1686 were making a statement against Louis XIV’s ability to control their decisions, a statement for their autonomy that Louis XIV did not, and perhaps could not, tolerate.

To understand the approach of Louis XIV and his bureaucracy towards the conversion of the Parisian Protestant traditional nobility, a study of two families will form the core of this chapter: the Comte and Comtesse de Roye and their ten children, and the Duc and Duchesse de la Force and their nine children. Both of these families maintained a regular presence in the capital city, and were known to attend most services at the temple of Charenton. They were both also members of the older noblesse de l’épée, families with noble lineage dating back several centuries, distinguishing them in the eyes of the monarchy as traditional leaders in the realm. Their experiences of the Revocation reflected Louis XIV’s approach to members of this traditional nobility in particular, and their interactions with the French state reflect the balance between respect and control that plagued Louis XIV’s interactions with this group. The archival record for

343 The distinction between old and newer aristocratic families became more pronounced in the seventeenth century, as the number of nobility increased and the avenues for self-definition changed. Jay Smith links this search for family history to the remaking of noble culture throughout the seventeenth century. J. M. Smith, *The Culture of Merit: Nobility, Royal Service, and the Making of Absolutist Monarchy in France, 1600-1789* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1996), chs. 1 and 2. Throughout this chapter, I will use the term “nobility” to refer to this group in particular, as Louis XIV’s approach to the noblesse de la robe differed greatly (as will be discussed in chapter 5).
traditional noble families residing primarily in Paris is scarce at best, yet the reconstruction of the experiences of these families reflects important tensions within the execution of the Revocation that can be extrapolated to the traditional nobility as a whole.

Frédéric-Charles de la Rochefoucauld de Roye and his wife, Elisabeth de Durfort-Duras, were the sitting Comte and Comtesse de Roye and de Roucy in 1685, residing primarily in Paris. The title of Comte de Roye and de Roucy was an old one, with its seat in the Picardy region. The first Comte de la Rochefoucauld de Roye was murdered in the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre in Paris in 1572, and left the title of the Comte de Roye and de Roucy to his younger son, the grandfather of Frédéric-Charles. The elder branch continued the direct La Rochefoucauld line and, by the late seventeenth century, their heir was a duke and peer of France. In the mid sixteenth century, the family had been entirely Protestant; by the late seventeenth century, a split arose between the La Rochefoucauld and de Roye. After the Wars of Religion, in which two generations of La Rochefoucauld heirs were killed on the Protestant side, the sitting Comte de la Rochefoucauld converted his family back to Catholicism, due to his close friendship with

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344 The destruction of the baptismal records from Charenton in the Hôtel de Ville fire of 1871 forces a reliance on nineteenth-century reconstructions for any prosopographical research in Paris proper. These two noble families recur with enough frequency in state records to reconstruct their experiences without these records, but similar reconstructions would be nearly impossible for other noble families.

345 The La Rochefoucauld family was one of the oldest noble families in France, able to trace their lineage to the early eleventh century. They had inherited the title of Comte de Roye and de Roucy with the marriage of Charlotte de Roye, the elder of two daughters, to François III de la Rochefoucauld in 1557.

346 François VII de la Rochefoucauld was the duke de la Rochefoucauld in 1685, son of François VI, the author of the *Maximes*.
Louis XIII. The family of the Comte de Roye remained entrenched in the Protestant nobility, distancing the two branches. Frédéric-Charles’ marriage to Elisabeth de Durfort-Duras was a statement reinforcing his connections to the Protestant community in France, as she also descended from Protestant nobility on both sides. The La Rochefoucauld de Roye family can, therefore, be seen as definitively Protestant in the late seventeenth century, with close ties to both militant Protestant nobility and ancient noble, primarily Catholic, families.

Their family was a large one, with ten living children in 1685, but was spread relatively far apart as a result of the Comte de Roye’s role in the military. This position defined his relationship with the king, as it reflected his status as a member of the traditional nobility and his service of the king in the most traditional noble manner, in warfare. In 1685, he was in Denmark commanding the Danish king’s armies. He had received Louis XIV’s permission to assist the Danish King Christian V in 1683, and had been awarded the title of grand marshal of the Danish army and the Order of the Elephant.

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347 The conversion of François III, comte de la Rochefoucauld de Roye, was solidified by his marriage to Charlotte de Roye (carrier of the title), as her sister was married to the first Prince de Condé, a Huguenot leader. His grandson’s wife, Claude d’Estrissac was Catholic, and this may have been part of the impetus for his conversion to Catholicism, as he inherited her family’s land and titles with the marriage.

348 Both were still connected to the Condé family, through both marriage and network connections, but their interactions appear to have been limited.

349 They were first cousins on their mothers’ side. His mother was Julianne de la Tour d’Auvergne, hers Elisabeth de la Tour d’Auvergne. Their brother was also the Maréchal de Turenne, one of Louis XIV’s best generals, who converted to Catholicism in 1668. On her father’s side, she descended from the Durfort-Duras, another militantly Protestant family from the Agen region. E. Haag, *La France protestante* (Paris: Sandoz et Fischbacher, 1877), 501-9. Haag describes Elisabeth’s grandfather as a “tiède Protestant” for his refusal to command the siege of La Rochelle, but notes his active armed participation in the Wars of Religion, suggesting that Haag’s perspective was slightly skewed.

350 This relationship harkened back to the feudal relationship of king and lord, defined by military service. This state was evolving by the late seventeenth century, but remained central to the idea of nobility. Dewald, *Aristocratic Experience and the Origins of Modern Culture*; Smith, *The Culture of Merit*. 
Their three elder sons had also joined the French army; in 1685, two, François and Charles, were still serving, although one had died in battle in 1684. They were presumably Protestant in 1685, but had left the home and, thus, the direct care of the Comtesse de Roye. In Paris, their five daughters and three younger sons remained in her care: Charlotte and Henriette, two grown, yet unmarried daughters; Frédéric-Guillaume, Louis, and Barthelemy, ages twelve to sixteen; and Isabelle, Marie, and Eléonore, young girls. This familial dispersion created a unique set of challenges for the de Roye family, as their Protestant heritage and status as noblesse de l'épée placed them squarely in the center of Louis’ efforts to convert the high nobility.

The Duc de la Force in 1685 was Jacques-Nompar de Caumont de la Force, the fourth duke, married to Suzanne de Beringhen, his second wife. The Caumont de la Force family was also an old one, holding land in the province of Guyenne since the Middle Ages, thus placing this family nearly as high in the nobility as the La Rochefoucauld. They, like the La Rochefoucauld, had converted to Protestantism early in the Wars of Religion, and many were also killed in the Saint Bartholomew’s Day Massacre. The first Jacques-Nompar de Caumont was there as a young man, and survived; he later became a close personal friend of Louis XIII. This friendship elevated the family to a dukedom in 1637. He and his family remained staunchly Protestant, however, even with exhortations

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351 The order of the Elephant is the highest Danish military honor. This posting followed the Danish and Finnish Scanian War, in which the French were the arbiters of a forced peace, and must relate to the French intervention in this struggle.
352 François was 25 and Charles 20, making them adults in the eyes of the king and responsible for their own conversion.
353 Charlotte was their eldest child, twenty-nine years old, Henriette was eighteen. The young girls were aged six, five, and four.
to conversion by Louis XIII himself on his deathbed.\textsuperscript{355} His sons had active careers in the military, as befitted their new status as peers of the realm, actively participating in Louis XIII’s wars and attaining the ranks of \textit{maréchal de camp}.\textsuperscript{356}

Jacques-Nompar III de la Force, the sitting duke at the time of the Revocation, was not a military man. He and his family lived primarily in Paris, in a home on the rue des Saints-Pères in the \textit{quartier} of Saint-Germain-des-Près.\textsuperscript{357} His wife, Suzanne, was from a prominent Parisian banking family, but not a major noble family. This suggests that the connections the marriage brought were primarily financial in nature, although the marriage also strengthened the Caumont’s ties to the Parisian Protestant community. Her father, Jean de Beringhen, was an elder in the temple of Charenton, and she and all of her siblings were baptized and raised in that community.\textsuperscript{358} Their children had a similar experience, at least until the Revocation.\textsuperscript{359} In 1685, all but one of the Caumont children remained at home with the duchess; the eldest daughter from the duke’s first marriage, Jeanne, had married the Marquis de Courtomer, her cousin, in 1682. Marie-Anne-Louise and Marguerite, her full sisters, were as yet unmarried.\textsuperscript{360} Jacques-Nompar and Suzanne also had six children of their own, all young at the time of the Revocation: Henri-Jacques, aged 10, François, aged 7, Armand, aged 6, and three young daughters, Charlotte,

\textsuperscript{355} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{356} The elder son of Jacques-Nompar I de Caumont, Armand-Nompar, had only daughters, thus passing the title to his brother Henri-Nompar, upon his death. This daughter, however, was Charlotte Caumont de la Force, the wife of Maréchal de Turenne from 1663-1666, the general of Louis XIV’s army that was the brother of the Comtesse de Roye. Jacques-Nompar III de la Force was the grandson of Henri-Nompar, as his own father died before his grandfather.
\textsuperscript{357} Their regular presence at the Protestant temple in Charenton testifies to their life in Paris, although their participation in the court of Versailles is uncertain.
\textsuperscript{358} SHPF MS 892. The de Beringhen family will be discussed at length in chapter 5.
\textsuperscript{359} SHPF MS 892 has baptismal records for the Caumont sons, not the daughters, but this seems to be the way of the register rather than a statement on their participation.
Marguerite-Suzanne, and Magne. In contrast to the de Roye family, all of the members of the Caumont family were tightly connected to Paris and its Protestant community. The age of their children allows a full exploration of Louis’ designs on the reeducation of very young children, and their connections to the Beringhen family provide an interesting relation to the community at Charenton. Most importantly, the Duke’s status as a peer of France and a participant in Louis’ court forced the king and his bureaucracy to address his Protestantism personally and directly, demonstrating the monarchy’s approach to noble conversions in a very immediate way.

A Place of ‘Distinction’ in the Revocation

With the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in October 1685, Louis XIV demanded the conversion of all of the Protestants in his realm, nobles included. In its immediate execution, however, this desire for noble conversion appears to have relied on subtle incentives more than on direct enforcement. La Reynie’s specific orders to respect the “distinction” that should be accorded noble families like the de Roye, and the La Force, placed the police chief in an unenviable position. The most highly sought after conversions were taken out of his reach, and given instead to the leaders of the Catholic Church or retained by Louis XIV himself. These figures, in turn, relied first upon the pressure to please the king and their belief in the inherent superiority of Catholicism to effect these conversions. For the first two months following the Revocation, these less forceful tactics dominated the king’s approach to the nobility, even as he focused his personal efforts on their conversion and control.

Their mother was Marie de Saint-Simon Courtomomer, who died in 1670, thus making all of these girls at least 15 years old in 1685. Jeanne married Claude-Antoine de Saint-Simon, the
In the text of the Revocation, the state’s interest in control over the nobility is crystallized in the specific prohibition of Protestantism on noble lands. The precedent set by the Edict of Nantes allowed noble landlords to dictate the religions allowed on their lands as long as, of course, this included Catholicism.\footnote{Edict of Nantes, Articles VII and VIII. This practice is clearly linked to the “cuius regio, eius religio” tradition of toleration adopted after the Peace of Augsburg.} This allowance subverted, in some ways, the monarchy’s attempts to centralize all authority and its cessation here, in the Revocation, mirrors the larger questions of monarchical control that dominated the late seventeenth century. The argument for the importance of social collaboration in the monarchy’s dealings with the nobility, most notably articulated by William Beik, places such action in a dialogue between the noble elites and the central monarchical state.\footnote{Beik, Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth-Century France; Mettam, Power and Faction in Louis XIV’s France; Kettering, Patrons, Brokers and Clients. While this model is currently being challenged by the work of scholars like John Hurt (Hurt, Louis XIV and the Parlements.), Beik’s argument for a reconsideration of the nature of absolutism on the grounds of these types of negotiations remains pivotal. Beik, "The Absolutism of Louis XIV as Social Collaboration."} An earlier allowance by Louis XIV for the Duc de la Force to keep his personal Protestant chapel in his chateau, following a ban on the practice of Protestantism in that region, is a classic example of such dialogue.\footnote{Marquis de Courtomer, the son of Marie’s brother.} The king needed La Force’s general support, as a duke and peer of the realm, and the allowance for his religion was the necessary negotiation. The change in tactics seen in the Revocation therefore signals a change in Louis XIV’s approach to the nobility, either as a whole or solely with regard to their religion. He stepped outside of the constructed social system, issuing absolute edicts and requiring noble compliance. The fervor Louis XIV felt for the enforcement of these edicts, in both their religious and social elements, turned what had been an avenue of negotiation into one of absolute power. Historian Darryl Dee has explained this decrease
in collaboration, and increase in forceful control, in relation to the increasing warfare of the 1690s, but clearly warfare was not the only contributing factor. In the relatively peaceful period of the 1680s, Louis XIV employed similar tactics, suggesting increasing noble control was a larger, and earlier, movement on the part of the king.

Jay Smith has also argued for the importance of an evolution in Louis’ dealings with the nobility, and the king’s efforts to effect conversions following the Revocation seems to fit most closely with this model. His analysis of the place of the “sovereign’s gaze” in the construction of an omnipresent monarchy, such as was necessary to allow for the various forms of royal service arising in the late seventeenth century, has space for both the subtle and direct pressures felt by the higher nobility. Smith argues that the system of observation employed by Louis XIV in the later seventeenth century was far from anonymous, instead becoming largely self-regulatory in its application of rewards, or graces, from the king for noticed service. Here, we find the incentive to convert in the early months following the Revocation, when noble families would have been well aware of the king’s desire for their conversion. If anything, Louis XIV’s belief at this time that his highest nobility would convert without overt pressure demonstrated a type of political and religious idealism on his part. His system of observation and service was set to exact the king’s demands.

The intense focus of Louis XIV and his “observers” on the religious lives of the nobility, however, raises additional questions. If, as Smith argues, the observation system was self-regulating and the nobility were aware of their place within it, why does the

363 AN E 1804. This occurred in 1679.
365 Smith, The Culture of Merit, chapter 4.
pressure to convert so abruptly change, first in October 1685, then again in January 1686? The answer appears to lie in the deeper meaning of religious conviction, particularly as held by Louis XIV himself. Whereas with questions of military and courtly service, a slight to the monarch could be reprimanded within the system, a refusal to convert had no obvious corollary. Thus, a step outside the system, into the world of prisons and police coercion became necessary. The Revocation was this first step, eliminating altogether a system of religious toleration that had been established throughout the seventeenth century. While, obviously, this was not limited to the nobility, it speaks to the larger response that Louis was taking both to the nobility and religious toleration. The change to directly invasive and coercive conversion efforts in January 1686 was the second step, reinforcing in a visible way the power behind the Revocation and the importance of the central monarchy in forcibly guiding the realm as a whole. As the nobility had long been the traditional opponents to this type of centralization, or absolutism, their participation in the redefined system became essential. Their religious beliefs and actions, in the context of both the Revocation and the centralizing French state, were at the heart of the king’s insistence on obedience in this most personal of issues.

**The Mood Changes: 1686**

A shift from subtle to direct pressure occurred in January 1686, when the king issued his edict on the reeducation of Protestant children and began to incarcerate Protestant nobles who had not converted in previous months. This edict, requiring the removal of Protestant children from their parents so they would be raised and educated in

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366 Ibid., 162.
the Catholic tradition, allowed either their Catholic relatives or the state to step in as guardians.\textsuperscript{367} The edict itself was self-evidently intrusive, placing the state in control, either directly or vicariously, of the education of all children who remained Protestant. This intrusion was most likely to occur for noble families, and more likely to permanently reshape their family structures. Louis XIV’s overarching interest in reforming French society into French Catholic society, when paired with a need for political control of the nobility, resulted in a history of familial readjustments and forced conversions unique to the second estate.

The noble family was a viable avenue for Louis XIV to effect his efforts towards noble control largely as a result of the connection between families, networks, and power centers that dominated the late seventeenth century. The continued reliance of the monarchy and its bureaucracy on clientage networks meant that family loyalty and construction was not only a question of social control, but also one heavy with political meaning. The de Roye family, through their La Rochefoucauld ties, had long been clients of the Prince of Condé, a network Louis had considered potentially dangerous since the beginning of his reign.\textsuperscript{368} Sharon Kettering argues that the emergence of clientage networks linked to royal ministers allowed the monarchy to survive the tumult of the noble rebellion in the Fronde,\textsuperscript{369} yet, the continued precedence of the highest nobility within the court structure of 1680s France also placed social and political value on their role. In his attention to these leading families, particularly the peers of France, Louis had

\textsuperscript{367} “Edit concernant l’education des Enfans,” 12 January 1686.

\textsuperscript{368} This is not without reason, given Condé’s leadership of the noble Fronde. The La Rochefoucauld actively fought with Condé in the Fronde, as the first prince de Condé had married Eléonore de Roye, thus linking the families by marriage. K. Béguin, \textit{Les Princes de Condé: Rebelles, courtisans et mécènes dans la France du Grand Siècle} (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1999).
continually reaffirmed their traditional status while reinforcing their lower hierarchical place within the state.\(^{370}\) In addressing noble families and their structure in this edict, therefore, Louis found another means by which he could force the many changes he wished to see in his state.

The edict’s connection to education was part of the growing emphasis on the power of education at court, as discussed above. Noble responses to these social and political shifts had themselves included changes in educational strategies, as Mark Motley has shown, allowing them to imbue their understanding of the inherent superiority of the nobility with the social, cultural and religious codes required of the evolving aristocracy.\(^{371}\) Thus, this connection between increased pressure to convert, and increased consequences for the failure to do so, and the king’s direct intervention in education can be seen as an extension of this construct, established both at court and in noble homes in the late seventeenth century.

By January of 1686, the king was increasingly displeased with the lack of noble conversions, and believed that an increase in his forceful insistence in several venues would be the antidote to this displeasure. Not only were edicts issued reformulating the king’s approach to children, and noble children in particular, the monarchy became increasingly interested in forcing conversions on an individual level in the second estate. In Paris, this resulted in increased discussions with La Reynie, and the inclusion of the Parisian police in noble enforcement from this point forward. This growing discontent,

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370 This argument is key for all discussions of social collaboration in the construction of absolutism. Beik, "The Absolutism of Louis XIV as Social Collaboration."
and its reaction, can easily be seen in a letter from Seignelay to La Reynie on January 30,
where he revealed,

> the king is informed that there are still many Protestant people of quality in Paris
> who form a kind of party, and who watch one another making it honorable to not be the first to change religion… [and] demanding conditions for their reunion with the Church that cannot be accorded.³⁷²

As such, Seignelay asked that one of the believed leaders of this group, the Marquis de St. Gelais, be arrested immediately, so as to put an end to such demands. This shift in tone, calling upon La Reynie to address the Protestant nobility in Paris instead of leaving them outside of the enforcement policies, was compounded by a request, in the same letter, to submit a list of all Protestants remaining in Paris, regardless of their social status.³⁷³ Not only was the monarchy turning its head more directly towards the nobility with regard to conversion, but it was calling upon the newly established bureaucracy to effect these demands.

This shifting tone, and ensuing shifting policies, prevailed in 1686. The letters of the Maison du Roi, headed by Seignelay, are filled with discussions of conversions, emigrations, pensions, and religious institutions. The king was more forceful in his requests to his bureaucracy regarding these noble families, and more insistent on all actors adherence to his broader vision. In a May letter to the Marquis de Menars, he insisted on compliance with his educational plans, asking the Intendant to ensure that all “new Catholics” were regularly sending their children to catechism classes and instructions. His phrasing, asking that Menars “make known to my newly Catholic subjects that I desire” that they send their children to instruction, reveals a tone of both

³⁷² O/1 30, 30 January 1686.
³⁷³ Ibid.
displeasure and authority, trying to ensure that Menars and his subjects both are aware of the importance of this command to his larger vision. When combined with the police pressure in Paris, these more official letters, destined to publicly convey the king’s desire for compliance across the social spectrum, reaffirm the centrality of education and conversion of noble families in 1686.

While the families as a whole were the target of Louis’ reforms and restrictions, their experiences are most easily understood when divided along gender and age lines. To that end, I will first consider the experiences of noble men, the heads of their household and carriers of the title, then that of their wives, and finally the experience of their children, both boys and girls. The nobility experienced the most focused and direct pressure to convert in the months between the change in tactics in early January 1686 and the end of that year, warranting a detailed exploration of those events. Discussion of the experiences of the Caumont la Force and de Roye families, as well as several other nobles living in Paris, illuminates the progression of this pressure and its social, political, and cultural meanings.

In general, men experienced pressure to convert in the form of incarceration, either in traditional prisons or in seminaries. These locations are easily understood within the context of political conversion, and have links to the punishment and imprisonment system of the lettres de cachet. The political implications of these imprisonments were intrinsically linked to the political power of these nobles; if not for their status, they

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374 AN O/1 30, fol. 155v.
375 Lettres de cachet were employed by the monarchy for the incarceration of nobility for political, social, or personal reasons. They required no bureaucratic involvement, and could only
would have been relegated to the prisons of Châtelet instead of the more aristocratic experience at the Bastille. Prisoners were, in keeping with tradition, required to pay their own room and board while imprisoned on religious charges, but the privileges they enjoyed within these walls differed greatly. Letters from the king abound—allowing or prohibiting visits, access to books or finances, or walks on the grounds—demonstrating a continuing royal interest in the level of pressure applied to individual members of the nobility. The involvement of Louis XIV, or, at least, his lead ministers, in these seemingly mundane details was a part of his larger objective to maintain personal control of his state, played out on a personal level for these men of political or social importance.

For no man is this interest more pronounced than the Duc de la Force, as a result of his position as the only Huguenot peer of the realm at the time of the Revocation. In his memoirs, the Marquis de Sourches referred to him as the “only grand Huguenot lord who is still in France” in June 1685.\(^{376}\) He had faced regular calls to conversion throughout the 1680s, but, even immediately following the Revocation, these demands were tempered with the respect believed due to a man of his rank. His visit from the Duc de Duras during his illness in June 1685 was both an enticement to conversion and symbol of respect, given the rank of his attempted converter. In the memoirs of the Marquis de Dangeau,\(^{377}\) this visit was greeted with grace and gratitude on the part of the Duc de la Force, as he “appeared perhaps a bit touched by that which M de Duras said, and was

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\(^{376}\) G. J. de Cosnac and A. Bertrand, eds., Mémoires du Marquis de Sourches sur la règne de Louis XIV, vol. 1 (Paris: Hachette, 1882), 257. Sourches was discussing the king’s efforts to convert the Duke in that month, given the duke’s recent illness.

\(^{377}\) Philipp de Courcillon, Marquis de Dangeau, kept a daily journal of his life at the court of Versailles.
sensible of the honor that His Majesty had paid to him. While the writer’s Catholic beliefs affected the report, as visible in his wish that the duke had been influenced by the pleas to conversion, it also reveals the delicate dance towards conversion that had long been played. It escalated slightly in late December 1685, as the king began his shift towards more forceful conversion efforts, when the duke and his family were recalled to court by a lettre de cachet. He then had a personal audience with the king, in which “His Majesty spoke to him of nothing but abandoning his heresy to return to the true religion.” The attempt was unsuccessful, yet the privilege of this personal appeal on the part of Louis XIV speaks volumes to the importance of the Duc de la Force’s conversion to the king. This next step in the king’s enticements to conversion called upon the personal loyalty the duke owed the king, and the power of personal appeals in effecting the king’s will.

The failure of this attempt, combined with the general increase in pressure on the nobility to convert in January 1686, led to the duke’s banishment from Paris on January 30. La Reynie received orders via Seignelay the morning of the 30th to personally visit the duke’s house the following morning to deliver the king’s orders that he retire to one of his country houses, and the rest of his family move as well. The king also wrote a personal letter to the duke explaining this decision, and expressing his displeasure. He bemoaned the fact that, even with the “marks of friendship and singular consideration that I have given you, you let yourself follow the poor counsel of those who wish to keep

378 Soulié, *Journal du Marquis de Dangeau*, 195. The Duc de Duras was also the brother of the Comtesse de Roye.
379 The continuing place of these *lettres de cachet* within the larger bureaucratic framework of the Revocation reinforces their centrality to noble imprisonment in the late seventeenth century.
381 O/1 30, 30 January 1686.
Chapter 4

you in the hold of a religion that I can no longer tolerate in my Realm."382 This personal
appeal on the part of the king was extraordinary among conversion efforts, reflecting the
deep personal investment Louis XIV had in the conversion of this Protestant duke. He
took care, however, to place the blame for the duke’s lack of conversion on the people
around him, giving the duke room to yet abjure and remain loyal to the king while
retaining his personal honor. Even with his banishment and the increasingly harsh efforts
to convert him and his family, the system of honor and social graces remained central to
the interactions between the king and this peer.

Yet letters discussing the Duc de la Force betray an even deeper sense of
displeasure on the part of the king. A letter dated the same January 30 from Seignelay to
Archbishop de Harlay of Paris referred to meetings that had taken place between the duke
and the archbishop after his forced return to Paris, on which the archbishop had recently
reported to the king. His assessment, “that there is no stance to take regarding him except
to allow him to go to England” was not acceptable to the king, and Seignelay’s letter
made clear that this path would never be so. Instead, he asked again for the archbishop’s
advice, given the king’s decision to banish the duke from Paris. He reminded the
archbishop that the king “did not make such a decision without pain” and asked “if there
is nothing that has changed since the letter that you wrote to His Majesty, or if you
believe that there would still be something by kindness and patience in his regard because
if you do not seem likely to succeed in this vein, His Majesty believes he should not
hesitate to execute” his plan for banishment. This letter, full of contradictory plans and
couched in supplicatory language, reveals a king conflicted over his next step and entirely

382 AN O/1 30, fol. 45v.
dissatisfied with the results of the efforts so far undertaken, going so far as to demand the
archbishop reconsider his assessment at the last minute.

During his exile at his provincial manor, the duke was constantly reminded of his
absence from Paris and Versailles. The king hoped that banishment from the pleasures
and benefits of court life and the king’s favor would remind him of the necessity of his
conversion. In February, following news that the duke may be more seriously
entertaining the idea of conversion, a letter from Seignelay to the duke expressed yet
again “how much His Majesty desires [his conversion], not only for the general wish that
he has that his subjects follow the true religion, but also for the particular friendship that
he has for you.” If these rumors were true, he continued, the duke was welcome to leave
at any time to return to court.383 Clearly, return to court and to favor was seen as the
highest reward the duke could welcome for his conversion, and it only awaited his
willingness to convert.

The king’s approach to noble conversion relied heavily on such exiles from court
and from favor, and was largely successful. The Marquis de Heudicourt converted in
order to stay in Paris in January 1686,384 and the Marquis de Saint-Gelais relented under
similar pressure in early February385. The Marquis de Courtomer, the son-in-law of the
Duc de la Force was recalled to court on February 1, along with the Marquis de Bougy
and the Marquis de Théobon.386 Presumably, they faced similar meetings with the king or
his lead ministers, imploring them to convert and return to favor at court. The Marquis de

383 AN O/1 30, fol. 72v.
384 O/1 30, 16 January 1686.
385 O/1 30, 10 February 1686. This is the same Marquis de Saint-Gelais mentioned as a trouble
maker in Parisian Protestant circles in late January.
386 O/1 30, fol. 54.
Courtomer was reported as converted on February 11. Among these men, not all resided at court, yet they were clearly swayed by the social, political, and financial benefits that came from remaining in the king’s favor. All came from families that had converted during the Wars of Religion, yet, after direct pressure by the king himself, converted quickly.

The duke’s refusal to convert in the face of these pressures is notable, therefore, for rumors of his conversion were untrue. By April, the king was increasingly impatient with the back-and-forth he had endured for the past six months. He recalled the duke to court via Seignelay on April 15, and met personally with him on April 18. The meeting was, in the words of the Marquis de Dangeau, “useless”—a royal letter incarcerated the Duc de la Force in the seminary of Saint-Magloire that same day.

This moment, the incarceration of the duke in an Oratorian seminary, was pivotal in his conversion narrative. Until this point, Louis XIV had relied on increasingly coercive measures, but had not yet arrived at a level of distrust and displeasure so as to incarcerate a peer of the realm. Many, many, other members of the nobility had been incarcerated or threatened with incarceration, including the duke’s family, but he had personally been given leniency in respect to his high noble status and hereditary position as a peer. At this moment, however, Louis XIV’s trust appears permanently broken, and he abandoned the system of grace and honor that had defined his relations with the highest nobility. From this point forward, he never fully trusted the duke. He maintained his involvement in the duke’s life, family, and conversion, to the point of ordering his personal confessor take

388 Ibid., 322.
389 Saint-Magloire was an Oratorian abbey and seminary in the heart of Paris, founded in 1620. AN S 6524.
charge of the conversion effort at the seminary\textsuperscript{391}, yet it was colored by this incident and its perceived betrayal.

On May 25, after one month in the seminary, the duke converted to Catholicism at the hands of the archbishop of Paris.\textsuperscript{392} Interestingly, Seignelay and La Reynie did not discuss this conversion, and no record of its existence can be found in the correspondence of the king’s household. Yet it was recorded in the Marquis de Dangeau’s journal, reflecting its status as important gossip at the court of Versailles, and reported by the \textit{Mercure Galant} in their May issue. The \textit{Mercure} obliquely referenced the king’s struggles with the conversion of this prominent Protestant, claiming,

\begin{quote}
the more that this triumph cost in care, the more it is glorious to the Church, and to [the Archbishop]; and the more the Duc de la Force searched to fully clear away all his doubts, the more one believes that he has been pierced by the light of Faith.\textsuperscript{393}
\end{quote}

As discussed above, this paper was in full support of the Revocation itself and all of Louis XIV’s conversion efforts, and reported regularly on their progress. The conversion of the Duc de la Force was newsworthy, in this sense, and was deserving of discussion at the court of Versailles, in the eyes of the Marquis de Dangeau, but did not make the official correspondence of the king. This omission demonstrates both the faith that Louis XIV had in this final step of conversion—the duke’s conversion was bound to happen once he was faced with incarceration—and his personal dissatisfaction with the necessity of this step. His bureaucrats had become responsible for the conversion themselves, after the failure of Louis’ system of honor, and therefore Louis XIV was removed from the concluding acts. The duke’s conversion was viewed as, and was, a statement of political

\begin{footnotes}
\begin{enumerate}
\item O/1 30, fols. 50, 62, 64v, 123v.
\item O/1 30, fol. 138v.
\item Soulié, \textit{Journal du Marquis de Dangeau}, 339.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotes}
power on the part of the king, yet the success was slightly tempered by the bureaucratic force required to obtain it.

In this conversion, and in many of those effected in the capital in these months, the role of the Parisian priests and archbishop became increasingly central. The king clearly placed the responsibility for religious teaching and resulting conversions on the bishops of every diocese, with members of his bureaucracy there to ensure their success and accordance with the king’s goals. A letter to Menars, the Intendant of Paris, on March 14 responded to an apparent lack of vicars and curés in the Parisian parishes, a problem the king suggested he address directly with the bishops of his department. Seignelay clarified, if the bishops were unable to find the funds to supply the requisite number of priests, “His Majesty wishes that you tell me what you find necessary so that He can ensure that in the Churches of your department there will be a sufficient number of priests.” The following paragraph further explained the king’s plans to build up the churches of Paris, and of the realm as a whole “which, after the number of new converts, cannot contain all those who should attend divine services.” The expense of this expansion was to be borne by the diocese, not the king, although the king would step in if necessary in order to ensure the success of his plan. The parishes and diocese were called upon to expand to meet the new demand, including the religious instruction and sacramental lives of the new converts. In this way, Louis XIV underscored the importance of the Church itself and its bureaucracy while simultaneously ensuring their allegiance to the throne.

393 Mercure Galant, May 1686, p. 274-5.
394 O/1 30, fol. 94v.
395 This all is directly related to the debate over the Gallican church that raged throughout the early 1680s. Louis’ stance on the centrality of the monarchy and the Church’s subservience
For those Protestants who were incarcerated, visits from Catholic priests were a daily occurrence. The vicar of St. Eustache, a priest by the name of Varet, visited the Bastille every day, making his rounds in the prison to daily demand conversion of the prisoners and offer spiritual advice. In the seminary of Saint-Magloire, as in other seminaries, daily spiritual meetings with the abbot were required. Nobles such as the Duc de la Force warranted a bit more individual treatment, and were regularly called upon to meet with Archbishop de Harlay and Père de la Chaize as well as the pastors serving their place of detainment. This separation from the regular priests of Paris, and the regular Protestants of Paris, reinforced their status as nobility and, in doing so, perhaps subtly reminded them of their place within the realm and duty to the king. The prominence of church officials and priests in effecting the king’s wishes for conversion, even amongst the nobility, also emphasized the close relationship between the king and the Church at this point, and the deeply religious nature of this social and political act, forcing the men to face the dual nature of their conversion.

The many meanings conversion held in 1686 was highly apparent in the treatment of Protestant nobles after their abjuration. The Duc de la Force abjured on May 25, but June did not find him released, but only allowed access to his financial accounts. On June 25, still in the seminary, his visiting privileges were increased and he was allowed a

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thereto was well established. Bergin, Crown, Church and Episcopate under Louis XIV; A. Forrestal, Fathers, pastors and kings: Visions of episcopacy in seventeenth-century France (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 2004). Jean Orcibal has also linked Louis’ strategy towards Protestants to the Gallican movement. Orcibal, Louis XIV et les Protestants..  
396 BNF MF 17421; O/1 30.  
397 O/1 30, 1 June 1686. The king restricted financial access for non-converts in an effort to impede their emigration and place more pressure on their conversion.
visit from his father-in-law, a fellow Protestant who had yet to convert. While the exact date of his departure from this incarceration in the seminary is unknown, it is clear that even following his professed abjuration, the king was interested in detaining him. This continued incarceration not only ensured his allegiance to his newfound Catholic beliefs, but also reminded him of the power the king continued to hold over him. In this experience, the duke was not alone. The Marquis de Théobon, one of those recalled to court in February, was recalled again in March, but could not be found. A letter from Seignelay to La Reynie expressed the king’s concerns that his absence from Paris might be due to his desire to flee the realm, and asked the police chief to search for him more thoroughly. Two weeks later, another letter indicated that this Marquis might be at the Danish embassy, suggesting that he had still not been located, and the king was increasingly concerned. Like the Duc de la Force, the Marquis de Théobon remained some sort of risk for the monarchy even after his supposed abjuration. Because their conversions held political, not solely religious, meaning, Louis XIV continued to monitor and suspect these noblemen well beyond their religious professions. Their continued Protestantism after the Revocation had made them into political suspects and the possibility of renewed ‘treason’—either through a return to Protestantism or a more

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398 O/1 30, fol. 231. This is Jean de Beringhen, whose experience of the Revocation will be discussed in detail in chapter 5.
399 The next clear reference to his location does not come until 1688, when he was living in his Parisian home.
400 O/1 30, 11 March 1686 and 23 March 1686.
401 While no direct record of his abjuration can be found, his recall to court without a following arrest, followed by a similar recall one month later, suggests that this marquis converted quickly after the February meeting. As will be discussed later in this chapter, the pressure on his wife and children proves their Protestantism at the time of the Revocation, but his lack of incarceration must be taken as proof of conversion.
overtly treasonous act like emigration—made them continued suspects in the eyes of the monarch, affecting their lives long after conversion.

The Comte de Roye stands as one important exception to this trajectory of increased pressure, for his military status allowed him to remain outside of France and free from the conversion requirements. In 1683, he had been posted to Denmark to command the king’s troops there.\textsuperscript{402} He returned home occasionally, visiting the court of Versailles for several months in the winter of 1684, but lived primarily outside of the country. His Protestantism was an asset in Denmark, and he received high honors from the Danish king for his military prowess.\textsuperscript{403} He was living there at the time of the Revocation, and was not recalled to France. Instead, he simply remained at the Danish court for several months until his wife and eldest daughters joined him, at which point they moved to England. This treatment is at odds with the experience of the vast majority of the second estate, with the exception of a handful of other military leaders.\textsuperscript{404} The Maréchal de Schomberg, the Marquis de Ruvigny, and the Comte de Roye were all accorded this dispensation, and were all three powerful military figures with attachments abroad. Their military status provided them with social standing partially outside of the court culture, and a more tangible link with their noble military ancestors than the court system provided. Perhaps more importantly, their links with other courts, kings, and armies heightened their disconnect from the French king and his courtly system.\textsuperscript{405}

\textsuperscript{402} de Cosnac and Bertrand, \textit{Mémoires du Marquis de Souches sur la règne de Louis XIV}, 158.
\textsuperscript{403} Soulié, \textit{Journal du Marquis de Dangeau}, 70, 135.
\textsuperscript{405} The Maréchal de Schomberg was born in Heidelberg and had commanded armies for the French, Portuguese, Dutch, and various German states. The Marquis de Ruvigny had English relations and had established his English citizenship in 1680, although he had only fought for the French state.
Considering the emphasis placed on the dishonor of nonconversion, or false conversion, these examples are best understood as exceptions to the general social system of Versailles and courtly life. Their physical removal from court exempted them partially from the system of merit in place there, and their military prowess allowed them to remain more fully in the system of warrior nobility that had prevailed in previous centuries.406

The status of the Comte de Roye as an exiled Protestant was complicated, however, by the fact that his wife and children remained in France, and at the court of Versailles. For many of these noble families, the religious convictions of their wives, and resulting persecution towards conversion, were equally complicated and difficult situations. These experiences were concurrent, forcing families to face these pressures separately yet simultaneously. Often, the conversion of one family member was taken as a prompt for increased pressure on the other, increasing the general sense of urgency within this situation. The Comte de Roye was forced to negotiate with Louis XIV because of his wife’s presence at Versailles; the pressures on the Duc de la Force continued long after his conversion in part because of his wife’s continued Protestantism. For all of these families, the stories of their men and women were tied together, for better or for worse.

While noble men posed a political threat, much of the monarchy’s fear of Protestantism was centered on women. Their roles as keepers of the household, when taken with their formative place in the lives of their children, made them a much more

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406 Jonathan Dewald has argued for the importance of the courtly system and its educational principles in seventeenth-century warfare which, while perhaps true for much of the French army, seems to have been less essential for these examples. Dewald, *Aristocratic Experience and the Origins of Modern Culture*, ch. 2. Jay Smith’s emphasis on the sovereign’s gaze even within the army structure must also allow for exceptions, given the physical distance of the Comte de Roye from the French king. Smith, *The Culture of Merit*. 
viable social and religious threat. The incarceration of noble women took place primarily in convents, the traditional location for the education of young noble women and the detainment of women who wished to retire from society. While noble men were imprisoned, following the means by which they had long been punished for political and social crimes in early modern France, noblewomen faced instead the traditional method for female education or seclusion. The inherent difference between the two avenues for incarceration speaks to the understood separation of the two sexes, and the distinct roles each played in early modern society.

The placement of pensioners in convents greatly increased in the seventeenth century, even excluding their use as places of Protestant incarceration. Historian Elizabeth Rapley explores this expansion as an outgrowth of the Catholic Church’s approach towards women in the Counter Reformation. Whereas previously convents had existed largely self-sufficiently, with little outside interference from either the government or the Church, increasing fears of female spirituality and activism initiated a move towards clausura in the seventeenth century. Alongside this shift, the convents increasingly became a place of both refuge and confinement. Rapley explains these enclosed spaces “were a tempting resource for a society that was increasingly concerned

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407 J. Hardwick, *The Practice of Patriarchy: Gender and the Politics of Household Authority in Early Modern France* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998). Hardwick defines the household broadly, including people, places, and things, and sees a woman’s role as responsible for daily management of this household. In her interpretation, the household is a microcosm of social authority. S. Hanley, "Engendering the State: Family Formation and State Building in Early Modern France," *French Historical Studies* 16, no. 1 (1989). Education within the home, with the influence of both parents, had also become more important throughout the seventeenth century, particularly for Protestant families. Motley, *Becoming a French Aristocrat*; Dewald, *Aristocratic Experience and the Origins of Modern Culture*, ch. 3; Strauss, *Luther's House of Learning*; Cunningham, *Children and Childhood in Western Society since 1500*, ch. 3.
with law and order and had on occasion to deal with ‘difficult’ women.\textsuperscript{409} Beginning with the sheltering of young women deemed at risk in larger society, these convents were forced more and more frequently to accept and detain women who presented political and social difficulties, often on orders from the king or his lead bureaucrats.\textsuperscript{410}

In 1686, these difficulties were primarily differences of religion, and Protestant women were incarcerated in great numbers in these convents. For noble Protestant families, at the time of the husband’s arrest, the woman would be ‘arrested’ as well, and taken to a convent chosen by either the king or the archbishop. Orders from Louis XIV to remove noblewomen to various convents abound in the early months of 1686, with La Reynie receiving them via Seignelay on a weekly basis.\textsuperscript{411} These mandements originated with the Archbishop, who alone held the power to force a convent to receive an outside pensioner, but he sent batches of blank mandements to the king for his use.\textsuperscript{412} As Rapley describes, it was at this point when “the great invasion of pensionnaires started… The teaching monasteries had been awarded a niche in society as the instruments of royal policy towards recalcitrant Protestant subjects.”\textsuperscript{413} The Archbishop had effectively ceded much of his authority over these convents in an effort to work with the king’s wishes, and the king saw these teaching monasteries as means by which the conversion of women could be best executed.

\textsuperscript{408} Rapley, \textit{The Dévotes}; ———, \textit{The Social History of Cloister}. Rapley sees a direct link between the changing place of religious women in society and the rise in the teaching orders, which will be explored in greater detail later.
\textsuperscript{409} ———, \textit{The Social History of Cloister}, 246.
\textsuperscript{410} Sarah Hanley considers this growth of prisons as part of the development of a separate female sphere, while recognizing their necessity as “alternative prisons.” Hanley, "Engendering the State: Family Formation and State Building in Early Modern France."
\textsuperscript{411} AN O/1 30.
\textsuperscript{412} AN O/1 30, fol. 125.
\textsuperscript{413} Rapley, \textit{The Social History of Cloister}, 249-50.
So, when the Duc de la Force was forced to retire to his country home in January 1686, the Duchesse de la Force was moved, with her daughters, into the convent of the Visitation de Sainte-Marie. This particular convent was chosen by La Reynie, on orders from Seignelay to select “whichever convent you agree upon with Monseigneur the Archbishop.”\(^{414}\) This combination of autonomy and collaboration was a regular feature of La Reynie’s role in the Revocation, and speaks to the centrality of this operation within the social reorganization of the Revocation as a whole. Throughout La Reynie’s orders in early 1686, letters requesting he choose convents for unconverted noble women appear regularly, often with the caveat that the Archbishop accept them, but his choice remained. Louis XIV evidently trusted La Reynie to find the appropriate homes for these Protestant women, and to do so both quickly and regularly.

The choice of convents as the locale for the incarceration and forced reeducation of Protestant noblewomen reflects the deep-seated gender distinctions present in early modern French society. Whereas noblemen were expected, on some level, to occasionally wield their inherent power in a way that displeased the king, noblewomen faced nearly opposite expectations. The French state had increasingly asserted its power over the institution of the noble family throughout the seventeenth century and, by 1685, had established a separation of spheres that placed women largely outside of the political network, but granted them power in social and cultural spheres.\(^{415}\) This distinction produced a difference in response from the crown when faced with a lack of conversion: the disobedience of noblemen could be punished within the existing socio-political

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\(^{414}\) AN O/1 30, 30 January 1686.

\(^{415}\) Hanley, "Engendering the State: Family Formation and State Building in Early Modern France." The extension of these spheres is most clearly seen in the development of salon culture.
system, but that of noblewomen required a step outside the traditional venues. Convents, with their emphasis on education,\textsuperscript{416} provided an environment that both removed Protestant women from their current place in society and furnished them with the required instruction for their conversion. Placements in prisons may have accomplished the former, but not the latter, and the paternalistic ideals at play in the Revocation necessitated this education for women.

Throughout the discussion of women’s religiosity and refusal to convert, the term “\textit{opinastreté},” stubbornness or obstinacy, dominated. While occasionally applied to men, particularly in occasions of relapsed converts, it appeared regularly in discussions of women and girls. The use of this term, common though it may be, to describe a particularly female experience of religious conviction in the face of forced conversion, suggests that women’s conversion was taken more personally, and less politically, then that of men. Whereas the refusal of dukes, counts, and other nobles to convert was a threat to the socio-political order, the refusal of their wives indicated a deeper problem. They should have, perhaps, simply converted when their husbands or social superiors (i.e., the king and his bureaucrats) demanded it of them. Yet, the narratives of conversion for these families reveals that it was more often the noble women who refused to convert. For the Duchesse de la Force, this refusal to convert continued long after her husband’s conversion, and her \textit{opinastreté} remained a subject of discussion for the king, and a source of trouble for the duke. The intense use of this term, and the crown’s focus on

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these women and their reeducation, speaks volumes to the role they were expected to play in the conversion narratives, and the problem their lack of immediate conversion caused.

Very little information survives to detail the experience of these noblewomen in convents, but the few surviving orders allow an extrapolation of the crown’s interaction with this process. Louis XIV’s orders were almost exclusively restrictions, after the initial incarceration, suggesting that the crown’s most important function was the limitation of freedoms. For most women, after the orders placing them in convents, no orders exist for their release or any of their future activities. The crown simply lost interest, even in noble women, after turning the process of conversion over to these teaching convents. In some ways, this disinterest was counterintuitive; after the threats and effort involved placing them in convents, one might expect regular updates from the convents to the crown. Yet, this hands-off approach also underscores the faith Louis XIV had in the reeducative process. He interpreted their entrance into convents as acceptance of his royal will, and assumed that with the proper reeducation they would continue to please the king by their conversion. The religious orders chosen focused on education and repetition as a means of reaching the most recalcitrant Protestant women, and any release was contingent on conversion. Therefore, these convents had the trust of the monarchy to manage the affairs and progress of these noblewomen until their expected, and required, conversion.417

Forced entry into a convent was only the beginning of the restrictions placed upon most Protestant women, as the king limited all contact with the outside world. For most

*English Ladies in Seventeenth-Century Catholicism* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2005); Motley, *Becoming a French Aristocrat.*
Protestant women, the Duchesse de la Force and the Marquise de Théobon included, restrictions on interaction were combined with daily religious teachings in the belief this would make them more willing to convert. A letter to the superior of the Nouvelles Catholiques complained about the number of visitors a Dame Le Cocq received, as it was “a means to slow down and even impede her conversion,” and ordered the superior to forbid all visitors. A letter to the same superior two weeks later expanded this prohibition, ordering that all women and girls in the convent “receive any visit or even a letter that you have not seen beforehand,” and limited their contact with any Catholic servants as well. There were no exceptions for high birth or connections, as demonstrated by orders to this superior in early May, forbidding Mademoiselle de Sainte-Hermine these same privileges. Her family was intimately connected to Madame de Maintenon, yet, even this connection was not enough to warrant communication with the outside world. These restrictions on communication and contact are illuminating of the social connotations of conversion, particularly for women. Louis XIV saw the outside community as possibly enhancing the unwillingness to convert for many women and, in response, limited their social interactions to the nuns who were instructing them. Thus, all their interactions would be focused on the Catholic teachings so that, if these women would not convert by the “truth” of the Catholic faith, they may convert in the face of the sheer pressure placed upon them—social and political, not solely religious.

417 It is clear from later records of these convents that the influx of women in 1686 eventually abated, and the majority of these women left the convents, presumably after some sort of conversion, or promise thereof.
418 AN O/1 30, fol 36v.
419 AN O/1 30, fol 61v.
420 AN O/1 30, fol 154v. The Sainte-Hermine family were cousins of Madame de Maintenon with whom she had been raised.
Incarceration in a convent was rarely a brief ordeal, with most women remaining in the convent for at least several months. During this time, the king worked with the convents to ensure these women be regularly instructed in Catholic teachings. An ordonnance dated April 8, 1686, clarified the king’s position on their treatment and forced instruction in these convents:

His Majesty, wishing to secure for the women who remain committed to the Pretended Reformed Religion the means to instruct themselves, in order to make their reunion with the Catholic religion… enjoins the Superior of the convent [of the Nouvelles Catholiques] and those who have been received there that his intention is that these women listen with patience and submission to the instructions that are given to them, to ensure that within fifteen days of their reception in this house they could make their reunion.421

Here, the king’s belief in the power of education to quickly effect conversions was tempered by the knowledge of the slow progress of many of these women, and the refusal of many more to even listen to the instructions they were required to receive. Yet, faced with this reality, his response was to reinforce the centrality of the education process in these convents and use the force of an ordonnance to compel the nuns and their pensioners to comply. Throughout 1686, letters to La Reynie and to the superiors of several convents reveal the continual presence of this royal pressure. When the king received information that the Marquise de Théobon, for example, had not yet converted in February 1686, he instructed La Reynie to use all means necessary to further pressure her to convert, believing her “obstinacy” stemmed from a lack of pressure.422

Three convents stood out as the most frequent destinations for Parisian Protestant women: the Nouvelles Catholiques, the Visitation de Sainte-Marie, and the Miramionnes. The Nouvelles Catholiques were an obvious choice, given their order’s focus on the

421 AN O/1 30, fol. 129v.
422 AN O/1 30, 12 February 1686.
reeducation of Protestants in particular. Their constitution of 1707 defined “the
Instruction of Protestants and of New Catholics as the most essential goal of their
vocation” and they had been active in this role before the Revocation. The convent of
the Visitation de Sainte-Marie and the Miramionnes were also new orders, created in the
surge of religiosity that arose in Catholic Reformation France. They both had connections
to the court and royal household and, by the 1680s, were well established and heavily
patronized institutions. While specific numbers are difficult to obtain, given the lack of
detail in the surviving record, the prevalence of these three, newer, convents in the orders
issued in 1686 cannot be denied. Beyond this patronage, Louis XIV also regularly funded
the Nouvelles Catholiques from his own treasury, and allotted occasional support to
many others. From December 1685 through December 1687, this convent received bi-
monthly payments of 3000 livres for the “subsistence” of the convent. Occasionally, as
in February 1686, they also received additional payments of “extraordinary pensions for
the subsistence of women.” The occasional support of the Miramionnes and the Filles
de Sainte-Marie more often took the form of individual pensions, although general
support of the houses was not unknown. In supporting these venues of new forms of
Catholic spirituality and educative approaches, Louis XIV reinforced the connection of

423 AN LL 1641.
424 The financial records of the Visitation de Sainte-Marie, AN S 4809-11, reveal their continual
acquisition of land in and around Paris throughout the 1680s, as well as large concurrent
donations. The Miramionnes were founded by their namesake, Madame de Miramion, and
continued to draw on this wealth. All of these orders will be discussed in depth in chapter 6.
425 AN G/7 884-886.
426 AN G/7 885.
427 AN G/7 885. In February 1686, 6000 livres was given to the Miramionnes “to pay for a house
to lodge the new Converts,” but they did not receive the type of regular donations enjoyed by the
Nouvelles Catholiques.
the Catholic Reform principles to his efforts to reeducate Protestant women, and the centrality of these convents in doing so.

While the majority of Protestant noblewomen experienced this process of incarceration and forced reeducation in a convent setting, the Comtesse de Roye, like her husband, enjoyed exceptional treatment. She was present at the court at the time of the Revocation, having been seated at the king’s table at the recent marriage of the Duc de Bourbon, but her husband’s status in the military placed her in a unique situation. She obtained the king’s permission to leave court without an abjuration and join her husband abroad in January 1686. The Comte’s own standing with the king here deeply affected the standing of his wife, an almost inverse experience to that of the Duc and Duchesse de la Force. His reprieve from conversion allowed her the same privilege. In late March, she and her two eldest daughters, above the age of reeducation and conversion, left the French court. The Marquis de Sourches described her departure as a “spectacle that brought compassion to everyone” and tears to the eyes of her brother, the Maréchal de Lorges, who accompanied her. This effect was compounded by the fact that the Comtesse was only allowed to bring her two eldest daughters, aged 29 and 18, with her to Denmark for her reunion with the Comte. Their younger children and grown sons had to remain in France, to be raised and educated Catholic.

In her story, the depth of Louis’ commitment to reeducation is evident, even as the Comte and Comtesse are allowed to leave France. The family enjoyed an extraordinary position outside of most of the restrictions placed on Protestants, yet their children were not exempt. The Comte and Comtesse de Roye were allowed to leave, but in doing so not

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429 Ibid., 367.
only abandoned their lands, titles, and inheritances, but also their children. The Marquis de Sourches, in describing the Comtesse’s departure, remarked upon “the compassion that everyone felt, to see a woman of this quality abandon her children, her goods and her country for a religion as false as the one she professes.” While the court felt empathy for her position, they also recognized the state’s interest in the children she was forced to abandon. Perhaps she, like many of the other noble women, was “stubborn” in her faith and would not convert, but her children remained possibilities. And so, for them, a life of reeducation began with their parents’ choice to depart.

The children of noble families all experienced similar reeducation efforts, starting with their removal from their families. At the time of their parents’ arrest (or temporary exile, in the case of the Duc de la Force), noble children were removed from their homes by the Parisian police and placed in either convents or schools, depending on their gender. Once Louis XIV had made up his mind to enact this edict in mid-January 1686, he accepted no delays in its enforcement. On the day preceding its publication, January 11, Seignelay wrote to La Reynie reminding him of the impending publication and asking that he make the necessary arrangements for the La Force and de Roye children, in particular. The next day these children were again the central subject of discussion, with La Reynie receiving assurances that the king had issued the necessary orders for these edicts to be enacted upon noble children, and asking for the status of his plans for these children, as well as those of the Marquis de Théobon. The discussions taking place around the publication of this edict imply that this edict was primarily destined for the children of noble families, not those of working or artisanal families. The emphasis

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430 Ibid.
431 AN O/1 30, 11 January 1686.
placed on their removal to close relatives who were Catholic reflects the reality of many noble families—the La Rochefoucauld were Catholic, the de Roye Protestant, but they were only slightly removed from one another—rather than the more localized religion experienced by other social groups. Additionally, the cost of educating children in convents or Jesuit schools was not low and, while the edict provided for those families who had no Catholic relatives, the burden of payment always rested squarely on the Protestant family. For noble families, education in a religious system was not unexpected, even for Protestant children, and the king’s intervention in their educational plan altered primarily its religious tenor.

In January 1686, eight children were still at home for the Caumont la Force family: two elder daughters from the Duc’s first marriage and six children under the age of ten, three boys, three girls. When the family returned to Paris after the Christmas holidays, they found La Reynie awaiting their arrival. His instructions had informed him that “The King has resolved to provide for the education of the children of the Duc de la Force” when the duke was ordered to leave Paris, and requested that La Reynie take personal charge of the children. He was to conduct the boys to the Jesuit college in Paris (Collège Louis le Grand) and his wife to do the same for the girls, to whatever convent he agreed upon with the archbishop. This level of personal care reflected the status of the Caumont la Force family; instead of a lower member of the Parisian police, they received

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432 AN O/1 30, 12 January 1686.
434 Protestant temples often ran primary schools themselves and, at a higher level, Protestant academies had developed extensively in the seventeenth century, although Louis XIV’s gradual attack on Protestantism had closed many of them. Chartier, Julia, and Compère, L’Éducation en France du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle; Deyon, "Les Académies protestantes en France."
435 AN O/1 30, 30 January 1686.
the particular care of the chief of police himself. Yet, it was still a member of Louis’ bureaucracy enacting Louis’ regulations on the family of a peer of France.

The delicacy of the situation was reflected most clearly in the letters between Seignelay and La Reynie in the following days. On January 31, Seignelay addressed the young age of many of the children, much too young to enter into convents or schools, and asked La Reynie to take the younger children to the home of the Duchesse de Saint-Simon, who would care for them.\footnote{AN O/1 30, 31 January 1686.} This turned out to be in error, however, as a letter two days later informed La Reynie. The king had been told that the duchess wished the younger children to be placed with the Duchesse de Saint-Simon, and had done so, but now the duke was displeased. To resolve the situation, Seignelay wrote,

> His Majesty wishes to leave the choice to Monsieur de la Force, either to leave all the boys together at the Collège [Louis le Grand] and the girls at the Visitation [de Sainte-Marie], or to place those that are younger than seven at the home of the Marquise de Saint-Simon.\footnote{AN O/1 30, 2 February 1686.}

While the duke and duchess had their children forcibly removed from their care, they were still allowed to be relatively active in the administration of this newfound Catholic care. The younger children were removed to the home of the Marquise, the duke’s eldest daughter, rather than the Duchesse, to whom they were not closely related.\footnote{Jeanne Caumont de la Force had married Claude-Antoine de Saint-Simon, Marquis de Courtomer, in 1682, her first cousin on her mother’s side. The Saint-Simon Courtomer family was closely tied to the Protestant families in southern France, including the Amonnet, although their seat was in Normandy. In 1686, the Marquis and Marquise de Courtomer had converted, though it is unclear when.} In following the duke’s wishes even in his exile from Paris, the king and his bureaucracy were respectful of his status while remaining faithful to the king’s wishes for conversion.
Letters sent to Père de la Chaize, the king’s confessor, and the rector in charge of the Jesuit college also demonstrated this level of regard. To the rector, Seignelay wrote asking he prepare a room for the boys, and “choose one of your fathers to place with them and take care of their instruction.” He also informed the rector of the weak health of the eldest boy, Henri-Jacques, asking that he take particular care not only with his instruction, but with his health. 439 This level of detailed involvement on the part of the king, through Seignelay, reflected the deep personal connection Louis had with this family. Not only was he anxious that these children convert, but that they remain happy, healthy children in their new situation. The care taken can be understood as a part of Louis’ larger concerns for the country, and his self-conception of himself as a father figure to his subjects. These children were part of his plan for a fully Catholic France, and would be leaders in this future. By ensuring that the rector, Père la Chaize, and La Reynie took particular care with them, he was attempting to ensure their fealty in the future.

For the family of the Comte de Roye, similar concerns dominated. On the eve of the edict removing children from their families, Seignelay’s letter to La Reynie reminded him that the Comtesse de Roye had many children under the age of sixteen—the cutoff for removal. He informed him that the king wished to allow the Comtesse the choice of her Catholic relatives for the placement of her children, and that the king awaited this decision. 440 By allowing the countess to make this decision on her own, rather than forcing a choice of relatives upon her, Louis respected her position in the court society. Like in his approach to the Caumont la Force family, the king’s forceful implementation of his edict, through the person of La Reynie, was tempered with a reiteration of the

439 AN O/1 30, fol. 46v.
440 AN O/1 30, 11January 1686.
respect the de Roye family had experienced in their encounter with the police in the previous month.

Even with this respect, however, the six youngest children of the de Roye family were removed from their mother’s care in January 1686, two months before her departure with their elder sisters. The girls, all under the age of eight, were not taken to a family member’s home, but rather placed in the convent of Notre-Dame de Soissons. Their elder brothers, aged twelve and thirteen, were presumably enrolled in the Jesuit college in Paris, though no record of this enrollment survives. The prominent place of this college within Paris, particularly for the higher aristocracy, and its role in the Caumont la Force family’s experience of the Revocation, however, allows this assumption. Perhaps more importantly, the guardianship of all of these children was transferred from their parents to their uncles, the Maréchal de Duras and the Maréchal de Lorges. These were their mother’s brothers, active at court and in the king’s army. While they did not personally educate these children, both took an active role in managing their futures in French society. They stepped into the traditional father’s role and, in doing so, underscored both the king’s ability to find, and be, a suitable father figure for noble children, and their own father’s inability to follow the king’s wishes.

Within all of the noble persecution discussed above, children remained an ever-present question. Children represented the greatest possibility for the success of Louis’ grand plans, as they were the most vulnerable to the changes taking place around them. The children of the Sieur de L’Isle, a minor member of the provincial nobility, were among those considered at risk, as their mother had emigrated earlier in the year. Louis

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441 A letter dated 2 May 1686, referenced these girls and their possible flight risk, dismissing it as a non-issue, as they were known to all be in this convent. AN O/1 30, 2 May 1686.
had ordered his arrest on February 17, in response to his wife’s flight, and a letter to the Intendant of Tours requested payment for the pension of his children’s enrollment at the Jesuit college in Paris. This letter clearly shows that the lord’s goods had been confiscated at his imprisonment; yet the main concern of Louis’ bureaucracy was the employment of these goods for this pension. For the children of the Sieur de La Ferté Civile, also a provincial nobleman with ties to Paris, a similar situation unfolded later in the year. Madame de la Ferté Civile was considered a flight risk and, when the Parisian police could not ascertain her location in September 1686, Seignelay informed La Reynie that “His Majesty wishes that his case be handled according to the latest declarations and regarding his children, He approves that you place the boys in the collège and the girls remains at the Nouvelles Catholiques.” While their parents did not attract as much attention as the higher nobility, such as the Caumont la Force or the de Roye, these children received strikingly similar treatment. They were placed in the same convents and colleges, and faced the same pressures for quick and total conversions to Catholicism. When it came to noble children, Louis XIV was consistent: their reeducation was paramount, and would definitely occur if given the slightest provocation from their parents.

The Théobon children were unique because they were returned to their parents care before the end of the year. For the vast majority of Protestant children, however, the following years were spent in these institutions, regardless of their conversion. They faced a similar education to their Catholic-born counterparts, and were raised in these

442 Chapman, Private Ambition and Political Alliances, 25.
443 AN O/1 30, fol. 83.
444 AN O/1 30, 29 September 1686
445 AN O/1 30, 1 October 1686.
institutions with little parental involvement. While some noble Catholic children still enjoyed the tutelage of a preceptor in their homes, by the late seventeenth century most were enrolled in colleges or convents around the age of seven. Protestant-born children may have begun their enrollment in these institutions as outsiders, but the emphasis on common social ground found there, combined with their conversions, would have quickly assimilated them to the Catholic majority.\footnote{Julia, "L'enfance entre absolutisme et Lumières (1650-1800)," 72-86.}

In the case of the Caumont la Force, however, the lack of involvement permitted for their parents extended to the payment of their pensions. The January edict clearly placed the burden of support for these incursions onto the families; yet, Louis XIV paid the pensions for all of the La Force children through 1690 at least. Starting in July 1686, the royal treasury paid a biannual pension to the Jesuit college in Paris for the four Caumont la Force boys and their personal preceptor. This amount began at 1853 \textit{livres}, followed by payments of 2514 \textit{livres} and 2774 \textit{livres} in January and August of 1687, before it evened out around 1600 \textit{livres} per quarter for the rest of the 1680s.\footnote{AN G/7 885-890. These payments were not completely regular, with the royal treasury often paying several quarters at a time after a long period of non-payment, but they did continue into the early 1690s at least.} This support was slightly exceptional, given that the only other children supported by the king at this institution were orphaned,\footnote{The royal treasury also paid the pensions of the two sons of the deceased Sieur de la Chateau starting in late 1687, and that of the sons of the deceased Sieur de Lashau beginning in September 1688. These pensions were substantially lower, around 1000 \textit{livres} per year. AN G/7 886-890.} and reflects the deep sense of obligation Louis XIV felt for these children. His personal involvement in their education extended as well to the Caumont la Force daughters. The convent of the Visitation de Sainte-Marie received 1500 \textit{livres} per year for their education, not including the personal pensions paid to the elder girls upon
their conversion.449 Most families, including the Théobon and de l’Isle families, did not receive this type of support and were instead forced to contribute to their children’s reeducation while facing their own pressure to convert. By supporting the Caumont la Force children long after the initial enforcement of his edict, Louis XIV reinforced his personal commitment to their reeducation. He remained involved in their lives, as a type of guardian, much in the way the Duras brothers served for the de Roye children. This continued reaffirmation of the centrality of education, in the form of financial support, focuses our attention on the importance of this effort, particularly for the children of the highest nobility.

Whereas the king only occasionally supported the education of noble children, his financial support of new noble converts was far more extensive. For many noble men and women, the promise of a pension was a large part of the king’s promised incentives to convert. With the Marquis de Théobon’s recall to court in early 1686, he was promised the king’s “support” if he converted.450 His wife’s conversion in March 1686 garnered an 8000 livre pension, which continued as a 1000 livre pension every following year.451 When the elder Caumont la Force daughters converted in the summer of 1686, they each received a pension, the elder 3000 livres and the younger 2000 livres. For some members of the lower nobility, these pensions were not annual, but rather singular “bonuses” received on the news of their conversion. The Comtesse de Clermont d’Amboise received 1500 livres on her conversion in early 1688, the Vicomte de Cabanac 1200 livres in May

449 AN G/7 885-90. The pension to the convent began in January 1687, and was paid regularly through 1690.
450 AN O/1 30, fol. 23.
451 AN G/7 885-8.
1688, and the Chevalier de Mirabel 400 livres in September\textsuperscript{452}. These pensions were scaled according to level of nobility, with higher-ranking families like the Montmorency and La Force receiving greater pensions, but applied to anyone converting. This effort was similar in tone to the general rewards system found at Versailles, wherein pleasing the king regularly came with financial benefits. Thus, these pensions and their continuation were an annual reminder of the king’s pleasure with their conversion and his support.

Throughout 1686, the question of noble conversion was central to Louis XIV’s plan of social reform, particularly with regard to the reeducation of women and children. While noble men were incarcerated in keeping with traditional forms of punishment, women and children faced convents and colleges in keeping with the king’s plan. The edict of January 1686 was aimed most particularly at these noble families, and their newfound inclusion in the bureaucratic system of the Parisian police signified their symbolic demotion on account of their religion. Clearly, Louis’ personal relationships with these families affected his decision to delay enforcement, but it also created an atmosphere prime for harsh conversion techniques when he perceived them as defying his will and disrespecting his previous generosity. The incarcerations began in 1686 were effective for some immediately, as seen in the family of the Marquis de Théobon, but for most this was only the beginning of a forced decision: to accept conversion or attempt to go into exile.

\textsuperscript{452} AN G/7 886-7.
As Time Goes On: Exile or Conversion?

The continual pressure to convert created an atmosphere where remaining in France as a Protestant noble became less and less tenable. For the de Roye family, their exile permitted the elder members of the family to leave for Denmark, but they continually negotiated the trouble of finding a place in a new society after their flight. For the Caumont la Force, Louis XIV’s personal interest in the conversion and reeducation of all members of the family continued as they reestablished the family’s place in French society after their exile from court and the conversion of most family members. Louis XIV did not abandon his goal of reforming the French nobility into his ideal, Catholic society, and the events of the late 1680s and 1690s reinforce the centrality of the nobility to this plan. There was no middle ground; French noble families could either convert and retain their political, social, and cultural advantages, or attempt to flee the country.

While the de Roye family was one of the few who were legally allowed to leave the country instead of converting, their experience was similar to those who chose clandestine flight. After her departure from the French court in March 1686, the Comtesse de Roye joined her husband at the court of the Danish king, along with her two eldest daughters. Their presence there, however, was short-lived, due to a social gaffe made by the countess. When invited to dine with king and queen of Denmark, she made reference to a character at the French court, an ugly older woman, when discussing the queen. Overheard, the queen made inquiries with her ambassador and discovered the identity of this woman, thus prompting her outrage. The Comte de Roye retired from the king’s army shortly thereafter, citing disputes with another commander, but the story
circulated amongst the courts of Europe.\footnote{Soulié, Journal du Marquis de Dangeau, 386.} The family left Denmark for Hamburg, briefly, before settling on England as their new home. While the cause of their departure from their first home in exile was unique, the unsettled nature of these frequent moves was characteristic of the first years in exile for many Protestants, and was a dominant force in their efforts to reestablish communities outside of France.\footnote{The Huguenot diaspora has been well studied by many scholars. Cottret, The Huguenots in England; van Ruymbeke and Sparks, Memory and Identity; Dunan-Page, The Religious Culture of the Huguenots, 1660-1750.}

The de Roye’s choice of England was not random, as one of the Comtesse’s brothers had previously established himself there alongside a flourishing French Protestant community. Louis de Duras, the first Earl of Feversham, was a commander in James II’s army, having followed him back to England from his exile in France during the English Civil War. Louis de Duras had remained Protestant even following James II’s conversion, and remained a favorite, often serving as a pseudo-ambassador to the court of Louis XIV on his behalf before the coronation of James II in 1685.\footnote{His powerful position in the English military and court helped assure the Comte and Comtesse de Roye of a favorable reception in England, and of support there. The French Protestant community welcomed the de Roye openly, and James II assured them of a continuation of their titles and rights in the English court. While this was not quite equal to the station that they would have enjoyed in France, they had forfeited their rights to French property and inheritances with their departure, and the gift of land in England assured their continued stability.}

The Comte and Comtesse de Roye, along with their two eldest daughters and, eventually, one of their sons, spent the rest of their days in England. The Comte de Roye
was given the title of the Earl of Lifford by James II, and an honorary place in his army. The Comte passed away in June 1690 after an illness, but his title afforded his wife and daughters entry into the English court, where they made their home. The elder daughter, Charlotte, never married, and eventually was named governess to the English royal children, suggesting her continued presence at court. The younger, Henriette, married the elderly earl of Stafford, guaranteeing herself a place in English society that was not dependent on the expatriate French community. The Comtesse lived until 1702, dependent on the small property she owned in England. Her will, dated 1701, reveals a cognizance of her meager situation, and her sense of exile from France. She left all her property in England to her daughter Charlotte, and anything remaining in France to her son Frédéric-Guillaume, who had joined his parents in England in the late 1680s, describing them as “the only ones not provided for.” For the rest of her children, she asked only that a ring with her hair be sent to each. These seven children, left behind in France, she never saw again. The marriage of her eldest son, François, in 1689 was conducted without their approval, as the signed form of proxy did not reach the

455 Archives départementales (AD) de Lot-et-Garonne, 38 J 17.
456 F.-A. de la Chesnaye des Bois, "De la Rochefoucauld de Roye," in Dictionnaire de la Noblesse (Paris: 1872). He was also asked, in 1688, to take a place at the head of James II’s defending army but declined, leaving the place open for his brother-in-law, the Earl of Feversham. AD Lot-et-Garonne, 38 J 17.
458 de la Chesnaye des Bois, "De la Rochefoucauld de Roye."
459 Frédéric-Guillaume was 16 at the time of the Revocation, placing him in an awkward zone between reeducation (below the age of 16) and conversion or exile. He was apparently granted the right to leave alongside his sisters and parents, although his elder brothers stayed and converted, suggesting that he had accompanied his father to Denmark and was thus outside the grasp of the French state. He inherited the title of the Earl of Lifford in England, although this was never officially registered, and spent his life in the English army. Ibid.
countess’s brothers until after the ceremony.\textsuperscript{461} Clearly, given their exile, the approval of his parents was no longer necessary; only his uncle’s approval was required.\textsuperscript{462}

The choice of exile was easier for the de Roye family than for many, but they faced similar challenges nonetheless. With the help of the Comtesse’s brother, they were forced to find a new place in a new court, renouncing many of their traditional honors. The lives and marriages of their children in France went ahead without their consent or involvement, reliant instead on the role of the Comtesse’s brothers. For these children, their parents’ exile continued to complicate their lives even in their absence. Historian Sara Chapman writes of the marriage of their youngest daughter, Eléonore, saying “although the \textit{duc et pair} branch of the La Rochefoucauld line, including Francois V and Francois VI were Eléonore’s distant cousins, which gave her a very high status in noble society, the taint of her family’s Protestantism greatly impeded her chances of realizing a marriage alliance within her own rank.” As such, Eléonore married into a ministerial family, becoming the wife of the Comte de Pontchartrain, a lead minister in the later years of Louis XIV.\textsuperscript{463} On a larger scale, the de Roye were preoccupied with questions of inheritance and financial stability, like many other refugees. The Comte de Roye benefited from a 12,000 \textit{livre} royal pension before his exile; after, these payments obviously stopped.\textsuperscript{464} The title of Comte de Roye and its attached lands were also passed

\textsuperscript{461} Soulié, \textit{Journal du Marquis de Dangeau}, 307, 16. François married Catherine d’Arpajon, daughter of the Duc d’Arpajon, known for his efforts to return southwestern France to Catholicism under Louis XIII. François himself had converted.

\textsuperscript{462} Sarah Hanley has described the rising importance of parental consent to marriage as a part of the “family-state compact” formed in early modern French society. The dismissal of this consent for François’ marriage can therefore be read as a sign of the lack of power the de Roye held in France. Hanley, "Engendering the State: Family Formation and State Building in Early Modern France."


\textsuperscript{464} AN G/7 885.
to his son François on his exile, leaving the Comte and Comtesse with no set source of income. The confiscation of land was a regular feature of the crown’s approach to exiles, and the records of the king’s household through 1688 are full of transfers of titles and confiscation of goods upon the news of a Protestant’s flight. The early conversion of the elder de Roye sons ensured the transfer of the family’s property to them; for many others whose family had left or was under suspicion, their goods simply reverted to the state. This financial component of an already stressful experience reiterates the difficulty of this choice. Exile, whether allowed by Louis XIV or not, required a near-complete removal from one’s life in France.

For the La Force family, the duke’s conversion in May 1686 precluded any chance of permitted exile, as any return to Protestantism would be treated as a relapse in faith rather than a continuance. As a courtier and peer of France, rather than an active military leader like the Comte de Roye, he faced a different set of pressures from the king that continued long past his initial conversion. His forced conversion at Saint-Magloire was greeted with only a slight increase in privileges there, including access to his money and accounts and the possibility of interacting with various family members.465 He appears to have left the seminary shortly after his conversion, sometime in the summer of 1686, but the Duchesse refused to convert and remained in a convent until sometime in 1687. For both of them, the king’s involvement in their daily lives remained a constant. Letters from Seignelay and the maison du Roi continued to arrive, regulating the access the duke had to various accounts, who they were allowed to see, and various other small matters.

465 AN O/1 30, 1 June 1686 and fol. 231.
that demonstrate the depth of interest Louis XIV continued to hold.\footnote{AN O/1 30, AN O/1 31. In September, the duke received a letter from Seignelay denying the financial support he intended to give to his father-in-law, who remained in prison as a Protestant (fol. 336). In March 1687, further letters arrived requesting he change his servants as they were suspected Protestants.} Perhaps most importantly, their access to their children remained constrained by the king, who had taken them under his control.

This control over the entire Caumont la Force family, adults and children alike, is most evident in the marriage of Marie-Anne-Louise in early 1688. She was the duke’s daughter from his first marriage, in her late teens in 1685, and had moved to court as a member of the Dauphine’s circle after her conversion in early 1686. The king had placed her as a fille d’honneur as a particular favor to her and her family after her conversion; normally, the Dauphine only had six filles d’honneur at a time and Marie-Anne-Louise’s entrance made seven.\footnote{de Cosnac and Bertrand, Mémoires du Marquis de Souches sur la règne de Louis XIV, 427. She joined the court in mid-July 1686, and was also given a pension of 1,000 écus (3,000 livres). The Marquis de Dangeau also noted that she was the first daughter of a duke to hold this position, but her father’s situation compelled it. Soulé, Journal du Marquis de Dangeau, 358-9.} Yet her presence there caused considerable trouble, as she became the mistress of the Dauphin,\footnote{This dalliance with the Dauphin caused problems for the king’s household long after her marriage, as she claimed her first child was the illegitimate daughter of the Dauphin (born in 1689). AN 353 AP 23.} spurring the king to being to search for a suitable husband in late 1687. The king’s involvement in this matter, to the level of writing the father of her future groom to ensure his cooperation, reveals his continued control over the entirety of the Caumont la Force family. The marriage of a daughter was traditionally the purview of the father, yet, here, Louis XIV acted as a surrogate father to Marie-Anne-Louise. He requested the duke’s presence at court on February 3, 1688, ostensibly to
acquire his consent for the king’s match.469 Five days later Seignelay wrote to the Comte du Roure, informing him,

the King ordered me to send you this express courier to inform you that having considered Monsieur your son for marriage with Mademoiselle de la Force, His Majesty has ordered me to make a proposition to Madame your wife, which I will work on with your pleasure.

He continued on to remind the Comte of the financial benefits of pleasing the king with this marriage, and the advantages it would bring to his family.470 The letter ends with a request for the contracts to be sent to Seignelay, so that the marriage could proceed quickly. Two weeks later, Seignelay wrote again, this time to the Comtesse, asking that she and her husband come to court quickly, as “the sooner one can expedite this affair the more agreeable it will seem.”471 The tenor of this entire exchange is domineering, as if neither the La Force nor the du Roure family had much say in the execution of the king’s plans. While Marie-Anne-Louise’s affair with the Dauphin certainly had an expediting effect on the king’s interest, the force with which the details of the match were executed betray a deep sense of responsibility and control on the part of Louis XIV.

The marriage took place March 7, 1688, in Paris, at the home of the Duc de la Force. The Marquis de Dangeau noted that the duke was not well, causing him to stay home during the church ceremony, but that the duchess was allowed to see her children for the first time in a long time.472 For the duke and the duchess, a marriage set by the king was both an honor and an insult, as it simultaneously reaffirmed their status in the eyes of the king, that he would take an interest in their daughter’s marriage, and

469 AN O/1 32, fol. 37v.
470 AN O/1 32, fol. 38v.
471 AN O/1 32, fol. 54.
472 Soulié, Journal du Marquis de Dangeau, 7 March 1688. The duke was continually unwell from the early 1680s, making this a plausible situation, not simply an excuse.
undermined the paternal and familial authority of the duke and the entire Caumont la Force family. Their peripheral role in both the establishment of the marriage and the ceremony itself demonstrates the depths to which Louis XIV had supplanted the duke as head of the family. His paternal interest in these noble children had elevated to such a level that, when faced with a situation traditionally brokered by the father, he stepped in and facilitated the marriage himself. This interference was an attempt to assure the king of the continued Catholicism and loyalty of Marie-Anne-Louise, and of the continued subordination of the duke. Even having followed the king’s requests and converted, the Duc de la Force was still distant from the affairs of his family, much as he would have been having gone into true exile.

This situation only got worse in July 1689, when the king arrested the duke and duchess once again, this time on suspicion of treason. A letter from the king to La Reynie on July 16, 1689, explained “the conduct of my cousin the Duke de la Force and of Monsieur de Vivans appears suspect to me, I have given my orders to arrest them, and would like by their knowledge to be much more informed.” La Reynie was, accordingly, to go to the Caumont la Force home and arrest the two men, taking them to the Bastille. There, they were interrogated, with the reports sent directly to the king.

Perhaps more importantly, a letter from Seignelay to Harlay, the procureur général of the Parisian Parlement, requested that a seal be placed on all of the goods and letters belonging to the Duc de la Force and Monsieur de Vivans. The king requested a report of

473 AN O/1 33, fol. 180. Monsieur de Vivans appears alongside the Duc de la Force in these arrest records, but it is unclear if he accompanies him throughout the following years. He is probably Henri de Vivant, Comte de Panjas, the duke’s uncle, though he would have been quite elderly at this time. The de Vivans family was closely allied to the Caumont, coming from the same region of France, and also having served with Henri IV.
474 Ibid. These reports do not survive.
their contents, undertaken while “maintaining discretion for those who could have some knowledge of the things that could have been undertaken against my service.” The discretion requested here and the immediate emphasis placed upon the seizure of the duke’s papers reveals the king’s fear of larger issues than a relapse in conversion, and the continued centrality of the duke in the king’s mind long after his initial forced conversion.

Within two weeks, the king also arrested and incarcerated six servants from the family home at La Boulaye, following an inquiry by the Intendant of Rouen. The women in this group were taken to Paris and placed in the Nouvelles Catholiques to make their conversion to Catholicism, revealing the continued presence of Protestantism at the Caumont la Force home. Even at the Bastille, the Duc de la Force kept valets of dubious religious leanings; a letter from Seignelay to the governor of the Bastille insisted on their replacement with two “longstanding Catholic” valets, coming from the duke’s staff, if possible, but if not, a full replacement would be necessary. The inclusion of all of these characters in the arrest of the duke and duchess emphasizes the continued social character of religion, both Catholic and Protestant, and the centrality of social networks in assuring complete conversions. While Louis had taken great pains to ensure the duke’s conversion and that of his family, the presence of unconverted members in the Caumont la Force household helped to confirm his fears of a false conversion. An additional letter to La Reynie two days after the initial arrest further illuminates these concerns, as Seignelay asked the police chief to place particular emphasis on the meetings of

475 AN O/1 33, fol. 180.
476 AN O/1 33, fol 187v.
477 AN O/1 33, fol. 203.
Protestants near the La Force country manor in his questioning of Monsieur de Vivans.\textsuperscript{478}

While the letter was full of names and places, details that must have been gathered by the local police, the king was reliant on La Reynie to clarify the entire picture, and the duke’s place within it.

The king’s interest in all of the people near the Duc and Duchesse de la Force reiterates the importance of community not only for underground Protestants, but also for Louis XIV’s larger vision of Catholic France.\textsuperscript{479} In flaunting Louis XIV’s ideals and possibly supporting the Protestant community, the Duc de la Force found himself committing newly treasonous acts. The accusation of \textit{lèse-majesté} was a much more serious charge than that of relapse, which was more common for Protestants in the late 1680s, and signifies the depth of the betrayal felt by Louis XIV. While it is unclear from the surviving record what, exactly, transpired near the La Force country manor, the severity of the king’s response and his invocation of his Parisian bureaucracy to enforce his ideals remains a strong message. If the duke and duchess were orchestrating Protestant gatherings, their political allegiance would also come under question. Even if not, it is possible that a duke’s relapse could have been automatically interpreted as a form of \textit{lèse-majesté}, due to his inherent political power. Either way, Louis XIV viewed their Protestant activities or beliefs as counter to his state, and thus treasonous. In this accusation and incarceration we see the reality of the French state 1686—Louis XIV relied upon La Reynie and Seignelay, and suspected and incarcerated a Peer of France.

\textsuperscript{478} AN O/1 33, fol. 259. Monsieur de Vivans is most likely Henri de Vivans, Comte de Panjas, the uncle of Jacques-Nompar Caumont de la Force.

\textsuperscript{479} In the wake of the Revocation, many Protestant communities, particularly in the south of France, converted on the surface but maintained an underground religious community. This period is known as “le désert.” Adams, \textit{The Huguenots and French Opinion, 1685-1787}; Strayer,
The Duc de la Force remained in the Bastille for two years after this accusation, and the Duchess in the Château d’Angers, a royal prison, for much longer. Throughout this period, the royal household remained deeply involved in the regulation of their visitors, their access to money and financial transactions, and any letters or books received. Only in September 1689 did the Duchess receive permission to walk on the ramparts of her prison; in October, an official letter from the king was required for the Duke to visit with his lawyer to arrange his affairs.\footnote{AN O/1 33, 12 September 1689; AN O/1 33, 3 October 1689.} The next spring, when the duke attempted to rent out some of his lands around La Boulaye, the king interfered again, allowing him to meet with his lawyer to begin the process but asking the governor of the Bastille to take care that he not place newly converted Catholics on the land, fearing a resurgent Protestant influence in his surrounding community.\footnote{AN O/1 34, fol. 43.} The Duchess faced similar scrutiny in the Château d’Angers, when in June 1690 the governor of the prison was asked to ensure she had no visitors, not lawyers, not notaries, not even doctors if the governor was not sure of them; in December 1690 two of her serving maids were expelled from the realm, as “we have no hope for their conversion.”\footnote{AN O/1 34, fol. 157v, fol. 351v.} Even while the king held the duke and duchess in his own system, he doubted the influence of those around them and their ability to wreak havoc on his tentatively Catholic society. When the duke was finally released to Saint-Magloire in April 1691, and to his daughter’s care in May, Seignelay sent him a letter directly reminding him of his obligations to the king, asking him to “come bow to the

\textit{Huguenots and Camisards as Aliens in France}; Joutard, "The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes: End or Renewal of French Protestantism."
king” at his earliest convenience.\textsuperscript{483} The month spent at Saint-Magloire served to remind the duke of his newfound Catholicism by renewing his contact with the priests who converted him. The letter requiring his presence and homage at court spoke to the larger obligations the king saw for the Duc de la Force. Not only was he reminded directly of his new religious allegiance, his political loyalty had to be reaffirmed as well.

All of these concerns and controls served to reiterate the lack of trust Louis XIV had in the Duc de la Force and his wife. Even though his conversion had been a strong statement to Louis XIV of the duke’s submission to the king’s sociopolitical goals, the effort put forth to effect this conversion had poisoned the king’s trust in the duke permanently. The initial delay and later suspicions worked together to create a new relationship based not on negotiation, but on strict fealty. Louis XIV had been forced, in his interpretation, to employ his bureaucratic system to discipline the religious and inherent political choices of the duke and therefore, even upon the duke’s release from this system, he owed Louis XIV renewed statements of loyalty. The duchess’s continued refusal to convert worked against this reestablishment of the king’s trust, making the communities surrounding the duke also suspect. In this arrest, incarceration, and release, the continued mistrust Louis XIV held for the Duc de la Force was made obvious.

For the Caumont la Force family, the choice, however forced, to stay in France and convert shaped the entire decade following their conversion, up until the duke’s death in 1699. Their children remained in the custody of the state, the duke was in poor health after his release from the Bastille, and the duchess was in and out of various prisons and convents for the entire decade. The papers seized in their arrest in 1689 were not returned

\textsuperscript{483} AN O/1 34, fol. 127. The Marquis de Dangeau noted his appearance on May 17, 1691. D. Soulié, de Chennevièrese, Mantz, de Montaiglon, ed. \textit{Journal du Marquis de Dangeau, avec des
until early 1692; La Reynie had held them for the previous three years. In a letter insisting upon their return, Pontchartrain, the minister who had replaced Seignelay after his death in 1690, wrote to La Reynie, “after you have been assured there is nothing that pertains to the disposition in which Monsieur and Madame de la Force were with regard to the King when it was seized or concerning the religion,” they should be returned. Political and religious loyalty was clearly the focus of this investigation and, in not returning the box of papers immediately, La Reynie (and, by extension, the king’s bureaucracy) emphasized his disbelief in the duke’s loyalty on both fronts. Even this bureaucrat, lower than the duke and duchess on the social scale, had grounds to question them and investigate their papers, given the mistrust the king held for them.

While the duke remained a free man for the rest of his life, his interests continued to be dominated by the king. In a rare letter from the duke to the king’s lead minister in 1692, he begged the king’s assistance for his daughter, who wished to leave the convent where she was staying for a visit with her older sister, the Marquise de Courtomer. He also asked that upon her return to the convent, which was taken as an assumption, she be moved to one closer to his home in La Boulaye, so that he might visit her from time to time. The tone of the entire letter is supplicatory, reminding the minister of his illness and his inability to travel to negotiate these things in person, therefore begging Pontchartrain to intervene on his behalf. While such deferential language was common


484 Louis Phélypeaux de Pontchartrain took over the office of minister of the maison du Roi in 1690, after the Marquis de Seignelay passed away in November of that year. He was the cousin of Balthazar Phélypeaux, Louis XIV’s minister for Protestant affairs, and a member of a longstanding ministerial family. His son, Jerome Phélypeaux, married Eléonore de Roye, the youngest daughter of the Comte and Comtesse de Roye, in 1697. Chapman, Private Ambition and Political Alliances.

485 AN O/1 36, 38v.
courtesy in noble letters at this time, this went further. The Duc de la Force was clearly reliant on the king’s good graces for most affairs concerning his family, as they all remained in the custody of the state, and was cognizant of the power Louis XIV and his ministers held. Additionally, by writing to Pontchartrain, not Louis XIV himself, the duke acknowledged the power of the ministerial state in general, and of Pontchartrain in particular, within this system. Even though he held the rank of a duke and peer, Jacques-Nompar Caumont de la Force was entirely under the control of Louis XIV and his burgeoning bureaucracy.

His wife, who had not even pretended to convert to Catholicism, felt the power of the state even more acutely in her continued incarceration. Whereas her initial arrest in January 1686 placed her in a convent, her arrest in 1689 found her in the Château d’Angers, where she remained for much of the following decade. The duke’s release in 1691 had not included her, and letters regulating her interactions, both in person and in writing, continued to come from the Maison du Roi. In March of 1694, she pleaded with both Pontchartrain and the king himself for permission to write to her husband, receiving it only so long as “she did not abuse this permission by writing too often and that all letters that she writes and receives pass through [the governor’s] hands.” In an accompanying letter to the duchess herself, Pontchartrain acknowledged the “ills that she suffered” and the king’s desire to alleviate them, but also reminded her of her refusal to convert as the source of all her troubles. The king had not yet completely abandoned hope of her conversion, given enough pressure and enough time, but was willing to make

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486 AN 353 AP 22.
487 The duke’s previous letter references her visit to her daughter in the convent, but letters from Pontchartrain to the governor of the Château d’Angers suggest these visits were not allowed. AN O/1 36, fol. 36.
a few concessions as personal privileges. Her status as the wife of a converted nobleman helped, but was not enough to truly remove her from the king’s control. Even though she, unlike the Comtesse de Roye, had remained in France, her contact with her family was similarly nonexistent.

It was not until August 1695 that she returned to her husband and her home at La Boulaye, and even then it was under the supervision of a man named Huet who reported to Pontchartrain. All of her actions remained suspect, simple visits to the doctor required royal permission and accompaniment until the summer of 1697. At this point, the duke’s health appeared to take a turn for the worse, as he converted to Catholicism yet again sometime between July and December 1697. Considering he had already converted to Catholicism at least two times at this point, this additional conversion suggests a lack of conviction on his part, and a lack of faith in this conversion on the part of the king. Yet, Louis XIV was willing to accept his conversion again, knowing that he was ill and perhaps hoping that this illness had called him to Catholicism. For the duchess, however, this third conversion brought another order for her incarceration. In the letter requesting she leave La Boulaye, Louis XIV wrote to her of the friendship he had always held for the duke, claiming,

I believe I cannot give him a greater mark [of friendship] than removing from him all people who could, at the end of his life, inspire feelings contrary to the good disposition he has found himself in since his conversion.

In Louis’ interpretation, the duke’s final conversion to Catholicism was a statement of belief and allegiance and, accordingly, must be met with responding friendship. This

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488 AN O/1 38, fol. 40v.
489 AN O/1 39, fol. 155. I have not identified Huet’s full name or title, but his correspondence with Pontchartrain places him within Louis XIV’s bureaucracy at a relatively low level.
490 AN O/1 40, fol. 81; AN O/1 41, fol. 114.
friendship may have come in the form of the expulsion of the duchess, but the sentiments expressed reveal the interconnected nature of Louis’ beliefs.

This final conversion came only shortly before the duke ceded his dukedom and peerage to his son, Henri-Jacques, now a twenty-three-year-old man. Letters to the Caumont family in June 1698 refer to the privileges remaining to Jacques-Nompar after the cession, and also constantly reference his poor health. The concurrent nature of these two events—his final conversion to Catholicism and his cession of the dukedom to his son—cannot be coincidental, and may explain the necessity of this final conversion. Henri-Jacques had converted to Catholicism as a child, as a result of Louis XIV’s edict forcibly removing him from his parents, and therefore was allowed to inherit property in France; however, if Jacques-Nompar remained a ‘relapsed’ Protestant, that is, converted to Catholicism and returned to Protestantism, his lands could revert to the state upon his death. The king remained actively involved in monitoring the duke’s religious and physical state in the last years of his life, sending another royal observer to live with at La Boulaye after allowing the duchess to return again in December 1698. Her return was described, in a letter from Pontchartrain, as a particular favor of the king, as mark of the “friendship and particular esteem” he held for the duke. Yet, the duchess remained under constant surveillance and was only allowed to speak with her husband under supervision, and never of religion. Simultaneously, Père Bordes, the Oratorian father who had first converted the duke at Saint-Magloire in 1686 arrived at La Boulaye in order to “fortify

491 AN O/1 41, fol. 183.
492 AN O/1 42, fol. 117v states the privileges remaining to Jacques-Nompar, by royal brevet.
493 This was first established in the edict of 25 June 1680, but the text of the Revocation clearly states that all punishment for relapsed Protestants remained the same after the Revocation. While the duke and his family may have been exempt from these rules, on account of privilege, the legal situation remained complicated.
him in his religion.”495 Louis XIV was taking no chances in the hopes that the Duc de la Force would die Catholic, an ultimate sign of true conversion.496

Jacques-Nompar Caumont de la Force, the fourth duke, died on April 14, 1699, a Catholic. His wife was at his side, a Protestant. The preceding December, after her return to La Boulaye, the king had asked his representative there to be sure the duchess was taken under arrest as soon as the duke passed away; however, he apparently had a change of heart, and she was left in her son’s care.497 He, too, was an avowed Catholic by this point, leaving her the sole remaining Protestant member of her family. Even after years in prison and years of separation from her husband and children, Suzanne de Beringhen, Duchesse de la Force, was “stubborn.” In light of this, and of her husband’s death, Louis XIV allowed her to leave France for England. On May 15, 1699, Louis XIV gave orders for her to be accompanied to Paris, where she would leave for England.498 This freedom to leave the country was an extraordinary privilege, enjoyed only by a few noble families. For the Caumont la Force, this had not been an option until the death of the duke, suggesting that Louis XIV was much more heavily invested in the conversion of a nobleman and his children than of his wife. He may also have taken her continued refusal to convert into consideration, given that a noblewoman would most likely live with her grown children after the death of her husband. This arrangement could have put all of Louis’ work to convert the Caumont children into jeopardy by exposing them to such an

494 AN O/1 42, fol. 234v.
495 AN O/1 42, fol. 248. He was also asked to continue to try to convert the duchess, but warned of her stubbornness.
496 There were recurring problems with new converts to Catholicism rescinding their conversion on their deathbeds. The duke’s aunt, Jacqueline Caumont de la Force, the Comtesse de Vivans, did this in June 1699, but did not die, and was subject to criminal proceedings for her relapse. AN TT 450.
497 AN O/1 43, fol. 3v and 127v.
avowed Protestant influence, and so her exile may have seemed more prudent.

Nonetheless, her quick departure from France after the death of her husband accentuates the differences in expectations Louis XIV had for noble men and women, as well as her personal determination to remain Protestant in the face of these pressures.

For the rest of her life, Suzanne de Beringhen, Duchesse de la Force, lived outside of London, supported by estates in England and, in part, by her son in France. After she begged Pontchartrain to allow some financial support in late 1699, Henri-Jacques regularly sent a small stipend to support her life in England.499 Several of her siblings, including her sister Françoise, ended up in exile in England, and she remade her life around them and the Huguenot community in England.500 Yet, other than the quarterly payment she received from her son, she appears to have had little contact with her children and family in France, and she never returned. In her will, she described this separation, and their conversion, as “the subject of my Greatest Grief,” asking God,

> with all the ferocity I am capable of the Return of his Holy Blessing upon them for to bring them back into the right way, and to enlighten them with the Light of his Holy Spirit which their ancestors have sealed with their Blood to the end that they may Glorify him by their Conversion.501

Tellingly, she was more concerned with their conversion to Catholicism and its stain on the family’s Protestantism than any other worldly problem; it was the only reference to her experience in France in her entire will. She outlived her eldest son, Henri-Jacques, and all of her property and income was left to her third son, Armand, who had succeeded

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498 AN O/1 43, fol. 150.
499 AN 353 AP 22. The Duchess wrote to Pontchartrain in September 1699 of her penury in England, asking the king’s mercy so that she not be forced to work. Receipts of payments from Henri-Jacques to his mother in the 1710s (AN 353 AP 23) suggest he acquiesced.
500 One of the two witnesses to her will was Philippe Mesnard, previously a minister at Charenton who had emigrated to England and was a minister of the Royal Chapel of St. James.
to the dukedom, with small personal gifts for her other surviving children and grandchildren.\textsuperscript{502} Her life in England reflected the clear decision she had to make, in 1699, between staying with her family as a Catholic or leaving them for Protestantism; even in her death, she did not return to France.

The Caumont la Force family had significantly less choice than the de Roye, at least before the death of the duke, yet both ended up with exiled relatives in England. Louis XIV’s decided interest in the children of both families required a permanent separation of parents and children for both as well, for even while they remained in France, the duke and duchess had little contact with their family. The choice between exile and conversion was dictated largely by the personal decisions of the king and, while a monumental choice in some regards, clearly did not truly allow family unity for noble families of this rank. For some lesser nobles, such as the Théobon family, conversion allowed reunification after the pressures of 1686 had ceased; for those who held considerably more political and social power, either choice resulted in separation. While the focus of Louis XIV’s noble conversion efforts may have been most intense in 1686, their effects resonated long after.

The importance of noble conversion to Louis XIV cannot be underestimated, and his efforts to effect these conversions for noble men, women and children from early 1686 on reflect this centrality. For the de Roye family, the king focused his attention on the children, as the Comte and Comtesse were allowed to leave for England. For the Caumont la Force, this privilege was not allowed, and the entire family was pressured to

\textsuperscript{502} Henri-Jacques Caumont de la Force died in 1720. Armand had four children, Jacques, Armand, Anthoine and Olympe, all of whom received personal items. To her daughters, both
convert for the next decade. Although the Duchesse de la Force was allowed to leave after her husband’s death, the high social and political status of the Duc de la Force and his children made their conversion too important, both personally and politically, for Louis XIV to allow any leniency. The story of both of these families illuminate the importance of their conversion, as members of the noblesse de l’épée, to Louis XIV’s conception of the social order in late seventeenth-century France, and his control thereof. Their experience paralleled the two competing forces in Louis XIV’s political system: that which allowed a degree of autonomy and collaborative power to members of the Second Estate, and that which reserved all power to the king, who employed it largely via his bureaucracy. In delaying forced conversions, and then ferociously insisting upon them, Louis XIV worked within both models but relied much more heavily upon his own absolute power. While his bureaucrats were essential within this process, administrating every step, Louis XIV also heavily invested and involved himself in the conversion of noble families. Their conversion, or lack thereof, reflected on his ability to control the system as a whole, and his personal involvement demonstrates the depth of his commitment to this religious reconfiguration. For Protestant families of the noblesse de l’épée, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the edicts that followed represented a seismic shift in their interaction with the crown, no matter their choice to convert, flee, or face incarceration.

nuns, the duchess left a 400 livre income, and to her sister, a 30 pound income. Ibid.
Chapter 5
The Revocation for Parisians

In his plan for the conversion of Paris, submitted to Louis XIV in mid-November 1685, La Reynie emphasized the importance of multiple, concurrent efforts to encourage conversions. From financial rewards, to exemplary conversion of wealthy Protestants, to an emphasis on reeducation, the police chief covered all of Louis XIV’s goals for the capital city, arguing that their work together would convert the majority of the Protestant population. 503 These plans, distinct from the personal appeals begun for the nobility in late 1685, defined the implementation of the Revocation in Paris for the non-noble population. The particular personal attention of the king enjoyed by the nobility, with its benefits and disadvantages, was moderated for the bankers, bourgeois, and artisanal residents of Paris by the growing state bureaucracy. Financial and political status within the city brought a higher level of attention from the king himself, but Louis XIV largely delegated the conversion and reeducation efforts for the Third Estate to La Reynie. Guided by Louis XIV’s overarching goals—the conversion and reeducation of the entire French Protestant population—the bureaucrats of Paris implemented a plan for the artisanal and bourgeois population of the city that relied upon its traditional institutions while expanding the reach of the state.

The sheer number of people in this social group resulted in a much more systematic approach to conversion, with less of the personal connection that dominated the efforts towards the nobility. Before the Revocation, the Protestant community in Paris before the Revocation was defined by its broad membership across social lines. Gwenaëlle Léonus-

503 BNF MF 7050, fol. 143.
Lieppe’s prosopographical study of the Parisian Protestant community proposes that up to 8,000 Protestants lived in Paris in 1685, making up less than three per cent of the population, and were actively integrated into the economic and social community.\footnote{Léonus-Lieppe, "À la redécouverte des réformés parisiens au XVIIe siècle." She bases this estimate on a study of contracts across Parisian districts.}

Orentin Douen’s late nineteenth-century study placed the number closer to 10,000, based more closely on the now-missing baptismal registers for the temple at Charenton and La Reynie’s own lists.\footnote{Douen, La Révocation de l’Édit de Nantes à Paris, 1, 157-63. The baptismal registers for Charenton were destroyed in the Hôtel de Ville fire of 1871, making all estimates simply estimates. These numbers do generally align, however, with the trends suggested by Philip Benedict. Benedict, The Huguenot Population of France, 1600-1685.} While 2,000 people is not insignificant, the proximity of these estimates allows rough generalizations, and suggest the strength of this community within Paris. Paris itself was growing exponentially in this period, nearing 500,000 inhabitants by 1685, a burgeoning economic and cultural center. The nobility only accounted for a small portion of this population, making bourgeois and artisanal Protestants the main focus of much of the conversion and reeducation action. These families felt the implementation of the Revocation immediately.

Many of the bourgeois and artisanal families affected by the Revocation in Paris left very little archival trace, with a single mention of their conversion often being their only mark in the historical record. Therefore, in an attempt to better understand the experience of this group, this chapter will focus in detail on three Parisian families that left a slightly larger trace: the family of Jean de Beringhen, a Parisian banker and recent member of the noblesse de la robe, the family of Jacques Muisson, a member of the Parisian parlement, and the family of Matthieu Amonnet, a wealthy lace merchant. While their experiences undoubtedly reflect a wealthier version of this Parisian experience, their

Chapter 5
treatment throughout the 1680s reflected their close ties to the economic and social forces within Paris much more than any political status. In the eyes of the king and his institutions, these families did not merit the personal attention given to the families in the noblesse de l’épée. The survival of personal papers from each of these families—an archival rarity—also allows a greater insight into their experience of enforcement than otherwise possible through the limited state archives. The conversion of these parents and children, like those of noble families, was central to the state’s efforts in Paris, and reveals the personal experience of the Revocation for families in the Parisian social elite.

This chapter will examine the evolution of the pressure placed on Parisian Protestants beginning immediately after the promulgation of the Revocation and lasting until approximately 1688. While some efforts continued well into the 1690s, the most focused and most successful efforts for these conversions occurred in this two-year span, led by the Parisian police. These families experienced the Revocation primarily through the burgeoning bureaucracy, with less direct interaction with the king himself but were, all the same, central to the king’s plans for a social and religious realignment. In the financial support given, and the bureaucratic attention paid, their experience of the implementation of the Revocation is an essential part of this narrative.

The Immediacy of the Revocation

The city of Paris experienced the Revocation in astonishing immediacy, beginning with the destruction of the temple in Charenton on October 22, the same day as the edict’s registration. For the bourgeoisie and artisans of the city, this was part of the

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506 This is discussed in detail in chapter 3.
trajectory of enforcement they had been experiencing from early October. The expulsion of provincial Protestants from the city in mid-October, combined with the concurrent efforts of the police to locate all Protestant families, created an atmosphere of enforcement primed for the Revocation. The care for detail Louis XIV expressed in the registration of the edict can also be seen in the implementation in his capital city, with details sent directly to La Reynie and his police force. With a combination of incentives, guarded force, and person-to-person contact, the large Parisian Protestant population was gradually (at least externally) converted.

The Parisian police force was intimately connected to the structure of the city of Paris, and relied upon this knowledge to create a detailed plan for Protestant conversions. The quartier divisions of the city were monitored not only by the quarteniers, a group of men responsible for the daily administration of government in their locale, but by an overarching group of police commissioners who reported directly to La Reynie. These commissioners, numbering 48 in total, were responsible for the administration of justice and the monitoring of society in their districts, making them ideal participants in the program of conversion. Nicolas Delamare, the leading commissioner, and the others regularly submitted reports and recommendations to La Reynie regarding Protestant families in their quartier— their location, their likelihood to convert, and their response to

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507 Quarteniers were responsible for tracking the population of their neighborhood, ostensibly for determining eligibility for election to the city council. This institutional structure was established in the sixteenth century. M. Le Moel, "Quartiers de Paris," in Dictionnaire du Grand Siècle, ed. F. Bluche (Paris: Fayard, 2005).

508 Each quartier had one head commissioner who reported regularly to La Reynie, aggregating the reports of the sub-commissioners. Saint-Germain, La Reynie et la police au grand siècle, 34-40.
any previous conversion efforts. Not only were their movements within the city observed, but any departures from the city were also monitored for the possibility of emigration, and each newly converted or Protestant family required the permission of La Reynie to leave legally. In invoking this administrative system, Louis XIV and Seignelay enabled a level of accountability that would not have been possible earlier in the century, one that spoke loudly to their determination to convert every single Protestant in France.

This system was unique to Paris, and its existence allowed Louis XIV to not invoke the military presence that dominated the experience of the Revocation in the South. One week after the Revocation, Robert was given orders to punish any soldiers who threatened to disrupt the public order “under the pretext of having orders to be garrisoned.” In late December, Harlay received a similar order, when Seignelay told him, “His Majesty does not want to resort to sending troops to Paris nor to employing regimental soldiers for placement in the homes of Protestants… [as] he believes that one can accomplish the same effect with the sergeants of Châtelet and the archers of the Prevôt de l’Île.” The idea of the garrison of troops as a last resort seems at odds with the heavily militarized approach undertaken in the provinces, and can only be explained by the special nature of Paris within the realm. Troops in Paris signified a breakdown in

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509 Delamare’s role in the Revocation was discussed in more detail in chapter 1. Delamare submitted the majority of the surviving reports, but seems to have aggregated many of them for La Reynie. BNF MF 7052.
511 McCullough, Coercion, Conversion and Counterinsurgency in Louis XIV’s France. Jacqueline Gratton has also explored the role of intendants in this increased military presence, crediting the intendants rather than the king with the bulk of the force. This could not have happened in Paris, given the proximity and continual involvement of the royal household. Gratton, "The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the Role of the Intendants in the Dragonnades."
512 AN O/29, fol. 481v.
the social and political orders, as seen in the Fronde, and Louis XIV wished above all for his Revocation to be the refinement of his new order, not the destruction of what he had already created.

It was with this approach that La Reynie prepared, in mid-November, a document outlining the king’s particular plans for the Protestants residing in Paris. The first concern mentioned was Louis XIV’s overriding desire to keep troops out of Paris; the second, a recommendation to issue another edict reinforcing the king’s commitment that Protestants would not be allowed to keep control of the education of their children, born or unborn. These two goals, coming first in a long list of suggestions, clearly held a place of importance in the overall conversion plan. The document continued to recommend a series of possible rewards that would speed up the pace of conversion in Paris without the need for military intervention, while making examples of those higher-placed Protestants who still refused to convert. La Reynie wrote repeatedly of the value of the king’s recognition of these conversions, and of those of less prominent Protestants, arguing that this recognition—whether given in *livres*, recognition, or social advantages—could be the key to escalating conversions in the capital city. He even offered up his own home as a gathering place for the possible conversion of many of these prominent Protestants, so that he could personally take them to the archbishop for absolution.514

In this document, and in the hundreds of other notes and correspondence regarding conversions in Paris, the importance of La Reynie and the Parisian police force comes through powerfully. Here, La Reynie was helping define the king’s policy towards Paris and its Protestant population; as we shall see, all of his recommendations were

513 BNF MF 17420, fol. 197.
514 BNF MF 7050, fol. 143.
implemented. The regular correspondence between Seignelay and La Reynie (often several times a day) continued long past the initial promulgation of the edict itself, allowing Louis XIV to maintain a direct involvement with the process of conversion and implementation. His reliance on La Reynie came with the exclusion of other members of the bureaucracy, signaling perhaps his belief in La Reynie’s ability to properly interpret his desires and effectively control their execution. Jean le Camus, the lieutenant civile of Paris, traditionally a position charged with the king’s justice, was repeatedly reminded of his secondary role to La Reynie in this matter. A letter from Seignelay on December 15, 1685, asked him to leave the policing of possible Protestant émigrés to La Reynie in a tone that suggested he was obstructing, more than aiding, the execution of the king’s plans. Seignelay reminded him of the importance of “avoiding conflicts of jurisdiction in a matter of this nature,” calling attention to the unique place of the Revocation in the trajectory of policing and justice in Paris as well as Le Camus’ changing position.515 While Le Camus remained essential in maintaining the jail system, where many Protestants eventually found themselves, La Reynie and his commissioners had the ear of the king and, accordingly, the power to effect change—and conversions—in the city of Paris.

Beginning in October 1685, the police commissioners of each Parisian quartier undertook door-to-door surveys of the Protestant families in Paris and their conversion status. Their reports to La Reynie in December 1685 split the Parisian Protestants into three general categories: absent from Paris, converted, and still Protestant. Although the reporting varied slightly between commissioners, with some reporting in detail on the

515 AN O/1 29, fol. 551. This struggle for power between La Reynie and Le Camus was recurrent in the 1680s, as Le Camus’ position became less relevant with the ascension of La Reynie.
number of women, children, and domestics and others simply giving the number of
remaining families, the division of these categories remains revelatory. All together, the
commissioners accounted for 5,151 people. Of these, only 1,230 had converted, 344
were unaccounted for, and 3,577 remained Protestant. While 1,230 conversions was
certainly a high number, the number of unconverted Protestants was nearly double that
after two months of concerted pressure on the part of the king and his police force.
Within these broad statistics, high variations occurred. While over half of the Protestants
in the quartiers of Cité and Place Maubert had converted (584 people), over eighty
percent of the Protestants in the quartiers of La Grève, La Mortellerie, Sainte-Eustache,
and Saint-Germain remained Protestant (1137 people). The high variation within these
numbers reveals the uneven efforts of the Parisian police in the first few months. While
attentive to the broad goal of conversion, their house-to-house reports were as concerned
with locating all of the Parisian Protestants as they were with insisting on conversion.

Even in the three quartiers that accounted for nearly half of the Parisian Protestants
(Saint-Germain, Place Maubert and Saint-Antoine), the numbers were not equally
distributed. While the population of Saint-Antoine was close to the averages for the entire
population, the population in Place Maubert had one of the highest rates of conversion,
and Saint-Germain one of the highest rates of nonconversion. These variations show the
irregularity with which conversion incentives and pressures were applied in various
neighborhoods, perhaps reflective of the commissioners charged with them. The short
time frame in which these changes were expected to occur also affected the ability of an
even application of conversion tactics, as different social groups reacted differently

516 When compared with the other estimates of the Protestant population, this number seems
slightly low, but not extraordinarily so. Léonus-Lieppe, "À la redécouverte des réformés parisiens
Map I. Quartiers of Paris, 1685.

Based on the *Eighth Plan of Paris* from Nicolas Delamare’s *Traité de la Police*, Paris, 1705.

A. Quartier de la Cité  
B. Quartier de Saint Jacques de la Boucherie  
C. Quartier de la Verrerie  
D. Quartier de la Grève  
E. Quartier de Sainte Opportune  
F. Quartier de Saint Germain  
G. Quartier de Saint Andre  
H. Quartier de la Place Maubert  
J. Quartier de Saint Antoine  
K. Quartier de la Mortellerie  
L. Quartier du Marais  
M. Quartier de Saint Martin  
N. Quartier de Saint Denis  
O. Quartier des Halles  
P. Quartier de Saint Eustache  
Q. Quartier de Saint Honoré  
R. Quartier de Saint Germain des Prés  


Chapter 5

Map II. Relative Concentrations of Protestants in Paris by quartier, 1685.

Based on the *Eighth Plan of Paris*, from Nicolas Delamare’s *Traité de la Police*, Paris, 1705.

Blue: 3-6% of the Protestant population.
Green: 6-9% of the Protestant population.
Yellow: 9-12% of the Protestant population.
Red: 12-15% of the Protestant population.
The quartier of Saint-Antoine was known for its population of artisans, thus making them more readily amenable to Louis XIV’s promises of pensions and guild membership; Saint-Germain was on the outskirts of Paris, home to many noble families and thus more servants, whose experience of the Revocation may have been affected by the king’s approach to the nobility.\(^{517}\)

The three families that form the core of this chapter were spread throughout these quartiers, and their different experiences stand together as the experiences of the relatively wealthy Parisian families of the social elite.\(^{518}\) Jean de Beringhen, Jacques Muisson, and Matthieu Amonnet were all devout Protestants living in Paris, from long-standing Protestant families. Amonnet and de Beringhen were temple elders, and Jacques Muisson was related by marriage to another elder. Their families’ baptisms, marriages, and burials all appeared in the records of the temple at Charenton,\(^ {519}\) and they were all intimately tied into the larger Protestant community through both familial and business associations. Perhaps more importantly, they and their families all felt the force of Louis XIV’s increasing insistence on conversion from 1686 on. The chance survival of their personal papers in the historical record allows a reconstruction of their experience that cannot be accomplished with other less prominent families, and using them as a guide will allow a greater understanding of the other, more fragmented stories of their fellow Parisian Protestants.

\(^{517}\) Magdelaine, "Enquête: Les protestants parisiens sous l’Ancien Régime."
\(^{518}\) The Amonnet family lived in the quartier Sainte-Opportune (rue des Déchargeurs), the Beringhen in Saint-Antoine (place Royalle) and the Muisson in Sainte-Eustache (rue des Fossez).
\(^{519}\) These records have since been lost, but the research of Emile Haag done in the 1860s contains much of the lost material. While not every child, marriage, or burial can be found in his notes, the prevalence of these families in the surviving notes allows an extrapolation to their entirety. SHPF MS 66.
Jacques Muisson was a member of the Parisian Parlement, and the youngest of the three men. He entered the Parlement in 1671 at the age of 35 and married Anne de Rambouillet the following year.\textsuperscript{520} His father was a wealthy banker, based in Paris, as were his maternal grandfather and his wife’s father,\textsuperscript{521} connecting him directly to the world of the financiers. His wife’s mother was the famed \textit{salonnière} Madame de la Sablière, known for her patronage of the poet Jean de la Fontaine and her weekly salon.\textsuperscript{522} Like many members of the Parlement, his influence derived primarily from these family connections, not directly from his seat in Parlement.\textsuperscript{523} The combination of these powerful financial and cultural connections ensured that the Muisson family quickly attracted the attention of Louis XIV and his bureaucracy in the wake of the Revocation. Jacques and Anne had five children together, the eldest born in 1674, and the youngest only five years old at the time of the Revocation.\textsuperscript{524}

In contrast, Jean de Beringhen was elderly by the time of the Revocation, with no young children at home. He had made his fortune as a banker and resided primarily in Paris with his wife, Marie de Menours. De Beringhen had purchased the title of \textit{secretaire du roi} in 1657, an ennobling title attached to the Parlement of Paris that

\textsuperscript{520} Anne was the daughter of Antoine Rambouillet, Sieur de la Sablière, a wealthy Protestant banker, and Marguerite Hessein, the noted salonnière.
\textsuperscript{521} Henri Muisson, his father, was a wealthy banker in his own right before his marriage to Peronne Conrart, the daughter of Jacques Conrart and the sister of Valentin, founder of the Académie Française.
\textsuperscript{522} Madame de la Sablière opened her salon after her separation from Antoine de Rambouillet in the late 1660s. She patronized many well-known intellectuals, including the poet Jean de la Fontaine, who resided with her. Her salon was known for its melding of Protestant and Catholic intellectuals until Mme de la Sablière’s conversion in 1679, following the death of her husband. Conley S.J., \textit{The Suspicion of Virtue}, 75-81.
\textsuperscript{523} There were approximately 250 members of the Parisian Parlement, and the vast majority of those officeholders were councilors, like Muisson. Parlement traditionally held power based on its ability to register (or not) royal edicts, but after the struggles of early seventeenth century and the Fronde, Louis XIV largely held complete control over the Parisian Parlement by the 1680s. Hurt, \textit{Louis XIV and the Parlements}. 
exempted him from taxes and accorded higher social standing, demonstrating his wealth and reaffirming his status. In 1685, he was officially a member of the noblesse de la robe, distinct from the traditional nobility, but a member of the Second Estate.\(^{525}\) He had seven living children, the youngest of whom was nearly twenty, including his daughter, Susanne, the Duchesse de la Force.\(^{526}\) His treatment differed greatly from that of his daughter and her family, reflecting the king’s important distinction between the new and traditional nobility—Jean de Beringhen was first and foremost a member of the Parisian social elite. His prominent status in the Parisian banking world, and his role as an elder in the temple of Charenton also brought particular attention to his conversion, as he could serve as an exemplary conversion in many social circles.

Matthieu Amonnet and his family were less wealthy than the de Beringhen and Muisson families and even more closely connected to the Parisian social world, although they were still relatively elite. Amonnet was also an elder at the temple of Charenton, but was a wealthy lace merchant, not affiliated with any of the larger political institutions in Paris. While La Reynie’s assessment of him and his status emphasized his wealth, in comparison to the other elders of Charenton, his financial stability rested more on his mercantile success and less on the financial or political status held by bankers and financiers like Muisson or de Beringhen. He and his wife, Rachel Houssaye, were both

\(^{524}\) SHPF MS 66.

\(^{525}\) Solnon, "Secrétaires du roi." This title technically placed de Beringhen on the bottom edge of the Second Estate, a member of the noblesse de robe. Its purchased afforded him the benefits of nobility after twenty years (1677), and was hereditary. This path to nobility was referred to as "savonnette à vilain," soap for serfs, as it did not require any noble heritage.

\(^{526}\) In birth order, these children were: Theodore, a conseiller au Parlement de Paris; Marie, wife of François le Coq, Sieur de Germain; Susanne, wife of Jacques de Caumont, Duc de la Force; Françoise, unmarried, aged 29 in 1685; Elisabeth, wife of Pascal le Coq des Forges; Frederic; and Adolphe. Three other children did not survive into adulthood.
from merchant families, placing him squarely within the bourgeois of Paris. Together, they had five children, the eldest a seventeen-year-old boy, and four younger girls. His brother was also a lace merchant, and had recently emigrated to London to avoid Louis XIV’s religious persecution, making Amonnet’s actions particularly interesting to the Parisian police. The level of detail in La Reynie’s report on him far exceeds that of any other elder, and focuses heavily on his interactions abroad.

For the first few months following the Revocation, the king’s plan for Parisian conversions revolved around incentives. Rather than starting with extreme force, the pressure to convert was slightly more understated, with the visits of Parisian police to every Protestant household partially countered by the ability to ‘please the King’ through conversion and be rewarded for it. In November and December 1685, hundreds of small payments were made to merchants and workers at the time of their conversion. The amount varied from small payments of 5 livres to up to around 100 livres, depending on the status of the new convert and the size of their family. These payments were minuscule in light of the state’s budget, but were a concrete demonstration of the king’s satisfaction with these conversions and, as such, could have been the tipping point for families who were considering conversion. The royal treasury allocated 21,000 livres in the month of February 1686 for the “new converts of Paris,” presumably paying for the

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527 His brother, François, was also in the lace-selling business, but had left Paris for London in 1681. Rachel Houssaye was the daughter of Noë Houssaye, a merchant in Tours. T. du Pasquier, Généalogies Huguenotes (Paris: Editions Christian, 1985), 112-8.
528 François, 17, Marthe, 16, Marguerite, Marie, 13, and Rachel. Only three of them appear in the Charenton baptismal registers, giving their ages. As these registers survive only in secondary sources, it is distinctly possible that the others were also baptized there, but the records were lost. SHPF MS 66; ibid., 118.
529 BNF MF 7050, fol. 184.
pensions allocated in the last months of 1685, and then continued to disperse 5,000 *livres* a month for their support for the next few years.\(^{531}\) This money would have been spent on all conversion actions in Paris, but records from La Reynie and Monsieur de Lubon, treasurer of the marine, demonstrate regular disbursements of 3,000 *livres* to these new Catholics, beginning as early as November 21, 1685.\(^{532}\) This money was clearly marked for the artisanal and bourgeois converts of Paris, as more elite members of society received pensions directly from the king’s treasury. In allocating this money through the Parisian bureaucracy, for wide disbursement, Louis XIV demonstrated his belief in the ability of these payments to help encourage conversions, and in the bureaucratic system to handle the administration.

The majority of the pensions disbursed through this system went to the workers of Paris and their families, and La Reynie kept detailed records of each family’s allotment alongside details of their family’s status and relationships. By the end of 1686, 640 individual converts appeared in La Reynie’s notes,\(^{533}\) 170 of which had received some sort of pension from the state. The information La Reynie included alongside these conversions and pension disbursements allows a glimpse into the mass conversion of Parisian artisanal and working families. Within this group of 640, 60 percent of the

\(^{530}\) BNF MF 7051, fol. 337; BNF MF 7050, fols. 134 and 138.  
\(^{531}\) AN G/7 885, 886, 887. Similar payments were also sent to provincial administrators, but with less regularity and longevity.  
\(^{532}\) The disbursement of November 21, 1685 totaled 3,290 *livres* and that of December 7, 1685, totaled 3,000 *livres*. BNF MF 7051, fol. 337; BNF MF 7050, fols. 134 and 138. The disbursement of December 7 was marked as “sent to Monsieur de Seignelay” on January 4, 1686, perhaps explaining a bit of the delay. Some of these payments went through Monseiur de Lubon as a result of his connections to the Colbert family (Seignelay was also minister of the marine).  
\(^{533}\) When the names of any family members were given, they were included in this count. Many conversions were listed as simply “with his wife” or “with his two children,” however, and those numbers do not figure in here. These additional converts would increase this number by at least
conversions noted were of men, often with the conversion of their wife and family simply included alongside. Additionally, of the 263 women whose names were included, 77 were widows, and another 50 converted alongside their husbands. That leaves only 130 women who converted presumably on their own initiative, and 16 of those were servants of other new converts, suggesting their conversion may have been influenced by others as well. In contrast, the majority of men listed have no family included in their conversion record (288 of 377). The emphasis on familial conversions that emerged particularly in early 1686 is evident here, as is the centrality of community in these forced conversions.

The conversion of women was an essential part of the conversion and reeducation process, yet, for many of these families, they were known solely by the occupation and name of their husband. Those women who were not firmly attached to a family unit may have been a lower priority for the conversion efforts of the state, and therefore more easily emigrated instead of converting.

In keeping with this emphasis on the conversion of entire families, the pensions paid to working men seem to increase not only based on their status in their field, but also by the size of their family. Most silk workers received pensions of between 9 and 18 livres, for example, but Daniel Briere received 40 livres, for himself, his wife, and his four children. Fifty year old François Prevost, a clock maker, received 60 livres for

200, but the lack of information given on them makes them less valuable for this analysis. BNF MF 7050, 7051.

534 Women were generally, under French law, considered minors, unable to participate fully in the legal system. Even those women who worked were represented legally by their husband. M. Sonenscher, Work and Wages: Natural Law, Politics and the Eighteenth-Century French Trades (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989), 66-7. The work of Daryl Haftor and Julie Hardwick has also revealed women active on their own behalf in guild culture, particularly in Paris and Rouen, although this seems to play a smaller role here. D. M. Haftor, Women at Work in Preindustrial France (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007); Hardwick, The Practice of Patriarchy.
himself, his wife, and his three children; his son, also a clock maker, but unmarried, received only 30 livres. While inherently logical, this approach also reiterates the importance of entire families—men, women and children—in the societal change that Louis envisioned with these conversions. By rewarding those families that converted all at once, the financial incentives to convert directly supported Louis’ larger goals. Yet, true to early modern society, this forward-looking vision for societal change via family units was complicated by an older vision of society, reliant on guilds and differentiation between workers. Jean Pirare, a master clock maker, received a pension of 100 livres, nearly double that of François Prevost, who had not become a master. The same held true for David Arbrinon and Martin Gardon, master button-makers, who received 60 livres each, compared to the 20 livres given to Pierre Gillermain, a simple boutonier. Clearly, socio-economic status also played a role in the disbursement of pensions, further refining the payments based on family size and structure. Together, these two criteria illuminate the realities of conversion for many of these families: pensions were based on their current standing in Parisian society, and their ability to act as a family unit. These two factors defined every day experience for Parisian artisans outside of the conversion experience, and Louis’ reliance on them here reflected his cognizance of the importance of working within existing social structures. The pension payments built upon these systems, encouraging movement from within without directly, violently, forcing conversion.

535 BNF MF 7050, fol. 337.
537 Ibid; BNF MF 7051, fol. 134. Gardon and Arbrinon converted on November 21, 1685; Gillermain on December 7, 1685. Gardon’s wife converted as well, but no family was listed for either Arbrinon or Gillermain.
Not only did many workers receive direct payments from the royal treasury, in the form of one-time pensions, many also availed themselves of the king’s offer to help newly converted artisans attain master status in their respective professions. Seignelay first brought up this offer on November 20, nearly one full month after the Revocation. In a letter to La Reynie, he wrote, “His Majesty believes that to bring about the most artisans to conversion, it will be necessary to give to those who are capable of their chef-d’oeuvre the majority, or at least a quarter, of the cost of being received as a Master.”

He then continued to ask for La Reynie’s advice on the necessity of this incentive; a letter dated three days later reflected this response, asking La Reynie to proceed with his recommended approach, allowing converted Protestant artisans to be received into the guilds as masters, paying only one quarter of the customary dues. Those that could not afford the reduced fee would have the remaining one-quarter fee paid by the king, as a letter to Robert, the procureur du roi, dictated on two days later.

For many Parisian artisans, this entry into a higher social status would be significantly more valuable than the small, one-time, pension paid to them. As a master in their respective guild, they would be entitled to certain tax and legal rights and representation, easier access to the materials necessary for their trade, and would have a much higher chance of increased wages in the future.

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538 AN O/1 29, 20 November 1685.
539 AN O/1 29, 23 November 1685.
540 AN O/1 29, fol. 513. A letter to Robert on November 23 speaks to the day-to-day role he played in the administration of this initiative, while La Reynie remained the leader.
some Parisian artisans, providing them with the stability the life of a journeyman could not offer.\textsuperscript{542}

For those Protestants who were of an age between childhood education and the reception of pensions or masterships, Louis XIV also instituted a system of apprenticeships. The apprenticeship system was the key to the majority of the Parisian guilds and, by supporting young new converts in their quest to join the guild system, he was able to provide a long-term solution to both their religious and financial stability. Only established Catholics, not new converts, were allowed to mentor these children, and the children themselves had to have converted. On September 30, 1686, Louis had established the precedent that newly converted children would be allowed to work and not attend school, so long as they attended on feast days and Sundays.\textsuperscript{543} By the late 1680s, requests were pouring in for the sustainment of newly Catholic young adults, many of whom’s parents had not converted and fled the country. Seignelay’s clerk, Sieur de Clairambault, administered the program, relying primarily on testimony from parish priests to the need and true conversion of these new Catholics. A letter from November 1686, for example, asks him to aid 18-year-old Marie Royer, a girl who had spent seven month in the Nouvelles Catholiques, but was now converted and attempting to find a position as a wool carder’s apprentice. The priest sung her praises as a new convert, and the ability of this apprenticeship to form a good, wise worker.\textsuperscript{544} The contracts for these

\textsuperscript{542} Journeymen were notoriously mobile, moving from shop to shop and town to town to find employment. Long-term affiliation with a master artisan would often lead to entry into the respective guild, but was not guaranteed, as the fees and apprenticeship requirements must also be met. Sonenscher has argued that the barriers to entrance into early eighteenth-century guilds were much lower than often perceived, but still emphasized the vagaries of inheritance, marriage, and apprenticeship on possible guild entrance. Ibid., 105-11.

\textsuperscript{543} AN O/1 30, fol. 326.

\textsuperscript{544} G/8 617. Similar letters abound in this collection.
apprenticeships went through Sieur Clairambault, and he requested regular updates on the progress of his charges towards both master-status and Catholic living.\textsuperscript{545} This program continued through the 1690s with Clairambault at its head, making it one of the longer-running endeavors of the post-Revocation impetus to education. Its concurrent emphases on religious and material learning made it attractive to many new Catholics, while its relatively low cost (compared to the payment of basic pensions or the housing and pensionnate of children in convents and colleges) ensured its longevity.\textsuperscript{546}

Amongst all of these incentives, the more coercive pressures to convert continued simultaneously. The rewards doled out to artisans who converted were complemented by the efforts of the \textit{procureur general}, Achille III de Harlay, to close the boutiques of those artisans and bourgeois who refused to convert. This plan was the brainchild of Harlay himself, approved by the king via Seignelay, and reflected the bureaucrat’s belief in the power of force to change the dynamic in the capital city, as early as December 11, 1685.\textsuperscript{547} While Louis XIV was adamant that royal troops not be involved in the blockading of these shops, asking Harlay to rely instead on the guards of Châtelet, his enthusiasm for this mixture of rewards and sanctions demonstrates his ability to simultaneously believe in the desire of his subjects to bend to his will and the necessity of force to enforce that desire.\textsuperscript{548} Harlay’s letters to La Reynie reveal the high level of attention both paid to the conversion of these artisans, with regular discussions of

\textsuperscript{545} G/8 617. A report from 1699 includes details on several girls living under one roof, training in tapestry. The emphasis is on their faith base, with later comments on their good behavior for their mistress.

\textsuperscript{546} This program continued well into the 1700s, with the earliest apprentices joining immediately following the Revocation. G/8 617.

\textsuperscript{547} BNF MF 17420, fol. 185.

\textsuperscript{548} Paris was an exception, in many ways, to the use of force seen throughout provincial France in the enforcement of conversions. Garrison, \textit{L'édit de Nantes et sa révocation}.
individual families and boutiques, requesting assistance from the other to ensure the
king’s demands, both affirming and restrictive, were fully executed.549

While the artisans of Paris were clearly an immediate focus of the monarchy after
the Revocation, the bourgeois of Paris received as much, if not more, individual attention
from the Parisian bureaucracy. Louis XIV’s plan for the conversion of his capital city
relied heavily on the quick conversion of these influential residents, as was clearly laid
out in a letter from Seignelay to Harlay in late November. “His Majesty desires that
before anything is done to execute his future plans that you be aware of his intentions”
for the bourgeoisie, and that, seeing as “the conversion of the main Protestant bourgeoisie
was furthered by his efforts,” he, along with La Reynie, was requested to prepare a report
for the king on these efforts.550 The correspondence between La Reynie and Harlay for
the month of December focused not only on this requested report, which the king
received in early December, but on the details of conversion for specific bourgeois
families. Lawyers, bankers, and shopkeepers fill these letters, as Harlay requested the
support of La Reynie’s commissioners to pressure various families, suggested the best
path for La Reynie to intervene in the efforts Harlay had begun, or reported on the
success of his own efforts.551 La Reynie had received his own pressure to convert this
group of Parisians from Seignelay, in the form of requested reports on the numbers of
bankers and other bourgeois families remaining in Paris.552 These families held special
significance in the conversion efforts in part because of the concentration of Protestant

549 BNF MF 17420. Harlay and La Reynie corresponded regularly from the time of the
Revocation through 1686, on a nearly-daily basis. While the letters are difficult to analyze, given
their singular mentions of various families, they do demonstrate the detailed level of involvement
for both men.
550 BNF MF 17420, fol. 171.
551 BNF MF 17420.
households in such occupations, but largely as a result of their power, as members of 
bourgeoisie, to effect change and cause problems in the capital city. The individual 
attention they received, compared to the broad efforts to entice artisanal conversions, 
reflected the social stratification of early modern Paris and the belief that actions of the 
wealthier could affect that of those less fortunate.

Seignelay himself intervened to force the conversion of these powerful members of 
society in early December, with a convened meeting of several leading Protestant heads-
of-household at his own Parisian home. Forty-nine men signed their abjuration that 
morning, promising to reunite with the Catholic Church and reject all the heresies that it 
rejected.\footnote{AN O/1 29, 14 December 1685.} The group was primarily composed of bankers and merchants, the result of an 
effort by La Reynie and Harlay to gather a group of prominent Protestants to abjure all at 
onece, as requested by the king. Louis XIV believed that the joint abjuration of many 
financial leaders in the Protestant community would help reinforce the financial and 
social incentives to convert, and remove the possibility of negative repercussions for 
those lower on the social scale who wished to convert.\footnote{He lists the attendees on pages 164-6.} One week later, Seignelay 

wrote to La Reynie stressing the importance of following up on these new converts to 
ensure they truly adhered to their new religious status. The king had heard that many 
were going back on their conversions and, while he was willing to be slightly lenient if 
they were waiting to fully convert with their entire family, La Reynie was charged with 

\footnote{Douen, \textit{La Révocation de l’Édit de Nantes à Paris}, 2, 155-86. Douen’s interpretation of this 
event focuses heavily on the forced nature of the conversions and the coercive behaviors of La 
Reynie and Seignelay. It appears as if no financial incentives were given to these men for their 
conversion, but Douen’s overall emphasis on the violence and injustice of the Revocation makes 
it difficult to tell. The archival record is not clear.}
ensuring any indecisiveness did not penetrate out to other families.555 By focusing on these families and, more specifically, on the men at the head of these families, Louis XIV and his bureaucracy reminded all Parisian Protestants of the centrality of conversion for their future success in the city. The involvement of key players from both groups—leading merchants and bankers, and the king’s right-hand minister—underscored the importance of these conversions for the king himself, reinforcing their importance on the whole.

Among the bankers, merchants, and powerful artisans that Louis XIV worked hard to convert, the elders of Charenton stood out as the single most important group. Their status as leaders in the Reformed Church gave Louis hope that their conversion would spark others and, perhaps more importantly, this status had been acquired due to their social and economic power within the community. In 1685, twenty-four men held this title and responsibility. The vast majority had been elders since the early 1670s or earlier, with five joining the group in the 1680s.556 They had all been under surveillance by La Reynie’s police commissioners before the Revocation, and Louis XIV’s insistence on knowing their status and location only increased afterwards. On November 8, La Reynie prepared a report for the king on twelve of the twenty-four, primarily those who had held the position longest. This report included details on the businesses and homes each elder owned, their families and in-laws, and their general disposition and possibility of conversion. Antoine de Massanes, for example, “passed for a very rich man… owner of

555 AN O/1 29, 21 December 1685. Louis’ concern with the new converts ability to retract the conversion Seignelay extracted was due, in part, to the Church’s insistence that a conversion without a priest (or one that was forced) was not a true conversion. The conversions of December 14 could easily be argued to fall under either category, a loophole that he feared many of the attendants might be exploiting. Ibid., 177.
556 Ibid., 3: 488-93.
the majority of the rue Sevre,” whereas Louis Gervaise was reported to be “of a mediocre
spirit, having nothing above his status as a merchant.” For Antoine Crozat, sieur de la
Bastide, particular interest was paid to his “wise spirit” and the belief that “he had stayed
in the [Protestant] Religion for some worldly interest.”557 The attention La Reynie (or his
commissioners) paid to the worldly status of these elders speaks volumes to the
importance of economic and community leadership in Louis XIV’s vision of conversion
for the Parisian Protestants.

The particular attention paid to these elders extended to, on November 10, their
exile from Paris. Two days before receiving this memoire, Louis XIV had asked La
Reynie specifically to check into any letters of change issued to these elders, perhaps for
fear of their flight. Two days after the receipt of La Reynie’s detailed report, he exiled
nearly all of the elders of Charenton from Paris (where, presumably, access to flight was
easiest).558 Their destinations varied, based largely on where each elder had property or
family, but none were closer than 150km from Versailles, and none further south than
Limoges.559 By forcing these community leaders to leave Paris to consider their
conversion, and exiling them to locations that impeded their emigration, Louis XIV
removed them from working against conversion efforts in the capital while
simultaneously reminding them of his power to remove them as well from the sources of
their own wealth and prestige. The first exile orders were issued only to the men, with
their families forbidden from accompanying them. On November 20 La Reynie was
given orders to change this stance, exiling the families from Paris as well. This revision

557 BNF MF 7050, fol. 184.
558 AN O/1 29, 6 November 1685 and fol. 500. Two elders, Falaiseau and Rozemont, were not
exiled along with the rest, as they were present at the meeting at Seignelay’s on December 14,
and signed their abjuration. DDouen, La Révocation de l’Édit de Nantes à Paris, 2, 120.
was in keeping with Louis XIV’s general focus on families in his conversion efforts, similar to his approach to Parisian conversions at this time.

Jean de Beringhen, the banker, and Matthieu Amonnet, the lace merchant, were two of these elders of Charenton facing exile in November. Beringhen had been an elder since 1670, while Amonnet had been elected more recently, in 1679. Both were active leaders in the church, however, and were included in La Reynie’s reports on home life and financial situation compiled in early November. Beringhen was described as an older man, wealthy, and zealous in his religion; Amonnet a native of Loudon whose entire family had already been active in emigration and whose religious preferences, though strong, might be influenced by pressure on his economic interests. On November 10, alongside the other elders, Jean de Beringhen was exiled to Limoges, and Matthieu Amonnet to Mayenne. A report to La Reynie on November 18, however, shows that Beringhen was not in Paris at the time of this order, residing instead on his property north of the city, and these orders would have to await his return. On November 22, the orders changed, and Beringhen ordered sent to Montargis instead. Amonnet, in contrast, was in Paris under surveillance at the time of the orders, making him an easy target for enforcement. For both of these men, the exile location was far from their personal familial bases (Beringhen in Brittany, Amonnet in Poitou) and their sources of income, making the exile that much more of a hardship.

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559 BNF MF 7050, fols. 149-83.
560 Douen, La Révocation de l’Édit de Nantes à Paris, 3, 488-93.
561 BNF MF 7050, fol. 184.
562 BNF MF 7051, fol. 138. The irony of awaiting a return for the execution of an exile order seems to be lost on the commissioner (Le Page), who simply reports on the persistence of Beringhen in his religious beliefs.
563 AN O/1 29, fol. 500.
Two groups of Parisian Protestants—ministers and foreign Protestants—were exempt from the actions of enforcement in late 1685, but were still monitored by the police force. Protestant ministers, unlike the elders, were exempt from all efforts at forced conversion after the Revocation and, instead, granted safe passage out of the kingdom. This exemption was written into the text of the Revocation, where an emphasis on the rewards given to those ministers who stayed and converted was paired with an order for all ministers who would not convert to leave the realm within two weeks.\footnote{Edit, 22 October 1685, articles 4 and 5. As discussed in chapter 3, this right of emigration was standard in religious treaties of the early modern period.} In support of this, a model certificate for the safe passage of these ministers was also sent out to all provinces, allowing the minister, his wife, and his children to leave France.\footnote{AN O/1 29, fol. 470v.} In reality, Seignelay’s letters to La Reynie reveal a king focused on the conversion of these ministers, giving them extra time as requested if it appeared at all possible that they might convert.\footnote{AN O/1 29, 29 October 1685, 3 November 1685, 10 November 1685.} More importantly, his letter to Monsieur de Menars, the intendant of Paris, on October 21 clarified that this permission to leave the realm was extended to a minister’s children only if they were under the age of seven. Those who were older than seven would stay in France, without their parents, and, presumably, be converted to Catholicism.\footnote{The report on Amonnet’s wife’s attempted flight was included in La Reynie’s report of November 8, 1685, placing him on a high-risk list of sorts.} This regulation came from official sources, in the person of Seignelay, but was not part of the text of the edict or the official \textit{lettre du roy} that accompanied the edict’s distribution to the intendants. The force that was soon to become an even larger part of Louis XIV’s efforts to effect conversions, particularly in his capital city, was...
therefore present in an unofficial manner from the beginning, even in this most tolerant of its articles. By retaining control of the elder children of these ministers, Louis XIV made a statement about the importance of the youth in reshaping French society into his Catholic ideal that would pervade his ensuing efforts towards conversion.

Alongside this native French population, the subgroup of foreign Protestants was also a concern. In December 1685, La Reynie undertook another survey, this time attempting to account only for this group. While their Protestantism remained legal after the Revocation, considering their foreign status, their presence in the capital created an interesting problem. Not only did their easy access to Protestant lands make them ideal candidates for aiding the flight of people and goods, the chapels in the Danish, English and Dutch embassies were havens for French Protestants wishing to continue attending services in Paris. As early as October 25, 1685, La Reynie received instructions from Louis XIV to seize any goods going into the embassies of Protestant realms; Robert, the procureur général, received similar instructions. In late December, Robert received a simple clarification regarding all foreign-born Protestants: if they had become naturalized French subjects, they were be treated like all other subjects, if not, they were simply to be encouraged to convert. This distinction between foreign-born and French Protestants reinforces the sociopolitical nature of the Revocation for all levels of society. If Louis XIV had emphasized and enforced conversion simply for conversion’s sake, or for solely religious reasons, foreign-born Protestants would not have been exempted. His emphasis

568 AN O/1 29, fol. 469. This letter from Seignelay accompanied the official lettre du roi sent out to warn the intendants of the impending Revocation, and the only clarification of the edict that it gave was this restriction on the age of a minister’s children.
569 BNF MF 7050, fol. 232. This report detailed not only the numbers of foreign Protestants living in Paris, but also the names of their family members and their professions.
570 Douen, La Révocation de l’Édit de Nantes à Paris, 2, 540-50.
on redefining French society, however, included understanding of international boundaries, and an acceptance of the international precedent afforded to foreigners in early modern European states. The harsh conversion tactics felt by his own subjects were not applied to those holding political allegiance elsewhere, even as his police force monitored and inspected their every move. The bureaucratic interest in all Parisian Protestants, no matter their status or allegiance was the hallmark of the months immediately following the Revocation. The care for detail seen throughout the conversion efforts would pervade the king’s efforts of the following year, as La Reynie expanded on the king’s plans for an entirely Catholic capital city.

**Increasing Fervor, Increasing Force: 1686-87**

In late December 1685, the royal attitude towards conversions visibly changed, as Louis XIV began to enforce the more radical of his social changes and the more powerful of his efforts to enforce conversions. This increasing intensity parallels that which faced noble families; instead of the massive amounts of numerical reports that were generated in the early months of the Revocation, the communication between La Reynie, Seignelay, and other members of the bureaucracy turned distinctly more personal, focused in detail on the conversion of particular families. Yet, in contrast to the experience of the nobility, the Protestant artisans and bourgeois of Paris faced Louis XIV’s bureaucracy, prisons, and convents without the questions of honor and political negotiation. As a result, the prison experiences were harsher and quicker to arrive, families had less say in the lives of

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571 AN O/1 29, fol. 477-8.
their children, and convents were much less accommodating to the requests of nonconverted women.

A series of letters from Seignelay to La Reynie in late December revealed the depth of this change in tenor. On December 22, Seignelay wrote requesting an updated count of the Protestants in Paris, so as to aid Louis XIV in his fervor to do something more for their conversion. Beginning December 23, he alerted La Reynie of several upcoming changes. In the first letter, he wrote of the king’s plan to “on the 10th of the next month, declare to those of the mentioned religion that remain in Paris that he will only give them one month more to make their final resolution, after which time they would be required to go to the places that had been indicated to them in the Provinces.” This resolution most directly applied to those families that had garnered the direct attention of the crown, in the form of orders to leave Paris, but also demonstrates the changing momentum for these conversion efforts. The firm orders Louis XIV had issued in previous months were now fully enforced. This attitude continued in a letter dated December 31, wherein Seignelay requested La Reynie to go ahead with the king’s plan to incarcerate stubborn Protestant women in the Nouvelles Catholiques, or other convents. For Protestant men, women, and children, the efforts focused on their conversion were significantly increased, as punishments for non-conversion took the place of the rewards previously offered.

Louis XIV requested an updated count of the remaining Protestants in Paris on January 3, believing many had converted from the last count on December 21. La Reynie thus demanded a new series of reports from each commissioner. The level of detail reported to La Reynie in the responding letters is astounding; clearly, the commissioners

572 AN O/1 29, 23 December 1685.
573 AN O/1 29, 31 December 1685.
had also internalized the king’s emphasis on individuals and families, as each report listed the remaining Protestants by street, then by name and occupation. In an accompanying letter, also dated January 3, the commissioner Delamare reported on the varied success he had achieved in converting all of the families on the provided list, and assured La Reynie that he would now shift his attention to the few individuals who remained Protestant. His intense focus, and that of the other commissioners, on ensuring that every known Protestant in their quartier signed an abjuration, created an atmosphere in which Louis XIV’s anxious awaiting of new numbers from the Parisian streets was completely understandable.

Alongside these more detailed reports arose an increase in retributions for those Protestants who had not yet converted, as they now stood apart as the remaining few. In a letter of January 5, Seignelay outlined the king’s plan for these remaining Protestants to La Reynie, beginning with his plan to lodge troops in the homes of the main remaining families, as Louis XIV was “convinced that garrisons have a very considerable effect and effect the conversion of the majority of those with whom they are placed, and of those who would fear a similar treatment.” For those that were not convinced by these garrisons, Seignelay believed the only remaining options were imprisonment and exile from Paris. Given that the king was not pleased by the idea of exiling Parisians, he hoped La Reynie would effect conversions quickly. The introduction of troops into Paris, in the

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574 AN O/1 30, 3 January 1686.
575 BNF MF 7051, fols. 41-60.
576 BNF MF 7051, fol. 130
577 AN O/1 30, 5 January 1686. Jacqueline Gratton has recently argued that the intendants, not Louis XIV, were at the heart of the policy behind the dragonnades, going beyond the intended billeting. While this may be the case in some areas, these statements by Louis XIV definitively reveal his interest in using billeting as a coercive conversion tactic, and that he endorsed their use,
form of billeting, was in contrast to the king’s earlier desire to keep the military out of his capital city, and reveals a monarch increasingly displeased with the slowing rate of conversions in the city. The turn to these more militaristic and punitive tactics, similar to those employed in the southern *dragonnades*, was a notable shift in policy and required increased effort on the part of the police.

Not only were the king’s punishments for Protestantism expanding, at this point they were also more and more focused on women and children. The edict of January 10, 1686, ordering the removal of Protestant children from their families in order to be raised and educated Catholic, came as an important part of these increasingly severe actions. The text of the edict specified those parents who were “still sadly engaged in heresy” as the target of this edict, reinforcing the state’s focus on those families who had steadily resisted efforts towards conversion. ¹⁵⁷⁸ In his explanatory letters to La Reynie and Robert, Seignelay emphasized this edict’s importance to the king as part of his plan to further pressure the remaining Protestant families, and exhorted its quick registration and implementation. ¹⁵⁷⁹ Simultaneously, non-aristocratic Protestant women began to be moved into convents. La Reynie took charge of this effort, having argued for its implementation in letters to Seignelay in early January. A letter from Seignelay on January 5 emphasized the king’s willingness to work with the police chief and archbishop to effect these incarcerations, while placing the onus of responsibility on La Reynie. ¹⁵⁸⁰ A separate edict registered January 25, focused on the women who had failed to convert even after their husband’s conversion, explained how “this stubbornness divides families, at least in a secondary capacity. Gratton, "The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the Role of the Intendants in the Dragonnades."

¹⁵⁷⁹ AN O/1 30, 8 January 1686, 10 January 1686.
and impedes or delays the conversion of their children.”581 This phrasing, and the readiness of Louis XIV to allow the incarceration of women in convents when suggested by La Reynie, underscores the centrality of these groups in this phase of enforcement. In the preceding months, families were asked as a whole to convert, and were counted primarily by the male head of household. In January, not only was the king more willing to impose harsher punishments on women, he was more interested in how many, exactly, remaining men, women, and children there were in the city.582 Failure to convert had become personal, even for these bourgeois and artisanal families that the king had never met.

The Muisson, Beringhen, and Amonnet families felt this shift in tactics almost immediately. On January 11, the day before the edict allowing the seizure of children was registered, Seignelay prepared La Reynie for the removal of the Muisson children to the home of their grandmother, Madame de la Sablière, asking him to inform her that the king had chosen her to raise her grandchildren.583 On the next day, La Reynie wrote to Harlay of the difficulty of finding the Muisson children, due to their family’s late arrival at their home, but of his ultimate success late in the evening of relocating the children.584 As all of them were under the age of 16, they were all removed from their home. Two days later, La Reynie paid a second visit to the Muisson home, taking Madame Muisson into his care and placing her in the convent of the Miramionnes.585 This two-pronged

580 AN O/1 30, 5 January 1686.
582 On January 9, La Reynie reported a grand total of 917 Protestants remaining in Paris to Harlay. Of these, 293 were children and 44 widows. He did not differentiate between male and female individuals or heads of household. BNF MF 17421.
583 AN O/1 30, 11 January 1686.
584 BNF MF 17421.
585 Ibid. This convent is discussed in chapter 6.
approach, removing the children to their Catholic grandmother and nearly simultaneously placing Madame Muisson to a convent, was intended in part to force Jacques Muisson to convert for the entire family. Without the presence of his wife, La Reynie hoped that he would see all the benefits of conversion (namely, the return of his family). He even went so far as to have a long private conversation with Monsieur Muisson in the midst of these seizures, perhaps the cause of the two-day delay on the removal of Madame.586 His reticence to convert, however, forced La Reynie to continue with the harsher plan.

La Reynie arrested Jacques Muisson on January 20, following repeated efforts to effect his conversion with the previous tactics. At this point, the entire Muisson family was held by the French state in various locations. It is unclear exactly where Jacques Muisson was incarcerated, but the relative comfort of placing Madame Muisson at the Miramionnes, a secular religious order, and the children with their close relatives, revealed the king’s interest in not simply punishing the Muisson family, but reminding them of the king’s power to force their conversion. They were separated, in the care of Catholics, and receiving a variety of daily spiritual ‘guidance.’ The pressure to convert increased even more when Madame de la Sablière, disinterested in the daily care and education of her grandchildren, asked the king to place them in convents and colleges.587 Seignelay passed this request on to Harlay, ordering him to find a proper place for these children. Only two days later this plan was put on hold, when Monsieur and Madame Muisson wrote to the king, requesting permission to meet and discuss their conversion.588

The combination of pressures, and the apparent fear of enrolling their children in Catholic

586 BNF MF 17421. A letter from La Reynie to Harlay discusses the meeting he planned to have with Muisson on January 12, 1686.
587 Her letter requesting this does not survive, but it seems likely that her own conversion in 1679 and her public role as a salonnière influenced her decision to not take on this responsibility.
Schools, resulted in exactly what Louis XIV had desired all along: their consideration of conversion.

For the Amonnet family, separated already by the exile order given to Matthieu Amonnet in November, the move to place their young daughters in convents applied this same pressure. In early December, Matthieu Amonnet wrote to his wife of the state of continual distress in which he found himself, missing his wife and children and fearing for their safety. He urged his wife to “fight the good fight, and God will give us the grace to defeat [this].” In early January, however, La Reynie executed orders to remove the Amonnet daughters from their mother’s care in Paris, allowing her only limited visits. A second letter from Matthieu Amonnet to his wife, dated January 20, was full of anguish, lamenting both the state of all French Protestants and that of his daughters in particular. He wrote,

You will cry and lament the poor children, you hear the cries and the wails of our poor children, locked up and cloistered and under the power of our most cruel enemies. They suffer, they want you, they call for you, they say to you, my good mother, take us out of here, but you cannot hold out your arms to keep them nor respond to them without perpetual sobbing. The deep feelings he obviously held for his family were reflected in his ability to understand the anguish of his wife at the seizure of their children; yet, he concluded this paragraph on their distress with an entreaty to leave these sufferings with God.

God has means unknown to man to deliver us from oppressions that we have been made to suffer, do not leave yourself felled by affliction, refrain from anguish, place your confidence in God, leave the care of your Children to Him after having done all things humanly possible to have them. He is their Father and their God, he will not abandon them.

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588 BNF MF 17421.
589 BNF Archives de la Bastille 10435.
590 AN O/1 30, 5 January 1686. Their son may have been in Paris at the time as well, but at the age of 18 would have been considered an adult.
591 BNF Archives de la Bastille 10435.
Here, in the simultaneous calls for motherly love and faith in God, Matthieu Amonnet’s response to the forceful tactics of Louis XIV and his bureaucracy becomes clear. He was deeply personally affected by the separation of his family, as one might expect, but was fully capable and willing to place this suffering in the context of human suffering on earth. His calls for his wife to remain strong in the face of this increased pressure serve as a contrast to the response of the Muisson family, two distinct responses to a pressure-filled situation.

For the Beringhen family, the lack of young children greatly altered their experience in January 1686. Monsieur de Beringhen had been exiled with the rest of the temple elders but, due to his advanced age, had not yet left Paris in January. He was granted another eight-day extension on his residency in Paris on January 11, due to his promise to convert, and was also exempted from garrisons of troops at his provincial home. It was not until January 20, therefore, that La Reynie received simultaneous orders to ensure the conversion of Messieurs de Beringhen and Muisson. Beringhen, however, was not sent to prison, but rather exiled to Montargis, as had originally been ordered in November. This differentiation may have simply been due to his age, but may have also reflected an awareness on the part of the king that greater, quicker pressure on Muisson could have a positive effect on the conversion and education of his children, whereas Jean de Beringhen was largely removed from his influence on his children’s religious choices. In a reversal of roles, the presence of the Beringhen’s daughter Françoise in her parents’ home was considered a danger, as “she impedes their

592 Their youngest son, Adolphe, was already 19.
593 AN O/1 30, 11 January 1686.
594 AN O/1 30, 20 January 1686.
Her treatment then mirrored the experience of other adult women, as she was relegated to the convent of the Ursulines in Montargis.

The concurrent experiences of enforcement for all three families highlight the newfound focus on individual families in January 1686, and their similarities underscore the centrality of purpose found in Louis XIV’s bureaucratic approach in this period. While earlier financial incentives continued, with payments to newly converted Parisians leaving the royal treasury monthly, Louis XIV systematically increased the force applied to those families who refused to convert. For the prominent men attached to the temple, exile continued; for those powerful men still in Paris, imprisonment. Their wives and older daughters were placed in convents; their children removed to either the care of family or of nuns. By approaching the problem of non-conversion with such a regularized approach, Louis XIV and his bureaucracy were able to deal with the considerable number of remaining Protestants quickly. Their attention to the conversion and reeducation of Protestant children, exemplified in the edict of January 12, became a central focus, and the king’s overall dissatisfaction with the slow process of conversion played out in its execution. With this month’s enforcement as a foundation, the pressure to convert only increased as the year went on.

The Muisson family was the first to ostensibly convert, after their requested meeting took place in late January. Harlay received a letter from Seignelay on January 30, approving his decision to wait until the following Monday to remove the Muisson children from their grandmother’s care and explaining that “if they convert, His Majesty thinks it appropriate to discuss jointly with them, with all the gentleness possible, the

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595 AN O/1 30, fol. 29v. Letter from Seignelay to Bezons. Françoise was 29 years old.
means to assure the instruction of their children in the Catholic religion.” He was clearly less than trusting that the Muissons would continue with any promises to educate their children in Catholic schools, and was perhaps concerned that this conversion might solely be a means of reacquiring the rights to educate their children as they pleased. Nonetheless, a conversion must have taken place, as Madame Muisson was released from the Miramionnes by Seignelay’s letter on February 2, and Monsieur Muisson received an order reinstating his access to his money. No order or letter survives requesting the king’s bureaucrats to not enforce the order removing their children to schools and convents, but the lack of further communication on this front, when combined with the other areas demonstrating a reinstatement of trust, allows conjecture that the Muisson family did retain the guardianship of their children and their children’s education.

Actual signed conversions, even more so than promises to convert, were key in allowing Protestant families to escape the watchful care of the Parisian bureaucracy. Jean de Beringhen had promised to convert several times by mid-1686, never having gone through with it, and the escalating incarceration of his family reflected the growing impatience of the monarchy with such promises. The Muissons, too, had attempted to give themselves more time by continual promises to convert, but were eventually pressured to sign conversions to regain their children. Promised conversions were rampant in Paris in late 1685 and early 1686, and La Reynie’s letters are full of notes on families who had promised and must be followed up. The rates of emigration in this

596 BNF MF 17421, 30 January 1686.
597 BNF MF 17421.
598 AN O/1 30, 15 February 1686.
599 BNF MF 7050, 7051, 7053.
period emphasize how frequently these families, having promised their conversion, simply used the time given before incarceration to plan their escape from France.

While the promises themselves could be rationalized as a means to placate the government while making other plans, actual conversions would have forced a different justification. In Jacques Muisson’s will, the anguish this conversion caused was central. Immediately following the introductory remarks, he wrote,

I declare before all things, that I ask pardon from God with all my heart, of all the faults and sins that I have committed during my life, against His Sovereign Majesty, and notably of the enormous sin that I committed in signing that I belonged to the Roman Church.600

This confession and request for forgiveness came before any other statement of belief or request for the administration of his worldly goods. For Jacques Muisson, this conversion, even though later repented, was one of the defining events of his life. To understand this centrality, his belief in the Protestant faith must be taken seriously.

Historian Brad Gregory has written of the necessity of understanding religious belief in historical terms, looking for the meaning this religious experience held for the historical figures.601 In this case, Muisson’s evident unease about his 1686 conversion forces our consideration of the meaning, and importance, of these conversions. To say that they were only matters of convenience, buying time until the family could emigrate or evade the king’s bureaucracy, discredits the importance given to them by the Muissons, and families like them. Clearly, while necessary at the time, a signed conversion could generate years of spiritual unrest.

600 SHPF MS 842. Testament of Jacques Muisson, 1690.
601 Gregory, Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe, ch. 1; ———, "The Other Confessional History: On Secular Bias in the Study of Religion."
Matthieu Amonnet’s letters to his wife while in exile underscore the centrality of his belief in the merciful nature of God and the unjust state of the world, both central Protestant tenets. While the letters were primarily concerned with the family’s financial affairs, Amonnet wrote at length on the necessity of trusting in God during the “sad and lamentable state” of the French Protestants. As mentioned above, when faced with the seizure of his children, he instructed his wife to place her confidence in God, that He would care for the children. On January 28, 1686, as he gave instructions on who she might speak to to care for the business, he asked her to “pray to God without ceasing that he might have pity on us and deliver us from our troubles.” Later, during his incarceration in the Bastille, the rhetoric grew even stronger. As he firmly denied reports of his conversion, saying, “I am instructed in my religion, I have only practiced the teachings and customs,” he reminded his wife that “God has means unknown to us” and “He will return [our children] to us and bring us back together when it is time for Him to demonstrate His force.”

While distraught by the separation and religious education of his family, Matthieu Amonnet saw this experience as part of the trials given to man by God to test their faith. In this way, his expression of faith in God must read as an essential part of his experience of the Revocation, guided by his religious beliefs. His lack of conversion, and Muisson’s conversion and repentance thereof, both demonstrate the centrality of belief in this experience.

While the threat of incarceration and the reeducation of their children had been enough for the Muisson family to sign their conversion, Matthieu Amonnet took the seizure of his family as provocation to plan his emigration. In exile in Mayenne, he

602 BNF Archives de la Bastille, 10435.
Chapter 5

communicated regularly with his business associates both throughout France and in the Low Countries. On April 25, 1686, Seignelay received a report that Amonnet had left Mayenne, and “his wife may be complicit in his retreat.” He ordered La Reynie to arrest Madame Amonnet, placing her in the Bastille, and to arrest Monsieur as well as soon as he arrived in Paris. On April 30, his valet was also arrested, in Mayenne, and all of his papers were seized. Amonnet had been trusted, on a small scale, to remain in his place of exile while his wife and daughters faced conversion efforts in the capital; his flight, therefore, was a clear statement against the king and his power to force conversion that had to be answered. In keeping with the increasing punishments for nonconversion found in the capital, the crown’s response was incarceration for both him and his wife. The immediate incarceration of Madame Amonnet in the Bastille, rather than in a convent, is significant, as it signaled the king’s understanding of her complicity in the attempted emigration and her subsequent punishment, rather than efforts towards reeducation and conversion.

For non-noble Parisian Protestants, the experience of prison was common. The first wave of arrests came immediately following the Revocation, primarily for those Protestants caught fleeing the city. Alongside the more passive programs encouraging conversion, arrest and incarceration only seemed fitting for those who actively disobeyed the edict forbidding emigration. In early 1686, however, arrests drastically increased; 356 religious prisoners appear in La Reynie’s records of the Revocation, with only 24 of them

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603 BNF Archives de la Bastille 10435. The correspondence from Amonnet to his associates outside of France is not part of this archive, but the letters received by him during this period are sufficient evidence to his regular correspondence.
604 AN O/1 30, 25 April 1686.
605 AN O/1 30, 30 April 1686. These men were subsequently transferred to Paris to testify against Matthieu Amonnet. AN O/1 30, fol. 159v.
having been arrested before January 1686. The rest, some 332 prisoners, were spread across the city’s prisons throughout that year. The royal prisons of the Bastille, the Grand and Petit Châtelet, and Fort L’Eveque received the vast majority of these prisoners, functioning as the central locations for these incarcerations. These prisons were the main repositories for Parisian criminals in the seventeenth century, depending on social status. During the Revocation, this distinction continued, with prisons chosen based on the varied statuses and crimes of the religious prisoners. Only a small number, twenty-eight total men and women, were arrested but held in abbeys, seminaries, or convents.

Seignelay and La Reynie were both in regular communication with the governors of these prisons, reinforcing the royal leadership that drove these incarcerations. La Reynie received regular reports and requests from all of the governors, detailing the prisoner’s progress towards conversion, or lack thereof, and passing along any requests any prisoners had regarding access to visitors, financial affairs, or their proposed conversion. Seignelay, in contrast, issued orders to the governors, restricting access before any requests could be made. Most of these requests and restrictions had to do with various forms of communication: visits, letters, or financial arrangements. By granting and restricting access to the outside world, Seignelay, La Reynie, and the prison governors

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606 While it is possible that the arrests took place long before the person appeared in La Reynie’s records, the documents appear to be relatively contemporary, given the later annotations and recommendations on a prisoner’s status.
607 Riley, A Lust for Virtue, 31-5. The Bastille primarily housed well-born prisoners, the prison of Fort L’Eveque was primarily for those prisoners who violated the moral codes in Paris, and the Grand and Petit Châtelet for those felons awaiting criminal trial. Of the religious prisoners of 1686, 93 (28%) went to the Bastille, 136 (41%) to Châtelet, and 64 (19%) to Fort L’Eveque (32 have no location denoted, and one was sent to Château de Vincennes).
608 Of these twenty-eight, seven women were designated Dame or Demoiselle, often a sign of noble descent, but not exclusively. If noble, they would likely have been treated as described in chapter 4, but the limited amount of detail in these records makes verification not possible.
attempted to regulate the information prisoners received, particularly regarding other Protestants. On July 21, 1686, Louis XIV even forbade Protestant prisoners from interacting with each other in the Bastille, for fear that they were supporting each other’s determination to remain Protestant. The continual interaction between the king’s leading bureaucrats and the prison governors ensured that the king’s wishes were enacted exactly as he intended, and that he could be apprised of, and possibly reward, any new conversions as soon as they occurred.

Matthieu Amonnet’s immediate arrest upon his attempted flight from Mayenne was highly typical of the state’s reaction to emigration. He had been trusted in exile, to an extent, allowed to live on his own while Louis XIV awaited his conversion. His flight, therefore, was a strong statement to the king and his bureaucracy that he could not be trusted to convert on his own and, perhaps more importantly, that he did not respect the king’s wishes that he remain in exile. On July 3, 1686, La Reynie himself conducted his interrogation in the Bastille. After a few introductory questions about his name, age, and residence, La Reynie inquired asked his central question “Where were you going when you were arrested?” Amonnet’s response, that he was traveling to settle his financial affairs abroad, was not satisfactory. La Reynie continued, asking if he was aware of the king’s general restrictions on Protestants traveling abroad without explicit permission, and why he was disobeying the king’s direct order to stay in Mayenne. Amonnet’s response to these questions, and to the several following, come across as a sort of dance, as he attempted to rationalize a series of events that very clearly pointed to attempted emigration. His abrupt departure without permission, the large amount of gold he carried

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609 For Madame Amonnet, for example, he wrote to the governor of the Bastille on May 26, 1686, restricting her communication with her daughters and all other outsiders.
with him, his attempt to remove his wife and daughters from Paris: these facts all worked against him in this interrogation.\textsuperscript{611} The letters that La Reynie had seized from Amonnet’s home upon his arrest, primarily cryptic correspondence with Protestants in Holland, confirmed, in the eyes of the state, his disloyalty and recalcitrant Protestantism.\textsuperscript{612}

Jacques Muisson experienced prison in a slightly different way that Matthieu Amonnet, but one that held true for many Parisian Protestants as well. He was arrested in late January and freed less than two weeks later, having signed a conversion. For many men and women, a quick abjuration after arrest was a way to avoid incarceration and many, like Muisson, may have converted for immediate gains and then repudiated that conversion later.\textsuperscript{613} The Muisson family, as a result of their slightly higher status and the crown’s interest in their children, received continued supervision, but many families would have escaped the crown’s watchful eye after their signed conversion. The reports of the commissioners were almost exclusively focused on those individuals and families who had yet to convert; only an attempted emigration or public religious act would bring them back under surveillance.\textsuperscript{614} These brief incarcerations served primarily to entice their conversion as a show of power from the state. For Jacques Muisson and his family, this demonstration clearly worked.

\textsuperscript{610} AN O/1 30, fol. 238.
\textsuperscript{611} BNF Archives de la Bastille, 10435. This interrogation was transcribed in La Reynie’s own hand.
\textsuperscript{612} BNF Archives de la Bastille, 10435. The letters included in this archive are both to and from Matthieu Amonnet, many without any signature or address. Several refer to roundabout means of transmitting information across the border without giving away the location of Protestants in hiding, and one is even written in a type of completely unintelligible code.
\textsuperscript{613} In the La Reynie notes, five separate cases have notes describing a conversion within the week. BNF MF 7051.
\textsuperscript{614} The prisoner records do include arrests made for Protestants holding secret services in homes, writing against the king’s religion, and selling meat during Lent.
The long incarceration of Jean de Beringhen was profoundly different from that of Jacques Muisson, Matthieu Amonnet, or any other artisanal or bourgeois Protestant, largely on account of his connections to the nobility. De Beringhen, who had purchased an ennobling office in the 1650s, benefited primarily from his daughter’s marriage to the Duc de la Force. The king’s efforts to effect his conversion in late 1685 paralleled those of any other elder of Charenton, with his exile and the removal of his wife and daughter to a convent. Yet, after he failed to convert quickly, he did not receive the increasing punishments Matthieu Amonnet or Jacques Muisson experienced. Instead, he was cajoled further to convert, with letters like the one Seignelay sent on April 29, 1686, saying, “the King sends you Monsieur Varet to confer with you and to instruct you in the truths of the Catholic religion… his intention is that you listen, and that you give him all the time necessary for this.” This unsubtle reminder that the king strongly desired his conversion to Catholicism was a show of strength on the part of Louis XIV, but was also significantly more reserved than similar letters addressing men like Muisson or Amonnet. Jean de Beringhen occupied a liminal place between true nobility and the rich bourgeoisie, primarily on account of his familial connections, and thus received a unique treatment. In its singularity, and the melding of two approaches, this treatment demonstrates the gradation between the levels of force imposed in these varying attempts to entice conversions. No one case was directly identical to the other, requiring a level of attention simultaneously representative of the collaborative and authoritative monarchy.

615 AN O/1 30, fol. 147.
Nonetheless, Beringhen’s refusal to convert did merit some form of punishment, and on May 12 a letter from the king ordered his incarceration in the Bastille.\textsuperscript{616} For Jean de Beringhen, however, the experience of the Bastille was marked by his relationship with his son-in-law. Even though the Duc de la Force was also incarcerated at various points in 1686 and 1687, his title still brought privileges for them both. On July 3, the duke was allowed to visit de Beringhen in the Bastille, and he was allowed to send letters to Madame de Beringhen in Soucy.\textsuperscript{617} These privileges were accorded during a period in which the king believed in La Force’s conversion, perhaps thus thinking him a positive influence on de Beringhen. After his transfer to the Chateau d’Angoulême, effected by his son on account of his advanced age,\textsuperscript{618} La Force’s complaints to the royal household continued to bring about various privileges, from walking on the ramparts to visits from his wife.\textsuperscript{619} While arrested and held as a prisoner, de Beringhen’s familial connections defined the treatment he received in prison, setting him apart from most Protestant prisoners. The centrality of his social connections to his prison experience reflected the continued importance of networks in the French state, even when dealing with religious issues.

For these men, and the hundreds of other Protestant men like them, Parisian prisons were an integral part of how they interacted with the French state upon their refusal to convert. Their movements between various prisons, or cycles of incarceration and

\textsuperscript{616} AN O/1 30, 12 May 1686. A second letter dated May 26 allowed him to return to Paris and the house of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine, but this appears to have not been enacted, given later orders regulating his experience in the Bastille. AN O/1 30, 26 May 1686.
\textsuperscript{617} AN O/1 30, fols. 239, 250v.
\textsuperscript{618} AN O/1 30, 29 August 1686. Theodore de Beringhen, a conseiller au Parlement in Paris, probably presented the packet requesting his father’s transfer. La Reynie was charged with investigating his claims (not detailed in the order) on August 22, 1686, and the transfer was ordered August 29. Theodore de Beringhen eventually fled the realm.
release, demonstrate the variations within the state’s ostensibly regular policy, and the continued importance of family connections. The location and experience of incarceration reflected a sliding scale of punishment for Parisian Protestant men, with royal attention varying based on social and family status. Yet, the most important factor in their prison experience (or lack thereof) remained conversion. Muisson’s quick conversion, Amonnet’s flight, and de Beringhen’s complete refusal to convert all shaped their experience of the prison system.

Protestant women in Paris were also often incarcerated, nearly at the same rate as Protestant men, though many women avoided the prison system and were placed directly in convents. In total, forty-three percent of the prisoners appearing in La Reynie’s records were female, and were arrested at similar rate throughout 1686 as were men. The percentage held in the higher-profile prison of the Bastille was slightly lower, sixteen percent as compared to the men’s thirty-four percent, but artisanal and bourgeois women otherwise were treated nearly equally when refusing to convert. While La Reynie had advocated the placing of women in convents for their reeducation in late December 1685, and some women were transferred from prisons to convents following their abjuration for further instruction, clearly the use of these harsher methods of forcing conversion was largely acceptable regardless of gender. Rachel Houssaye, the wife of Matthieu Amonnet, was arrested nearly simultaneously with her husband, and spent an equal amount of time in the Bastille. She was arrested by order of the king a few days before her husband, and released alongside him sometime in 1687 or early 1688. Her incarceration, therefore, must be seen as equally harsh and directed as her husband’s, although no written record

619 AN O/1 30, fols. 328, 336, 345.
on her behalf survived. She was seen as complicit in his attempted flight, thus meriting equal punishment, and her refusal to convert prolonged her stay, just as it did his.

Women were seen as an essential part of a family’s conversion, and their own signed conversion held equal power to their husband’s in securing their release from prison. The Amonnet’s experience of prison underscores the connection between these conversions, and the crown’s emphasis on entire families. In Matthieu Amonnet’s letter to La Reynie, dated September 20, 1686 from the Bastille, he requested one thing: the release of his wife and daughters. He wrote,

I am culpable, it is right that I suffer for the punishment of my crimes, but have compassion on a poor infirm woman… and four poor orphans… whom have committed no other sin than the imprudence of a father and husband.620

At this point, both Amonnets had spent four months in the Bastille, with their daughters held in convents. Monsieur Amonnet appeared, in this letter, to recognize the punishment of his crime of attempted emigration, but appealed to La Reynie’s sense of mercy and justice in an effort to remove his family from these punishments. It was an understandable attempt, but did not take into account the familial nature of the crown’s process of conversion. Amonnet failed to recognize that the conversion of his wife and daughters was as important, if not more so, than his own. His wife’s conversion would have secured her release; his letter was worthless without it.

For Protestant women, however, the possibility of incarceration in a convent remained equally strong. Like the placement of aristocratic women in convents, the choice of a convent for artisanal and bourgeois Parisian Protestant women signaled the crown’s resolve to reeducate these women in the Catholic faith, rather than simply

620 BNF Archives de la Bastille, 10435.
incarcerate them. This form of incarceration was possible primarily for those women who had not directly violated any of the king’s new laws regarding Protestantism by attempting to flee or assist others in evading conversion. Rather, the majority of the women in these convents were denoted in La Reynie’s notes by their familial connections; their fathers, sons, husbands, and uncles, and their failure to convert for the family. Mademoiselle d’Orignac, for example, held at the Nouvelles Catholiques, was noted as having regular visits from her Catholic uncle, in hopes of his influence towards her conversion.621

These convents emphasized the education of Protestant women, in the hopes of effecting their full conversion. In notes La Reynie took on many members of the Nouvelles Catholiques in mid-1687, he noted several times “she is instructed” when attempting to address the current state of religious belief for Mademoiselles Bernon, Martine, and Manyeu. Mademoiselles des Forges and Morisset, on the other hand, were noted as unwilling to even speak of religion, despite the sisters’ continual attempts. The highest praise was reserved for a Mademoiselle de Perray who “worked by good intentions and good examples to instruct the others.”622 La Reynie’s focus, in these notes, on the educational status of these women to mark their religious beliefs demonstrates the centrality of this approach to this form of incarceration. Whereas the notes on prisoners focused on the additional crimes they had committed, these women were not described as criminals, but a type of religious novice, learning the ways of Catholicism. Only upon their staunch refusal to attend any ‘instruction’ would prison be considered.

621 BNF MF 7051, fol. 246.
622 BNF MF 7051, fol. 247.
Transfers from prisons to convents went primarily in one direction: towards convents, and their educative principles. In late September 1686, Seignelay allowed La Reynie the discretion to move whichever women he saw fit from Fort L’Eveque to the convent of the Nouvelles Catholiques; other women, before and after this order, received specific dispensations from the king to be moved from prisons to convents. The Nouvelles Catholiques received several such women in late 1686 and early 1687, some after their abjuration in prison, some with instructions to further instruct them in the Catholic religion. Mademoiselle de Moulin was a typical participant in this progression. She was incarcerated in 1686, released to the Nouvelles Catholiques in January 1687, and released from their convent in April of the same year. By moving her into the Nouvelles Catholiques for several months, she was further instructed in the religion she professed in prison, thus giving the state a sense of added security to a conversion forced in prison.

The story of Elizabeth Bonnefonds was a telling example of this experience, as she was arrested in late September 1686 for housing Protestant émigrés. She had ostensibly converted shortly after the Revocation, and did not appear on the rolls of remaining Protestants from early 1686. By attempting to help Protestants escape Paris, however, she placed herself directly in the sight of the Parisian police, and her efforts landed her in Fort L’Eveque. There she remained for several months, before being transferred first to the Château d’Angers, and finally to an unnamed convent in Paris. Her request to La Reynie, dated July 30, 1687, claimed her loyal conversion to Catholicism and her

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623 AN O/1 30, September 30, 1686.
624 Mademoiselle du Moulin is most likely the granddaughter of the first pastor of Charenton, Pierre du Moulin. In the admittedly scanty records of the Nouvelles Catholiques, eleven women followed this progression, though some had a much shorter stay in prison. BNF MF 7051, fol. 243.
longstanding innocence as reasons to allow her release from the Château d’Angers; his notes said, “it would be best to confine her in a religious house.” While La Reynie was not inclined to trust her, his recommendation of a religious house underscores the centrality of these institutions in the incarceration experience of Parisian women.

Elizabeth Bonnefonds may or may not have been guilty of sheltering Protestants, but La Reynie’s most pressing concern was her solid education in the Catholic faith. After a suitable period of time, she could be moved to a convent.

For those women who never experienced prison, like Mesdames Muisson and de Beringhen, incarceration in a convent was their experience of the Revocation. Anne de Rambouillet, the wife of Jacques Muisson, was placed in the secular house of the Miramionnes as part of the king’s effort to effect the family’s conversion in late January 1686. She spent less than two weeks in the religious house, exiting with the king’s permission after her conversion alongside her husband in early February. Marie de Menours, the wife of Jean de Beringhen, did not convert so readily, and so spent a considerably longer time in various convents in Paris and the provinces. She entered a Benedictine convent in Montargis (the location of her husband’s exile) in February 1686, moved to the convent of the Visitation in April, and to the Abbey de Soucy in June. There she remained for a year, before Mère Garnier, the prioress of the Nouvelles Catholiques, requested that she be transferred back to Paris to her convent. La Reynie received these orders to transfer her yet again from Seignelay on June 13, 1687, who said, “Mère Garnier knows the little progress that she has made… and she hopes to succeed at

626 BNF MF 7051 fol. 341, MF 7053 fol. 241.
627 BNF MF 17421.
628 AN O/1 30, fols. 123, 133v, 231. All of these moves came on the order of the king, suggesting continual involvement.
her conversion.” All of these moves, between convents in the provinces and in Paris and between orders, show the king’s commitment to finding a location that would both work for her conversion and keep her removed from temptations, both to herself and to others. La Reynie’s notes were riddled with requests from the king to move women from one convent to another on account of their “obstinacy” or the “poor example” they set for the other women who might convert. For Madame de Beringhen, both could have been true. From early 1686 until mid 1688, she passed the majority of her time in various convents attempting to effect her conversion, with only one brief departure in August 1687 brought about by a promise to convert.

By retaining women like Marie de Menours and Anne de Rambouillet in convents, the king made a statement about the importance of their conversion while simultaneously emphasizing the educational priorities that pervaded his efforts after the Revocation. With the cases of Madame Amonnet and Elizabeth Bonnefonds, the convent played a secondary, restorative role, acting as a bridge between the prison experience required for their counteractions to the king’s law and their restoration, as Catholics, to French society. Through both means, convents and their educational principles were essential for Louis XIV’s project of conversion for Protestant women.

For the children of these Protestant parents, reeducation was even more central. They rarely entered prisons, but were very likely to be placed in seminaries or convents if

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629 AN O/1 31, June 13, 1687.
630 AN O/1 30, 31. BNF MF 7051, 7053. Sometimes the request (and description) came from Seignelay to La Reynie, sometimes La Reynie would report this to Seignelay or other members of the bureaucracy, but the terms “opinatre” and “mauvaise exemple” were frequent.
631 She was released from the Nouvelles Catholiques August 25, 1687 to the home of Madame de Courtomer, the eldest daughter of the Duc and Duchesse de la Force, on account of her promised abjuration. O/1 31, fol. 187. By March 1688, orders were required to release her yet again from a convent in Sens, though no orders for reentry exist. AN O/1 32, fol. 105v.
their parents were deemed unfit to educate them in the Catholic faith. After Louis XIV’s edict of January 1686, this became a central tenet of the enforcement of the Revocation in Paris, with La Reynie regularly assigned to move children into, or out of, convents and Catholic homes depending on the status of their parents. In May, Louis reiterated his commitment to this effort in a letter to Monsieur de Menars, the Intendant of Paris. He wrote,

> I was informed that many new Catholics neglect to send their children to their neighborhood Schools, and to the Instructions and Catechisms that take place in their parishes; ensuring that they could remain without being instructed in their Religion … my intention is that you make known to my newly Catholic Subjects, that I wish that they regularly send their children to the Schools, and to the Instructions and Catechisms.

He continued, adding the prescribed punishment for neglecting this responsibility: the children would be taken from their parents and placed in convents or colleges, with the pension to be paid by their parents.\(^\text{633}\) Two weeks later, he reiterated this commitment in a second letter to Menars, expanding the required education from the children of new Catholics to those children whose parents had fled the country, either without converting or after a false conversion.\(^\text{634}\) While the number of children left behind in such a state was considerably smaller, Louis XIV was determined that all converted Protestant children regularly attend schooling in both religious and secular matters.

The focus on education was present from the edict of Revocation itself, but was forefront in the king’s mind primarily in 1686. The king’s official letters to the Intendants in May came on the heels of a report from the Bishop of Meaux that these ideals were not

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\(^{632}\) The educational approach of convents is discussed more fully in chapter 6.

\(^{633}\) AN O/1 30, fol 155v.

\(^{634}\) AN O/1 30, fol. 173.
being fully enforced, a report that clearly angered the king. Religious education was largely the domain of the ecclesiastics, and Louis required the cooperation of the bishops and their priests in order to effectively institute these reforms. A later letter addressed to the bishops in the Ile-de-France region reminded them of the “continual care” Louis XIV paid to the “reunion of all of my subjects into one religion,” emphasizing the importance of “applying oneself to the Instruction of children in the principles of the Catholic religion.” To that end, Louis XIV strongly encouraged the bishops to assign a priest in their diocese to the particular duty of visiting and inspecting the teachers in that diocese, “to verify their conduct, [and] examine if they acquit themselves with appropriate responsibility to the instruction and education of the children.” The pressure placed on the bishops here to devote their resources and efforts to the reeducation of Protestant children signaled Louis XIV’s singular focus on this aspect of the Revocation in mid-1686, and his willingness to coerce the institutions of the Church, not only his own bureaucracy, into executing his wishes in this regard. By subtly requiring both local bishops and Intendants to enforce his views on education, Louis XIV involved every level of the existing bureaucratic structure in the execution of his ideals.

The implementation of such ideals was, as always, much more difficult than the conception, but La Reynie’s letters and notes from 1686 reveal the regularity with which it was attempted. On January 29, Seignelay asked him to place the children of Widow Dury into convents, following her own placement therein; on February 22, he received orders to place the sons of Sieur de Vicq in colleges; on the 25th, a similar request for the son of Sieur Rafon, a new convert; on the 27th, an order to move the daughter of a painter

635 AN O/1 30, fol. 149v. The Bishop of Meaux was Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet; this letter was sent in his capacity as bishop, not as a court preacher or educator.
named Ferdinand into a convent. These requests were almost always accompanied with language reaffirming the king’s commitment to “execute in their regard the declaration concerning the education of Protestant children,” a constant reminder of the king’s power to both issue and enforce such ideals. Such requests continued throughout 1686, with various special situations arising as well. One family, that of Charles le Jay, a master hosier in Paris, had five children that had spent time both in Paris and in Switzerland, following their father’s temporary emigration. A request to La Reynie in June 1686 described their two eldest daughters, aged 10 and 6, as having “the misfortune to have been instructed in heretic schools” therefore “it would be doubly charitable to place these two girls at least for some time in the Nouvelles Catholiques.” A second letter regarding the family, dated two days later, requested the continuation of the father’s pension as a new Catholic, as well as La Reynie’s help finding him employment in Paris, so that he might spend less time reading and thinking about religion. Together with the reeducation of his children, these incentives were intended to keep him and his family in the Catholic religion, a perfect mixture of the variety of positive and negative reinforcements that Louis XIV had emphasized throughout 1686.

The nonconversion of their parents meant the Amonnet daughters were completely caught up in this system, whereas the Muisson children largely avoided it on account of their parents’ conversions. All four of the Amonnet girls were in the Nouvelles
Catholiques by early January 1686, with limited contact with their mother.\textsuperscript{641} On February 19, they were released from the convent to their mother’s care, on the advice of Mère Garnier, the head of the convent.\textsuperscript{642} These orders were reversed upon their parents’ attempted flight and subsequent incarceration, thus emphasizing the role of the parent’s actions, both religious and non, in determining the role the state played in the education of their children. In mid-June 1687, the two youngest daughters made the decision to enter the convent permanently, and were granted permission to do so by the king. These girls were at most thirteen years old, but the combined desire of the king to ensure their Catholic future and their parents’ inability to prevent it from prison allowed the process to move forward. La Reynie was ordered to take whatever he could from their parents’ goods for their entrance fees, and the king would make up the difference.\textsuperscript{643} The Muisson children, having escaped placement in colleges and convents because of their parents’ quick conversion in early February 1686, remained watched nonetheless. In September, having received a report that Madame Muisson may not be fit to educate her children in the Catholic religion, Louis XIV turned not to La Reynie but to Harlay, the procureur general, who had first arranged their conversion. Harlay’s involvement was most likely a reflection of Muisson’s position in Parlement, and his response was as well. He advised the king to leave the children with their mother, regardless of the reports, and the king acquiesced.\textsuperscript{644} Although Harlay’s report has not survived, Louis XIV’s ready acceptance of it signals his desire to believe that the family had legitimately converted, and to not

\textsuperscript{641} AN O/1 30, 5 January 1686. Rachel Houssaye could visit her daughters as long as the visit was conducted with a sister of the Nouvelles Catholiques present.

\textsuperscript{642} AN O/1 30, 19 February 1686. Mère Garnier held an important position as the head of the Nouvelles Catholiques, and is discussed in greater detail in chapter 6.

\textsuperscript{643} AN O/1 31, 16 June 1687. Rachel Amonnet wrote a letter to La Reynie personally dated August 27, 1687, asking for the execution of these orders. BNF MF 7053, fol. 9.
impose restrictions on a family that was ostensibly Catholic. Here, too, then, the quick conversion of Madame and Monsieur Muisson forced a radically different experience of the Revocation than the Amonnets experienced.

The experience of the Revocation in Paris in 1686 and 1687 was dominated by La Reynie’s police force, and the families remaining in the capital city in this period felt the power of the French state in the incarcerations and forced reeducations that dominated these years. La Reynie’s ability to execute and interpret the king’s wishes regarding these Protestants of Paris proved the importance of the bureaucracy in administering the Revocation, even as the varying social statuses of these Protestants required occasional involvement from the king as well. This period was the high point of enforcement, as families that had not converted immediately after the publication of the Revocation were individually targeted and pursued in an effort to force their conversions. Seignelay and La Reynie corresponded on a nearly daily basis; Louis XIV regularly requested reports on the progress and intervened in individual cases; the convents and prisons were overflowing with Protestant cases. As the Amonnet, Beringhen, and Muisson families demonstrate, to be a Protestant in Paris in these years was a trying experience.

A Tactical Shift: 1688

In February 1688, the entire focus of this conversion and reeducation program changed rather abruptly. On February 6, Louis XIV requested yet another memoir on the remaining Protestants in Paris from La Reynie, including all Protestants remaining in convents and prisons for lack of abjuration. By the end of February, based on this
information, he had changed his approach completely, and wrote to La Reynie and the Intendants of his intention to expel all remaining Protestants from the realm. As he explained in his letter of February 27, “being no longer able to suffer that people so stubborn in their terrible religion live any longer in my realm, I write to you to tell you that my intention is that you should conduct them to the closest border location” so that they may leave the realm.646 This forced expulsion was in direct contrast to the previous royal policy of incarceration and forced education in the hopes of conversion, with the emphasis on education remaining only in the letter of clarification sent to the Intendants from Seignelay, wherein he expressed hope that many young Protestants may still be converted, and encouraged them to write to the king for special orders for those remaining Protestants under the age of twelve.647

In changing course and expelling recalcitrant Protestants from France, Louis XIV made a decision on their future in France and the future of his reign. The bourgeois and artisanal Protestants that lingered in French convents and jails were taking unprecedented amounts of resources, both financially and socially, with what appeared to be little hope of conversion. In early 1688, Louis XIV was embarking on an international path that would lead to the Wars of the League of Augsburg, and continuing to devote these resources to unconverted Protestants may have appeared untenable.648 Additionally, the expulsion of these remaining Protestants would result in many of their goods and property reverting to the crown, as they had no Catholic family, thus providing a small

646 AN O/1 32, fol. 62v.
647 AN O/1 32, fol. 63. This letter was sent with the previous, official lettre du roi. Such clarifications were typical of royal communication with the Intendants, and often give additional details the king wished to omit from official correspondence.
windfall to a country on the verge of war. By cutting his ties with these subjects and forcing their emigration, Louis XIV hoped to redirect his bureaucracy towards the now-pressing needs of an international war.

The redirection of the bureaucracy away from these conversion efforts was only possible with non-noble Protestants, as their refusal to convert had little effect on Louis XIV personally. While a nobleman’s refusal to convert was taken as a personal slight, an impingement on Louis XIV’s power and honor as the leader of nobles, the refusal of a banker or a merchant was not tied so closely to the honor-driven social system. In many ways, by continuing to focus his own, and the state’s, attention on these individuals, Louis XIV was granting them more interaction with the king and his bureaucracy than they had ever previously experienced. By forcing their emigration, they lost this relationship with the king, and the king regained valuable time and income.

Jean de Beringhen, his wife Marie de Menours, and their unmarried daughter Françoise all were allowed to leave France in March 1668, with the king’s permission. An order issued March 7, 1688 required Jean de Beringhen to depart immediately for the Franco-Dutch border, taking a route that avoided Paris.\(^\text{649}\) His wife received similar orders five days later, to travel from her convent in Sens to Montargis, to pick up her daughter, and then to proceed to the Franco-Dutch border.\(^\text{650}\) Neither Madame nor Monsieur de Beringhen had ever converted to Catholicism, and had been in the state’s custody for over two years. While de Beringhen’s property had been seized in order to

\(^{648}\) International alliances had been building against Louis XIV since the mid-1680s and although the first invasion did not occur until September 1688, the plans began earlier in the year. Wolf, *Louis XIV*, 426-45.

\(^{649}\) AN O/1 32, March 7, 1688. A letter sent along with these orders asked Monsieur Poirel to advise the Duc de la Force of these orders, and to report to Seignelay when Beringhen actually departed. AN O/1 32, fol. 67.
pay his and his wife’s pensions, the conversion of his two youngest sons had allowed the
bulk of the property to remain in the family. As such, the de Beringhen’s were perfect
candidates for the expulsion orders Louis XIV desired: they refused to convert, had little
previous contact with the monarchy, save their daughter’s marriage to the Duc de la
Force, and their departure for Holland would allow the king to redistribute the family’s
wealth as he saw fit.

Of the seven grown children in this family, only two stayed in France and
converted to Catholicism. The eldest son, Theodore, a councilor in the Parisian
Parlement, was also expelled and fled to Holland, but his wife and daughter remained in
France.651 Marie and Elisabeth, two daughters who married into the Le Coq family, fled
with their husbands to England, and lived out their lives in London. Susanne was forced
to stay in France as the Duchesse de la Force but never converted, and their only
unmarried daughter, Françoise, fled with them to Holland. Only the two youngest sons,
Frederic and Adolphe, aged 22 and 19 at the Revocation, respectively, ever converted.652
The benefit to them, of course, was the inheritance that should have been split among
three sons and four daughters was given to them, and to Theodore’s wife and daughter.653
The de Beringhen family, on the whole, was a picture of steadfastness in the face of
Louis XIV’s force, with most family members eventually leaving the country. This
ability to withstand the king’s pressure may in part be attributed to the age of the family

650 AN O/1 32, fol. 71v.
651 He appears to have set up business with his father, briefly. The 1704 book Cinquante lettres
d’exhortation et de consolation sur les souffrances de ces derniers tems, published in The Hague,
is attributed to him.
652 Frederic inherited his father’s title of Sieur de Langarzeau, and entered the French cavalry.
Adolphe has largely disappeared from the historical record, though he may have eventually
served in the Danish army.
members at the time of the Revocation; only two children, Theodore and Susanne, had children of their own in 1685, and those children were retained by the state and converted, and the two youngest members of the family were the two who remained. The rest had grown to adulthood but had no children of their own, making them ideal candidates for emigration, either with or without the king’s permission.

For Jean de Beringhen and his wife, however, the exile to Holland required them to begin a new life at an advanced age. While de Beringhen had some business contacts in Holland, he wrote several letters to La Reynie and Seignelay pleading for access to some of his goods in France. His request, still couched in a language of deference to the king, reminded him that his exile in Holland was only at the request of the king. He closed his letter with a statement that,

the pain that one has made me and my family suffer in our country, and that I suffer still here, are because I only want to adhere to one God, father, son, and Holy Spirit… And that I do not want to nor am able to recognize any authority or power in France is legitimate between God and the King.654

This allegiance in supplication was necessary for de Beringhen to have any chance of receiving favors from the French king, but its style suggests a sincerity as well. In 1688, Jean de Beringhen was seventy-six years old, and had lived his entire life in France. While The Hague offered the religious freedom he found essential, his worldly attachments were in France, and this exile could not have been an easy one.655

653 A series of brevets in the official record established the distribution of this inheritance over several months in late 1688. AN O/1 32, fols. 113, 165, 182, 183v, 229, 268.
654 BNF MF 21621. This first letter, dated November 11, 1688, was followed up with a second plea, dated June 1, 1690. Alongside Jean de Beringhen’s personal pleas for assistance in exile, he also asked the king to intervene in order to stop his son Frederic from wasting the family fortune. La Reynie’s notes suggest that he did look into the son’s spending, though it is unclear if anything was ever done to resolve either issue.
655 Jean de Beringhen appears to have died in The Hague in 1691, and Marie de Menours in 1706.
The experience of the Amonnet family paralleled that of the de Beringhen, with one notable exception: where the de Beringhen children were grown and went into exile on their own, the Amonnet daughters were unable to leave France with their parents. No direct order survived exiling Matthieu Amonnet and Rachel Houssaye from France, but they clearly left the prison of the Bastille sometime between October 1687 and April 1688. A bureaucrat in Mayenne, the place of his exile, received orders to seize all remaining goods once belonging to Amonnet on April 14, 1688, and in late August 1688, an official *brevet* from the king gave all of the Amonnet’s goods and property in France to their daughters.\(^{656}\) They, like the de Beringhen family, fled to Holland; Matthieu Amonnet had business contacts in Amsterdam.\(^{657}\) Their five daughters had been placed in various French convents after their arrest, and all remained there immediately following their exile, including the two who had requested to become professed sisters.

In exile in Amsterdam, Matthieu and Rachel Amonnet joined the French Reformed Church, where their children slowly joined them. In January 1693, Louis XIV issued a passport allowing Marthe Amonnet to join her family in Amsterdam.\(^{658}\) There she married another French Protestant refugee, before dying young in 1695. Marguerite and Rachel Amonnet also joined their family in Holland at some point in the 1690s, and also married into the French Protestant community.\(^{659}\) Only Marie remained in France in 1719, when a *brevet* was issued changing the previous distribution of Matthieu

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\(^{656}\) AN O/1 32, fols. 95 and 227v. The brevet specified that Matthieu Amonnet and Rachel Houssaye were “conducted” out of the realm, thus part of this project of exile.

\(^{657}\) BNF Archives de la Bastille, 10435. Many of the letters without names or dates seized in Amonnet’s arrest came from Amsterdam, or referenced business affairs there.

\(^{658}\) AN O/1 37, fol. 13.

\(^{659}\) Staatsarchief Amsterdam, 5001 vol. 1131. Marthe Amonnet was buried as the wife of Louis François Aubert in 1695. Rachel Amonnet was buried as the wife of Isaac Doulcet in 1715. This
Amonnet’s estate to her favor. As the daughters reached adulthood, they were treated as such, and thus more able to leave the realm. If assessed in 1690, Louis XIV’s persistence regarding their conversion was ostensibly successful; by 1700, it is clear that the family was resolutely Protestant. Their story is one that counteracts the goals of the French monarchy, and demonstrates the survival of French Protestantism in the face of the Revocation and its surrounding edicts.

Jacques Muisson and his family defied the king directly, fleeing for Holland after their professed conversion. In October 1687, before Louis XIV reconsidered Protestant emigration, the family fled Paris for the Hague. On October 24, Louis issued orders to seize all of their goods in Paris, giving control of them to Madame de la Sablière, Anne de Rambouillet’s Catholic mother. Among the goods seized was Jacques Muisson’s parlementary office, as it was a salable good in early modern Paris, worth several thousand livres. The premier president of the Parisian Parlement, however, was apparently displeased with the king’s seizure of a parlementary office, and received a sternly worded letter from Seignelay on October 27, ordering him to proceed promptly along the lines of any other councilor who had fallen out with the king. This tension over Muisson’s official office reflects the constant struggle between Louis XIV and the Parisian Parlement, but also the reticence of at least one bureaucratic institution to follow through with Louis XIV’s orders regarding Protestants. Muisson’s main income was from

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660 AN O/1 63, fol. 336. Marguerite is listed in this brevet in tandem with her sisters Marthe and Rachel as fugitives from the realm. She does not appear in the Amsterdam burial records, but most likely joined her family there, as she also does not appear in the records of the family in London.

661 AN O/1 31, fol. 214.
By fleeing without the king’s permission, the Muissons were able to bring their entire family out of France together. Their children had been returned to them after their first conversion in February 1686, and this clandestine emigration allowed them to keep the family together. The stress of the persecution and emigration on the entire family was obvious, however, in the wills of Monsieur and Madame Muisson. As discussed above, Jacques Muisson’s first concern in his will was the “enormous sin that I have committed in signing that I aligned myself with the Roman Church.” His later specifications, that his wife would be named the sole guardian and tutor of all of their children, further reflected the lack of trust he placed in any outsiders for their children’s safety.664 Anne de Rambouillet’s will, written after the death of Jacques Muisson, went even further in its discussion of the ramifications of their experience in France. She wrote,

> if I have had the unhappiness in the time of the persecution in France to sign that I did myself remit to the Roman Church, I take God for witness that it never [has been] with any persuasion or any intent to live in but I have succumb[ed] through the temptation of my children which were removed of me.665

Her later plea, that God watch over her children and grandchildren and ensure they are taught the Protestant faith, echoes this dissatisfaction with her first conversion in France and the pressure placed upon her family to reeducate their children in the Catholic faith. Together, these two statements reiterate what the Muissons saw as the defining

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662 AN O/1 31, fol. 216v. This immediate pressure was not enough, and Seignelay wrote again in March 1688 ordering the suppression of Muisson’s office. AN O/1 32, fol. 79v.
663 This income most likely went with the Muisson estate to Madame de la Sablière, but it is unclear.
664 SHPF MS 842.
experience of their lives: their families’ persecution in France and their efforts to remake their lives in the Netherlands following their flight.

The experience of the Revocation for Parisian artisanal and bourgeois families relied much more heavily on the bureaucracy instituted by Louis XIV than on interactions with Louis XIV himself, but was still largely reflective of the policies set by the king. La Reynie’s regular correspondence with the royal household, primarily via Seignelay, allowed him to remain in close contact with the shifts in policy that occurred between October 1685 and early 1688, even as the king was less involved personally in the conversion of these families. For the Amonnet, Muisson, and Beringhen families, their wealth and status did attract personal attention from the king and his lead ministers, but the force used to effect their conversions mirrored that felt by the Third Estate. The heavy use of prisons, convents, and colleges dominated this experience of the Revocation, with non-aristocratic children receiving copious attention from La Reynie and the Parisian police. The conversion of every man, woman, and child in Paris required an attention to detail that relied heavily on the growing state bureaucracy, even after Louis XIV allowed for limited emigration. In the programs established to place new converts into guild positions, or support them with limited pensions, Louis XIV’s insight into the particular desires and needs of the artisanal and bourgeois population following conversion was made clear. The attention given to these families, combined with the amount of money spent in efforts to convert, reflect the fundamental importance of the conversion of all levels of Parisian society in the execution of Louis XIV’s new vision for France.
Chapter 6
Social Education, Religious Control

With the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the practicality of new ideas about education was directly tested. In the convents, schools, and programs employed to enforce Louis XIV’s program of reeducation, the application of questions on the place and system of education became tangible. The new institutions and programs created in the wake of the Revocation applied these theories in different ways, addressing Louis XIV’s overarching concern in social religion through the creation of new Catholics. The relative innovations found in this period, particularly in a program to distribute books to new converts, speak to the realities of education in the 1680s, complicating and enriching our picture of an educational moment.

In this chapter, I will discuss three separate approaches to conversion and education that followed the Revocation as examples of the execution of these ideals in the late 1680s. The Nouvelles Catholiques, a female order founded in the mid-seventeenth century, the Society of Jesus, the main arm of the Catholic Reformation, and a royal program to distribute books to new converts begun in 1686 all played important roles in the reeducation of Protestants after the Revocation, yet represent different educational impulses on the part of the crown and French Catholic society. As Louis XIV considered, then implemented, his efforts to reeducate Protestants, these institutions and ideas definitively shaped the reality of education after the Revocation.
Conversion in the Catholic Reformation: The Nouvelles Catholiques

The female community of the Nouvelles Catholiques epitomized the religious devotion and interest in conversion found in Paris in the late seventeenth century, and their involvement in the Revocation emphasizes the connection between the two. This house, a non-traditional female community interested in education as a means of conversion, reflected the heart of female piety in the Catholic Reformation. It became the leading recipient of Protestant women forced into convents after the Revocation, welcoming over 150 women in 1686 and 1687 alone, requiring financial and logistical support both from other communities and the king himself. The education received there clearly appealed to Louis XIV’s ideal of reeducation, and the overarching emphasis on conversion made this community the ideal place for recalcitrant Protestant women.

The house of the Nouvelles Catholiques was opened in 1634 by members of the company for the Propagation of the Faith, although it was far from a traditional convent at this time. The Company for the Propagation of the Faith had been founded recently itself, a product of the Counter Reformation, as an organization devoted to the conversion of Protestants.666 It rapidly expanded, creating several connected communities for both men and women, both traditional and secular.667 The Nouvelles Catholiques were part of this network, a logical expansion from the group’s primary mission. While they were under the protection and patronage of the Archbishop of Paris, giving them some traditional status, the convent adopted no official rule and was not governed by allegiance

667 These included houses of the company itself in Paris, Marseilles, Aix, Grenoble, and Lyon. In Paris, the houses of Nouvelles and Nouveaux Catholiques, the Institute of Christian Union, the
to any one religious order. Their mission required interaction with the outside world, and
their foundation was rooted in the type of quasi-secular piety that dominated in early
seventeenth-century Paris. As historian Catherine Martin explains,

Like all these new female orders of the seventeenth century whose activities were
incompatible with clture, the sisters of the house of the Nouvelles Catholiques of
Paris had a slightly hybrid status, as Rome only recognized those who kept clture
as nuns and were, by this fact, authorized to pronounce solemn vows. But, while
other institutions, like the Union Chrétienne, came as near as possible to religious
status in imposing at least simple vows, the Nouvelles Catholiques seemed wary
of this procedure.

This “hybrid status” persisted throughout the seventeenth century, with the first official
rule for the community coming only in 1675, forty years after its initial foundation.

The published rule of 1675 provides the clearest insight into the goals and operation
of this community in the late seventeenth century. Divided into six major sections, the
document was not a traditional constitution for a religious house, but a set of guidelines
reflecting the community’s liminal status between secular and professed order. It
established rules and routines for the sisters in the house, both professed and non, as well
as the non-converted and recently converted women in residence. Alongside its professed
devotions to Christ and his mother, the constitution listed “the most important of all the
exercises of the House” as “the instruction that continually takes place there, both for
those who are still engaged in heresy and for those who have abjured it.” This overtly

Company of the Holy Sacrament, and the Daughters of the Propagation of the Faith (Daughters of
Saint-Croix) were all part of the company. Ibid.

Barbara Diefendorf’s study of the foundation of female religious orders in early seventeenth-
century Paris claims this was a defining characteristic of the period, reflective of Catholic
Reformation values and female piety at the time. B. B. Diefendorf, From Penitence to Charity:

Martin, Les compagnies de la Propogation de la foi, 215. The community of l’Union
Chrétienne was also founded by the community for the Propagation of the Faith.

Constitutions pour la maison des nouvelles Catholiques de Paris, (Paris: F. Muguet, 1675),
24.
temporal goal, and its emphasis on education, reflects the community’s tradition in secular piety, as well as its ties to the state’s goals of conversion and reeducation. The structure of the community’s days, as set out in its ideal form, also reflected these goals. The sisters followed the office of the Blessed Virgin, praying at the prescribed times every day. Yet, they adapted this rigid monastic schedule to fit the needs of their community; while the sisters prayed Vespers, for example, a few sisters remained behind with the non-converted women and instructed them. Their regular devotion signaled their status as a convent, as did the listed “devotions” of the house to various saints and patrons, but their continual focus on education and conversion required flexibility.

The constitution of 1675 also spoke at length to those women who were part of the community but had not yet converted. They were an integral part of the mission of the community, and obviously intimately involved in its daily life, yet were held slightly apart from the Catholic sisters. Those entering the convent to convert were asked to “receive with respect and gratitude the Instruction that is given to them,” attend the religious discussions and catechetical lessons given daily, and learn to “pray to God in their inner spirits… the prayers that the Catholic Church offer to the Faithful.” They were not allowed visits from their families, for fear that their religious beliefs would undo much of the work of the sisters, and were expected to conform to the community’s rules on modest dress and devout behavior. The constitutions required the community to accept any woman who presented herself as wanting to abjure her faith, no matter her current

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671 Ibid., 17-21. Prime was prayed before waking their pensioners, the pensioners attended the chanting of Tierce and Sexte (Mass was said between these two), None was also said before the whole community, Compiles was said with Vespers, for professed sisters only, and Matins and Lauds were exclusive of non-converts.
672 Ibid., 47-8.
religious affiliation, so long as she was over twelve years old. This age restriction stemmed from the age of reason set under the Edict of Nantes discussed above, and emphasized the role the community saw for itself as a home for those willingly choosing to convert to Catholicism. The constitutions also required that all women be received free of charge, without the requirements for dowry or pension set at many houses. Their actions to convert Protestant women were charitable actions, in their interpretation, and could not be charged for. Together, these rules and requirements give a picture of a community devoted to the reeducation of Protestant women, working within the framework of Catholic Reformation Paris and the restrictions of the Edict of Nantes.

It was in this period of codification that François de Fénelon, then a rising religious figure, became involved in the community. He was named their spiritual director in 1678, partially on the recommendation of his uncle. The community was already held in high esteem by the court, and his nomination as spiritual director was a vote of confidence in Fénelon and his zeal for conversions. As historian Janine Gore explained, “his superiors, in confiding the direction of the Nouvelles Catholiques to him, saw that it was the area where his aptitude for controversy could best bear fruit. For the needs of his cause, Fénelon united piety and dialectical argument. He would put his precise and flexible intelligence in the service of the Church.” Fénelon had proven himself in religious circles and was trusted to not only guide the sisters in the community, but those who were there for conversion. He worked closely with the Mother Superior, who truly led the

673 The constitutions specified Lutheranism, Calvinism, or “other” Protestant “heresies” as their main goal. They also would accept Jewish women, but with more hesitation.
674 His uncle was Antoine de Fénelon, the Marquis de Fénelon, who was a close friend of Vincent de Paul.
community, connecting his own views on spirituality and conversion with the goals of the house. Together, they shaped the tenor of the house in the 1680s, creating an institution that was zealous for conversions and rooted in a tradition of religious educational thought.

The Mother Superior of the Nouvelles Catholiques at the time of the Revocation was Mère Marie-Madeleine Garnier, who had been elected superior in 1685. Garnier joined the community of the Daughters of Providence in 1651, a community founded by a follower of St. Vincent de Paul. According to a hagiographic study of this founder, Vincent de Paul himself dispatched Marie Garnier to take direction of the Nouvelles Catholiques. It is unclear when exactly she moved from the Daughters of Providence to the Nouvelles Catholiques, though it appears likely she was there by the early 1670s at the latest. Her predecessors, including Marie Foucault, who had led the convent from 1680 to 1685, had all come from illustrious Parisian families; Marie Garnier was the first superior with no known contacts to the court before her time at the convent. This lack of political associations outside the community allowed Garnier to build on her own prestige as the leader of a prominent convent, creating a role for herself within the bureaucracy of the Revocation.

A comparison of the detailed requirements from the 1675 constitution and the more elaborate rule of 1707 gives some idea of where the convent was headed in the interim

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676 The Filles de l’institut de la Providence were founded by Marie Lumague (Madame Pollalion) in 1643; it received royal patronage from Anne of Austria in 1651.

677 *Vie de la Vénérable servante de Dieu, Marie Lumague* (Paris, 1744), cited in Martin, *Les compagnies de la Propagation de la foi*, 217. Martin is uncertain of the veracity of this citation, but argues for the logical connection of de Paul and Garnier via the daughters of Providence.

678 The previous superiors were, in order, the Duchesse de Crouy, the Comtesse de Montmorency, the Presidente Loysel, Madame Fouquet (presumably related to Nicolas Fouquet), and Marie Foucault (sister of the Intendant). Douen, *La Révocation de l’État de Nantes à Paris*, 2, 238.
years, and the effect the Revocation and the ensuing influx of women had on the community. Whereas in 1675 the constitution placed a heavy emphasis on conversion with three months, in order to keep the number of unconverted (and, thus, problematic) women at a minimum, this requirement was minimized in the rule of 1707. The free admittance of all women, also emphasized in 1675, was toned down as well in 1707. While this admission without pension was maintained, a second article was added requesting a pension for any woman staying over three months, and some support from their families. The constitutions of 1707 were also much more detailed in their enumeration of the requirements for converted women and of the sisters in the community, laying out specific instructions for each role in the house, including a sister in charge of the education program. This increase in specificity may reflect the necessity of greater organization in the wake of the growth of the 1680s, and marked a definite move towards formalization that the early convent eschewed. The Revocation, and its ensuing influence on this community, forced its regularization.

The conversion process itself, as enacted at the Nouvelles Catholiques, was written out and published by a Dominican friar in 1685. The Latin text spoken by the priest, the actions of the priest and the participant, and the role of the community are all laid out, presumably as an example for other orders interested in following their example. Tellingly, while the priest’s prayers and exhortations are primarily in Latin, the profession of faith and official abjuration were both in French. This choice reflected the spirit of the community and of the conversion efforts of the Revocation. While the traditions of the Church were kept in the priest’s actions and words, the use of French in

679 AN LL 1641, section 10, articles 12 and 13.
680 AN LL 1641.
the parts of the “penitent” allowed them to participate more fully in the conversion and avoid any uncertainty.\footnote{H. Krattman O.P., \textit{Maniere d'absoudre l'heresie, et comme elle se practique dans la maison des Nouveaux et Nouvelles Catholiques} (Paris 1685).} The ceremonial nature of the process is also significant, as reflected in the official nature of the prayers and the invocation of the pope’s authority. In the blessing and absolution of the converting woman, the priest called upon Jesus Christ, the Pope, and the Archbishop of Paris as the authorities of the church, then proceeded to say:

\begin{quote}
I absolve you first from every sentence of excommunication that you had incurred on account of your crimes against heaven, and your participation as a heretic, and on account of your reading of heretical books, and restore you, to the Holy Sacraments of the Church, the Communion of the Union of the Faithful, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.\footnote{Ibid. Dominus nostre Jesus Christus te absolvat; Et ego authoritate ipsius qua fungor, ac Beatorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli, Summi Pontificus, vel Illu striissimi, ac Reverendissimi Archiepiscopi Parisiensis in hoc parte mihi commissa, et tibi concessa, absolvo te in primis ab omni vinculo excommunicationis majoris quod incurrit ob crimen aeres, et participationem cum haeretics, et ob lectionem librorum prohibitorum, et restituo te, vel adjungo Sanctis Sacramentis Ecclesiae, Communioni et Unitati Fidelium, in nomine Patris, et Filis, et Spiritus Sancti, Amen.}
\end{quote}

The mention of the official sentence of excommunication, which occurs two other times within this service, reminded the participants of the serious nature of conversion, while the more detailed pardon for the woman’s participation in heretical services and reading of heretical books makes the ceremony more personal and tangible. Together with language such as the returning the converting woman to “the bosom of the holy mother Church,” this ceremony worked to unite a personal conversion with both the immediate community of the Nouvelles Catholiques and the larger idea of the Catholic communion. Its publication emphasizes the exemplary nature of this balance, and the regularity with which it must have been performed.
In this community, conversions were reached through intensive reeducation. Women who entered the house were required to attend daily lessons in the catechism, “so that they could understand and imprint upon their spirits these truths,” as well as daily lectures on theological controversies. Weekly meetings with the Mother Superior and additional preaching and instruction during holy periods augmented this regular instruction, with preachers brought in as suggested by the Archbishop of Paris or the Superior herself.\textsuperscript{683} This regimen took hours each day, not including any attendance at services; instruction was clearly the house’s priority. By forcing Protestant women to attend all of these attempts at reeducation—the catechism, exhortations on the falsity of Protestant beliefs, Catholic Mass and prayer services, personal spiritual guidance from Catholic leaders—the convent attempted to completely rewrite the women’s external and interior piety. A detailed description of the type of education given in 1675 explained, “they will be taught to pray to God in their inner spirit, and by the prayers that the Catholic Church proposes to its faithful, and which are commonly used and received here.”\textsuperscript{684} The concurrent mentions of inner piety and the prayers condoned by the Church emphasize the importance of obedience to the Church’s teachings on all fronts. It also conforms to the Constitutions’ earlier rule, requiring “the Women taking refuge in the House will attempt on their part to be docile, quiet, humble, and obedient, and to receive with respect and gratitude the Instructions that they are given.”\textsuperscript{685} Reeducation was a difficult proposition even without critical responses, and the Constitutions here reveal the regularity with which vocal opposition must have occurred. Yet for Catholics, including the king, the forced reception of Catholic teachings and prayers was an invaluable asset,

\textsuperscript{683} Constitutions pour la maison des nouvelles Catholiques de Paris, ch. 1, section IV.
\textsuperscript{684} Ibid., ch.2, section II.
and cemented the place of the Nouvelles Catholiques as the central Parisian institution for Protestant women.

This approach to education paralleled many of the ideas expressed in contemporary educational treatises, while adapting to the realities of educating grown women. The Nouvelles Catholiques were interested in effecting conversion as quickly as possible, and the intensive religious education found in their community was an intense adaptation of the religious emphasis found in educational writings. They did not include literate education for these women, perhaps deeming it unnecessary, but instead focused on an educational program that directly affected their standing with the Catholic Church and the French state. The gendered understanding of education and piety expressed in the treatises was also minimized here, as their roles as Christian mothers were less important than their own religious belief at the time. This relatively more personal approach reflected the state’s, and the community’s, interest in forming Catholic women, and the priorities at work in the Nouvelles Catholiques. While the more theoretical understanding of female piety could be useful, the community as a whole was decidedly more interested in adapting theory to practice and working alongside traditional, theoretical, norms.

The convent was at its largest in the years surrounding the Revocation, both in public awareness and in numbers of women in the community. Between 1685 and 1700, 285 women entered the convent of the Nouvelles Catholiques, and 167 of those entered before 1688. In comparison, in the forty years preceding 1675, the convent had only seen 1500 women total (sisters and converts); between 1675 and 1685, another 500 had passed through its doors.\(^686\) The influx of pensioners and non-converted Protestant women

\(^{685}\) Ibid.
pushed the convent financially and spatially, requiring regular support from the French crown. The gift of half of the buildings and land at Charenton to the convent of the Nouvelles Catholiques was not only a forceful statement against the persistence of Protestantism near the capital, it was a practical gift reflecting the rapidly growing state of the community. In his bequest, Louis XIV cited his desire “to employ as usefully as possible the buildings, land, and dependencies of the Temple and Consistory” at Charenton as the driving reason for his donation to the Nouvelles Catholiques. Not only did the king support the community through this land grant, he also regularly funded the Nouvelles Catholiques from his own treasury. The community’s emphasis on receiving women without family pensions, and the king’s insistence on using this community for recalcitrant Protestant woman created a delicate financial situation. Beginning in February 1686, therefore, regular payments of 3,000 livres per month were sent to the Nouvelles Catholiques of Paris; the largest of any payments to religious houses in the wake of the Revocation. These acts of financial support were some of the strongest statements Louis XIV could make in favor of the community, and reflected its exponential growth in this period as well as the king’s belief in the house’s mission.

The community of the Nouvelles Catholiques was closely tied, from its foundation, to the other convents and communities linked to the congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, and similar conversion models can be seen there in the wake of the Revocation. Although the Parisian houses of the Filles de la Providence and the Filles de l'Union Chrétienne did not see their mission as internment and forced conversion, they too

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687 AN S 4668. The other half of the buildings were given to the Parisian Hôpital General. In July 1686, the Nouvelles Catholiques purchased this half from the hospital, giving them rights to the entire area. AN O/1 30, fol. 257.

688 AN G/7 885, 886.
welcomed Protestant women in the wake of the Revocation. There were also many convents of Nouvelles Catholiques in provincial France, serving as the primary receptors of Protestant women in their areas. In 1685, communities of Nouvelles Catholiques affiliated with the company for the Propagation of the Faith existed in Orléans, Chalons, La Rochelle, Toulouse, Montauban, Montpellier, and Foralquier. Louis XIV supported these communities, and similar house not affiliated with the company for the Propagation of the Faith, much in the same way as he did that of Paris, with regular payments. All of these houses functioned on a similar model of piety, one derived from Counter Reformation ideals, and infused their education and conversion efforts with this religious devotion. For Louis XIV, this was essential.

While the Nouvelles Catholiques was by far the largest convent focused on the conversion and reeducation of Protestant women in the wake of the Revocation, the large numbers of women deemed in need of such communities required the monarchy to also look to other convents. In Paris, the convent of the Visitation de Sainte-Marie (a Salesian order), the Ursulines, and the so-called Miramionnes (a secular house under the direction of Madame de Miramion) all played a prominent part in this conversion effort. All three were relatively new houses, products of the increase in women’s spiritual roles in the Catholic Reformation. All were also directly connected with the teaching ideals of the Catholic Reformation, and thus perfectly suited for the expansion of Louis XIV’s reeducation project.

689 Martin, Les compagnies de la Propagation de la foi, 223.
690 Ibid., 239.
691 AN G/7 885, 886.
The Ursuline order, founded in the late sixteenth century, was the primary teaching order in late seventeenth-century France, despite its history as a secular house and its relative newness. They had also established themselves as a missionary order, particularly in the New World, connecting their educational endeavors to the evangelization of the Counter Reformation. These twin missions often created strife for the order, as they were simultaneously expected to spread Catholic teachings and adhere to Catholic notions of episcopal hierarchy and female piety, a struggle common to many orders in this period. With the Revocation, however, their experience in both fields created an ideal community for the placement of Protestant women. For a woman by the name of Dame Fabrice, for example, the Ursulines were a suitable alternative when there was no room in the Nouvelles-Catholiques. The two orders were seen as interchangeable in the placement of Madame Muisson, with the decision left up to the procureur général. Other women and girls were moved in and out of the convent by La Reynie or other members of Louis XIV’s bureaucracy with relative regularity in 1686 and 1687, underscoring the extent to which this convent served as an essential piece in the reeducation effort.

The community of the Miramionnes, a secular group of devout women headed by the wealthy Madame de Miramion, existed even more outside of the bound of traditional female religiosity, and their involvement in the Revocation emphasizes the connection

693 Lux-Sterrit, Redefining Female Religious Life, 112-21. Barbara Diefendorf’s recent study expands this into other orders. Diefendorf, From Penitence to Charity.
694 AN O/1 30, 27 January 1686.
between Counter Reformation piety and many of Louis XIV’s efforts. They took no vows and were affiliated with a parish church rather than their own chapel, in order to maintain their status as devout laywomen. By doing so, they were allowed to work among the people more directly, and were not subject to the rules of clausura that overtook female religious communities in the late seventeenth century.696 This community was much smaller than many of the houses used in the Revocation, particularly the Nouvelles Catholiques, and only welcomed a handful of Protestant women in the late 1680s. Yet they clearly were seen as a viable alternative to many of the larger houses, a suitable place particularly for those women who had not converted elsewhere.697 One of Madame de Miramion’s more hagiographic biographers placed the impetus to use the Miramionne community squarely on Madame de Maintenon’s admiration of her piety and devotion, claiming the intimate relationships formed in this community would have been seen to accelerate conversions.698 While this interpretation seems a bit exaggerated, the religious devotion and unique lay experience of the Miramionnes complemented Louis XIV’s understanding of religion in society. The placement of Protestant women in their community forced these women to see lived Catholicism and its social implications, an approach to religion that Louis XIV consistently employed.

The uniting characteristic for these communities and the Nouvelles Catholiques was their novelty, their interest in newfound female spirituality in the wake of the Catholic Reformation. None were founded before the sixteenth century, and all practiced modified

695 AN O/1 30, 12 January 1686.
696 Rapley, *The Dévotes*, ch. 5.
697 AN O1 30, fol. 171, Miramionnes received the daughters of Sieur de Villarnoul who had refused to convert elsewhere. AN O1 30, 28 March 1686, Madame Chardon was moved to the Miramionnes.
(if any) versions of traditional clausura and monastic life. In supporting these communities, and choosing them as instruments of his forced incarceration in convents, Louis XIV aligned his reeducation efforts of the Revocation with the piety expressed in the Catholic Reformation. This underscores the deep connection between the Revocation and the Counter Reformation, even as its expressions evolved in the late seventeenth century. The Nouvelles Catholiques, and orders like them, were redefining female religious life, and Louis XIV was keen to adopt these ideals into his own religious program. Together, they speak to a moment at which the state worked with religious women to further a common goal, an expression of practical piety that arose in part from the social religion of the Catholic Reformation.

**Jesuit Education in the 1680s**

The order of the Society of Jesus held a prominent role in seventeenth-century French society and religiosity, one that extended into the Revocation. Many of the leading preachers and theologians at court were Jesuits, and Jesuit education was the dominant model for aristocratic education. The Jesuits had confirmed their return to preeminence with the nomination of Père la Chaize, a Jesuit, as the king’s confessor in 1674, and his regular councils with the king and the Archbishop of Paris were the key decision sessions for religious affairs in Paris. The rising fortunes of the Jesuit order came after a long period of disfavor at the French court, and their loyalty therefore needed to be reproven. Their actions in the Revocation and the ensuing reeducation

efforts helped to demonstrate this allegiance, and corresponded to their order’s educational mission.

Jesuit educational ideals were firmly established in 1599 with the publication of the *Ratio Studiorum*, a program for Jesuit education. This document, written by the Fifth General Congregation of the order, was the codification of the Jesuits’ educational experiences in the sixteenth century and a plan for their future. While the Jesuits perhaps did not intend to found schools, by 1599 there were more than 200 Jesuit colleges in Europe. The first Jesuit schools were simply for new members, but they were quickly expanded to lay students, “partly in a response to a demand on the part of lay people and partly as a way of finding the financial resources to pay for the training of its own members.” With this rapid expansion came the need for regularization, and this formalized version of the *Ratio Studiorum* was the product of multiple less-formal versions composed in the late sixteenth century. The practical experience gained from fifty years of teaching, combined with the Jesuits’ theoretical approach to scholastic learning, created a document that was at once prosaic and visionary and would guide the Order’s teaching through the late eighteenth century.

The *Ratio* was divided into several small sections, each detailing the role and responsibilities of a single group of the college, including both students and teachers. The

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699 Its full title is the *Ratio atque institutio studiorum*, or Method and Custom of Studies.


701 Ibid., 81.

702 Jesuit education has been extensively studied as both part of the Catholic Reformation and part of the tradition of French educational history. F. de Dainville, *L’éducation des Jésuites (XVIe-XVIIIe siècles)* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1978); F. Charmot S.J., *La pédagogie des Jésuites: Ses principes, son actualité* (Paris: Editions Spes, 1951); Chartier, Julia, and Compère, *L’Éducation*
majority of the text was devoted to explanations of these rules: the regulation of the day, the organization of the school, the setting of exams, and the subjects taught. The publication of this level of detail is of itself extraordinary, and reflective of the order’s deep-seated interest in creating a regularized educational experience across the Christian world. It also reveals the depth to which Catholic teachings were integrated into Jesuit colleges. The “final goal” of all levels of classes, as explained in the rules for teachers, was “moving students to obey and love God and the virtues by which we ought to please him, and to make all their academic pursuits relate to this final goal.” The students’ religious devotion was an integral part of this, with daily prayer and reflection encouraged. Yet, perhaps more importantly, the Jesuit colleges integrated this religious outlook into more secular learning. While at the forefront of some of the Scientific Revolution, the order was also keenly aware of the need to keep to the Catholic teachings, and emphasize the religious interpretations over the newer, secular ideas. Historian François Charmot describes this impulse as the “Christianization of science,” a move that simultaneously accepts new ideas and favors the traditional framework. This attitude extended into all subjects, as Jesuit education emphasized worldly knowledge with a Catholic basis. The Ratio’s rules on subjects and authors taught, separated by age and ability, can therefore be understood as part of their larger goal to both spread and contain knowledge.

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705 Charmot S.J., La pédagogie des Jésuites: Ses principes, son actualité., part V
The Parisian expression of Jesuit education was the Collège Louis-le-Grand, founded in 1563 as the Collège de Clermont. It had experienced the highs and lows of the Jesuit order in France throughout the seventeenth century, opening and closing intermittently from 1594 to 1618 as the Jesuits sought to establish themselves with the monarchy.\textsuperscript{706} By 1682, the relationship was as close as it ever would be, and the Jesuits renamed the school Collège Louis-le-Grand after receiving royal patronage from Louis XIV. This patronage was the expression of Louis’ faith in the school; as historian Gustave Dupont-Ferrier wrote, “Louis XIV loved the collège de Clermont; he encouraged his courtesans to send their sons there; he himself did not disdain to go there,” particularly for the theater put on by the schoolboys.\textsuperscript{707} With the \textit{lettres patentes} establishing the school as part of the royal foundation, therefore, Louis XIV cemented its place as the leading institution for boys in Paris, and solidified his already-strong relationship with the Jesuit order. It was by no means the only school for boys in Paris, yet, partially because of this foundation, it was definitively one of the most prestigious.\textsuperscript{708}

In the 1680s, Collège Louis-le-Grand was at its largest, welcoming around 550 students as pensioners and more than 2,000 total students.\textsuperscript{709} Pensioned students were the financial lifeblood of the institution, paying their own room and board and fees to the school, while many of the students in the elementary classes were welcomed freely as

\textsuperscript{706} The assassination attempt on Henri IV in 1594 was by a man educated at the Collège de Clermont, forcing a nine-year closure. They reopened only to be banished again with the expulsion of Jesuits in 1610. The school reopened definitively in 1618. Fumaroli, \textit{L'Age de l'eloquence: Rhétorique et "res literaria" de la Renaissance au seuil de l'époque classique}, 242-56.


\textsuperscript{708} The main competition for the College de Clermont in Paris was the Université de Paris, which did not focus as largely on the lower school.

\textsuperscript{709} Dupont-Ferrier, \textit{Du collège de Clerment au Lycée Louis-le-Grand (1563-1920)}, 1, 76-7.
part of the Catholic mission of the school. This size eclipses most Parisian convents, but
the numbers are not strictly comparable, as the Collège held a more unique position in the
city. It does, however, reflect the prominence of the Jesuits and the Jesuit educational
model at the time of the Revocation. Not only were the majority of prominent ministerial
and noble families sending their sons to this collège, their prominence at court reinforced
Louis XIV’s personal affinity for the Jesuit model of education. Together, these impulses
placed the Collège Louis-le-Grand at the forefront of education in the late seventeenth
century.

With this size and its newfound royal patronage, the school became the default
institution for the forced education of Protestant boys. While incarcerations in convents
are much more common in the records, any mention of young boys being incarcerated
results in their being sent to the College Louis-le-Grand. The sons of the Duc de la Force,
the Marquis de Théobon, and many less-notable families all were sent to this collège,
many to stay for several years.\(^{710}\) Clearly, the Collège Louis-le-Grand was the first
thought for male education at the highest levels, and the most trusted source for complete
conversion for these boys. As historian John O’Malley writes, “as Europe moved into the
Confessional Age, Jesuit schools to a greater or lesser degree even on the secondary level
became ever more clearly confessional institutions.”\(^{711}\) This confessional identity,
combined with their contemporary allegiance to the French crown, won the Jesuits a
status as trusted Catholic educators, sure to combat heresy while adhering to the king’s
social objectives.

\(^{710}\) AN O/1 30. For the stories of the De la Force and Théobon families, see chapter 4.
\(^{711}\) J. O’Malley S.J, "From the 1599 *Ratio Studiorum* to the Present: A Humanistic Tradition?," in
*The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum: 400th Anniversary Perspectives*, ed. V. J. Duminuco S.J. (New York:
The conversions enacted at the Jesuit Collège Louis-le-Grand were infused with this double allegiance, to the Catholic Church and the French monarchy, fitting their place in seventeenth-century society and their educational approach. The religious dogmatism infused in every level of Jesuit education at this time presupposed the need for more obvious religious reeducation, forcing Protestant boys who attended Louis-le-Grand to regularly face their religious difference. Prayer began every class, meal, and day, and daily attendance at Mass was required of every boy; while no true course in religious belief existed, everyday life was a regular reinforcement of Catholic beliefs and traditions.\textsuperscript{712} This religious education was simultaneously political, as “the most cherished vow of the Jesuits at the collège was that the king of France would always be the most Christian king and that faith in the king would become inseparable from religious faith.”\textsuperscript{713} The political nature of the Collège Louis-le-Grand was perhaps even more pronounced than many Jesuit schools, given its direct ties to the royal household and its place as the school for the sons of the Parisian elite. Many of the boys in the school would go on to become political leaders, noble or non, and the Jesuits at Louis-le-Grand took their formative role very seriously. When boys in a similar situation, yet Protestant, joined this institution, the pressure to convert must have been formidable.\textsuperscript{714}

The Nouvelles-Catholiques and the Jesuits both represent an innovation in religious education, or reeducation, that was distinctive to the late seventeenth century. In correlating political pressure and Catholic reform ideals, both institutions made themselves ideal locations for the monarchy’s efforts towards reeducation. Yet, they

\textsuperscript{713} Ibid., 273.
enacted these ideals in distinct ways. The Nouvelles-Catholiques, as an order outside of traditional female religiosity, allowed for the adaptation of educational ideals to the specific needs of post-Revocation education. While adhering to a strict understanding of the supremacy of Catholicism, this community allowed newer ideas of female piety to shape the educative experience of these Protestant women. Similar things can be said for the Collège Louis-le-Grand; while adhering rigidly to the ideals of the Catholic Reformation, the Jesuits had transformed their order, by the late seventeenth century, into one closely tied to the French monarchy. The adoption of the name Louis-le-Grand just three years before the Revocation, and its status as a forming ground for the sons of the political elite, created an atmosphere infused with simultaneous religious and political loyalty. These institutions were therefore key components of Louis XIV’s efforts to reeducate Protestants in Paris, representing the fusion of Catholic Reformation piety and ideals of absolute monarchy that dominated the Revocation.

**Reading the Revocation: Books for New Converts**

One of the most revolutionary ideas of the Revocation period was a program, instituted by Louis XIV, designed to deliver Catholic literature to newly converted Protestants. In his summary of the program, La Reynie described it simply, saying, “the King distributed books for the instruction of heretics and new converts in Paris and the provinces.” Begun immediately after the Revocation, the program lasted until early 1687, distributing over 800,000 books. In correlating the distribution of books with the

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714 The only record of conversion at this school is that of the sons of the Duc de la Force, who converted within six weeks (see chapter 4). Dupont-Ferrier makes no mention of this small influx of Protestant boys in 1686, nor do the records of the Jesuit school themselves.

715 BNF MF 7054, fol. 32.
eradication of Protestantism (heresy), Louis XIV was working within the Counter
Reformation ideal of literate education as he effected his own personal ideal of Protestant
reeducation. This large-scale program thus must be considered as a fundamental part of
Louis’ plans for social and religious reform, even with such a short duration.

A bureaucrat named Gilles Clement was placed in charge of the entire program,
working separately from the police action headed by La Reynie. Clement was a lawyer in
the Parisian Parlement, and a member of the Colbert network. He appeared regularly in
the king’s records from the 1680s, primarily as an administrator of religious programs,
largely under the direction of Paul Pellisson-Fontanier, Seignelay’s assistant for religious
affairs.716 Based in Paris, he assisted Pellisson with the distribution of pensions to the
new converts in that city, and collected information from the provinces in the same vein
to present to the king. A payment of 133,425 livres from the Royal Treasury to Clement
personally in March of 1687, designated as “for pensions accorded to new converts from
October to December 1686,” shows the vast amounts of royal money that passed through
his hands in these years, and the centrality of his role in conversions in the capital.717 His
role in the book program was in a similar vein, a central administrator, and his
appointment thereto reflects the reliance of Seignelay on lower bureaucrats in this busy
year for religious affairs.

It was the scale of this program that is the most astonishing, and that best
demonstrates Louis’ dedication to this idea and ideal. At least eleven Parisian printers
were involved in this effort and were asked, as François Muguet describes in his report,
“to work incessantly on the works that had been ordered for the new converts, as it was

716 AN Gi/7 990, fol. 1; Dingli, Colbert, Marquis de Seignelay, 90-1.
the intention of the King, and ordered to stop everything else for this work.”718 This
group included some of the largest print shops of the day, with the shops of Frédéric
Léonard, Etienne Michallet and François Muguet producing three-quarters of the total
volumes, some 667,000 books.719 The sheer number of books produced in fifteen months
(October 1685 to January 1687) lends validity to Muguet’s claim that the print shops
were asked to cease all other work, and a search of the French National Library’s catalog
for these printers’ works in 1686 turns up almost exclusively volumes requested by the
king for this program.720 Louis XIV built upon an existing network of printers, some
already contracted to the king, some not, to execute this strict focus on reeducation
through literature. It was a show of strength and concentration, and by imposing his
ideals on such a large scale, he made a definitive statement regarding the importance of
this initiative.

Together, these printers reported the production of 881,366 books for new
converts; twenty-seven different titles ordered by the king to further the Catholic
education of new converts. These numbers were extraordinarily high for a print run,
reflecting the king’s desire to not only provide books, but to provide massive quantities
of them. Furthermore, the cost of printing these books totaled somewhere between
600,000 and 800,000 livres, depending on the accounting, an amount that far eclipsed any

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717 AN G/7 885. Other payments in this series are designated solely “for the new converts of
Paris,” and most likely passed directly into the hands of Pellisson.
718 BNF MF 7054, fol. 125. The number of printers involved varies depending on the report,
anywhere from nine to sixteen, but eleven printers appear consistently and printed the majority of
the books.
719 BNF MF 7054, fols. 172-7. These three were all official “printers of the king,” and taxed at
the highest rate for booksellers in 1695. P. Renouard, Répertoire des Imprimeurs Parisiens,
livraires et fondeurs de Caractères en exercice à Paris au XVIIe siècle (Nogent-le roi: Libraire
des arts et métiers, 1995).
other funding for programs for new converts, even pensions. Devoting such resources—the printers of Paris, and hundreds of thousands of livres—to this project reveals the depth of the king’s commitment. These books were intended as a secondary form of education for his newly converted Catholic subjects, an approach that relied upon their ability to read and understand religious texts, but attempted to redirect this traditionally Protestant devotional activity into a more Catholic vein.

This program was aimed, remarkably, to distribute books primarily to non-noble new converts. Acknowledging their literate abilities, grown out of the Protestant tradition, Louis XIV sought to build upon this foundation with a newly Catholic emphasis. The focus on the bourgeoisie is most evident in the manner in which these books were produced. Of the 881,366 books printed in this program, 738,633 of them were bound simply, in parchment or cardboard, and 56,899 of them were not bound at all. This suggests a destination audience that would not be able to afford the luxurious bindings of leather or sheepskin, and a usage in everyday life that required simple, functional books. Of the copies I examined, those bound in parchment showed the greatest use and survived in the smallest numbers, even though their production numbers far outpaced their leather counterparts. These books, distributed among the bourgeois and artisans of

720 The king’s printers also produced several edicts, but no other full books are in the catalog for this year.
721 The printer’s reports to La Reynie put the book cost at 481,675 livres, but some reports are either missing or have not survived (Léonard, Michallet and Muguet were included). The total on Clement’s reports from early 1687 was 868,549 livres, with 443,947 livres already paid by the king; a slightly earlier report asked for 1,044,475 livres. La Reynie’s attempt at accounting for Clement’s spending puts the number closer to 733,000 livres. Clear accounting was not the specialty of Clement, as will be discussed below, but I believe a reasonable estimate places the expenditure at at least 600,000, and up to 800,000. BNF MF 7054.
722 BNF MF 7054, fols. 172-7.
Paris and the provinces, were a means by which Louis XIV’s religious and social ideals could reach a large population that he felt needed guidance after their conversions.

The Archbishop of Paris and Louis XIV’s personal confessor, Père de la Chaize, were charged with picking the books for distribution. Both were highly educated men, and well-versed in Louis XIV’s personal understanding of Catholicism and its role in French society. Together, they compiled a list of twenty-seven books to be produced under the program, with a focus on those books with practical applications for new converts. Prayer books, books with advice on the taking of communion and the practice of confession, treaties on the Mass, and, of course, catechisms were all part of this program. Amongst the twenty-seven titles published, four books stand out as the most highly printed, and therefore most highly distributed: the Catechism of the Catholic Church, an Interpretation of the Psalms, the New Testament, and the *Imitation of Christ* by Thomas à Kempis. These four books, accounting for nearly sixty percent of the books published, allow a deeper insight into the focus of this program, and the priorities of both the Church and the French state in the education of new converts.

The catechism was an obvious choice, given its centrality in most Counter Reformation education efforts. For this program, a special edition of the Canisius catechism was printed, with a dedication to Archbishop de Harlay and an introduction written for new converts. The Canisius catechisms, as historian Karen Carter has explained, dominated the Catholic Reformation educational efforts, with “not just one but three catechisms, containing the same doctrines but with graduate amounts of detail, meant to teach the basic doctrines of Christianity to people of all ages and intellectual

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723 Ibid. Of the 881,366 books printed, these four titles account for 511,683 of them.
capabilities.” By choosing a staple of Catholic education and adopting it to this situation, Harlay and La Chaize connected themselves to the long history of Catholic education. In the introduction for new converts, the author specified “it is not enough to be returned to God, and to be reunited into the body of the Catholic Church” but one must “instruct oneself in the truths and maxims that are essential to salvation and to Religion; that which is done by the Instructions and regular Catechisms.” This advocacy for a close reading of the catechism in its traditional question-and-response form attempted to reunite new converts both with Catholic religious beliefs and with Catholic forms of spirituality and education.

Two other key books in this program, the New Testament and the Psalms, were traditional choices of Protestant spirituality, and their inclusion on this list signals a response to the known beliefs of these recent converts. By providing a reinterpretation of familiar works, complete with notes that guide the reader towards the accepted Catholic interpretation, the reeducation effort seems almost subtle. These New Testaments were in French, like the Protestant bibles, but were the approved papal editions, where, as the translator wrote, “one is always attached to the Vulgate, with respect to the General Council that gave it to us… and to Saint Jerome.” The Psalms received a similar treatment, with most editions providing facing copies of the Latin and French texts, and some giving both texts and a French paraphrase. This paraphrasing was intended to guide the reader towards the proper interpretation of the psalm, away from any Protestant inclinations and towards, as M. Macé wrote in his introduction, “the clarity that one has

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724 Carter, Creating Catholics, 31.
725 *Catechismes, ou Instruction Familier sur les Principales Veritez de la Religion Catholique*, (Paris: Michallet, 1686).
long wished for, and that will place [the psalms] in a state to bring to us all the purpose that the Fathers and Councils wished for them.” To do so, he continued to explain, the commentator brought together all of the erudite writings on the psalms from over the centuries, making “an abridgment suitable for all types of people.” Again we see the focus of this book program on the literate groups in the middle of French society, people both able to and interested in understanding and interpreting the Bible itself, though perhaps not at the level of high theologians. In recognizing the religious desires of this group, Louis XIV and the administrators of this book program allowed for a spiritual interiority more reflective of the Protestant tradition and the new ideas of the Enlightenment than the traditional form of Catholic education.

The fourth popular title, Thomas à Kempis’ *Imitation of Christ*, was a leading devotional work for both Protestants and Catholics. Its place on this list cements the transconfessional approach of the book program while simultaneously speaking to the ideal of Catholic life it promoted. It was a central piece of Jesuit piety and definitive in the Ignatian spirituality they preached, the style of spirituality that dominated the Catholic Reformation and seventeenth-century France. Yet, in its emphasis on interior development and devotion through rejection of the world, it became an equally important part of Protestant spirituality, seeing dozens of reprints in Protestant countries throughout

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the early modern period. As one introduction stated, “there is no work, after the Holy Scriptures, that is so precious and so revered by pious souls,” as this book is “for those that would like to teach themselves the holy rules, that this book gives to each reader, to advance themselves in piety and in spiritual life.” Its inclusion here, in French translation, suggests again the importance of redefining works of Protestant spirituality with a Catholic interpretation for the new converts. It also emphasizes, however, the ideals of Catholic life that were central to many of the works produced under this program; alongside titles such as François de Sales’ *Introduction à la vie devote*, Coquelin’s *Devoirs de la vie Chrétienne*, and new prayer books, these new editions of the *Imitation* were a way for converts to subtly redefine their own spiritual life so that it could align with the religiosity promoted by the French state.

While in tune with the traditions of the Catholic Reformation, much of the literature produced was also deeply reflective of France in the 1680s and responsive to the French Protestant tradition. Several thousand copies of works such as Jacques le Fevre’s *Instructions pour confirmer les Nouveaux Convertis dans la Foy de l’Eglise* and de Brueys’ *Réponse aux plaintes des Protestants* circulated amidst the catechisms and explanations of faith, responding directly to Protestant claims and the problems of new

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729 Maximilian von Habsburg emphasizes the role translators played in making a Catholic work palatable for Protestant audiences, but also demonstrates its innate appeal to both audiences. In his calculations, between 1550 and 1650, 66 editions of the *Imitation* appeared in French alone, and were part of a European-wide phenomenon. M. von Habsburg, *Catholic and Protestant Translations of the Imitatio Christi, 1425-1650: From Late-Medieval Classic to Early Modern Bestseller* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011).


731 The duplicity of this effort, replacing the Catholic emphasis in a text that was originally Catholic, speaks to the importance of the text in both reformations.

732 These titles were produced in lower numbers than *The Imitation of Christ*, with only 41,991 copies of de Sales, 5,460 of Coquelin, and 64,809 prayer books. BNF MF 7054, fols. 172-7.
converts. The introduction to de Brueys’ *Défense du Culte Exterieur de l'Eglise Catholique*, a response by a converted Protestant to the Protestant understanding of the Catholic Church, claimed “that which was destined for their conversion will be even more usefully employed to instruct them now that they are converts.” Additionally, all of the works produced were primarily in French, with Latin only appearing briefly in some of the books. The copies of the psalms gave both the Latin and the literal French translation alongside the author’s interpretation, the New Testaments and copies of St. Augustine’s *Confessions* were all entirely translated, and the manual for following Mass even translated the entire Catholic service.

In the introduction to *La maniere de bien entendre la Messe de la paroisse*, Archbishop de Harlay emphasized the importance of the Mass for the newly converted Protestants. He wrote, “nothing is more useful to new converts than bringing them to the altars from which heresy has distanced them,” and claimed that understanding their participation in the service will set them apart from others, if they read and meditate on the book “with detachment and with fervor.” He was responding to the realities of conversion in the capital, in which many “new converts” converted in name only, while emphasizing a traditional means of Catholic conversion, participation in the Eucharist. Additionally, his concept of “with detachment and with fervor” exemplifies this duality, as it describes a type of religious thought that was simultaneously permeated with the Protestant tradition and its distaste for the Catholic Mass and desirous of a new religious

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733 10,383 copies of le Fvre’s *Instructions* and 8,156 copies of de Brueys’ *Réponse* were printed under this program. Ibid.
734 B. d. Montpellier, *Défense du culte exterieur de l'Eglise Catholique, où l'on montre aussi les defauts qui se trouven dans le Service public de la Région Prétendue Reformée* (Paris: Mabre-Cramoisy, 1686). 5,636 copies of this book were printed under this program.
735 F. de Harlay, *La Maniere de bien entendre la Messe de Paroisse* (Paris: Muguet, 1686).
experience in the Mass. Harlay was attempting to speak directly to the situation of these converts, addressing their particular experience within a framework derived from centuries of Catholic tradition.

It was this approach, this understanding and tolerance found in a program of forced conversion, that set this program apart. The literature came primarily out of the tradition of the Catholic Reformation, yet was informed directly by the experience of French Protestants and their religious traditions. By choosing books that both spoke to their past religious experiences and encouraged them to reform themselves in the Catholic model, Louis XIV, de Harlay, Père la Chaize, and all the administrators were creating and enforcing an ideal of religiosity that was simultaneously individualized and deeply situated in its social context. Remaining Protestant was no longer a legitimate choice in 1686 France, yet, with this program, the high administrators of a largely repressive Revocation worked in a fashion that encouraged personal religiosity—so long as it conformed with the state’s model. This dichotomy was epitomized in this program; its simultaneous tolerance for self-fashioned religion and determination to fashion that religion itself was emblematic of the reeducational efforts of the French state after the Revocation.

Although Louis XIV devoted vast amounts of time and money to the execution of this unique program, it was shut down in early 1687. Sieur Clement, the bureaucrat designated to administer the program, had clearly mismanaged the entire operation, and La Reynie was called in for a type of audit, an attempt to assure the king of what had been accomplished and regulate the financial strain. Clement appears to have been truly uninterested in the details of administration, and was not invested in the success of Louis
XIV’s grand idea. He wrote, in his summation of the program, that he “had not believed it necessary to keep a register of the receipt of books,” and had instead waited upon the printshops to send them out and “at the same time, send a bill for the quality of the binding and the edition.” And when questioned by La Reynie about apparent deletions in the expense register, he claimed “he didn’t know anything, that this was not the role of the administrator, that the secretaries who had done the recording could have done it.”

He concluded no written contracts with the booksellers, even as he claimed to have regulated the price with them, and delegated all record keeping of the distribution of the books, as well as the distribution itself. As an administrator of a royal program, this lack of accountability could not be tolerated in the bureaucratic system of the 1680s; his failure to regulate the spending and administration of the program was the main cause of its termination.

La Reynie’s audit of the production and distribution at the heart of this program began in early 1687 and lasted nearly a year. He was asked to examine Clement’s reports after Clement submitted a request for an additional 600,000 livres in expenses in early 1687, and the king simultaneously received requests for payment from various printers in Paris. Confounded by this state of affairs, Seignelay wrote to La Reynie of the king’s request to know everything about the value and distribution of these books, based on reports from the printers and from Clement himself. La Reynie’s examination found many inconsistencies in the few reports that Clement had given the king: forty-five thousand books had disappeared between June and July 1686, details requested on the quality of the books had never materialized, and the reports that had been provided had

736 BNF MF 7054, fol. 8.
737 BNF MF 7054, fol. 51.
been extensively edited in order to attempt to prove the requested expenses. The exacting
detail in which La Reynie reported on this to Seignelay reveals the depth of involvement
La Reynie had in the administrative processes, and the level to which Seignelay trusted
his judgment over other members of his network. He attempted as well to total up the
expenses himself, from Clement’s reports and the new reports he had requested from the
printshops, but was unable to come to a decisive number. He suggested to Seignelay
that although “he cannot say that there were no errors in the calculations [of the print
shops] since they were produced in such a hurry,” they should “pay each print shop ten
percent profit and interest on the advance that they granted also at ten percent,” relying
entirely on the print shop’s accounts. This resolution demonstrates the lack of faith La
Reynie had in Clement after the audit, believing him to have defrauded the king, and the
greater trust La Reynie had in his own accounting and his relationships with the
printshops of Paris. Above all, La Reynie’s delegation as the executor of this audit
places him at the top of administration of the Revocation in Paris, the most trusted of
Seignelay’s assistants in this regard.

While this particular program had bureaucratic struggles, it remains an important
aspect of Louis XIV’s approach to reeducation and the role of his bureaucracy within that
effort. It stands slightly apart from the institutional approaches seen in the Nouvelles
Catholiques and Jesuit collège, yet its fundamental ideal—the importance of reeducation

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738 BNF MF 7054, fols. 32, 60-64.
739 BNF MF 7054, fol. 92.
740 BNF MF 7054, fol. 178.
741 La Reynie’s role as chief of police placed him in charge of the regulation of the Parisian book
trade, in particular, the confiscation of illegal books and libels. He therefore had longstanding
relationships with the various printshops when this program began, and the letters from Frédéric
Léonard and François Muguet reporting on their expenses and losses clearly take a familiar tone.
in conversion efforts—united traditional piety with new forms of religious devotion in a program devoted to education. Louis XIV’s personal insertion into this program, and the involvement of his highest bureaucrats, reminds us of the importance of these figures in all aspects of the Revocation, and the centrality of these types of programs to the overall ideal of the Revocation. In correlating religious conversion and devotion with mass distributions of religious literature, Louis XIV blended the ideals of the Catholic Reformation with new ideas on literacy and education that arose from the late seventeenth century. This combination, even with its failures, speaks to the unique mindset found in 1680s France.

The institutions and programs included in the reeducation efforts following the Revocation approached the question of education in distinct ways, yet all shared a focus on the development of new French Catholics. The community of the Nouvelles Catholiques and other convents formed in the wake of the Catholic Reformation made evident the centrality of conversion and Catholic devotion within educational approaches and ideals. Their place within the reeducation efforts of the Revocation, and the support granted to them by Louis XIV, underscore the connection between the new forms of spirituality, particularly for women, that arose from the Catholic Reformation. The Jesuit Collège Louis-le-Grand, as another bastion of support for Louis’ reeducation efforts, continued this alignment while emphasizing the importance of political allegiance and favor within these programs. With its attempt at distributing books to new converts, the monarchy took even greater control of the educational efforts following the Revocation;

its short duration reflected the bureaucratic struggles of integrating conversion and education into the French state, yet its existence underscores the radical nature of the reeducation effort. The reality of these programs and the struggles they faced tested the theories of social education that arose in the 1680s, forcing the king to work within the religious and bureaucratic systems that dominated the period, for better or for worse. As with so many parts of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the reeducation efforts seen here reflect the interactions between the church, state, and French society in an important period, where social education and religious control were deeply connected to Louis XIV’s ideal of a truly Catholic France.
Conclusion

In 1698, thirteen years after the publication of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Louis XIV issued another edict clarifying the place and responsibilities of the new Catholics who now formed a part of his realm. In it, Louis reemphasized his commitment to the education of all new Catholics, particularly children, but shifted the burden of enforcement and accountability more directly to the bishops and archbishops of France. He acknowledged the decreased interest of his government in enforcing Protestant conversions and Catholic behaviors in the wake of the wars of the League of Augsburg, but vowed “new care in this time of Peace… to employ more efficient means to bring [our subjects] together fully and truly in the care of the Catholic Church.”742 His deep interest in the reeducation of newly converted Protestants, and his belief in the power of education to convince these new Catholics of the truth of the Catholic Church, remained as fervent as it was at the time of the Revocation. Yet, the bureaucratic system that he relied on so heavily in the 1680s was noticeably absent from this edict, its place being taken by the administrators of the Church. This dissociation of the government from its own plans for conversion underlines the definitive shift that took place in the 1690s; whereas in 1685 conversion was the state’s problem, it was now in the care of the Church.

As the eighteenth century progressed, religious struggles in France continued to command the attention of both the Catholic Church and the monarchy. Even in Paris, the

focus of so many of Louis XIV’s reeducation efforts, Protestantism remained a viable alternative. David Garrioch’s studies of the Protestant community in the eighteenth century emphasize the crown’s new interest in simply restricting public displays of religious difference, leaving aside attempts to discover covert practices or beliefs. The resurgence of the Jansenist debate and a growing anti-Catholic discourse began a long process that historians such as Dale Van Kley have characterized as a desacralization of the French monarchy. New religious sensibilities called into question not only the divisive royal actions of the previous century, but also the sacral nature of royal authority that had provided the foundation for Louis XIV’s vision. Where Louis XIV had seen an opportunity to reform society into its ideal, Catholic, nature, the kings of the eighteenth century contended with an increasingly divided kingdom, where religious toleration was more and more prevalent.

The international ramifications of the Revocation also challenged France in the eighteenth century, as Enlightenment debates on toleration increasingly supported the Huguenot community in exile over the French monarchy. Beginning immediately following the Revocation, Huguenot exiles in the Dutch Republic and England created an intellectual campaign to discredit the Revocation’s intolerance. The further work of

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French Enlightenment leaders like Voltaire and Montesquieu to support the French Calvinists brought greater attention to the plight of religious toleration in France, and called for an end to the religious policies of Louis XIV. With the final Edict of Toleration in 1787, on the eve of the French Revolution, Louis XVI addressed the legacy of the Revocation and attempted to stem the tide of desacralization and anti-monarchical sentiment held in these policies, with little evident success. For as much as Louis XIV attempted to include new ideas about education and social reform in his implementation of the Revocation, by the middle of the eighteenth century, these ideals were seen as hopelessly mired in the debates of the Reformation.

Two of the possibilities for the children of the Revocation in the eighteenth century are visible in the adulthoods of Henri-Jacques Caumont de la Force and Rachel Amonnet. Henri-Jacques Caumont was placed in the Jesuit Collège Louis-le-Grand in February 1686, and converted in March of that year. He grew up in the Catholic educational system, and assumed the dukedom of La Force upon his father’s death in 1699. In the early eighteenth century he wrote regularly to Pontchartrain, the lead minister of France from 1698, with details of his plans to educate and fully convert the Protestants of his land, complete with Jesuit missions and forced attendance at services and sermons. He rose in the French administration, becoming part of the regency council upon the death of Louis XIV, and remained a fervent Catholic until his death. Rachel Amonnet was the same age as Henri-Jacques in 1686, and was also placed, by the state, in religious education. Her time in the convent of the Nouvelles Catholiques as a young

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girl influenced her decision to join a convent herself, and she petitioned La Reynie in 1687 for the right to leave her family and join the community of La Charité. Yet, in the early eighteenth century she appeared on the list of marriages in the French Reformed Church in Amsterdam, having fled France sometime in the 1690s and was buried there in 1715. Henri-Jacques’ and Rachel’s paths diverged, and the differences in social and economic status that had long divided them grew large; but the experience of reeducation after the Revocation defined both of their lives. The political loyalty Louis XIV had created in Henri-Jacques Caumont lasted well into the eighteenth century, and the pressure he had put on Rachel Amonnet eventually forced her from France permanently.

Louis XIV’s grand plan to reform French society in the wake of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was revolutionary, even if fundamentally problematic. He relied upon his understanding of the nature of a “most Christian king” to create an edict, a bureaucracy, and a state where total Christian unity appeared possible. In the execution of this edict, he united the various factions within the French state to carry out his demands, relying heavily on the growing state bureaucracy. Particularly in the city of Paris, this new bureaucratic structure allowed Louis XIV to remain relatively involved in the details of the implementation of these edicts, while entrusting the daily operations to individuals aligned with his own ideals. The reeducation efforts directed at all members of French Protestant society, particularly the children, were deeply influenced by the debates about education that flourished in the late seventeenth century and inspired even Louis XIV himself. In combining religious conversion and education in an effort to form Protestants into French Catholics, Louis XIV built upon an absolutist vision of education and

747 AN 353 AP 23.
748 BNF MF 7053.
connected his efforts at social reform to a flourishing debate. The Protestant families of Paris were affected by these reeducation efforts in diverse ways, yet all experienced the unity of purpose Louis XIV brought to this effort. In forcing reeducation alongside his Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Louis XIV revealed his deep interest in the questions of social religion and education. Far from an outlier, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes must be understood as an integral part of Louis XIV’s kingship and his self-representation as a “most Christian king.”

If Louis XIV’s attempts to create social and religious uniformity in France were not altogether successful, they do reveal the contradictions inherent in the idea of forced conversion through education and an absolutist vision of education. At a moment when French culture was on a precipice, and new ideas on royal authority and religious toleration were emerging, this vision of social reform signaled a final moment in this iteration of French society. Ironically, the rising interest in education in the late seventeenth century that spurred Louis XIV’s grand reforms may have also laid the foundation for the new understanding of the relationship between education and the individual that would transform notions of human understanding in the coming Enlightenment. In ways that Louis XIV never intended or imagined, one can see Voltaire and his skepticism, and Rousseau with his inner searching, as the rightful children of the Revocation.
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