



The Huguenots of Paris
and the Coming of
Religious Freedom,
1685–1789

DAVID GARRIOCH

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How did the Huguenots of Paris survive, and even prosper, in the eighteenth century when the majority Catholic population was notorious for its hostility to Protestantism? Why, by the end of the Old Regime, did public opinion overwhelmingly favour giving Huguenots greater rights? This study of the growth of religious toleration in Paris traces the specific history of the Huguenots after Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685. David Garrioch identifies the roots of this transformation of attitudes towards the minority Huguenot population in their own methods of resistance to persecution and pragmatic government responses to it, as well as in the particular environment of Paris. Above all, this book identifies the extraordinary shift in Catholic religious culture that took place over the century as a significant cause of change, set against the backdrop of cultural and intellectual transformation that we call the Enlightenment.

DAVID GARRIOCH is Professor of History at Monash University. He has written widely on the social history of Paris in the eighteenth century, including *The Making of Revolutionary Paris* (2002), which won the NSW Premier's Prize for History in 2003.

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Monash University



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Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>List of maps</i>	viii
<i>List of tables</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	x
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xii
Introduction	1
Note on terminology	23
1 The campaign against the Protestants	24
Official policy before 1685	24
The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes	29
The impact of the persecution	37
2 Paris: ‘ville de tolérance’	45
The Revocation and its aftermath: selective enforcement	46
Official motives	50
Towards de facto toleration	54
Towards official acceptance	65
The price of ‘tolérance’	70
3 Who were the Huguenots of Paris?	75
Place of birth	85
Occupation	90
Distribution within Paris	96
4 Keeping the faith: family and religious culture	106
Theology and practice	107
Household and family culture	113
Closed households	121
5 Networks: the Protestants in the city	126
Family and occupational clusters	130
Provincial and international networks	134
The integration of networks	140
The role of the foreign chapels	144

6	Catholics and Protestants: hostility, indifference and coexistence	155
	The seventeenth-century background	156
	The eighteenth century	169
	The Catholic clergy	181
7	Growing acceptance	187
	Catholic collective memory: the Huguenots as innocent victims	202
	1789 and the Revolution	211
8	Changing beliefs and religious cultures	217
	Catholic reform and Jansenism	218
	Enlightened Catholicism	227
	A common enemy	236
9	A non-confessional public domain	242
	A Catholic public domain	243
	Secularisation	247
	Public identities	254
10	Conclusion: the coming of religious freedom	262
	<i>Select bibliography</i>	275
	<i>Index</i>	289

Figures

2.1 Admissions to the women's New Catholic convent in Paris, 1685–1702	<i>page</i> 48
2.2 Entries of Paris Protestants to the female New Catholic convent, 1704–89	56
6.1 Requirement of Catholic religion in the statutes of the Paris guilds, 1600–1770	158

Maps

3.1 Protestant households by parish, 1700–29	<i>page</i> 99
3.2 Protestant households by parish, 1760–89	100
3.3 Streets and squares with five or more Protestant households, 1700–39	101
3.4 Streets and squares with five or more Protestant households, 1760–89	102

Tables

3.1	Places of birth of Huguenots in eighteenth-century Paris	<i>page</i> 86
3.2	Occupations of Paris Huguenots, 1700–89	92
3.3	Female Huguenot occupations, 1700–89	95
3.4	Distribution of Huguenot households by parish	97

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Abbreviations

AN	Archives nationales
ArchP	Archives de Paris (formerly Archives départementales de la Seine)
Arsenal	Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal
BHVP	Bibliothèque historique de la Ville de Paris
BN MS fr.	Bibliothèque nationale, collection des manuscrits français
BNF	Bibliothèque nationale de France
<i>BSHPF</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français</i>
JF	Collection Joly de Fleury, Bibliothèque nationale de France
MC	Minutier central des notaires, Archives nationales, Paris
SHPF	Bibliothèque de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français

Introduction

On 7 June 1789, one month after the opening of the Estates General at Versailles, the first service of the new French Reformed Church in Paris was held in temporary premises, in the back room of a wine-seller's house in the rue Mondétour, just near the central market. The congregation was small, since Protestant religious services were still illegal: only in August 1789 would the new National Assembly proclaim freedom of religion in France. Nevertheless, the Reformed services continued, and at the end of June the new church opened a baptismal register. Almost a year later, in May 1791, it moved into more spacious premises in the former Catholic church of Saint-Louis-du-Louvre, in the heart of Paris.¹ Ever since early 1788, when limited civil rights had finally been granted to the 'Huguenots' – a derogatory name given to the French Protestant minority by their Catholic enemies, which they later defiantly adopted for themselves² – Paris Protestants had been campaigning to have their own church in the city. Their leaders were of mixed background and origins. Most were French-born, though one was from Berlin and another probably Swiss. A number came from the provinces, but quite a few bore names that had been common among Huguenots in Paris in the seventeenth century: Dargent, Doucet, Guillerault, Lemaistre, Ourry, Raimbault. All were educated, though not all were wealthy.³

¹ Armand Lods, *L'Église réformée de Paris pendant la Révolution (1789–1802)* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1889), p. 15. 'Premier Exercice public du culte réformé à Paris en 1791', *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français* [henceforth *BSHPF*], 36 (1886), 512.

² The so-called 'Edict of Toleration' of 1787 was not registered by the Parlement of Paris until early 1788. For possible origins of the term 'Huguenot' see Didier Boisson and Hugues Daussy, *Les Protestants dans la France moderne* (Paris: Belin, 2006), pp. 5–6.

³ For the members of the first consistory see Francis Garrison, 'Genèse de l'Église réformée de Paris (1788–1791)', *BSHPF*, 137 (1991), 25–61 (60–1). Several were also members of the consistory in 1803 and their background is given by Michel Richard, 'Notices sur les membres laïques du consistoire de l'Église réformée de Paris de 1803 à 1848', *BSHPF*, 125 (1979), 449–90.

The inauguration of the new Protestant church was the culmination of two intersecting stories. One was that of a persecuted religious minority who despite the combined efforts of the Catholic Church and the French state had for more than a century maintained the traditions of ‘the Christians who follow the reform of Calvin’, as a plaque on the door of the new church put it.⁴ The second story was that of the amazing change in religious attitudes in Paris, a city long renowned for its hostility to the Huguenots. Between the late seventeenth and the late eighteenth century, much of the Catholic population had come to accept the presence of Protestants, and many now saw toleration of this religious minority not as an unfortunate necessity but as something positive. This book traces these two stories, asking first how the Paris Huguenots survived, and in many cases prospered, in such a hostile environment; and second, how and why the change in the sentiments of the Catholic population came about. Neither story can be told independently of the other.

The Huguenots were followers of the Reformed Church, like most of the Swiss and Dutch Protestants, observing a broadly Calvinist faith. This derived, as its name suggests, from the theology of John Calvin, the sixteenth-century Geneva-based reformer, but it was modified across the seventeenth century by his successors and by Swiss, Dutch and French Reformed pastors.⁵ It differed both from Lutheranism and from Catholicism in emphasising predestination, the idea that salvation depended solely on God, who planned all things in advance, and did not rely on human actions. In practical terms, perhaps the greatest difference between the Reformed Churches and the Catholic Church lay in the latter’s emphasis on the cult of saints and of the Virgin, which Calvin described as at best superstitious and, at worst, sacrilegious, replacing God and Christ with a host of minor deities to whom people prayed.⁶ Calvinist churches were stripped of all the statues, pictures and symbols that filled Catholic ones, since nothing should distract from the believer’s focus on God. An undecorated communion table replaced the altar and there was no organ or other musical instruments. Nor, naturally,

⁴ ‘Premier exercice public du culte réformé’.

⁵ For excellent brief surveys see Menna Prestwich (ed.), *International Calvinism, 1541–1715* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp. 1–14; Dale K. Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution: From Calvin to the Civil Constitution, 1560–1791* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), pp. 22–4; and especially Philip Benedict, *Christ’s Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 77–114.

⁶ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols. (London: SCM Press, 1960), 2: 878–81.

did Calvinists wear or honour crucifixes or observe the feast days of the saints that proliferated in the Catholic calendar.⁷

The Reformed Churches also differed fundamentally from Catholicism over the nature of the sacraments. Whereas Catholic theology insisted that the wine of the Eucharist was physically transformed into the blood of Christ and the bread into his body, Calvinists saw this as a form of idolatry, turning mere objects into magical substances. To them the sacraments were, as Calvin put it, ‘tokens’ of God’s promises, although he did see the Eucharist as having spiritual power. Nevertheless, Reformed theologians did not accept the Catholic belief that the acts of baptism, marriage, confession, taking communion and the last rites actually made a difference to the fate of the soul.⁸ This in turn had a direct impact on religious customs. The Reformed Churches tended to delay baptism, seeing it merely as a promise that the child would be raised within their community, whereas Catholics feared that the soul of an unbaptised child might go to hell. Calvinists also, in order to prevent any veneration of the dead, in theory held no funeral services, not even prayers by the grave, and there was no thought that cemeteries were sacred ground. After people died their soul left their body and was in God’s hands. For Catholics, on the other hand, the prayers of the living might still be effective, and funerals and masses to assist them to reach heaven were central religious practices.⁹

The Reformed Churches held communion only four times a year, at Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and the beginning of autumn, whereas in the Catholic Church masses were available every day. In between communion days, religious services in Calvinist churches consisted mainly of Bible readings, sermons and the singing of psalms, designed to reaffirm the faith of the congregation and to educate them. There were

⁷ Michel-Edmond Richard, *La Vie des protestants français de l’Édit de Nantes à la Révolution (1598–1789)* (Éditions de Paris, 1994), pp. 31–4.

⁸ Calvin, *Institutes*, 2: 1281. Marguerite Soulié, ‘Signes et sacrements dans la théologie de Jean Calvin’, in *Les Signes de Dieu aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles*, ed. Geneviève Demerson and Bernard Dompnier (Clermont-Ferrand: Publications de la Faculté des Lettres, 1993), pp. 27–36. Benedict, *Christ’s Churches Purely Reformed*, p. 86.

⁹ On baptism, Philip Benedict, ‘The Huguenot Population of France, 1600–1685: The Demographic Fate and Customs of a Religious Minority’, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, 81, no. 5 (1991), i–ix, 1–164 (22–7). On funerals, Keith Luria, *Sacred Boundaries. Religious Coexistence and Conflict in Early-Modern France* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2005), pp. 118–19, and Bernard Roussel, ‘“Ensevelir honnestement les corps”: Funeral Corteges and Huguenot Culture’, in *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World*, ed. Raymond A. Mentzer and Andrew Spicer (Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 193–208. See also Natalie Zemon Davis, ‘Ghosts, Kin and Progeny: Some Features of Family Life in Early Modern France’, *Daedalus*, 106 (1977), 87–114.

no processions, and nor was pilgrimage deemed to have any particular value.¹⁰

The French Reformed concept of the Church was also very different from the Catholic one. Drawing on the model of the early Christian churches, it saw each congregation as a community equal to the others. Each one was governed by a consistory, comprising one or more pastors and twenty or so male elders elected by the congregation in a secret ballot. The consistory looked after the finances of the church, organised poor relief and oversaw the morals of the population, with the power to summon people to repent publicly or even to suspend them from communion for serious sins. The pastor was considered an expert in spiritual matters and a leader, but in his absence an elder could preside at religious services. Doctrinal matters were determined at synods attended by senior members, both laymen and pastors, from the different churches.¹¹ There were no bishops and no centralised, hierarchical structure.

In the 1660s, there were probably around 800,000 Huguenots in France as a whole, mainly concentrated in rural areas in the south, although their number was declining, partly because of accelerating official discrimination. In 1680, some 8,000–10,000 Huguenots lived in Paris, representing around 2 per cent of the city's population.¹² They had long suffered from the hostility of the Catholic population. From the early days of the Reformation there had been riots and lynchings by Catholic mobs, although the violence was not solely on the Catholic side. Later there were executions and state violence. In 1572, Paris witnessed one of the most notorious examples of extreme religious violence in sixteenth-century Europe, the St Bartholomew's Day massacre of several thousand Huguenots. Subsequently, in the late 1580s and early 1590s, the city's reputation as a Catholic stronghold was consolidated by the

¹⁰ This and what follows draws on Richard, *La Vie des protestants français*, pp. 21–39. On the importance of psalms for French Protestants, Barbara B. Diefendorf, 'The Huguenot Psalter and the Faith of French Protestants in the Sixteenth Century', in *Culture and Identity in Early Modern Europe (1500–1800). Essays in Honour of Natalie Zemon Davis*, ed. Barbara Diefendorf and Carla Hesse (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), pp. 41–63.

¹¹ On the consistories and synods see Élisabeth Labrousse, 'France 1598–1685', in *International Calvinism, 1541–1715*, ed. Menna Prestwich (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp. 287–91, and Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed*, pp. 135–6, 460–89. For the working of an early eighteenth-century French consistory see Hubert Bost (ed.), *Le Consistoire de l'église wallonne de Rotterdam, 1681–1706* (Paris: Champion, 2008).

¹² For an excellent overview see Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution*, pp. 22–5. Benedict, 'The Huguenot Population of France'. For the Paris population, Orentin Douen, *La Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes à Paris*, 3 vols. (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1894), 1: 161–2. The figure of 10,000 is accepted by Georges Dethan, *Paris au temps de Louis XIV: 1660–1715* (Paris: Hachette, 1990), p. 179.

activities of the League, which campaigned against Henri of Navarre, heir to the French throne, because he was a Protestant.¹³ Despite armed resistance from Paris, Henri eventually did become king, thanks in part to his conversion to Catholicism. He was able to bring a precarious religious peace with the Edict of Nantes of 1598, which accorded a measure of religious freedom to France's Protestants.

Nevertheless, Henri's successors remained highly suspicious of the Huguenots, whose history of conflict with Catholics and of occasional revolt against the Crown, together with their rejection of the established Church in France, made them suspect to a monarchy that depended heavily on a hierarchical Church and on an ideology of sacral absolutism. Their enemies accused them of republicanism, a charge facilitated by the relatively democratic structure of their churches, since they elected their pastors and were governed by lay elders who were also elected by the congregation. Louis XIV was strongly hostile to the Huguenots, and after 1661, when he was old enough to assume personal control of the government, he multiplied measures against them. By the 1680s a swathe of kingdom-wide discriminatory legislation had greatly limited their rights and there were widespread forced conversions, including the first *dragonnades*: the stationing of soldiers in Protestant communities and houses with instructions to achieve conversions by any means. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, which put an end to the reluctant toleration of the Reformed churches, was part of a long process.¹⁴

After 1685 the persecution accelerated, with mass forced conversions, confiscations of property and denials of civil rights. Many Huguenots fled to Switzerland, Holland, England and various German states. The anti-Protestant laws continued to be enforced after Louis XIV's death in 1715, although increasingly sporadically and unevenly across the country. Only after the mid 1760s did the persecution come to an end in most of the kingdom, although not until 1787 was the existence of French Protestants recognised in law, and that still did not include the freedom to practise their religion in public.¹⁵

¹³ Arlette Jouanna, *La Saint-Barthélemy: les mystères d'un crime d'État, 24 août 1572*, Paris: Gallimard, 2007. Barbara B. Diefendorf, *The St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 2009). Robert Descimon, *Qui étaient les Seize? Mythes et réalités de la Ligue parisienne (1585–1594)*. Mémoires de la Fédération des sociétés historiques et archéologiques de Paris et de l'Île-de-France 34 (Paris: Fédération des sociétés historiques et archéologiques, 1983).

¹⁴ For this and what follows, see particularly Janine Garrisson, *L'Édit de Nantes et sa révocation: histoire d'une intolérance* (Paris: Seuil, 1985), and Élisabeth Labrousse, *La Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes. Une foi, une loi, un roi?* (Paris: Payot, 1990). Further references are given in [Chapter 1](#).

¹⁵ For overviews of eighteenth-century French Protestantism see Geoffrey Adams, *The Huguenots and French Opinion, 1685–1787. The Enlightenment Debate on Toleration*

Paris, right under the eye of the monarch, was perhaps the last place where one would expect to find a continuing Protestant presence in the eighteenth century. Louis XIV was insistent that his capital, of all the cities in the kingdom, must become entirely Catholic, and the Revocation was followed by measures to force the Protestant inhabitants of the city to convert. Yet many Huguenots did remain in the city, and their numbers grew significantly across the eighteenth century. As a result of their illegal status we have quite a lot of information about them. For thirty years after 1685 the police watched them closely, and there were denunciations and arrests. Police spies monitored the chapels of the Protestant ambassadors, officially open only to foreigners but in practice frequented by French Protestants as well. We have scattered reports on those attending the Dutch chapel as late as 1766. Incomplete records survive from the Anglican, Swedish and Dutch chapels, and some of these concern Huguenots resident in Paris. There were also many Protestants who refused the Catholic last rites when they died, which meant they could not be buried in the parish cemeteries. Several hundred official permissions for burial in non-consecrated ground, sought by next-of-kin or friends, lie scattered through the voluminous archives of the local police officials. In addition to those born in Paris, migrants from the Low Countries, from Switzerland and from Germany included many members of the Reformed churches, some of them children of refugees who now returned. Huguenots also came from other parts of France. All these groups intermarried, to varying degrees, with the local Protestants, and their children quickly became little Parisians. Once we know who they were, of course, it is possible to trace some of them in the notarial and other archives.

The Paris Huguenots were present throughout the eighteenth century, therefore, but aside from a handful of specialist articles we know little

(Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1991); Boisson and Daussy, *Les Protestants*; Jacques Dedieu, *Histoire politique des protestants français (1715–1794)*, 2 vols. (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1925); Philippe Joutard, 'Pour les protestants, gérer la longue durée de la clandestinité', in *Du roi Très Chrétien à la laïcité républicaine (XVIIIe–XIXe siècle)*, ed. Philippe Joutard (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1991), pp. 50–61; vol. III of *Histoire de la France religieuse*, 4 vols., ed. Jacques Le Goff and René Rémond (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1988–1992); Robert Mandrou *et al.*, *Histoire des protestants en France. De la Réforme à la Révolution*, 2nd edn (Paris: Privat, 2001. First edition 1977); John McManners, *Church and Society in Eighteenth Century France*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 2: 565–657; Jeffrey Merrick, *The Desacralization of the French Monarchy in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), pp. 135–59; John Pappas, 'La Répression contre les protestants dans la seconde moitié du siècle, d'après les registres de l'Ancien Régime', *Dix-huitième siècle*, 17 (1985), 111–28; Richard, *La Vie des protestants français*; Brien E. Strayer, *Huguenots and Camisards as Aliens in France, 1598–1789. The Struggle for Religious Toleration* (Lewiston, NY, Queenston, ON and Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001).

about them.¹⁶ From general histories of French Protestantism, one has the impression that they disappeared almost entirely. This is indeed the message conveyed by the erudite and comprehensive late nineteenth-century study of the Revocation in Paris by Orentin Douen, who concludes that all but a handful either departed or converted.¹⁷ The same impression emerges from Herbert Lüthy's magisterial study of French Protestant banking, which acknowledges the continuing presence of a few old Huguenot families, but stresses the arrival of new ones, particularly from Geneva.¹⁸ Only in the second half of the eighteenth century do Paris-based Protestants reappear on the main historiographical stage. At that point a small number of writers, bankers and merchants, mostly new immigrants or descendants of French refugees, become a major part of French history. There is Antoine Court de Gébelin, author of one of the classics of the French Enlightenment, a nine-volume history of languages entitled *Le Monde primitif* (1773–82), and the chevalier de Jaucourt, who wrote many articles for the *Encyclopédie*. Among the Swiss who lived in the city were of course Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who was there from 1742 to 1756, the doctors André Tissot and Théodore Tronchin, and Jacques Necker, the banker who became French Finance Minister and who played a vital role in the lead-up to the Revolution.¹⁹

¹⁶ There is quite a body of work on Protestants in seventeenth-century Paris, including many unpublished *mémoires* directed by Jean-Pierre Poussou and Michelle Magdelaine. For the eighteenth century, the main studies are Garrisson, 'Genèse de l'Église réformée'; Francis Garrisson, 'Le Mariage à la campagne: une échappatoire pour les familles protestantes au XVIIIe siècle', *BSHPPF*, 155 (2009), 469–99; Francis Garrisson, 'Les Infirmeries protestantes de Paris au XVIIIe siècle', *BSHPPF*, 145 (1999), 31–87; Jacques Grès-Gayer, 'Le Culte de l'ambassade de Grande-Bretagne à Paris au début de la Régence (1715–1720)', *BSHPPF*, 130 (1984), 29–46. Gwenaëlle Léonus-Lieppe, 'La Chapelle de l'Ambassade de Hollande à Paris au XVIIIe siècle: instrument du maintien du culte réformé à l'époque du Désert', in *Les passions d'un historien. Mélanges en l'honneur de Jean-Pierre Poussou*, ed. Reynald Abad, Jean-Pierre Bardet, Jean-François Bunyach and François-Joseph Ruggiu (Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2010), pp. 1585–615; Gwenaëlle Léonus-Lieppe, 'La Chapelle de l'ambassade de Hollande à Paris au XVIIIe siècle. Vecteur de soutien aux protestants de France', in *Entre Calvinistes et Catholiques. Les relations religieuses entre la France et les Pays-Bas du Nord (XVIe–XVIIIe siècle)*, ed. Yves Krumenacker, with Olivier Christin (Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010), pp. 367–88; and Gwenaëlle Léonus-Lieppe, 'Justice déléguée, justice retenue: les modalités de l'application de la Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes à Paris', in *Justice et protestantisme*, ed. Didier Boisson and Yves Krumenacker ([Lyons]: RESEA-LARHRA, 2011), pp. 81–95. Léonus-Lieppe is currently undertaking a thesis on the Paris Protestants.

¹⁷ Douen, *La Révocation*.

¹⁸ Herbert Lüthy, *La Banque protestante en France de la Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes à la Révolution*, 2 vols. (Paris: SEVPEN, 1959–61).

¹⁹ Madeleine Morris, *Le Chevalier de Jaucourt: un ami de la terre, 1704–1780* (Geneva: Droz, 1979).

The focus of research on the eighteenth-century Huguenots, understandably, has not been on Paris but on areas of France with the largest Reformed populations, as well as on those who fled to form vibrant expatriate communities all over the world and who made significant contributions to the economy and culture of the places where they found refuge.²⁰ Yet the lack of interest in the Huguenots of eighteenth-century Paris has other causes. After all, we have excellent studies of the smaller Lutheran population of eighteenth-century Paris, largely composed of people who originally came either from Alsace or from Germany or Scandinavia.²¹ The Paris Huguenots have been neglected partly because their story is not particularly dramatic, and partly because it fits less neatly into the heroic story that until recently French Protestant historians told of their persecuted ancestors. There is nothing in Paris to compare with the bloody guerrilla resistance of the Camisards in the Cévennes or the courageous defiance of Protestant gatherings in the 'Désert', in rural areas mainly in the south. Few Paris Protestants suffered the appalling conditions on the galleys in the Mediterranean, and the well-publicised injustices done to Jean Calas and Pierre-Paul Sirven took place in southern France. (Calas was accused, tortured and executed for the murder of his own son, and Sirven was similarly accused of killing his daughter. Both were defended by Voltaire.)²² In Paris, by contrast, Huguenot resistance to persecution was very muted. In the second half of the century, when the Reformed churches were being covertly reorganised in France, the 'Messieurs de Paris', as the leaders of the Protestant community there came to be called by their more radical coreligionists, opposed any action they feared might provoke a new round of persecution. As a result,

²⁰ Recent regional studies include Didier Boisson, *Les Protestants de l'ancien colloque du Berry de la Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes à la fin de l'Ancien Régime (1679–1789), ou l'Inégale Résistance des minorités religieuses* (Paris: Champion, 2000); Janine Garrisson, *Protestants du Midi* (Toulouse: Privat, 1980); Yves Krumenacker, *Des protestants au Siècle des Lumières. Le modèle lyonnais* (Paris: Champion, 2002); Yves Krumenacker, *Les Protestants du Poitou au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Champion, 1998); Jacques Marcadé, *Protestants poitevins de la Révocation à la Révolution* (La Crèche: Geste Éditions, 1998); Marc Scheidecker and Gérard Gayot, *Les Protestants de Sedan au XVIIIe siècle. Le peuple et les manufacturiers* (Paris: Champion, 2003). Also of direct relevance to this book is Didier Boisson and Christian Lippold, 'La Survie religieuse des communautés protestantes du Centre de la France et du Bassin parisien de la Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes à l'Édit de Tolérance (1685–1787)', *Histoire, économie, société*, 21 (2002), 227–54.

²¹ Janine Driancourt-Girod, *Ainsi priaient les luthériens. La vie religieuse, la pratique et la foi des luthériens de Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1992); Janine Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens de Paris. De Louis XIII à Napoléon* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1992).

²² David Bien, *The Calas Affair: Persecution, Toleration, and Heresy in Eighteenth-Century Toulouse* (Princeton University Press, 1960). Janine Garrisson, *L'Affaire Calas. Miroir des passions françaises* (Paris: Fayard, 2004). Graham Gargett, *Voltaire and Protestantism* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1980).

older Protestant histories either ignore or denigrate these ‘timorous’ and ‘bourgeois’ Paris Huguenots.²³

The continued presence of French Protestants in the capital raises a host of questions. Who were they? How numerous were they? Above all, how did they survive and even prosper in this notoriously Catholic city, despite draconian laws against them and in the face of a hostile population? How did they retain their faith and pass it on to their children? This book suggests that while the survival of the Paris Huguenots as a religious minority depended in the first instance on their own determination to resist, it was also made possible by de facto toleration on the part of the authorities. But their continued existence always also depended crucially on the attitudes of the far larger Catholic population, which had it been resolute in its hostility could have denied them work, threatened them physically or systematically denounced them to the authorities. Even before the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Paris was legally classified as a Catholic city. Protestants could live there, but not maintain a church or practise their religion publicly, so they were forced to build a new temple at Charenton, some distance outside the city. This arrangement probably reduced religious conflict in Paris, although across the seventeenth century there was sporadic Catholic violence against the Huguenots, including a number of quite serious riots. Not only were there violent attacks, but in the 1660s and 1670s many trades explicitly excluded Protestants from membership.²⁴

There seems little doubt that when the Edict of Nantes was revoked, most of the Paris population either supported or was indifferent to the persecution. Madame de Sévigné’s much-quoted reaction to the new edict reveals the attitude of many French nobles: ‘Nothing is so beautiful ... and no king has ever done anything more memorable, or ever will.’²⁵ The anti-Protestant measures were celebrated by writers, including Bernard Fontenelle, Jean Racine, Jean de La Bruyère and Madeleine de Scudéry: ‘The king is achieving great things against the Huguenots’, she wrote.²⁶ According to the historian François Bluche, the Revocation was wildly popular among the common people of Paris. Orest Ranum agrees: it ‘must have been viewed by Parisian guildsmen and judges as

²³ Margaret Maxwell, ‘The Division in the Ranks of the Protestants in Eighteenth-Century France’, *Church History*, 27 (1958), 107–23 (112–16).

²⁴ Arie Theodorus Van Deursen, *Professions et métiers interdits. Un aspect de l’histoire de la Révocation de l’Édit de Nantes* (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1960), pp. 315, 20; Douen, *La Révocation*, 1: 314–16. The seventeenth-century background is examined below, in [Chapters 1](#) and [6](#).

²⁵ Madame de Sévigné, quoted in Douen, *La Révocation*, 1:61.

²⁶ *Lettres de Mesdames de Scudéry, de Salvan, de Saliez, et de Mademoiselle Descartes* (Paris: Leopold Collin, 1806), p. 170 (28 September 1685).

the fulfillment of their desires. The Revocation at last sanctioned what they had been doing all along. Hence, in the context of Parisian society, Louis XIV's decision must be seen as a popular act.²⁷

This is hardly surprising. Toleration, in the seventeenth century, was rarely viewed as a good thing: in essence, it meant allowing what one could not change. That was the view of French Catholic and Protestant leaders alike, since each saw the other as dangerously misguided but both sides recognised their inability to eradicate such error. 'Toleration' was therefore negative, not positive, since it meant putting up with people who represented a potentially serious threat to society.²⁸ In studying this period, too, it is important to distinguish between civil toleration and full religious freedom. Civil toleration primarily means freedom of conscience, state recognition of the right to be different, to be born, live and die in one's own faith. Most of the eighteenth-century proponents of toleration endorsed this policy, but in France, and indeed in most of Europe, few were prepared to argue for full religious freedom because that was seen to be a threat to the unity of the kingdom. The so-called Edict of Toleration of 1787 was consistent with this majority view, allowing 'non-Catholics' in France a legal status and freedom of conscience, but not the right to practise their religion.²⁹

Nevertheless, in Paris the everyday situation had already changed dramatically, surprisingly early in the eighteenth century. As this study shows, by 1700 the government had all but abandoned efforts at conversion, and after 1710 the police stopped harassing the Protestants almost entirely as long as they kept a low profile. Huguenots opened businesses and interacted peacefully with Catholics as workers, clients and neighbours. As the century went on, there were fewer and fewer impediments to their participation in every aspect of urban life, and by the early 1780s Louis-Sébastien Mercier, in his best-selling *Tableau de Paris*, was able to claim that 'religious liberty is possible in the highest degree in Paris; you will never be asked about your beliefs ... the Jews, the Protestants, the

²⁷ François Bluche, *Louis XIV* (Paris: Fayard, 1986), p. 609. Quotation from Orest Ranum, *Paris in the Age of Absolutism*, 2nd edn (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), pp. 251–2.

²⁸ Barbara de Negroni, *Intolérances. Catholiques et protestants en France, 1560–1787* (Paris: Hachette, 1996). Philip Benedict, 'Un roi, une loi, deux fois: Parameters for the History of Catholic–Reformed Coexistence in France, 1555–1685', in *The Faith and Fortune of France's Huguenots, 1600–85* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), pp. 279–308 (pp. 282–90). See also the valuable discussion in Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable Hatred. Tolerance and Intolerance in England, 1500–1700* (Manchester University Press, 2006), pp. 1–5.

²⁹ Antonio Rotondò, 'Tolérance', in *Le Monde des Lumières*, ed. Vincenzo Ferrone and Daniel Roche (Paris: Fayard, 1999) pp. 71–85. On the broader debate in France, Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*; Negroni, *Intolérances*, pp. 90–4.

deists, the atheists, the Jansenists ... the *nothing-at-all-ists* live entirely as they wish'.³⁰ He was not quite correct: unlike the city's Jews, who were unofficially allowed two synagogues, Paris Protestants could not open their own place of worship, but they did by then enjoy de facto freedom of conscience and for decades they had gone unhindered to the chapel of the Dutch ambassador.

All this resulted not just from a relaxation of official repression, but was a reflection of wider attitudes. In May 1789 the wallpaper manufacturer Jean-Baptiste Réveillon, who had been accused of trying to drive down wages, issued a justification of his conduct as an employer. Not only did he pay well and reward good workers, he claimed, but he allowed Protestants to work on Catholic feast days. This was hardly a sacrifice on his part, but what is revealing is that he could boast about it in print. Two months later, on 12 July, Camille Desmoulins made his famous speech to a large and socially diverse crowd in the Palais Royal. Standing on a table, he evoked the threat of a 'St Bartholomew's Day of patriots', intimating that the enemies of the Revolution at the royal Court were planning a massacre of Parisians. The same phrase was used by Mirabeau and by many others. It had become part of patriotic discourse, drawing on a revised understanding of the events of 1572 – when some thousands of French Protestants were killed in the streets and houses of Paris – as a premeditated massacre of innocents.³¹ The assumption that Desmoulins and others made, that the audience would immediately grasp the historical reference, indicates that it had entered the cultural imagination of Parisians, and in a way that led them to identify with the Protestant victims.

When the Edict of 1787 finally granted limited civil rights to Protestants, it stimulated overt protests only from a handful of religious conservatives, although some observers claimed that most Parisians were against it. Just over a year later, however, the general *cahier* of the Paris Third Estate, drawn up to suggest what reforms the King and the newly called Estates

³⁰ Louis-Sébastien Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, nouvelle édition, 12 vols. (Amsterdam, 1782–8), 3: 90, 3 and 4: 244.

³¹ JF 1103, fols. 135–40, 'Exposé justificatif du Sieur Réveillon'. Charles-Louis Chassin, *Les Élections et les cahiers de Paris en 1789*, 4 vols. (Paris: Jouaust et Sigaux, 1888), 3: 487. For Mirabeau, *Archives parlementaires de 1787 à 1860*, first series, 24 vols. (Paris: Paul Dupont, 1875–89), 8: 236 (15 July 1789). Another example is the reflection of the comte de Clermont-Tonnerre on the lynchings by a Paris mob, in July 1789, of Foulon and Bertier: 'I feared we might all become barbarous; I thought of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre ... and I asked myself, painfully, if we were even worthy of being free.' Charles Du Bus, *Stanislas de Clermont-Tonnerre et l'échec de la Révolution monarchique, 1757–92* (Paris: Alcan, 1931), p. 123, quoted in Tackett, *Becoming a Revolutionary* (Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 169.

General might undertake, expressed the view that ‘the Christian religion commands civil toleration. Every citizen should enjoy individual freedom of conscience.’ Admittedly, the *cahier* reflected the views of middle-class males rather than the entire population, and it stopped short of requesting complete religious freedom: ‘public order permits only one dominant religion’.³² Yet there were no protests in Paris when on 26 August 1789 the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen allowed religious liberty as long as it ‘does not disturb the public order established by law’, nor when on 24 December Protestants were allowed to stand for public office or when they were finally accorded full religious freedom under the 1791 Constitution. Some concern was expressed in the city about Jews receiving civil and religious equality, but few people seemed any longer to feel threatened by the Protestants.³³

This change in Catholic opinion helps to explain how the Huguenots managed to survive, prosper and multiply in Paris, but it raises the larger question of how, when and why the thinking of the religious majority had changed so dramatically. Of course, Paris was not the only place where religious hostility declined in the eighteenth century, though it is of particular interest given the city’s political and cultural importance, and above all its key role within the European Enlightenment and the French Revolution. There is a large literature on the history of religious toleration and the growing acceptance of toleration as a positive, rather than a negative, thing. This change has often been identified with the ferment of ideas that took place from the late seventeenth to the mid eighteenth century. The key thinking took place in the context of the 1688 Revolution in England and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in France. The work of John Locke and Pierre Bayle, in particular, deeply influenced eighteenth-century thinkers on the subject. Lynn Hunt, Margaret Jacob and Wijnand Mijnhardt have recently emphasised the importance of the Dutch Republic as ‘a marketplace for religious ideas’, many of whose published products appeared in French. In France itself, the question of religious toleration was discussed by many of the major *philosophes*.³⁴ The 1750s and 1760s have traditionally been

³² *Cahier général du Tiers État de Paris* (Paris: 1789).

³³ Marcel Reinhard, *Nouvelle Histoire de Paris. La Révolution, 1789–1799* (Paris: Hachette, 1971), pp. 205–8.

³⁴ Among many other titles, Élisabeth Labrousse, ‘Notes sur la théorie de la tolérance chez Pierre Bayle’, *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 4 (1975), 205–8. Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation*, 2 vols. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966–9), 2: 398–401. Marisa Linton, ‘Citizenship and Religious Toleration in France’, in *Toleration in Enlightenment Europe*, ed. Ole Peter Grell and Roy Porter (Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 161. John Christian Laursen (ed.), *Religious Toleration. ‘The Variety of Rites’ from Cyrus to Defoe* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999). Lynn Hunt, Margaret Jacob and Wijnand Mijnhardt, *The Book that Changed Europe. Picart and Bernard’s ‘Religious*

seen as the key turning point in the history of toleration in France, albeit building on late seventeenth-century debates. The 1760s, in particular, were the time of Voltaire's extraordinary campaigns on behalf of the family of Jean Calas and of Pierre-Paul Sirven. He was largely responsible for having the convictions overturned, and since both verdicts were apparently motivated by religious intolerance he is often credited with transforming public opinion on the subject. Nevertheless, debate took place all over Europe, and laws allowing greater freedom for religious minorities were introduced in many places – notably in England and in the Habsburg Monarchy.³⁵

The influence of the Enlightenment, as a movement of ideas, has been the subject of much debate. The key problem has always been to explain how debates among a tiny intellectual elite came to affect the thinking of the wider population.³⁶ Historians, as intellectuals, are perhaps inclined to believe that writers have played a crucial role in shaping public opinion, especially when they see the changes as positive. However, the key works of the Enlightenment were expensive and sometimes difficult to read, and they were rare even in the libraries of the most educated people.³⁷ Despite this, as some recent work has shown, certain aspects of Enlightenment thought were far more widely disseminated than once believed. Robert Darnton in particular has argued for the importance of vulgarisers who through pamphlets and novels, political pornography, even songs and poetry, reached a wide audience. A broad range of people in Paris, more than in other parts of France, had access to some of this material. Indeed, the memoirs of the master glazier Jacques-Louis Ménétra, edited by Daniel Roche in 1982, suggest that he was influenced by the work either of some of the *philosophes* or of their popularisers. He was certainly reflecting on toleration. Ménétra was a highly unusual man – the very fact that his is the only truly popular autobiography that

Ceremonies of the World' (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2010): the phrase quoted is the title of [chapter 1](#), pp. 25–44. On eighteenth-century debates in France, see especially Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, and for a useful summary of the views of the major *philosophes*, Shelby McCloy, *The Humanitarian Movement in Eighteenth-Century France* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1957), pp. 24–50.

³⁵ James E. Bradley, 'Toleration and Movements of Christian Reunion, 1660–1789', in *Enlightenment, Reawakening and Revolution 1660–1815*, ed. Stewart J. Brown and Timothy Tackett, vol. VII of *The Cambridge History of Christianity* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 348–70.

³⁶ Daniel Mornet, *Les Origines intellectuelles de la Révolution française (1715–1787)* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1933), p. 55. Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith. Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2007), pp. 343–4.

³⁷ For a useful overview see Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991. First published Paris, 1990).

we know of in eighteenth-century Paris indicates that – but his example suggests the penetration of ideas well beyond the book-owning elites.³⁸

That debate continues, yet even if we accept that ideas of religious toleration did reach a wide public, a further challenge is to explain why they were accepted. Recent work has revealed that the enemies of the *philosophes* were also much more widely read than was once believed.³⁹ Why should readers accept one side of the argument rather than the other, Voltaire rather than his nemesis Élie-Catherine Fréron? One of the leading Voltaire scholars, Graham Gargett, has suggested that in the 1760s the *philosophe* ‘had drawn public attention to a class of Frenchmen who were systematically discriminated against for reasons which no longer appeared valid to many of their fellow countrymen’, and John Renwick similarly argued that Voltaire’s role was to give the movement towards toleration its ‘final decisive impetus’.⁴⁰ In other words, the ‘public’ (whoever that was) was predisposed to accept Voltaire’s arguments, but until then had either not been effectively mobilised or had remained ignorant of the fact of discrimination. Either way, Enlightenment arguments for toleration found a ready audience because many French people were already inclined to accept the idea.

In religious matters, though, it is not only ideas that count. For most people, religious belief is not a product of intellectual choices. It has to do with the way they were brought up, their system of values, their personality and emotions. We need only read the accounts of English travellers visiting France and Italy in the seventeenth century to see how intestinal their negative responses to Catholic practice were.⁴¹ Catholics, on the other hand, were deeply and emotionally attached to the symbols and rituals of their faith, and attacks on these, even verbal ones, provoked an equally visceral reaction. They found Protestant churches drab, aesthetically wanting, their rites barren. The very spare burial practices of the Reformed churches, intended to emphasise the fact that the soul of the deceased was in God’s hands and not dependent on masses or

³⁸ Robert Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995); Robert Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982). Jacques-Louis Ménétra, *Journal de ma vie. Jacques-Louis Ménétra, compagnon vitrier au 18e siècle*, ed. Daniel Roche (Paris: Montalba, 1982), pp. 412–3.

³⁹ Didier Masseau, *Les Ennemis des philosophes: l’antiphilosophie au temps des Lumières* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2000); Darrin McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment: The French Counter-Enlightenment and the Making of Modernity* (Oxford University Press, 2001).

⁴⁰ Gargett, *Voltaire and Protestantism*, p. 352; John Renwick, ‘Toleration and Emancipation: “C’est la faute à Voltaire?”’, in *Enlightenment and Emancipation*, ed. Susan Manning and Peter France (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2006), p. 40.

⁴¹ Examples in John Lough, *France Observed in the Seventeenth Century by British Travellers* (Stocksfield: Oriel Press, 1985), pp. 182–236.

prayers of intercession said by the living, were interpreted by Catholics as uncaring indifference to the fate of the dead. Even when theological disagreements underpinned these differences (for sometimes there were historical rather than religious reasons for divergent rites), the responses of different confessional groups to each other's practices were not generally a matter of reason. We need to explain, therefore, not only how new ideas spread, but why they were able to overcome reactions arising from different religious sensibilities.

There are other approaches to the history of toleration that place less emphasis on the leading role of the *philosophes*. One of these stresses the role of government action, whether motivated by ideology or by pure pragmatism. Ian Hunter has recently suggested that the late seventeenth century witnessed a 'civil enlightenment', preceding the Enlightenment proper, that was in some ways hostile to the later emphasis on reason and individual rights, but that adopted civil toleration in response to the needs of the state.⁴² This certainly fits the circumstances of early eighteenth-century Paris, where the leniency of the authorities was motivated by pragmatic considerations and not by any concern for minority rights.

The importance of government and of elite political action is also stressed by some recent social histories, no doubt influenced by the resurgence of confessional conflicts in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century world. These studies see peaceful coexistence as the normal response of people living in religiously diverse communities, and attribute open conflict to external interference. A number of historians have shown that in various parts of seventeenth-century France relations between Catholics and Protestants were not as tense or as violent as they have long been portrayed.⁴³ Drawing on a large literature on 'confessionalisation', Keith Luria has pointed to the role of the seventeenth-century French government and of both Catholic and Protestant religious

⁴² Ian Hunter, 'Thomasius on the Toleration of Heresy', in *Heresy in Transition. Transforming Ideas on Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Ian Hunter, John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 155–67. For a related approach, Mary Fulbrook, 'Legitimation Crises and the Early Modern State: The Politics of Religious Toleration', in *Religion and Society in Early Modern Europe, 1590–1800*, ed. Kaspar von Greyerz (London: German Historical Institute, 1984), pp. 146–56.

⁴³ Labrousse, *La Révocation*, p. 68. Robert Sauzet, *Contre-réforme et réforme catholique en Bas-Languedoc: le diocèse de Nîmes au XVIIe siècle* (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, and Paris: Vander-Oyez, 1979). Thierry Azéma, 'Montélimar au XVIIe siècle. Une biconfessionalité fragile', in *Les Frontières religieuses en Europe, du XV^e au XVII^e siècle*, ed. Alain Ducelier, Janine Garrisson and Robert Sauzet (Paris: Vrin, 1992), pp. 137–49. Gregory Hanlon, *Confession and Community in Seventeenth-Century France Catholic and Protestant Coexistence in Aquitaine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993). Yves Krumenacker, "'Un de mes amis, catholique romain ...': catholiques et protestants au temps des dragonnades", in *De l'Humanisme aux Lumières, Bayle et le protestantisme. Mélanges en l'honneur d'Élisabeth Labrousse*, ed. Michelle Magdelaine, M.-C. Pitassi, R. Whelan et al. (Paris and

authorities in deliberately building what he has termed ‘confessional boundaries’ to separate the two groups. Sometimes they did this because they feared violence, but often they were attempting to protect their own side from ‘contagion’, from the sinful influence of the other religion. The result was to make peaceful coexistence more difficult because of the demonisation of the other side and the reduction of opportunities for contact. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was the culmination of this process.⁴⁴ Here too, state and institutional action and elite political pressure appear to be the crucial factors creating conflict and intolerance, a view extended to the whole of early modern Europe by Benjamin Kaplan. Nevertheless, while some of this historical work, like Kaplan’s, is intended to restore agency to ordinary people by overturning a teleology that sees the coming of toleration to the West as the product of the work of intellectuals and political leaders, ironically it too risks conferring enormous power on the elites and downplaying the autonomy of the wider population.

Other historians, interested in long-term shifts in religious belief, have approached the problem entirely differently. Michel Vovelle’s influential study of what he termed ‘dechristianisation’ in Provence suggested that there were major changes in Catholic religious sensibility across the eighteenth century. There was a decline in religious formulae in wills and in requests for memorial masses to assist souls into paradise. There was a parallel decline in the recruitment of priests and nuns and in the numbers of religious confraternities. Elaborate public religious celebrations were increasingly abandoned in favour of more individual, personal forms of religious practice. These changes took place earlier, on the whole, in urban areas and within the social elites, among men sooner than among women.⁴⁵ Vovelle’s approach was subsequently applied to Paris by Pierre Chaunu, revealing that a number of very similar changes were occurring

Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1996), pp. 67–75. Christian Desplat, *Catholiques et protestants de Béarn: essai sur la coexistence confessionnelle au XVIIIe siècle* (Pau: Princi Negue, 2005). Luria, *Sacred Boundaries*. Daniel Hickey, ‘Through the Eyes of Rural Notaries: Business, Community and Confessional Divisions in Seventeenth-Century Poitou’, *French History* (2007), 21 (2007), 1–21. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*. For a nuanced analysis, see the essays in Didier Boisson and Yves Krumenacker (eds.), *La Coexistence confessionnelle à l’épreuve: Études sur les relations entre protestants et catholiques dans la France moderne* ([Lyons]: RESEA-LARHRA, 2009), and particularly the conclusion by Olivier Christin. For a dissenting view, Benedict, ‘*Un roi, une loi, deux fois*’, pp. 279–308.

⁴⁴ Luria, *Sacred Boundaries*. On ‘confessionalisation’ in France and Germany, Philippe Büttgen and Christophe Duhamelle (eds.), *Religion ou confession. Un bilan franco-allemand sur l’époque moderne (XVIIe–XVIIIe siècles)* (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l’Homme, 2010).

⁴⁵ Michel Vovelle, *Piété baroque et déchristianisation en Provence au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Plon, 1973).

in the capital, although somewhat sooner. Already by the early eighteenth century, people in Paris were using less religious language in their wills, making fewer stipulations about where and how they were to be buried and leaving fewer bequests to the Church. These and other studies have been interpreted to mean that the French in general and Parisians ahead of the rest were becoming increasingly indifferent to religion.⁴⁶ This fits nicely with older arguments about the French Enlightenment – centred on Paris – as an anti-religious movement. For Chaunu, the villains of the piece were the *philosophes* and the Jansenists – the austere Catholic reformers whose condemnation by Rome caused huge divisions within the French church – together with a more vaguely defined individualism and materialism, all of which undermined Catholic belief. The argument about growing materialism is reinforced by a generation of work on consumerism that has revealed the unprecedented prosperity of a significant section of the eighteenth-century population, in Paris in particular. The growing optimism this generated, John McManners suggested, was a key factor in changing attitudes towards death.⁴⁷ The implication of this for religious toleration is that religion was becoming less important for people, that (as Alphonse Dupront put it) civil society was taking precedence over religious society and that religious difference therefore mattered less. For R. R. Palmer, too, the rise of the state, new scientific discoveries and new thinking about society led to ‘the withdrawal of religion from the forefront of men’s consciousness’ and to a ‘gradual cooling of religious ardour’.⁴⁸

This approach too has its flaws. First, as Benjamin Kaplan has pointed out, it reinforces a myth of secular modernity that exaggerates both the decline in religious belief and the degree to which modern societies are religiously tolerant.⁴⁹ Second, it assumes that religious belief can be measured by particular kinds of religious practice, which generally conform to an ideal type of a particular faith, frozen at one historical moment. Yet in recent years a growing number of historians have argued that eighteenth-century changes in religious behaviour do not indicate

⁴⁶ Pierre Chaunu, Madeleine Foisil and Françoise de Noirfontaine, *Le Basculement religieux de Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1998). See also Dominique Julia, ‘Des indicateurs de longue durée’, in *Du roi Très Chrétien à la laïcité républicaine*, ed. Joutard, pp. 183–207.

⁴⁷ John McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment. Changing Attitudes to Death among Christians and Unbelievers in Eighteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981).

⁴⁸ Alphonse Dupront, *Qu’est-ce que les Lumières?* (Paris: Gallimard, 1998), p. 229. R. R. Palmer, *Catholics and Unbelievers in Eighteenth-Century France* (Princeton University Press, 1939), pp. 8, 10.

⁴⁹ Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*, pp. 4–7, 357–8.

a massive rejection of religious belief but rather the adoption of new forms of faith that were more personal and individual. The Catholic Reformation stressed the importance of self-examination and of individual conscience, and by the 1700s, even religious confraternities, the most classic form of collective lay religious practice, gave far more space in their statutes to private prayer. As Marie-Hélène Froeschlé-Chopard has put it, ‘salvation was henceforth individual’.⁵⁰ This more private faith, although often quite sentimental, was for most eighteenth-century Europeans entirely compatible with enlightened thinking. If this is more evident in Protestant than in Catholic Europe, one can nevertheless point to many examples in Italy, Austria and some of the other German states.⁵¹ Even in France, many religious writers adopted the language and certain aspects of Enlightenment thought, and a few tried self-consciously to construct an ‘enlightened theology’. As Dale Van Kley has pointed out, most educated Catholics ‘remained for the most part unaware of any tension between secular lights and the basic tenets of Christian faith’.⁵²

⁵⁰ Marie-Hélène Froeschlé-Chopard, ‘Religion’, in *Le Monde des Lumières*, ed. Vincenzo Ferrone and Daniel Roche (Paris: Fayard, 1999), pp. 229–38 (quotation p. 236). Gaël Rideau, ‘Pour une relecture globale du testament. L’individualisation religieuse à Orléans au XVIIIe siècle (1667–1787)’, *Revue d’histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 57 (2010), 97–123. Louis Châtellier, *The Europe of the Devout. The Catholic Reformation and the Formation of a New Society*, trans. Jean Birrell (Cambridge University Press and Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l’Homme, 1989); Philippe Martin, *Une Religion des livres (1640–1850)* (Paris: Cerf, 2003); Éric Suire, *Sainteté et Lumières. Hagiographie, spiritualité et propagande religieuse dans la France du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Champion, 2011). François Lebrun, ‘The Two Reformations: Communal Devotion and Personal Piety’, in *A History of Private Life*, ed. Roger Chartier (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989. First published Paris, 1986), 3: 69–109 (pp. 72–9, 96–7).

⁵¹ Nigel Aston, *Christianity and Revolutionary Europe, c. 1750–1830* (Cambridge University Press, 2002). Bernard Plongeron, ‘Recherches sur l’“Aufklärung” catholique en Europe occidentale, 1770–1830’, *Revue d’histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 16 (1969), 555–605. J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion: The Enlightenment of Edward Gibbon, 1737–1764* (Cambridge University Press, 1999). Roy Porter and Mikulás Teich (eds.), *The Enlightenment in National Context* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981). Jonathan Sheehan, ‘Enlightenment, Religion, and the Enigma of Secularization: A Review Essay’, *American Historical Review*, 108 (2003), 1061–80. David Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment. Protestants, Jews, and Catholics from London to Vienna* (Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008). Dale K. Van Kley and James E. Bradley (eds.), *Religion and Politics in Enlightenment Europe* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2001).

⁵² Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution*, p. 4. See also Bien, *Calas Affair*, p. 173; Froeschlé-Chopard, ‘Religion’; Philippe Martin, ‘Des Livres de piété éclairés?’, in *Religions en transition dans la seconde moitié du XVIIIe siècle*, ed. Louis Châtellier (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2000), pp. 109–22; Catherine M. Northeast, *The Parisian Jesuits and the Enlightenment, 1700–1762* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1991); Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment*.

It was not, in fact, only the ‘secular’ *philosophes* who constructed arguments in favour of freedom of conscience. Growing numbers of eighteenth-century Christian thinkers, notably Protestants and Jansenists, advanced religious arguments condemning persecution. Jansenist theologians and jurists played a key role in the political debates around civil rights for French Protestants, arguing that persecution was both an obstacle to their conversion and that forcing people to take the Catholic sacraments, without believing in them, was a form of profanation. They argued that individual conscience could not, and should not, be constrained by force.⁵³ Palmer pointed out long ago that while the official Catholic Church continued to oppose religious toleration, largely for political reasons, most French Catholics disagreed, believing that God’s purpose was better served by allowing freedom of conscience. They, and even many apologists for the Church, were ‘relatively liberal’, sharing the new ideas and attitudes of their time.⁵⁴ Thus the pressure for toleration was coming from an alliance of enlightened and Catholic advocates.

If educated opinion might be swayed by such arguments, the question again arises of what ordinary people in the streets of Paris would make of them. It is one thing to favour toleration in principle, and quite another to accept difference in day-to-day interactions and particularly at the flash points where cultural or belief systems collide. In early modern France confessional tensions were commonly sparked when Protestants continued to work on Catholic holy days and when they failed to acknowledge the sanctity of the host when it was carried through the streets on feast days or on mercy missions to the sick and dying. The loud singing of psalms offended Catholic purists, while Calvinists had difficulty stomaching the baroque pomp of Catholic processions. Yet it is clear that by the eve of the Revolution most Parisians were prepared to accept these differences. In 1777 the first public Protestant funeral held in Paris for nearly a century provoked no adverse reactions – to the surprise and possibly mild disappointment of the former police chief Jean-Charles-Pierre Lenoir. De facto toleration extended to disregarding certain core Catholic requirements. Thus in Lent, when Catholics were supposed

⁵³ Charles H. O’Brien, ‘Jansenists on Civil Toleration in Mid-Eighteenth Century France’, *Theologische Zeitschrift*, 37, no. 2 (1981), 71–93. Charles H. O’Brien, ‘The Jansenist Campaign for Toleration of Protestants in Late Eighteenth-Century France: Sacred or Secular?’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 46 (1985), 523–39. Monique Cottret, *Jansénismes et Lumières. Pour un autre XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1998), pp. 183, 195–200. Froeschlé-Chopard, ‘Religion’, pp. 230–4. Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution*. Merrick, *Desacralization*.

⁵⁴ Palmer, *Catholics and Unbelievers*, pp. 3–22.

to abstain from eating meat, the Paris butchers' shops nevertheless remained open, 'for the use of the Protestants and of the sick and of all those who wish to eat meat', wrote Mercier.⁵⁵ The final test of changed attitudes to Protestants, in May 1791, was the uncontested conversion of a former Catholic church in central Paris – Saint-Louis-du-Louvre – into a Protestant temple.⁵⁶

The question, then, is how to account for changes not only among the educated minority in Paris, but also within the wider population. The argument advanced in this book is that in order to understand the shift in attitudes, we need to look not only at the development of ideas, and of course at the wider political picture, but also at the way Catholics behaved towards flesh-and-blood Protestants. Alongside the intellectual history of toleration is a broader social and cultural history: although the Huguenots represented no more than 1–2 per cent of the population – perhaps 4,000 individuals in the late 1680s, some 7,000 a century later – looking at their lived experience in eighteenth-century Paris enables us to explore the coming of religious freedom for Protestants in one of Europe's most important cities, one of the centres of the Enlightenment and subsequently of the French Revolution.

A significant part of this book is therefore devoted to finding out about the Paris Huguenots, how they survived, and what relationships they had with the Catholic population who surrounded them. [Chapters 1 and 2](#) trace the development of official policy from the active persecution of the late seventeenth century to the de facto toleration that characterised the early eighteenth, well before this happened in most other parts of France. [Chapters 3 to 5](#) look more closely at who the Paris Huguenots were, at their place in the neighbourhoods and the workplaces of the city and at the way they maintained their faith and rebuilt their networks. They were able to do this partly because, as [Chapter 6](#) demonstrates in more detail, overt hostility and grudging acceptance by Paris Catholics were gradually but steadily replaced by unconcern about religious difference. By 1750, despite continued campaigns by the Catholic clergy, most inhabitants of Paris seem to have accepted the Huguenots in their midst. All this occurred well before Voltaire's campaigns, before there was any public debate about civil toleration and before the most significant economic growth of the century. As [Chapter 7](#) shows, the changes in attitudes accelerated in the second half of the eighteenth century, as toleration for Huguenots became a political issue, as we can see not only

⁵⁵ Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, 5: 243. This is confirmed by Reynald Abad, 'Un Indice de la déchristianisation? L'évolution de la consommation de viande à Paris en carême sous l'Ancien Régime', *Revue historique*, 301 (1999), 237–75.

⁵⁶ Reinhard, *Nouvelle Histoire de Paris*, p. 205.

in public discourse but in the growing participation of Protestants in mainstream sociability.

The final two chapters attempt to explain why this change took place. They emphasise the importance of changing religious cultures among the Catholic population. Recent work on the history of French Catholicism, as well as my own research, shows religious belief becoming more personal, and hence less a matter of public concern. Paris became more secular, meaning not that people were abandoning religious belief but that they were separating the religious from the profane and placing more and more aspects of city life in the non-religious category. Public and political matters, once strongly Catholic, became increasingly secular, as we can see both in debates about citizenship and in the daily life of the city. This in turn meant that those with different religious beliefs represented far less of a threat. On the contrary, as concern about irreligion grew, particularly after 1750, Christians of any kind were for many Catholics preferable to the enemies of religion. A Catholicism that in the past had been constructed largely against Protestantism was now reshaped in opposition to unbelievers and atheists, who both groups agreed should not be tolerated. All this not only made ideas of greater rights for Huguenots more acceptable, but facilitated positive interaction with flesh-and-blood Protestants. These chapters also explore the role of the Enlightenment, understood broadly as a set of practices, behaviours and attitudes rather than a specific set of ideas. Viewing it in this way, as a cultural phenomenon, makes it easier to see how a general rejection of religious persecution might have become part of the world view of a broad 'enlightened' public that nevertheless remained strongly committed to the Catholic faith.⁵⁷ These cultural changes combined with the secularisation of the city to create a public space, both literal and figurative, that was no longer exclusively Catholic, as it had been a century earlier. Rather than seeing the Enlightenment and Catholic belief as mutually exclusive, or secularisation and religion as opposites, therefore, I suggest that in this respect they were complementary. The result was to reduce the occasions and the reasons for conflict, and to make freedom of conscience seem desirable to a wide cross-section of the Paris population.

The shift was not universal, but it was very widespread. By the 1780s, even many of the Catholic clergy had come to accept the Huguenot presence, although they (and probably the majority of the population) remained opposed to any weakening of the position of the Catholic Church. When, in 1789, the Revolution set out to create a regenerated nation, Paris Catholics no longer saw Protestants as a threat, and were

⁵⁷ Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*, pp. 357–8.

willing to accept them (far more readily than Jews) as fellow citizens with equal rights.

This book ends there, with the opening of the new French Protestant church in Paris, because the 1790s introduced a new set of variables, ending the dominance of the Catholic Church and entirely changing the political, cultural and religious landscape. The story, of course, was not over. The tolerant attitudes of the late eighteenth century were to be followed in the nineteenth by renewed tensions between Catholics and Protestants, in the context of bitter divisions produced by the French Revolution. These new factors reversed some, but not all, of the earlier changes. So while the story told here is one of growing acceptance of religious difference, I am not returning to a heroic history of progress in which the eighteenth century created a liberal modernity.

It is also important to point out that although the Revolution did bring religious freedom for all religious groups, for a time, attitudes towards non-Christians did not follow the same course as those towards Protestants. The history of religious toleration is often written as if greater acceptance of one other religious group implied a more positive view of all other faiths. Depending on the reasons for changing attitudes, this might indeed happen – though it is worth noting that even Picart and Bernard, whose *Religious Ceremonies of the World* portrayed a variety of religions as all containing moral and spiritual truths, did not see them all as equal.⁵⁸ Certainly, the debates over greater rights for the Huguenots challenged people to think about whether they should be extended to others, yet attitudes to Jews, in particular, were quite different, even among the *philosophes*, who endorsed toleration in principle.⁵⁹ Although for much of the century Paris Jews had greater de facto freedom than Huguenots, Catholic attitudes were often more hostile (as they were towards atheists). The changes described in this book, while they had implications for other religious groups, were in some respects particular to Protestants.

⁵⁸ Hunt *et al.*, *The Book that Changed Europe*, esp. pp. 119, 150–62, 200–5.

⁵⁹ There is considerable literature on attitudes towards Jews. See particularly Ronald Schechter, *Obstinate Hebrews: Representations of Jews in France 1715–1815* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003) and Alyssa Sepinwall, 'Les Paradoxes de la régénération révolutionnaire: le cas de l'abbé Grégoire', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, no. 321 (July–September 2000), 69–90. On Jansenist attitudes see the special number of *Chroniques de Port-Royal*, 53 (2004), *Port-Royal et le peuple d'Israël* (Paris: Bibliothèque Mazarine, 2004), particularly the essays by Monique Cottret and Nicolas Lyon-Caen. On Jews in Paris, André Burguière, 'Groupe d'immigrants ou minorité religieuse? Les juifs à Paris au XVIII^e siècle', in *Le Migrant. France, terre de migrations internes, terre d'immigration. Actes du Colloque d'Aurillac, 5–7 juin 1985* (Aurillac: Gerbert, 1986), pp. 183–200.

The way religious freedom arrived in Paris was not the same as in other places, even in other parts of France, let alone in eighteenth-century England or the United Provinces, where somewhat different forms of toleration were in place quite early. There were many paths to the modern world, even if there were also often parallels between them. Furthermore, a moment's reflection about our own time will reveal that there are still enormous tensions over religious difference, in Western societies and elsewhere, which is why the study of past intolerances, and of how and why things changed, is of continuing relevance.

Note on terminology

I have generally used the term 'Huguenot' or 'French Protestant' to refer to those who subscribed to the beliefs and cultures of the French Reformed churches. The term 'Protestants' includes Lutherans and Anglicans as well, of course, and I have mostly used it in that sense. Where there is no ambiguity, and to avoid repetition or circumlocution, I have also sometimes referred to members of all the Reformed churches – Swiss, Dutch and French – simply as 'Protestants'.

I have generally avoided referring to the Huguenots as 'Calvinists', because in the eighteenth century they did not refer to themselves that way, whereas Catholics often used the name in a derogatory sense. Some historians, mainly seventeenth-century specialists, do not consider the eighteenth-century French Protestants to be 'true' Calvinists. This objection treats the religious belief of a particular historical moment as an ideal, rather than seeing theology and religious traditions as works in progress, changing over time. I use 'Calvinist', 'Catholic' and 'Lutheran' to refer to theological and cultural traditions rather than to an unchanging set of doctrines or practices.⁶⁰

All translations are mine, unless otherwise indicated.

⁶⁰ For a useful definition of a 'system of orthodoxy', see Thierry Wanegffelen, 'La Difficile Identité des protestants français entre Réforme et Révocation', in *Identités, appartenances, revendications identitaires (XVIe–XVIIIe siècles)*, ed. Marc Belissa, Anna Bellavitis, Monique Cottret, Laurence Croq and Jean Duma (Paris: Nolin, 2005), pp. 13–23 (p. 14).

1 The campaign against the Protestants

On 22 October 1685 soldiers approached the village of Charenton, some eight or nine kilometres (approximately five miles) from Paris. They surrounded the Reformed Protestant church, one of the largest in France, while over 300 roofers, stonemasons and carpenters set to work demolishing the structure. Within a few days it was gone, the materials removed to be used in the construction of the Catholic Salpêtrière hospital a short distance downstream.¹

The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which for nearly a century had set out the terms of coexistence between the two faiths in France, did not come out of a clear sky. The Sun King had long been hostile to the French Protestant minority. Historians continue to debate his motives, some emphasising his piety, some his diplomatic goals, still others his belief that Protestants were potentially disloyal, because in the not so distant past they had indeed revolted against the French Crown.² Whatever his reasons, Louis escalated measures against French Protestantism – the official term was ‘la Religion Prétendue Réformée’ (the so-called Reformed Religion). The Revocation was simply part of a much longer process, preceded and followed by a series of increasingly severe edicts obliging French Protestants to convert to Catholicism. Draconian penalties were imposed on those who refused or who returned to their original faith.

Official policy before 1685

For much of the seventeenth century the Huguenots of Paris lived fairly quietly in the city. Most were merchants, shopkeepers and artisans, some

¹ Jean Haechler, *L'Encyclopédie de Diderot et de ... Jaucourt. Essai biographique sur le chevalier Louis de Jaucourt* (Paris: Champion, 1995), p. 30, n. 49.

² Jean-Robert Armogathe, *Croire en liberté. L'Église catholique et la Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes* (Paris: OEIL/Histoire, 1985), pp. 61–85; Garrisson, *L'Édit de Nantes et sa révocation*; Labrousse, *La Révocation*, pp. 99–110; Jean Orcibal, *Louis XIV et les protestants* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1951), pp. 91–110. Jacques Saint-Germain suggests that Louis had to act to avoid civil war: Jacques Saint-Germain, *La Reynie et la police au Grand Siècle* (Paris: Hachette,

wealthy and many poor, although some occupied prominent positions in the trades, in the intellectual world of the academies and in the legal and administrative hierarchy of the city and even of the kingdom. Under the Edict of Nantes of 1598, designed to end religious warfare in France, the towns of France were classified as Catholic, Protestant or mixed, and the rights and privileges of each religious community were laid out.³ Paris was designated a Catholic city, which meant that Protestants could live and work there but not practise their religion publicly. For baptisms, marriages and funerals, and of course regular Sunday worship, they had to go to Charenton. They also had to pay ecclesiastical taxes, could not work on Catholic feast days and were not permitted to marry during Lent. If they were wise, they stayed out of sight on the major feast days, when they ran the risk of running into a procession bearing the Blessed Sacrament, at whose passage everyone was expected to kneel and the men to remove their hats. If this happened they would have to decide whether to flee, to compromise their faith and kneel or to stand their ground and incur the wrath of the crowd.⁴

According to the Edict of Nantes, Huguenots could occupy all official positions, join any trade and enjoy equal treatment with Catholics in legal and administrative matters. But across the seventeenth century the authorities reduced or simply disregarded these rights. After the English Revolution, and particularly following the execution of Charles I in 1649, the French monarchy and many Catholics again came to see Protestantism as politically subversive, although it proved expedient for the Crown to ease the pressure on them during the Fronde, the mid-century revolt that nearly overthrew the King. But after 1661 royal policy became more overtly hostile. Decisions of the King's Council limited the places where Reformed worship could take place and banned the singing of psalms if it could be heard from the street. Protestant funerals were only to be held in the early morning and the evening, and many of their graveyards were expelled to the outskirts of towns. The numbers allowed to attend funerals and certain other religious ceremonies were severely restricted: a decree of 1670 limited the witnesses at Protestant marriages and baptisms to twelve. Children with Catholic fathers and Calvinist

1962), p. 303. John McManners sees him as savouring absolute power: McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 575–9.

³ An English translation of the Edict of Nantes may be found in Roland Mousnier, *The Assassination of Henri IV. The Tyrannicide Problem and the Consolidation of French Absolute Monarchy in the Early Seventeenth Century*, trans. Joan Spencer (New York: Scribner, 1973. First published Paris, 1964), pp. 316–63. For an account of the Edict's interpretation and enforcement see Luria, *Sacred Boundaries*, pp. 3–46. See also Garrisson, *L'Édit de Nantes et sa révocation*.

⁴ Labrousse, *La Révocation*, p. 22.

mothers were to be raised as Catholics and this was later extended to include those whose fathers had converted to Protestantism. In order to destroy Reformed Church organisation, contacts between different congregations were banned. Other measures reduced Protestant access to particular occupations, especially prestigious ones. Restrictions were placed on what Huguenot schools could teach, and in 1671 each was limited to a single teacher. No more than one school was allowed in each locality, however large the population. Meanwhile, it became a criminal offence for converts to Catholicism to return to their original religion and in 1680 all Catholics were forbidden to become Protestants. Marriages between those of different faiths were banned and the offspring of such unions declared illegitimate. After 1681, children of seven and over were declared sufficiently mature to decide to convert to Catholicism, without their parents being able to intervene. This allowed the authorities, in some parts of France, to abduct children and it sparked mass emigration by Huguenot families. Meanwhile, advantages were extended to Protestants who converted to Catholicism: remission of debts or exemptions from certain taxes. Not all of these laws were enforced and a few were later rescinded – the King's need to maintain good relations with various Protestant monarchs across Europe may have tempered his policies – but globally the situation of the Huguenots deteriorated markedly.⁵

Many of the new restrictions were provoked by denunciations by local Catholics at odds with their Protestant neighbours, but these complaints were clearly encouraged by the growing likelihood that they would be acted on. The increasingly anti-Protestant disposition of the government gave greater confidence to those who were hostile to the reformed religion but who had felt constrained by the Edict of Nantes. Thus in the 1660s the Catholic clergy became more outspoken and more missionary in its attempts to convert the Huguenots.⁶

Particular pressure was applied to the leaders of the Reformed Church. Many of the new laws deliberately made it very difficult for pastors to exercise their ministry. For example, across the 1660s and 1670s several

⁵ Élie Benoist, *Histoire de l'Édit de Nantes, contenant les choses les plus remarquables qui se sont passées en France avant et après sa publication*, 3 vols. in 5 vols. (Delft: A. Berman, 1693–5), 3: 445–53; Charles Bost, *Histoire des protestants de France*, 5 vols. (Carrières-sous-Poissy: La Cause, [1957]. First edition 1924), pp. 148–9; Deursen, *Professions et métiers interdits*; Labrousse, *La Révocation*, pp. 25–7, 121–31, 53–8; Luria, *Sacred Boundaries*, pp. 129–31, 87; Luc Daireaux, 'Anatomie d'une "réduction": le Conseil du roi et les protestants sous le règne de Louis XIV (1643–1685)', in *Justice et protestantisme*, ed. Boisson and Krumenacker, pp. 51–80. On the abduction of children, Alain Joblin, *Dieu, le juge et l'enfant. L'enlèvement des enfants protestants en France (XVIIe–XVIIIe siècles)* (Arras: Artois Presses Université, 2010).

⁶ W. J. Stankiewicz, *Politics and Religion in Seventeenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), pp. 171–97.

edicts banned them from preaching outside the place where they lived. If enforced, this meant that Protestants in hamlets and isolated villages, formerly visited by pastors from a larger centre, now had to come to town to attend services. Congregations were also banned from contributing financially to the livelihood of a pastor outside their own community.⁷

Protestant nobles also came in for special treatment. Many had already converted even before Louis XIV came to the throne. Those who remained staunchly Protestant experienced the King's displeasure, and some were directly ordered to convert or to go into voluntary exile, either on their country estates or outside the kingdom. Protestant army and navy officers found their promotion blocked, even as illustrious a commander as Abraham Duquesne, who won many victories for the French navy. One by one they abjured their Reformed faith, although it is noticeable that their wives often refused.⁸

Protestants were also weeded out of positions of influence in administration, law, medicine and science. All Huguenots in the households of the King and other members of the royal family were ordered to convert or resign, and this included personal guards, attendant gentlemen and -women, numerous administrators, stewards and clerks, as well as doctors, artisans and suppliers. Moysse Charas, who lectured in natural history at the royal botanical garden, was dismissed in 1679, while the portraitist Jacques d'Agar was removed from the Académie royale de peinture three years later. *Officiers* attached to royal jurisdictions were forced out, even those like Nicolas Lémery, who had purchased the position of apothecary of the Grand Prévôté de l'Hôtel du Roi. He was obliged to sell the office in 1683. Protestants were banned from practising as notaries, bailiffs or other legal officials, or as doctors. After 1681 only Catholics could be employed in the Ferme générale, the main tax-collection agency of the Crown, and Huguenots were progressively excluded from positions as municipal officers and judges in local seigneurial courts. Protestant magistrates in the Parlements – the major courts of appeal whose decisions set legal precedents within their jurisdictions – came under increasing pressure to convert or resign.⁹

⁷ Labrousse, *La Révocation*, pp. 48–50, 123, 6–7.

⁸ Richard, *La Vie des protestants français*, pp. 62–3, 99–100; Nathanaël Weiss, 'De la conversion de la noblesse protestante au XVII^e siècle', *BSHPP*, 1 (1853), 46–50.

⁹ Labrousse, *La Révocation*, p. 169; David J. Sturdy, *Science and Social Status. The Members of the Académie des Sciences, 1666–1750* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1995), pp. 255–6, 310. H. Vienne, 'Jacques d'Agar, peintre protestant', *Intermédiaire des chercheurs et des curieux*, 3 (1866), col. 547. Yves Durand, *Les Fermiers généraux au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1996. First published 1971), p. 598. AN Y12238, draft police ordinance, [June] 1664. Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 367–414; Daniel Ligou, *Le Protestantisme en France de 1598 à 1715* (Paris: Société d'édition d'enseignement supérieur, 1968), pp. 218–23.

These measures affected Paris Huguenots to varying degrees. Since Protestant religious practice was already banned in the city, some of the new restrictions had little effect, although a tighter interpretation of ‘the public exercise of religion’ did. In 1664 the police clamped down on Protestant activity in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, apparently in response to a complaint that a woman was running a Protestant school there. They found eight or nine children in her home, reading from Protestant books. The testimony of several Catholic neighbours indicated that the lessons were audible from other parts of the house.¹⁰

The expulsion of Protestants from law and administration had a huge impact on the Paris Reformed community, and increasing restrictions on employment threatened the livelihoods of many more families. After 1664 the lower courts in Paris refused to recognise any masters’ certificates that did not attest the Catholic faith of the holder: this meant that Protestants could no longer use the courts to enforce their right to join a guild or open a shop. In 1665 the Parlement of Paris issued a ruling excluding Protestants from the linen-makers’ guild. On appeal this judgment was overturned, but only temporarily. In 1669 Protestant embroiderers were banned from taking on apprentices and a few years later the same restriction was placed on the silk-weavers of the Faubourg Saint-Marcel. After 1680 Huguenots were not allowed to become midwives, and in 1685 they were formally excluded from the apothecaries’, grocers’ and surgeons’ guilds and from printing and bookselling. In July of the same year it became illegal to employ Protestant servants. The pressure leading to these measures did not all come from above, since in the 1670s and 1680s a number of the most prestigious Paris guilds – including the mercers, drapers, grocers, apothecaries, silk-weavers, furriers and goldsmiths – had already amended their statutes to exclude Protestants either from beginning apprenticeships or from joining the guilds as masters.¹¹

Many Protestants could read the writing on the wall and even before 1685 decided to leave, particularly as a number of Protestant localities – England, Denmark and the city of Amsterdam – had offered them asylum. Yet those who fled ran a huge risk, since a law of 1669 banned French subjects from leaving the country without permission. Anyone

¹⁰ AN Y12238, 2 and 7 May 1664.

¹¹ Benoist, *Histoire*, 3: 122, 53–4; Deursen, *Professions et métiers interdits*, p. 322. ‘Arrêt du Conseil d’Etat, qui fait défenses de recevoir aucuns Maistres Apotiquaries Epiciers de la Religion Prétendue Réformée, du 22 janv 1685’, and ‘Arrêt du Conseil du 15 septembre 1685, portant défenses à tous chirurgiens et apothicaires de la Religion Prétendue Réformée d’exercer leur art’, in François Prevet, *Les Statuts et règlements des apothicaires*, 4 vols. (Paris: Recueil Sirey, 1950), pp. 397, 399. JF 1669, fols. 20v–21v. Ranum, *Paris in the Age of Absolutism*, pp. 250–2.

caught doing so was to be imprisoned and have his or her property confiscated. Yet the escalation of penalties suggests that these laws were not a sufficient deterrent: in August 1685 yet another royal order offered half of the goods of refugees to anyone who gave information leading to their capture.¹²

The remaining Protestants faced not only legal but also extra-legal sanctions. Already in 1681, local officials had obtained numerous conversions by billeting dragoons on Protestants in Poitou. Soldiers were a notoriously violent group, sometimes in fact criminals released from prison on condition that they enter the army, in other cases men without work and often without roots, brutalised by their harsh daily lives. They were poorly paid, often well in arrears, and were accustomed to surviving when on campaign by extorting food and money from the populations of the places they passed through. People feared them and were often willing to pay to see them on their way. The only way the Protestants of Poitou could get rid of them was to abjure their religion, and many did. The manoeuvre was so successful, in the eyes of the authorities, that it was tried in other parts of France in 1685, provoking hundreds of thousands of forced conversions.¹³

Not all the measures taken were violent. In Paris the local authorities offered financial assistance to converts: when twenty-two-year-old Charles Guimet wanted to be apprenticed to a tailor but could not afford the fees, the police gave him the money in return for his abjuration on 4 June 1684. They also singled out, among others, a clockmaker living in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine: 'if he were offered some assistance ... it would be possible to move him and convert his family'. Others received varying sums as a reward for their compliance and the authorities advertised the benefits available: in another part of the city a cloth-weaver was recruited to offer his fellow craftsmen 2 *écus* each if they abjured.¹⁴ The combination of carrot and stick was often effective.

The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes

The Edict of Fontainebleau of 17 October 1685, revoking the Edict of Nantes, was thus the culmination of a long period of persecution, and it removed the remaining liberties of French Protestants. The King now banned Reformed religious services altogether, closed Protestant schools and decreed that all French children were to be baptised by Catholic priests and to attend catechism classes. Any children not attending would

¹² Labrousse, *La Révocation*, pp. 161, 75. ¹³ *Ibid.*, pp.159–63.

¹⁴ Douen, *La Révocation*, 1: 526–30.

be removed from their parents. Pastors, who were assumed to be behind the intransigence of the remaining Protestants, were to leave France within fifteen days or be sent to the galleys on the Mediterranean, unless they chose to abjure. Everyone else was forbidden to leave the country. Although the final article of the new Edict declared that Huguenots would be allowed to live and work in France provided that they did not practise their religion, it was clear that the authorities intended to make all French Protestants convert.

Nowhere was this more important than in Paris. Although Louis had moved to Versailles, he remained concerned about his oversized capital. The revolts of the Fronde, in 1648–52, in which the capital had played a key role, were well within living memory. Late seventeenth-century Paris was a large city by the standards of the day, with a rapidly growing population already over 400,000. The royal Court, the University and the law courts created a well-to-do elite and the city's role as a cultural centre and as the meeting place for the French nobility attracted wealthy people from the entire kingdom. The many wealthy noble and bourgeois families provided a major market for the flourishing consumer trades and attracted skilled craftsmen from around Europe. Alongside the wealth, however, was extensive poverty. Although wages were generally higher than in other parts of the country, unskilled work was poorly paid and some of the migrants attracted to the city's expanding labour market were among the most vulnerable to any economic downturn or to price rises sparked by poor harvests or cold winters.

In response to fears of crime and civil disorder, the city's administrative and repressive apparatus was particularly well developed. In 1667 Louis XIV had created the *lieutenant générale*, centralising policing in the hands of one man – the Lieutenant-General of Police – and giving him enormous power to control the city. He oversaw not only criminal matters but had an expanding range of attributions that soon embraced food supply, working conditions, public health and many other aspects of life in Paris. The first Lieutenant-General, Nicolas Gabriel de La Reynie, was a devout Catholic who worked hard not only to maintain law and order but to improve the health, living conditions and the moral standards of the Paris population. Even before the Revocation, he had ensured strict enforcement of the laws limiting Protestant practice in Paris, and he was now given primary responsibility for their elimination from the kingdom's largest city.¹⁵

Forty-eight hours before the edict of revocation was signed, a royal decree ordered provincial Protestants who had been in Paris for less than

¹⁵ Ranum, *Paris in the Age of Absolutism*, pp. 348–54. See also Leon Bernard, *The Emerging City. Paris in the Age of Louis XIV* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1970).

a year to leave the city within four days. The authorities had become concerned by the influx of refugees fleeing persecution in the provinces, and it was no doubt easier to deal with these people at home, where they were known, than to trace them in the capital. Then, as soon as the Revocation was approved by the Parlement, the principal law court, the police moved swiftly. The leading minister of the church at Charenton was ordered into exile within twenty-four hours, rather than fifteen days as the Edict stated, while his assistant ministers were given forty-eight hours. The twenty-four lay elders of the church, who comprised its governing body, at first continued to meet secretly, but the police quickly arrested several of them. The others were alternately questioned, cajoled and threatened. Four finally agreed to convert but the others resisted and were exiled to various provinces, where they were forbidden to take their families. Some had their property seized and the most intransigent had their children placed in convents to be brought up as Catholics. Most ended up leaving the country.¹⁶

Meanwhile, the records of the church at Charenton were seized, and they provided the basis for tracking Protestant households, quarter by quarter. Many families, particularly those of higher rank or deemed to have influence within the Protestant community, received visits from the police to encourage them to obey the royal order to abjure. Some were summoned, in small groups, before the Lieutenant-General of Police and the Archbishop, a daunting experience even for wealthy merchants, much more so for artisans and shopkeepers. In November the six Huguenot magistrates remaining in the Parlement of Paris were ordered to sell their offices. Merchants were threatened with the confiscation of their property and closure of their businesses. Meanwhile the police also visited poorer Protestants, making use of the poor lists from the Charenton church. They promised assistance to those who converted, and reminded each family that the Huguenots would no longer be allowed to take up collections on their behalf. Despite this, at the end of 1685 around 4,000 Paris Protestants still had not converted and the King ordered that soldiers be sent to 'encourage' them. News was arriving daily of the violence perpetrated by dragoons against provincial Protestants and it is possible that at the end of December a number of soldiers were indeed billeted on Paris merchants. But many Paris Huguenots had family members in the affected areas and were frightened even by the possibility. By early January the number of Protestants in the city, according to the police

¹⁶ Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 3–125; Gwenaëlle Léonus, 'De la répression à la conversion: la Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes et ses conséquences. L'exemple parisien, fin XVIIe–XVIIIe siècle', unpublished thesis, Paris IV (1997), p. 240.

count, had fallen to just over 900. The others had either abjured or fled. On 13 February the police reported with satisfaction that there were only forty-five recalcitrants left, mainly women, and that there was still hope that most of them would cave in. Marie Dufresne, the widow of a painter and sister-in-law of one of the elders of the Protestant church, spent a month in prison before agreeing to abjure. The wife of one Guignard, secretary to a nobleman living in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, held out longer: on 2 April she was still saying she would never convert, and in August 1687 she was transferred to a prison in Nantes. Her ultimate fate is unknown.¹⁷

In 1686 some 265 Protestants were imprisoned in the Bastille, and smaller numbers in other prisons. Of those whose periods of imprisonment are known, half were released within six months, having agreed to abjure.¹⁸ They did so not only because of the harsh prison conditions but because imprisonment – at the family's expense – almost invariably meant ruin. In artisan families, from shoemaking to furniture production, it was usually the man who did the manufacturing and if he was locked up the business would suffer and perhaps collapse. If the male breadwinner were an unskilled labourer, his wife would not earn enough on her own to feed a family. Most people therefore had little option but to abjure. The small number who continued to resist were mostly expelled from the country some months later.

A significant proportion of Paris Huguenots emigrated, despite the harsh punishments for unauthorised departure. The decision to leave was a difficult one, and often depended on whether they knew anyone who had already gone and who could offer advice and support. For those without such connections, there was less certainty of what might await them. Much also depended on the family's occupation. Departure was easier to contemplate for merchants with international interests, who could send money abroad. It was also an option for craftsmen whose main asset was their skill, particularly those like goldsmiths, who could easily carry their precious stock. For the poor, provided they had skills they could take abroad, there was perhaps little to keep them in the city, although at this level of society fear of the unknown may have been a significant factor. Those with substantial investments in real estate or in government loans found it harder to realise their assets. For people like

¹⁷ BN MS fr. 21622 contains the records of the commissaire Delamare's efforts to convert the Protestants in his quarter. Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 6–7, 19–21, 159–228, 367 and 3: 149–50. *Nouvelles extraordinaires de différens endroits*, 25 October 1685.

¹⁸ Monique Cottret, *La Bastille à prendre. Histoire et mythe de la forteresse royale* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1986), p. 38. Léonus, 'De la répression à la conversion', pp. 256–7.

tavern-keepers and grain or wood merchants, who had bulky stock and whose wealth lay in their local clientele and trade connections, emigration might mean losing everything. Imprisonment was just as bad, so they had little option but to convert to Catholicism.

Having succeeded, at least on paper, in obtaining the conversions of the remaining Huguenots, in the late 1680s and 1690s the authorities focused on two main issues. First, they tried to prevent further emigration. They seem to have been genuinely taken aback and alarmed at the numbers departing, both from France as a whole and from Paris in particular. Yet despite the harsh punishments, the haemorrhage continued. The police therefore watched the property and financial markets closely to identify any former Protestants who might be selling their assets or trying to transfer them abroad. In 1699 all 'New Catholics' were required to obtain permission to sell real estate worth more than 3,000 *livres*.¹⁹

Right across the 1690s the surviving records indicate that the vast majority of Protestants arrested were accused of trying to emigrate. The authorities alternated between punishing those whom they caught and offering inducements to stay. After one of the leading clockmakers in Paris, Desbuis, sent his sister and daughter to Rouen, possibly the first leg of a journey to England, he was threatened with arrest unless he made them return. A few years later, Jean Girardot successfully got his daughters to England and was promptly imprisoned in the Bastille, where he remained for five months. He was released only when he deposited a bond of 200,000 *livres*, a large enough sum to persuade the police that he would not also try to leave.²⁰

The authorities reserved the harsher punishments for those who were helping Protestants to emigrate: in October 1687 this offence was made punishable by death. The police concentrated considerable effort on dismantling the networks of guides, innkeepers and corrupt officials, and between 1685 and 1703 identified at least 150 'people smugglers' who arranged for false papers and passports or simply offered – often in return for large payments – to get refugees across the frontier by a safe route. Jean Leroy, a journeyman cabinet-maker, broke down under interrogation and admitted receiving 16 *écus* – a considerable sum – for guiding a Protestant family across the border. He had made at least four such trips.²¹

¹⁹ BN MS fr. 21621 contains many examples from the 1690s of attempts to thwart attempted emigration. Royal declaration of 5 May 1699, cited in AN TT143, dossier 3, piece 22.

²⁰ BN MS fr. 21622, fol. 45, n.d. Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 71–2.

²¹ Léonus, 'De la répression à la conversion', pp. 244–7, and Léonus-Lieppe, 'Justice déléguée', p. 90. BN MS fr. 21621, fols. 271–6, 26 August 1694. For other examples, Arsenal MS 10519.

The second main concern for the royal government in the years after the Revocation was to prevent 'New Catholics' or 'New Converts', as those who had abjured were now officially called, from backsliding. It was illegal for Catholics to convert to Protestantism and for converted Huguenots to 'relapse'. But those who were dying clearly felt they could afford to defy these laws, so a new royal order imposed penalties on the dead and on their families: anyone who refused the assistance of a priest while dying would be refused a religious burial, and the body would be dragged on a frame behind a horse, then dumped by the roadside and left to be eaten by animals. A man who refused the Catholic sacraments when sick would, if he recovered, have his goods confiscated and be sent to the galleys – for many prisoners a veritable death penalty, preceded by years of hard labour and harsh treatment. A woman would be publicly shamed, imprisoned and have her property confiscated. This law was rigorously enforced for a few months, but then the authorities realised that it was giving publicity to Protestant resistance, and the King instructed the intendants not to carry it out unless the deceased had already created a public scandal. It also became clear that the penalty was profoundly repugnant to many Catholics, for whom respect for the bodies of the dead was deeply ingrained, and it was soon quietly dropped.²²

The ferocity of this decree and of other new laws testifies to the failure of earlier ones and to royal frustration at continuing Huguenot resistance. A royal order of January 1686 forbade French Protestants to employ servants of the same religion: male employers who disobeyed were to be sent to the galleys, female ones to be whipped and branded. An edict of the same month ordered parents of the Reformed faith to hand over to Catholic relatives all children aged between five and sixteen. If they had no Catholic kin the children were to be placed in convents or schools, at the parents' expense, or in public hospices if they could not afford the fees.²³

The Paris police made sporadic attempts to destroy Protestant networks that might encourage resistance and hinder conversion. In 1691 the King approved a suggestion by Lieutenant-General La Reynie that Paris 'New Catholics' not be permitted to live in the same house unless they had already been there before 1685.²⁴ There was particular concern about religious gatherings, and in the late 1680s and early 1690s almost

²² AN TT464, Déclaration du roi, 24 May 1686. Labrousse, *La Révocation*, p. 190; Jacqueline Thibaut-Payen, *Les Morts, l'Église et l'état dans le ressort du parlement de Paris aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: Fernand Lanore, 1977), pp. 101–2. Didier Boisson, 'La Justice royale et les procès contre les cadavres aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles', in *Justice et protestantisme*, ed. Boisson and Krumenacker, pp. 113–27.

²³ JF 1699, fol. 1. Labrousse, *La Révocation*, p. 187; Léonus, 'De la répression à la conversion', p. 3.

²⁴ Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 575.

every interrogation included questions about meetings of Protestants and visiting pastors. La Reynie personally conducted the interrogation of Louise Le Sueur, a seventy-five-year-old widow whose son worked at the Royal Mint and who was caught at a small gathering that the police suspected was to have been attended by a visiting minister.²⁵ The harshest penalties – although still well short of those laid down by the law – were reserved for those who helped organise such meetings. Edme Roger, who had converted after seeing the body of a ‘relapsed’ Huguenot desecrated in his home town of Gien, came to Paris, where he admitted having given instruction to other Protestants. He had also assisted a visiting pastor and attended prayer meetings in different parts of the city. Arrested in January 1693, he was still in prison seven years later.²⁶ Pierre Baril was also accused of organising Protestant networks in the city. A former apothecary, just after the Revocation he came to Paris where he too acted as a guide for visiting ministers. He also attended the sick-beds of Paris Huguenots and no doubt offered both spiritual and – given his former occupation – practical assistance. He spent a year in the Bastille before being transferred to Caen, where he remained in prison for another four years. His wife and baby daughter were held in a convent until his release.²⁷ All of these were ‘administrative’ imprisonments ordered by the police chief, sometimes with ministerial approval, and none ever came before a court.

Police surveillance was supplemented by that of the clergy and elements of the Catholic population. A woman informed her local priest that her ‘New Catholic’ neighbours, a tapestry-worker and his wife, a laundrywoman, read the Scriptures and sang psalms each Sunday evening: she could hear them clearly from her room. Other meetings, this time including Easter communion, were reported at the royal tennis court in the rue Mazarine. It was difficult, in a crowded city, to avoid detection if the neighbours were hostile, although as we shall see, the number of such denunciations remained surprisingly low.²⁸

It was up to the clergy to monitor the religious practice of the converted Huguenots, and this was a more challenging task. Even if the parish priests knew who the former Protestants were, which was unlikely in the larger parishes with populations in the tens of thousands, there was nothing to prove that, on any given holy day, they had not attended one of the many monastery churches or heard mass in a different parish. The religious authorities therefore once again concentrated on the

²⁵ Arsenal MS 10495, fol. 25, 16 February 1692.

²⁶ Arsenal MS 10499, dossier Roger. Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 585.

²⁷ Arsenal MS 10494, fol. 295, February 1692. Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 585.

²⁸ BN MS fr. 7052, fols. 140–1, 24 April 1686.

'New Catholic' elite, sometimes with assistance from police observers, who watched those like the Girardot family, rich wood merchants who lived opposite the Île Saint-Louis, one of whom had been an elder of the church at Charenton. If people like these could be converted, others would follow, and if they did not obey, then their punishment would be a signal example. The King himself took an interest in the conversion of the Girardot family, and following a report in May 1686 that they were not fulfilling their Catholic duty, he ordered three of them to be imprisoned. Shortly after this two of the children were removed and taken to a monastery. At the end of 1691 the government minister Pontchartrain reminded the Lieutenant-General of Police that 'for a long time their conduct has been a matter for comment ... and particularly concerning the [goldsmith] Catillon's little daughter whom they have taken in so as to bring her up in the so-called Reformed Religion'.²⁹

It was clear to everybody that many of the 'New Catholics' were in fact 'mal convertis' – literally 'badly converted'. They did not go to church and were raising their children as Protestants. Following the return of peace in Europe in 1697, the authorities began a new campaign against the Huguenots. Earlier bans on Protestant assemblies and on contact with ministers were renewed, and 'New Catholics' were ordered to attend mass regularly. In response to the many civil unions that former Huguenots were contracting, a ban was placed on marriages outside the Catholic Church. All newborn children were to be baptised as Catholics within twenty-four hours, and to ensure this happened midwives were required to inform the clergy of births. (Protestants did not deem baptism essential for salvation, whereas for Catholics the soul of an unbaptised infant was at dire risk.) All children were to be raised as Catholics and sent to school and to catechism classes until the age of fourteen. Since the families of dying Huguenots often delayed calling a priest until it was too late, doctors were ordered to inform the clergy of anyone who fell seriously ill. These stipulations were followed by a new order that those letting rooms to 'New Catholics' were to give their names to the parish priest, and by another that required former Protestants to seek permission before moving from one province of France to another.³⁰

These rules, which largely reiterated existing laws but added some new restrictions, were followed by a general crack down on people who were evading Catholic religious observance. The police commissaires were again sent to visit Protestant families throughout the city 'to find out if

²⁹ Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 69, 71, 3.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 2: 599. On Protestant baptismal practice, see Benedict, 'The Huguenot Population of France', 23.

they intended to remain in these religious sentiments'³¹ – in other words, to put renewed pressure on them. A new exodus of Huguenots followed, leading to further arrests. Incarcerations of Protestants in the prisons of Paris rose from around 20 a year during the early 1690s to 45 in 1698, 104 in 1699 and 69 in 1700.³² The new Lieutenant-General of Police, Marc-René d'Argenson, under pressure from the King's ministers, suggested harsher measures: taking away the children of the 'badly converted' and of any Huguenots suspected of preparing to emigrate. This was approved by the King, and led to a brief episode of renewed repression. The 'New Catholic' convent for girls, which had taken in only a handful of new inmates since 1690, admitted at least sixteen girls in 1698 and a further sixty in 1699–1700.³³ We do not have records for the male 'New Catholic' institution or for other Paris convents that were routinely used to incarcerate Protestant children, so the total figures were greater. Although these figures were low by comparison with the overall number of Huguenots in the city, and the repression in Paris was always far less harsh than in other parts of France, the arrests were always intended as examples that would intimidate the rest. While they did not succeed in eliminating passive resistance, those Protestants who believed that their nominal compliance and the passage of time might weaken the King's resolve were in despair.³⁴

The impact of the persecution

The effect of these decades of persecution on the former Protestant community was huge. Of course, we know mainly about activities the authorities uncovered, but at the end of the seventeenth century the police were very assiduous and the records probably provide a fairly accurate indication of the situation. The church and the infrastructure associated with it had been destroyed and the pastors driven into exile. The former leaders, the elders of Charenton, had been dispersed and most had emigrated. The few who remained in Paris were closely watched. At first, some attempted to maintain their networks: Jacques de Rozemont, who had managed to hide some of the papers of the consistory in 1685, held secret meetings the following year, and the police suspected others, like the Girardot family, of doing the same.³⁵

In the early 1690s, as Huguenots in exile began to organise, ministers did manage to visit Paris from time to time, though at great personal risk.

³¹ AN TT464. ³² ANTT464. Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 601.

³³ Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 601. ³⁴ Labrousse, *La Révocation*, pp. 197–8.

³⁵ Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 120, 71.

In February 1692 the police captured a pastor who admitted that he had spent six months in the city and a further year living in the environs. He had conducted ‘an infinity’ of small meetings and had been witness to the repentance of ‘thousands’ who had abjured but wished to reaffirm their Reformed faith. He had conducted many baptisms but few marriages, he said, because of the negative consequences for any children. The implication is that he was encouraging people to get married in the Catholic Church, quite a major concession. Another minister was arrested in May and confessed that he had been in Paris for three and a half months, conducting forty or fifty religious meetings. Usually there were only two families present, he said, between six and twenty people including the children and the servants.³⁶ These examples indicate that Protestant pastors were able to operate in the city, sometimes for quite extended periods. Furthermore, the way they were passed from family to family and the many small gatherings they attracted show that some communication networks were maintained among the faithful. These continued to operate into the new century, since the police caught more ministers in 1697 and 1699 and uncovered evidence of prayer meetings in the rue Dauphine and elsewhere in 1700, and again in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine in 1703.³⁷ After this, there is nothing to indicate that pastors were operating in Paris except in the foreign chapels.

There is other evidence that Protestant networks were maintained. They were mobilised when families wanted to emigrate, enabling them to contact people who might act as guides. Some individuals systematically helped their coreligionists. A man named Falaiseau, perhaps related to one of the elders of Charenton, was summoned to the sick-bed of a gravely ill Protestant naval officer, and a police observer stationed outside Falaiseau’s house reported that he came and went at all hours of the night.³⁸ Somehow word was passed around of where he and others like him could be found. In August 1700 the police received a tip-off and arrested Louise Mercier outside a house in the rue de Seine where she had been teaching a young Protestant girl. In her pockets they found two spelling books and a Calvinist catechism, and during her interrogation they extracted the names of six other children she was teaching, as well as that of a Huguenot doctor. She had contact with the Danish embassy, and the police informant claimed that she was being paid by a Protestant wineshop-keeper.³⁹

But informal networks could not replace all the services once supplied by the church at Charenton. The support provided to the poor and the

³⁶ Arsenal MS 10495, fols. 25, 30, 77.

³⁷ Arsenal MS 10522, fol. 89, 19 May 1700. Arsenal MS 10523, fol. 185, 20 October 1700. Arsenal MS 10543, fols. 28, 30 (1703).

³⁸ Arsenal MS 10519, fols. 12–15 (1699). ³⁹ Arsenal MS 10524, fols. 5, 36, 39–40.

sick had disappeared, leaving only the individual charity of more affluent households. This increased the pressure on the Protestant poor to convert in order to benefit from Catholic assistance. It destroyed both the networks and the collective identity constructed by a functioning religious congregation. Furthermore, there was now no systematic way of identifying and welcoming newcomers. Admittedly, the Reformed population of Paris before 1685 was too large and too diverse ever to have formed a single community, and even those who regularly attended the church at Charenton did not necessarily know one another. Marie Delacombe, a servant arrested on the road to Brussels, said she recognised another of those detained as a Protestant because she had seen her at church, but she did not know her name.⁴⁰ The pre-Revocation Protestant congregation seems to have comprised many different but overlapping networks, and now there was nothing to hold them together. One of the pastors captured by the police in 1692 may have been protecting his brethren when he said that '[T]he Protestants of Paris are or appear to be the least disciplined in the entire kingdom ... and there is more unity elsewhere than in Paris, with regard to care of the poor and of the sick who belong to the Reformed Religion.'⁴¹ Yet his observation is consistent with the picture of the faithful drawing back into small family groups whom they could trust, passing visiting ministers from household to household through networks of kin and neighbourhood. There is little sense of city-wide organisation, and this is hardly surprising.

The Dutch, English (later British), Swedish, Danish and Brandenburg ambassadors maintained chapels in Paris and provided some religious services. A royal decree of 1685 had banned French Protestants from these chapels but the pastors asked no questions, and sometimes even offered assistance. At the end of 1685 the Swedish Lutheran pastor baptised five Huguenot children and married several couples. This chapel was closed in 1686–7, when the King of Sweden withdrew his ambassador in protest at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, but after it reopened the pastor assisted quite a number of French Protestants. From 1689 to 1698, however, there was again no Swedish ambassador or chaplain in Paris. The Danish chapel remained open until 1703, but then closed until 1744. The Dutch chapel, the only Calvinist one, also offered assistance to the Huguenots until Louis XIV declared war on the Dutch Republic in 1688 and the ambassador was withdrawn. It reopened from 1698 to 1701 and again provoked Louis XIV's ire by receiving French Protestants, but renewed war closed it again until 1713.⁴² The Huguenots of Paris were largely on their own.

⁴⁰ Arsenal MS 10421, fol. 11, 12 June 1685. ⁴¹ Arsenal MS 10495, fol. 30.

⁴² Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens*, pp. 77–8, 80, 147–8. Léonus-Lieppe, 'La Chapelle de l'ambassade de Hollande ... Vecteur', pp. 373–4.

There were also far fewer of them. The demographic impact of the persecution was immense, perhaps half of the Reformed population having emigrated since 1680. We will never know the exact number, since the records are fragmentary, and in any case the seventeenth-century authorities tended to minimise Protestant numbers in order to justify Louis XIV's claim that they were too few to justify the earlier policy of toleration. Some Catholic historians have taken a similar approach. Protestant historians, keen to emphasise the devastating impact of the Revocation, have been inclined to maximise estimates of refugee numbers. The best figure for Paris is provided by the late nineteenth-century Protestant historian Orentin Douen, who identified 2,400 refugees by name and suggested that there were around 5,000 departures between 1685 and 1687 alone. A modern estimate suggests that around half of the Huguenots in the Paris region emigrated and points out that since peasantry were more tied to the land than artisans, urban Protestants probably left in larger numbers.⁴³ Some of them later returned, and departures were partly compensated by an increase in arrivals from the provinces.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, it is clear that the emigration contributed greatly to the collapse of Huguenot networks in the city.

To the emigrants we need to add converts. It is impossible to know how many Huguenots conformed to Catholic practice after their abjuration. There is ample evidence that many never truly converted, but there were some, as Jean Haechler puts it, whose 'conversions of circumstance became sincere through habit, environment, and collective practice'.⁴⁵ Others again, who may never have accepted Catholicism for themselves, had their children brought up in the dominant religion. One of the Perrinet family admitted to his brother that he had raised his daughter in the Catholic Church even though he was persuaded of its errors: 'I am sending her into Babylon, but there are good lodgings there.'⁴⁶ The pastor Paul Bosc observed bitterly that there were many who thought this way: 'This is their reasoning. The Reformed accept that one can be saved within the Roman Church, when one is of good faith. Why then

⁴³ Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 478–82; Philippe Joutard, 'The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes: End or Renewal of French Protestantism?', in *International Calvinism, 1541–1715*, ed. Prestwich, p. 347; Samuel Mours, 'Essai d'évaluation de la population protestante réformée aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles', *BSHPF*, 104 (1958), 19.

⁴⁴ Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, pp. 285–92. Léonus, 'De la répression à la conversion', pp. 238–9. Yves Krumenacker, 'Le Refuge protestant urbain au temps de la Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes', in *Clandestinités urbaines. Les citadins et les territoires du secret (XVIe–XXe)*, ed. Silvie Aprile and Emmanuelle Retailaud-Bajac (Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2008), pp. 199–213 (pp. 199–200, 207–8).

⁴⁵ Haechler, *Jaucourt*, pp. 27–8.

⁴⁶ J. Lindeboom, 'Un Journal de Paul Bosc (1753–1757), d'abord pasteur, puis physicien', *BSHPF*, 97 (1938), 85.

should I not raise my children in this Church, rather than in a Religion that is banned in France and whose observance will expose them to a thousand difficulties?⁴⁷ It was a natural enough response, and some historians have seen this kind of thinking as creating a generation for whom religion was simply a matter of convenience. Yet it was just as likely to create a new generation of Catholics.

Some conversions were certainly lasting. Christine Perrot, the widow of a wineshop-keeper, broke with her wealthy Protestant family to raise her three children as Catholics, despite the poverty to which they abandoned her as a result. The formerly Huguenot apothecary David Gillet became churchwarden of his parish of Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie, an honour reserved for staunch Catholics. Other 'New Catholics' became nuns or priests, and one of them, Marguerite Catillon, was appointed Superior of the New Catholic convent in Paris in 1751, becoming responsible for converting others to the Catholic faith.⁴⁸ Despite the physical constraint and psychological pressure exerted on young Protestants confined in religious houses, or perhaps because of it, there is evidence that some of them developed a close relationship with their captors. At the end of her life, Louise Poupardin, widow of a wineshop-keeper in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, clearly felt a continued affection for the nuns at Sancerre in whose convent she had been confined, since she left them 300 *livres*, a large sum given the small size of her estate.⁴⁹

Such conversions – and there were many, including children who were removed from their families while young – depleted Huguenot numbers and sometimes led to family bitterness. The banker Pierre Foissin and his wife had twenty-two children, of whom ten survived to adulthood. Most remained Protestant but at least two of the daughters converted and later claimed that they had been denied a significant part of their inheritance. Madame Foissin suspected her Catholic sons-in-law of informing on her husband, leading to his being denied burial in the parish church.⁵⁰

For individuals, the impact of the persecution was often brutal. Many families, like the Foissins, were divided along confessional lines, not a new phenomenon in France, but one that often left a legacy of bitterness.⁵¹ More common still was physical separation. Some parents who persisted in their religious faith lost their children, who become de facto

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Arsenal MS 10654, n.d. [c. 1716]. AN TT142, dossier 7. Caroline Haurez, 'L'Éducation des Nouvelles Catholiques de Paris au XVIIIe siècle', unpublished maîtrise thesis, Paris IV (1997), p. 59.

⁴⁹ Archives de Paris [henceforth ArchP] DC6 224, fol. 149, 2 April 1736. Most of her family were Protestants: AN Y14777, 2 June 1727.

⁵⁰ Arsenal MS 10609, 26 April 1713.

⁵¹ Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 496.

orphans in Catholic institutions. There were also many like Louise Odry, arrested at the border with her four young children in June 1700 and held in solitary confinement, who wrote to her goldsmith husband, in a letter that was largely phonetic and without punctuation:

I speak to no one spend the day and most of the night crying Sorrows will not stop unless you resolve to return to France and become Catholic and I too so that they will allow us to be together and they will give us our poor little family so my dear husband reflect well if you wish to get me out from here this is what you must do otherwise I can say that I will never see you again which will be mightily hard to swallow for you know well that it was my great fear to be separated from you by death but here I am separated from you for ever unless God lays his hand on us.

Her letter was never sent, and after more than a year in the Bastille she agreed to convert and was released.⁵²

Many families were now scattered across several countries. Marguerite Aubert, the sixty-year-old widow of one of the elders of the Charenton church, at first refused to abjure and was imprisoned in the Ursuline convent. Her six daughters, who lived with her, were locked up in separate institutions. After the first month of imprisonment she wrote to say that she had been threatened with permanent solitary confinement in a distant location. She asked them to pray for her and added: '[T]his is perhaps the last letter I will write to you, but if we are separated forever on earth without ever seeing each other again, the Lord will grant us mercy and reunite us in heaven.' She held out for four more months but finally agreed to convert. Her daughters also abjured and were set free, and all of them subsequently managed to leave France. Marguerite went to Holland, where four of her daughters eventually joined her. The two others escaped to England. Of their five brothers, one settled in England, one in Ireland, the three others in the Netherlands. Such dispersal was common.⁵³

Another major consequence of the Revocation was a change in the gender balance of the Protestant population. Detailed studies have suggested that more men emigrated, perhaps because the penalties were greater for them, or possibly because it was easier for men to travel. In Geneva, over half of the refugees who arrived in 1684–6 were single males, less than a fifth were single women and another eighth were couples. The same was

⁵² Arsenal MS 10524, fol. 106.

⁵³ Nathanaël Weiss and Orentin Douen, 'Une Famille d'architectes parisiens. Les Du Ry', *BSHPF*, 45 (1896), 526–7. On the impact of emigration on families see Carolyn Lougee Chappell, "'The Pains I Took to Save My/His Family": Escape Accounts by a Huguenot Mother and Daughter after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes', *French Historical Studies*, 22 (1999), 1–64.

true in Frankfurt.⁵⁴ The Huguenot population that remained in Paris, therefore, had a preponderance of women, many of whom became heads of households, bringing up children and directing the servants alone. Combined with the destruction of the main institutions of the Reformed Church, this almost certainly changed the nature of Paris Protestantism. Before 1685 all those institutions were male dominated – the pastorate, the consistory and the elders with their pastoral and charitable role across the individual quarters of the city. After the Revocation the religious practice of Paris Protestants was driven back into their homes. This in itself posed little difficulty, in that Calvinism emphasised reading the Bible and saying prayers within the household. But in theory these activities were directed by the male head of the family, so the gender imbalance of the emigration now left women the primary responsibility for the religious education of children and Protestant employees.⁵⁵

The campaign against the Huguenots had two further general consequences. One was to leave the Protestant population of Paris – and indeed of France as a whole – far more plebeian. Most of the nobles, magistrates, government officials, bankers and rich merchants who had formed the Protestant social elite and provided many of the church elders had been forced either to convert or to leave. In the years after 1685 there were few Protestants in positions of influence. Banking and trade too had been, in Herbert Lüthy's words, 'decapitated'.⁵⁶ A second further consequence of the Revocation was to make French Protestantism a lay religion. It was not until the 1740s that pastors began to return permanently, and in Paris there were apparently, between the early years of the century and the 1750s, only the chaplains of the foreign chapels, whose presence and interest in the French Protestants was intermittent and whose reach was necessarily limited. It was therefore difficult for the city's Huguenots to have baptisms and marriages conducted or communion provided, and the clergy were not on hand to give advice or to maintain doctrinal purity.

By the early eighteenth century, then, Paris Protestantism was severely disrupted, its organisations and collective identity destroyed, most of its adherents cowed and bruised. Yet still they resisted; rarely overtly, but the parish clergy and even the royal government were well aware that the persecution had not brought the Huguenots back into the Catholic

⁵⁴ Boisson and Daussy, *Les Protestants*, pp. 234–5; Joutard, 'The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes', p. 351. Michelle Magdelaine, 'Francfort-sur-le-Main, plaque tournante du Refuge', in *Le Refuge huguenot*, ed. Michelle Magdelaine and Rudolf von Thadden (Paris: Armand Colin, 1985), pp. 31–44 (p. 38).

⁵⁵ Raymond Mentzer, 'La Place et le rôle des femmes dans les Églises réformées', *Archives de sciences sociales des religions*, 113 (2001), 119–32 (pp. 127–8), makes a similar point.

⁵⁶ Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 1: 74.

fold as they had hoped. Most of the Protestants who remained in Paris in the early 1700s had pretended to convert and observed a minimum of Catholic practice, while avoiding the mass and other aspects of the Roman religion that they found most offensive, like confession and the cult of the saints. They said their prayers in private, taught their children the elements of their religion and waited. Perhaps better times would come after the Sun King – sixty-two years old at the turn of the century – joined his ancestors in the royal tombs at Saint-Denis.

2 Paris: ‘ville de tolérance’

Chain-gangs left twice a year from the Tournelle prison on the Left Bank of the Seine. In 1712 Jean Marteilhe, a Protestant from Bergerac who had been caught trying to escape from France, was in the chain-gang with twenty-one other Huguenots, about to leave on the torturous journey to the Mediterranean galleys. He recalled that they were visited by ‘a good Protestant of Paris’, a rich merchant named Girardot de Chancourt, who approached the Lieutenant-General of Police, the top officials in the Paris Parlement and the governor of the prison to obtain permission to see the prisoners. Shocked at how closely they were confined, he paid the guards to have some of their shackles removed so that they could stretch their limbs, and he gave a further sum to the officer in charge of the chain-gang to provide food for the Protestants along the road. ‘A great quantity’ of Paris Protestants came to see the chain-gang pass through the streets and despite the brutality of the guards rushed forward to embrace them. Four merchants accompanied the prisoners as far as Charenton and paid to have them fed there.¹

The difference between the treatment of provincial and Paris Protestants could hardly have been more starkly demonstrated. Despite the semi-public nature of his action Girardot and the other Paris merchants were not punished. They had access to the highest civil authorities in the city and were treated with a respect utterly denied to the unfortunates in the prison.

Although some members of the Girardot family, like other Paris Huguenots, had suffered after the Revocation, spending brief periods in prison and having their children removed to the New Catholic convent, after 1700 they were left alone. Despite the laws confiscating the property of Protestants who ‘relapsed’ they were able to live and die in their religion and to pass on their considerable wealth to their children. Even

¹ Gaston Tournier (ed.), *Mémoires d’un protestant. Jean Marteilhe de Bergerac, condamné aux Galères de France pour cause de Religion, écrits par lui-même* (Le Mas-Soubeyran par Mialet: Musée du Désert, 1942), pp. 168–73.

immediately after the Revocation, the persecution in Paris had been far more limited than in some other parts of France. It also ended more quickly. The police archives suggest that even in the late 1680s and 1690s, despite bouts of arrests each time the King or his ministers turned their attention to the situation in the capital, the police often turned a blind eye to Protestants who did not draw attention to themselves. And despite the brief renewal of persecution in 1698–1701, the eighteenth-century history of Paris Protestantism is one of growing de facto toleration by the secular authorities and – less willingly – by the Catholic clergy. Well before the so-called 'Edict of Toleration' of 1787, Paris Protestants enjoyed a degree of autonomy and even in some instances a level of official recognition that is surprising in the capital of the kingdom, particularly in a city renowned for being aggressively Catholic.

The Revocation and its aftermath: selective enforcement

Even at the time of the Revocation, the persecution in Paris was far less violent than in many provincial communities. Threats and inducements were the primary means of persuasion, with imprisonment as a back-up measure. Very few Paris Protestants were sent to the galleys. Soldiers, who spread terror in some other parts of France, were perhaps deployed in Paris, but if so for only a very short time and in small numbers, and most were not regular troops but police auxiliaries with orders, it seems, to be moderate in their behaviour. The police had them march ostentatiously through the streets so as to frighten the Protestants, and this seems to have worked. It is also clear from the tone of the correspondence coming from Versailles that the Paris police chief repeatedly dragged his feet in enforcing the anti-Huguenot measures, resisting the harshest ones and repeatedly asking for more time. In the end the King gave him a direct order to bring in soldiers.²

After the initial enforcement of the Revocation, furthermore, the Paris authorities largely turned a blind eye to individual Protestants who did not try to leave the kingdom and who kept a low profile. Between 1686 and 1698 there is surprisingly little evidence of measures to enforce the conversions that the authorities had gone to such lengths to obtain. A document of 1710 claimed that since the Revocation

no master has been received [into the guilds] who did not say he was Catholic, but they are taken at their word, and on that of the guild officials, without any demand for a certificate from their parish priest or other proof ... and whenever

² Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 197–200. Gaston Tournier, *Les Galères de France et les galériens protestants des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, 3 vols. ('En Cévennes': Musée du Désert, 1943–9).

the zeal of certain priests led them to denounce these stubborn Huguenots ... the now deceased President [of the Parlement] de Harlay and Monsieur de la Reynie [*sic*] always believed that they should cover things up.³

This accusation is borne out by the police archives. Individuals who had played a major role in the former Reformed church remained under surveillance, but even people who organised meetings for Protestant worship were treated with extraordinary leniency. Marie Darambure, arrested in 1692, admitted arranging one gathering when a pastor was visiting Paris and that she had attended other assemblies. She refused to divulge any names of people involved, yet after being interrogated she was released. Four years later the goldsmith Coulin too was treated with kid gloves. He had sent his wife and daughter to England in 1695 and the authorities feared he might be about to dispatch his other two children. La Reynie ordered the police officer to find out what would make him stay and persuade him to recall his wife.⁴

This pattern of initial repression with little follow-through is reflected in admissions to the euphemistically named New Catholic convent where Protestant girls and women were taken to be re-educated (Figure 2.1). It was not the only place where they were incarcerated, but the pattern was almost certainly similar elsewhere.⁵ In 1686, just after the Revocation, some ninety-two girls or women entered the convent, most of them probably Parisians. After that, however, admissions dwindled, with only one in 1691 and none at all in 1696. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the end of war in 1697 was followed by a clampdown on Protestants, which can be seen on the graph. Sixteen girls or women entered the convent in 1698, thirty in 1699, and thirty-one in 1700. But after this the numbers declined again, and never returned to this level.

The renewed repression came soon after the retirement of La Reynie as Lieutenant-General of Police and his replacement by d'Argenson, who as we saw above proposed the removal of children as the best means of getting recalcitrant 'New Catholics' to conform. Yet the pressure to act was part of a wider push across the entire country and was driven by Versailles, not by the new police chief. It was part of a pattern of increased severity following major wars, when the King and his ministers were free to turn their attention back to domestic matters, so much so that the Huguenots came to dread the coming of peace. But these bouts of repression highlight the way that the Paris authorities, in normal times

³ AN K1244B. This document is a copy and the author is unknown.

⁴ Arsenal MS 10495, fols. 94–5, 14 February 1692. BN MS fr. 21622, fol. 41, 8 November 1696.

⁵ BNF MS Clairambault 983–4, lists of prisoners.

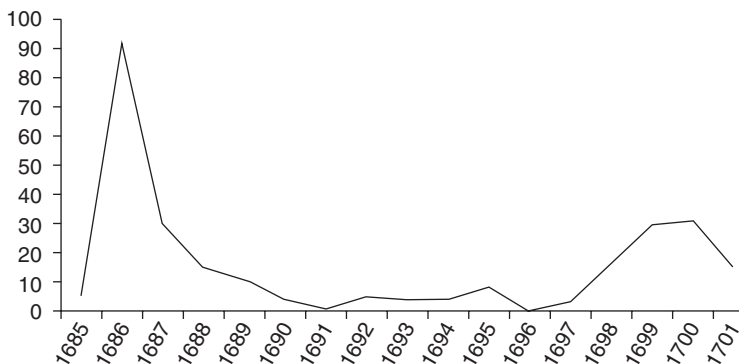


Figure 2.1 Admissions to the women's New Catholic convent in Paris, 1685–1702. Source: Doven, *La Révocation*, 2: 254

when there was no push from Versailles, largely left the Protestants alone. They certainly did not use all the means at their disposal, even though the repressive apparatus in the capital was highly developed.

The Paris police were not known for their clemency and were certainly prepared to act. Protestants – and others – received short shrift if they engaged in overt, public resistance or anything resembling sedition. A man named Cottereau was imprisoned in 1698 for reportedly saying that if the French had any courage they would rise against their ruler, who did nothing but suck the last drop of blood from them, and that the Court was full of whores and their pimps. He had also made frequent visits to England, returning with the apparent aim of strengthening Protestant resistance. Surprisingly, he was not sent to the galleys. Instead, he was put in prison for an indefinite period and seems to have been forgotten, only being released eighteen years later. In a similar case a baker's boy accused of threatening to kill the King was still in prison twelve years later. He had also reportedly burned a crucifix and a rosary and broken another crucifix over his wife's head, saying he would not bow down before devils.⁶

But where there was no active resistance, after the clampdown of 1698–1701 the police seemed reluctant to take any action at all. Even in 1700 d'Argenson opposed confiscating the estate of a former Protestant woman who quite clearly was 'mal convertie'! He wrote to the King's minister that the legislation ordering confiscations was as yet untested in

⁶ Arsenal MS 10512, fols. 33, 51. Arsenal MS 10494, fol. 313, 15 October 1692.

the courts and that he felt it was unwise to attempt a prosecution. 'This woman went to church', he pointed out, 'she listened to the sermons. It is true that she never took communion, but what proof do we have? And how could we prove that at the end of her life she declared herself a Protestant, since neither the nurse nor the domestics are likely to admit to it.'⁷ In 1715, in a comparable case concerning Paul Girardot, a member of the notoriously Protestant family of wood merchants, d'Argenson made a similar legalistic argument: it was true that the clergy had refused Girardot a Catholic burial, but as he had not actually refused to see them and had not formally declared himself to be a Protestant, there was no real proof.⁸ Even where Huguenot emigrants died in England or the Netherlands, the Paris authorities, unlike those in other parts of the kingdom, made no attempt to confiscate their property, as Henri-François d'Aguesseau, the King's representative in the Parlement, indeed admitted in 1712.⁹

Nor was it just a matter of turning a blind eye. There are some indications that the authorities actually protected individual Protestants. The police commissaire Thomin employed a pious Protestant as his domestic servant, and it is hard to believe that he and his wife were unaware of the man's religion.¹⁰ Such tolerance was certainly not universal within the police: Nicolas Delamare, author of the celebrated manual of policing, the *Traité de la police*, seems to have wished to use the full rigour of the law. But his superiors were far less enthusiastic. In 1715 the curé of Saint-Sulpice complained that Protestants were being accepted into some of the guilds. 'Their children and their domestics do not go to any [Catholic] services, the fathers and mothers do not hide their beliefs and advertise them whether they are well or sick; the taverns of these wineshop-keepers and their private rooms are used for gatherings of their coreligionists.' The Lieutenant-General of Police took three weeks to reply, then crisply denied that such assemblies had taken place other than at the Dutch chapel. He referred the matter of guild receptions to the *procureur du roi*, the King's representative in the royal court. This official, in turn, said he was unaware of such things going on but that he would keep a close eye on admissions to the guilds.¹¹ There is no evidence of any further action.

⁷ *Notes de René d'Argenson, lieutenant général de police* (Paris, 1886), pp. 24–5, quoted by Thibaut-Payen, *Les Morts, l'Église et l'état*, pp. 182–3.

⁸ Thibaut-Payen, *Les Morts, l'Église et l'état*, p. 184. For another example, AN TT143. On confiscations in the Berry region see Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*.

⁹ BN MS fr. 7046, fol. 16, letter of 18 September 1712.

¹⁰ Arsenal MS 10672, dossier Gigot (1707). ¹¹ BN MS fr. 7046, fol. 36.

Official motives

D'Argenson was less conspicuously devout and perhaps less personally hostile to Calvinism than his predecessor La Reynie. Nevertheless, his leniency did not reflect any sympathy for the Protestants. There were pragmatic reasons why the authorities in Paris chose not to pursue Huguenots who kept a low profile. The first was their fear that harsh measures would produce further mass departures, with dire consequences for the economy. In the middle of the renewed repression of 1699, anxious to avoid a further exodus from the city, d'Argenson summoned several of the leading merchants and reassured them that they would not be affected. When he received direct royal orders to arrest the banker Foissin he did not dare disobey, but he objected that 'the "poorly converted" Protestants will be very alarmed if this imprisonment appeared to be motivated by his obduracy in the matter of religious observance. But if the King allows, it would be good to attribute it to the emigration of his daughter.' This was duly done. D'Argenson also made clear in instructions to his subordinates that there was to be no frightening the horses. He wrote to the commissaire Delamare about a clock-maker named LaMargueritte, an obdurate Protestant who had sent his daughter to Rouen, often the first step in the passage to England. 'Speak to him, if you please ... and try to reassure all the artisans who are in a similar situation. The flight of people of this kind is extremely difficult to prevent because they carry their trade with them ... you should be as prudent and discreet as you are zealous.'¹²

'We know only too well from experience', wrote d'Aguesseau to Secretary of State Pontchartrain a few years later, 'the great damage that the exodus of the Protestants caused the kingdom, the loss of money, of crafts, manufacturing and industry, and the other sources of commerce and of state wealth that they took with them.' It was important, he continued, to retain those who were still in France. He reiterated this argument when in 1713 he rejected measures aiming to exclude Protestants from the guilds on the grounds that they 'would renew the emigration ... since by an unhappy chance, in nearly all trades the most able workers and the richest businessmen were Protestants'.¹³ Lieutenant-General d'Argenson agreed, adding that pursuing the Huguenots would drive away foreign workers and increase the hostility of the Protestant princes. An official briefing note, undated but probably from early 1724, records that there was no general requirement for aspiring masters and mistresses

¹² Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 605. BN MS fr. 21622, fol. 44, 20 April 1699.

¹³ BN MS fr. 7046, fol. 9.

to prove they were Catholic: '[I]t seemed impractical and would have been an excessive hindrance to trade.' Even where a clause in the statutes explicitly required proof, 'if it were enforced too scrupulously, many good workers might leave the kingdom'.¹⁴

A second major factor restraining the authorities was the fear of disorder. After the riot of 1671 in which a Catholic gentleman had been mistaken for a Huguenot and mauled by a mob, La Reynie wrote that 'such a seditious act, whose consequences could be far-reaching, deserves to be repressed with a degree of rigour'.¹⁵ Bringing order to the turbulent city was one of his key goals. The memory of the Fronde remained fresh and the risk of mobs attacking property, even Protestant property, was unacceptable.

The same considerations made it advisable not to bring military regiments into Paris. Soldiers were already a frequent source of concern because of their violent honour code and their preparedness to use weapons, and the police were very wary of them. There were numerous occasions when royal musketeers took delight in beating up the City Watch, a Dad's Army of retired soldiers and underemployed artisans. The idea of unleashing dragoons even on the Huguenots gave the police nightmares. Late in 1685, when a number of soldiers attacked a fruit shop owned by a Protestant, the authorities were quick to punish them. Early the following year, at the very moment that a few soldiers were apparently brought in to intimidate the recalcitrant Huguenots, the police imprisoned a number of soldiers who billeted themselves without permission on Protestant families. They and the Parlement feared 'the consequences of such disorder', apparently anxious about the effect that even authorised violence might have on the Catholic population. When soldiers disinterred and desecrated the bodies of several Protestants who had been buried outside the city, the authorities again became concerned. 'In the end, these are Christian bodies that we recognise as such, that should be treated with more charity. This disorder is considerable in all the faubourgs and it deserves attention', reads the report. It was sent to the King, who ordered action to prevent such occurrences.¹⁶

The potential disorder was also a moral one. D'Argenson feared that pursuing insincere converts might lead to worse evils: '[I]t would require penetrating the secrecy of personal conscience and might lead to obtaining certificates [of confession] by bribery, or perhaps even to sacrilege.' It would divide families, encouraging their members to denounce each other,

¹⁴ BN MS fr. 7046, fol. 10v. JF 1699, fol. 20v [1724].

¹⁵ BNF MS Clairambault 756, fol. 73, quoted in Saint-Germain, *La Reynie*, p. 301.

¹⁶ Jean Chagniot, *Paris et l'armée au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Economica, 1985), pp. 146, 562. Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 191, 208–9.

'and would cause a resentment that might spread through the entire capital, which should be considered a kind of common fatherland'. As the laws did not apply to foreign Protestants, particularly to the Genevans or other foreigners who had rights of residence in France, it would create invidious distinctions and have 'evil consequences among the common people that it would be imprudent to alarm by unprecedented inquisitions'.¹⁷

Removing Protestant children from their parents involved another kind of risk. The government minister Pontchartrain warned the Lieutenant-General of Police that such action 'sets the child against the father, makes him unable to learn a profession, and often destroys without adequate motive a father's affection for his child'.¹⁸ Removing children threatened both the family and paternal authority, and in a highly patriarchal system of government this was unacceptable.

To these arguments various influential people added others. There was a much greater chance of converting the Huguenots if they remained in a Catholic city, suggested d'Aguesseau, than if they fled to Protestant countries. When assailed by religious doubt they could more readily obtain instruction in the true religion in Paris than anywhere else.¹⁹ This may sound like rationalisation, but given d'Aguesseau's Jansenist piety he probably believed it. Other high-ranking people, particularly in the Church, also justified moderation, in order to obtain genuine conversions.²⁰ The Archbishop of Paris, Louis-Antoine de Noailles, who like many other Jansenist-leaning clerics believed that the Eucharist should be approached only by those who had examined their consciences and truly believed them to be pure, expressed concern that Protestants forced to take sacraments they did not believe in would be committing sacrilege.²¹ Lieutenant-General of Police d'Argenson extended the religious argument further. Harsh repression, he suggested in correspondence with the King's ministers, would be counter-productive because it would arouse sympathy for the persecuted, particularly among the newly converted, who might revert to their former faith. Referring to the prosecution of those who refused Catholic sacraments on their death-beds, he reminded his superiors 'how much this kind of procedure revolts those new converts who are still uncertain, and if it has this bad effect in the provinces it will have an even greater impact in the capital of the kingdom'.²²

¹⁷ BN MS fr. 7046, fol. 10v.

¹⁸ Pontchartrain to d'Argenson, 24 May 1698, quoted in Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 598.

¹⁹ BN MS fr. 7046, fol. 9, d'Aguesseau to Pontchartrain, 14 May 1708.

²⁰ Orcibal, *Louis XIV*, pp. 37–8, 132–3, 66.

²¹ Thibaut-Payen, *Les Morts, l'Église et l'état*, p. 183, n. 347.

²² *Notes de René d'Argenson*, quoted in Thibaut-Payen, *Les Morts, l'Église et l'état*, p. 183, n. 343.

There was a further pragmatic reason why the authorities did not try to enforce the religious laws to the letter. If they did so, wrote La Reynie frankly in 1693, ‘we would find such a great chain of infringements and of guilty persons that it appears far preferable not to recognise them than to expose such a great evil, in the present circumstances, to the public view’.²³ It would be an admission of failure and would undermine the authority of the Crown.

Protestant passive resistance was so widespread that the authorities could not punish everyone, and the police could not admit their own impotence. Paris was a very big city by early modern standards, and sections of the population were highly mobile and difficult to trace. Ironically, the destruction of Protestant organisation made it harder to track Huguenots in the city. There were no longer pastors and elders going to visit the flock and the remaining networks were diffuse and covert. Furthermore, as police spies reported, ‘[T]here are many people from outside who are arriving ... they number more than a thousand souls.’²⁴ Among them was Jean Thomas, who came to the capital after the Revocation ‘in order to profess his religion more freely’. Another man, asked why he had come to Paris, explained that having converted to Protestantism in his home town of Gien, people there had noticed that he had stopped going to church and was reading a lot, so ‘he had come to Paris where he would be better hidden’.²⁵ These two individuals were caught attending religious meetings but otherwise would have escaped attention.

Huguenot resistance thus created a series of dilemmas for the police. Absolutist government demanded obedience to the King’s wishes and hence to the religious laws. Yet another of its key imperatives was public order, and this might be compromised by driving the Protestants underground. Nowhere was this problem more acute than in the case of burials. Since December 1685, the kin or neighbours of deceased Huguenots were required to declare Protestant deaths to the police. But as long as they were afraid of coming to the attention of the authorities, they were hardly likely to do so, and those who died in the city were therefore buried secretly in gardens or in fields on the urban fringe. In 1697 the police discovered that a wool-carder had buried no fewer than eight people – the first of them his mother-in-law – in the garden of his house in the Faubourg Saint-Marcel.²⁶ This was, needless to say, highly unsatisfactory to the police, who preferred to know what was happening even if it meant turning a blind eye.

²³ Quoted in Saint-Germain, *La Reynie*, p. 320.

²⁴ BN MS fr. 21622, fol. 23.

²⁵ Arsenal MS 10527, fols. 47, 238, 28 July 1701. Arsenal MS 10499, fols. 8–10, 29 January 1693. On this immigration see Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, pp. 285–92.

²⁶ Declaration of 11 December 1685, cited in Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, pp. 8–9. Arsenal MS 10509, fol. 182 (1697).

Towards de facto toleration

All this was to lead to an extraordinary and unexpected development. Paris was to become the one part of the kingdom where the authorities adopted an official, though unpublicised, policy of toleration. It was not toleration in the modern sense of freedom of religious practice, but in the more limited seventeenth-century meaning of putting up with something one could not prevent. In 1708 Counsellor of State d'Aguesseau proposed as official policy what the police had largely been doing, when left to themselves, since the Revocation. As far as Paris was concerned, he wrote, 'there will be no pursuit of the living or of the dead on account of their religion, provided there are no assemblies and no public scandal'. In order to prevent further emigration, it was advisable 'to leave them one town where they will find a measure of tolerance and where they can live and die without being harassed on matters of conscience, however misguided they may be'. Paris was the appropriate place because it was a strongly Catholic city where they would be in a small minority, and this would make their conversion more likely. Because of its size, the policy of tolerance would not be apparent and the Protestants could believe they were simply going unnoticed. It would be wise, he went on, to make no public announcement, but to give verbal instructions to the Lieutenant-General of Police and to ensure that all cases were referred to him. In the rest of France the laws should be enforced.²⁷ Louis XIV acquiesced, and henceforth this was to be the official policy towards Paris.

It did not mean that persecution immediately stopped in the city. Rather, the already rather slack enforcement of the anti-Protestant laws continued and declined further, as the preoccupations of the authorities shifted in other directions and they came to see the Protestants as less of a threat. There were also the usual fluctuations, as police attention was drawn to the Huguenots by particular events or by royal orders. Some of those deemed to be opinion-makers continued to come under pressure. Marie Ragnier and her husband Jacob Roy, a wealthy wine-seller in the rue de la Huchette, had their eldest daughter placed with a Catholic seamstress near the Halles, on the other side of the river, and their one son was apprenticed, by direct order of the Lieutenant-General of Police, to a Catholic clockmaker, while the second daughter had been forcibly placed in the New Catholic convent.²⁸ Some Protestants also continued to be pursued by the Catholic clergy. Concern that Huguenots were managing to marry in the parish churches of Paris led the diocese to

²⁷ BN MS fr. 7046, fol. 9, d'Aguesseau to Pontchartrain, 14 May 1708.

²⁸ Arsenal MS 10608, fols. 61–80 (1713).

introduce a requirement for the prospective bride and groom to present a certificate of confession, signed by a priest. This was a practice already in use in other parts of France.²⁹

Nor was Paris completely exempt from the periodic clampdowns, directed by the royal government, that largely coincided either with the end of major wars or with renewed Protestant activity and religious conflict in other parts of France. A good measure of the pattern is once again the confinements at the New Catholic convent for girls, for which the entry records survive throughout the eighteenth century (Figure 2.2). The registers give the girl or woman's name and the names of her parents, her age, place of birth and place of residence where this was not Paris. The graph includes only those who were living in the city. Each entry also indicates at whose request the girl was taken in – which also showed who was paying her keep. Many were 'by order of the King' or of the Lieutenant-General of Police, others at the instigation of the Archbishop, of other members of the clergy or of devout notables. A small number are noted as having come voluntarily – which implies that the others did not. They have been excluded from the graph, as have the Jews and Muslims who very occasionally appear in the registers. (This means that the figures are not immediately comparable with those in Figure 2.1, which seem to include all admissions.) For each individual the date of abjuration is noted, and whether the girl was confirmed and had taken first communion. Occasionally she resisted and left without abjuring, like Catherine Bournau, admitted on 28 September 1704, who 'departed Protestant' on 6 August 1705. The date of departure is always given, in many cases together with an indication of the destination: many girls into apprenticeships, some back to their families, a few to convents. The youngest admitted was six but most were in their teens or twenties, and a few were older women.

The graph shows the decline in imprisonments in the early years of the century, followed by a sharp spike in imprisonments in 1713 after the Treaty of Utrecht, when the royal government once more tried to enforce its anti-Protestant legislation. But this was short-lived and Louis XIV's death in 1715 gave the Protestants new hope. Indeed, as the graph shows, there was initially an unprecedented leniency, with imprisonments dropping away sharply. Perceiving this, the Paris Huguenots began to attend French-language services at the chapels of the Dutch and British ambassadors: in 1715 some 300–400 communicants were received at

²⁹ Chaunu *et al.*, *Le Basculement religieux de Paris*, p. 279; Nicolas Lyon-Caen, *La Boîte à Perrette. Le jansénisme parisien au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2010), pp. 70–1, esp. n. 1. The precise date is unclear but a Protestant said the confession requirement was common in 1707: Arsenal MS 10572, fol. 49.

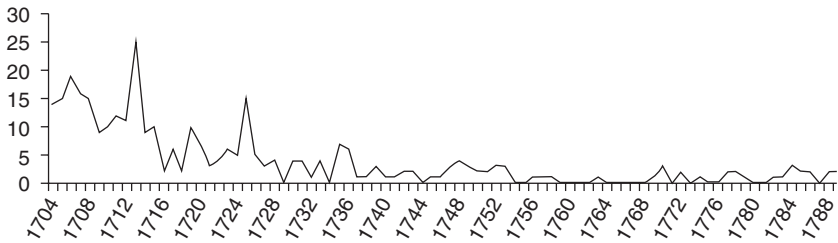


Figure 2.2 Entries of Paris Protestants to the female New Catholic convent, 1704–89 (voluntary entries excluded). Source: AN LL1642

the Anglican chapel and there were growing numbers of marriages. The newly reopened Dutch chapel also welcomed the Huguenots. The Swiss pastor Jean Hollard visited Paris around this time and was surprised to find so many Protestants there, ‘and as zealous as they are. [They] live in this Capital, most at their ease, some from the revenues of their country estates, others from their Trade, some from their Work and their industry.’ He observed that the Court must be aware of the numbers attending Protestant religious services, since the Anglican chapel was clearly visible from the Louvre! He divined that the Court deliberately allowed the services to continue, noting shrewdly that ‘[A]s most of those of the [Protestant] Religion who retire to Paris do so only to be less persecuted than in the provinces, if they were to attempt to deprive them of the shadow of Liberty they enjoy in this Capital, they would be obliged also to leave Paris, and France.’³⁰

In April 1716 the abbot of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, who had law-enforcement power around the abbey, had twenty-five people arrested outside the Anglican chapel, but the British ambassador complained to the Regent, Philippe d’Orléans, who apparently ordered their release. His intervention probably emboldened the Protestants further, and the authorities grew anxious. In January 1718 the Lieutenant-General of Police spread the word that French subjects coming out of the Dutch chapel would be arrested, but this had little effect.³¹ By the end of 1718 the Archbishop of Paris and many of the curés were complaining about Protestants publicly flouting the law, and the Papal Nuncio reported that

³⁰ Jean Rodolphe Hollard, *Relation d’un Voiage nouvellement fait par la France, où l’on voit l’état présent des affaires de la religion en ce royaume-là, par un Ministre suisse qui est présentement à Londres* (London: J. Delage, 1717), pp. 31, 5

³¹ Grès-Gayer, ‘L’Ambassade de Grande-Bretagne’, 32–6, 8, n. 4. In 1716 at least one French Protestant spent a month in the Châtelet prison for attending the sermon at the Anglican chapel: Arsenal MS 10625.

‘the true Religion is being lost in Paris, in full view of everyone: error is being preached and disseminated with impunity’. Another observer commented that ‘Monsieur de Machaut, Lieutenant of Police, who exercises the utmost severity in all his functions, closes his eyes and shows the utmost leniency towards the French Protestants who go to sermons at [Dutch ambassador] Monsieur Hop’s and [British ambassador] Milord Stair’s chapels.’³²

This was more than the government could tolerate. In March, in response to events elsewhere in France as well as in Paris, the Regent issued a reminder of the laws forbidding Protestant religious practice, and the police received orders to clamp down. They promptly arrested seventeen men and women outside the foreign chapels.³³ All were soon released, but the evidence from the New Catholic convent shows the harder line being taken: as [Figure 2.2](#) shows, in 1719 ten girls and women were confined. But this had little effect. The Anglican chaplain estimated that there were 400 people at his service on 30 May 1719 and around 600 at the Dutch chapel, and despite more arrests early in 1720 the crowds continued to come.³⁴ There were further sporadic arrests in 1721 and 1722. In 1724 the French government persuaded London to suspend services in French at the Anglican chapel, but the Dutch one continued to welcome Huguenots and in 1725 a police spy reported that ‘There have never been so many French Protestants at this sermon as there were today.’ There were further arrests there in 1727 and three more at Easter 1729.³⁵

The measures taken in these years were mild by comparison with the earlier persecutions or with those in other parts of France. Those arrested in 1719 were kept in prison for a month and then released, with none of the dire punishments promised by the law. One of them was a wealthy cloth merchant named Houssemaine, sixty years old. Reminded that he had converted to Catholicism in 1685, he responded that ‘as he abjured only to obey the King’s orders, he believed that he could and should continue to live as a Protestant and to bring up his son in that religion’. The case was clear-cut, as the police report pointed out: he ‘cannot but be regarded as a relapsed heretic’. Yet he was released when he promised not to return to the chapel, since – the file notes – he was elderly and

³² Grès-Gayer, ‘L’Ambassade de Grande-Bretagne’, 39.

³³ *Ibid.*, 39–40. Burdette C. Poland, *French Protestantism and the French Revolution. A Study in Church and State, Thought and Religion, 1685–1815* (Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 54.

³⁴ Grès-Gayer, ‘L’Ambassade de Grande-Bretagne’, 41–2.

³⁵ Arsenal MS 10751, fol. 165. Arsenal MS 10756, fol. 148. Arsenal MS 10747, fol. 240, 25 December 1722. Arsenal MS 10903, fol. 232, 1 April 1725. Léonus-Lieppe, ‘La Chapelle de l’Ambassade de Hollande ... instrument’, pp. 1594–5.

imprisonment would damage his business. Again in 1720, those arrested outside the Dutch chapel were released quickly because, reads the police file, 'they are workers who have nothing but their work'.³⁶

In this period, even the clergy seemed to be taking a new line towards the Protestants, giving up on any hope of converting the older generation but still trying to save the souls of the children. The curé of Saint-Leu, learning that a widowed Huguenot lace-worker in his parish had two teenage daughters, went to see her. When she refused to convert, he told her that the law required her to send her daughters to catechism in the parish. She said she would send the younger one, but that the older girl had to work, even on Sundays. The priest then agreed to pay for the apprenticeship of the younger girl, and found a good Catholic mistress for her. He took a harder line towards the sixteen-year-old, though, asking the police to confine her in the New Catholic convent. They did so, but three weeks later she forced a door and escaped.³⁷

A new crackdown on the Paris Protestants came in the mid 1720s, following government concern about Huguenot assemblies in Languedoc. This led to a new royal edict in 1724, marking the beginning of Louis XV's reign and consolidating the eighty or more individual laws directed against Protestants. A few loopholes were closed: for instance 'New Catholics' were now forbidden to have their children educated outside the kingdom.³⁸ Renewed pressure from Versailles led to increased surveillance in Paris and to a new peak of fifteen involuntary admissions to the New Catholic convent in 1725. The parallel male institution may have had a similar intake: in the same year it housed thirty-five to forty boys.³⁹ Still, the penalties even for serious breaches of the laws were surprisingly light. Gédéon Fevot, arrested in August 1724 for teaching Calvinist principles to quite large groups in his rented room, was released in less than five months.⁴⁰ Old Regime gaols were no party, but twenty or thirty years earlier such a short imprisonment would have been unimaginable.

When Cardinal Fleury came to power as Louis XV's de facto First Minister in 1726, there was a general relaxation of persecution throughout the kingdom, and once again it was more marked in Paris than elsewhere. The average number of involuntary admissions to the female New

³⁶ Arsenal MS 10696, fols. 276–95 (1720). Arsenal MS 10707, fol. 86.

³⁷ Arsenal MS 10855, fols. 146–57 (1724). AN LL1642, fol. 107, 20 January 1725.

³⁸ The text of the Edict can be found in Catherine Bergeal (ed.), *Protestantisme et tolérance en France au XVIIIe siècle. De la Révocation à la Révolution (1685–1789)* (Carrières-sous-Poissy: La Cause, 1988), pp. 64–77.

³⁹ Arsenal MS 10807, fol. 453, 'État présent de la Maison des Nouveaux Catholiques'. Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 236, says that the male house received half as many inmates overall.

⁴⁰ Arsenal MS 10826, fols. 144–59.

Catholic convent fell to three per year in the 1730s and to less than two per year in the 1740s. Fleury also seems to have increased ministerial oversight. Whereas in earlier years the police chief had usually made decisions on his own authority, between 1726 and 1743 Fleury's consent to imprisonments was systematically sought.

Despite falling numbers, the removals of children did continue. But here, the raw figures hide other changes that are consistent with the more general decline in persecution. The authorities were increasingly reluctant to take children away from their parents. When they did so, it was now because they were responding to particular perceived threats rather than simply seeking to obtain a conversion. A number of imprisonments, for example, explicitly aimed to prevent bourgeois girls from being sent abroad to marry: Anne Gastebois, Geneviève Henry and Charlotte Courcelle, all aged twenty, in 1714, 1723 and 1731 respectively.⁴¹ The police also sometimes intervened when one or other of the parents had died, particularly the father, since the authorities were particularly uncomfortable about overriding paternal authority. At twenty-two, Catherine Fareinne was still legally a minor: her parents had died, so the police were assuming the role of guardian when they refused to hand her over to Protestant relatives. This was in 1724, but they were still occasionally doing the same thing as late as 1789, when the New Catholic convent took in a nine-year-old girl whose parents had died and whose nearest kin were Protestants living in Geneva.⁴²

The authorities were also happy to step in where the girl's father or mother was Catholic, particularly where that parent gave consent. This was the case for twelve-year-old Marguerite Thérèse Petit in 1724, who was in the convent for five years before being returned to her Catholic mother. Louise Bart, aged thirteen, was brought in by her Catholic father in 1736 and twenty-year-old Louise Simard in 1739.⁴³ We cannot know how the girls felt about this, and none of these admissions is described as voluntary, but the initiative does not seem to have come from the police or the clergy.

There are other instances, too, where what appears to be an imprisonment by royal order in reality took place at the request of the family. Marguerite Jacobé de Naurois was admitted to the convent in June 1709, at the age of twenty-three, and her younger sister joined her in November.

⁴¹ Arsenal MS 10615, fols. 10–34. AN LL1642, fols. 63 (4 April 1714), 97 (30 June 1723). Arsenal MS 11137, fols. 165–76 (1731).

⁴² AN LL1642, fol. 97, 6 August 1723. AN LL1642, fol. 23, 24 May 1789. For another example see Arsenal MS 11081, fols. 98–101 (1730). On official concern about paternal authority, Joblin, *Dieu, le juge et l'enfant*, pp. 71–2.

⁴³ AN LL1642, fols. 109 (24 May 1724), 140 (26 May 1736), 153 (1739).

A file in the police archives reveals that the girls' father had had them brought back from Holland, where they had grown up, and (so he claimed) in order to convert them he had employed a Catholic tutor. When this man had attempted to seduce the older daughter, the father asked for the girls to be incarcerated in the convent.⁴⁴ This is in fact an early example of the kind of police intervention in family affairs that Arlette Farge and Michel Foucault examined in detail and that became very common in the middle years of the century. The eighteenth-century Paris authorities began to imprison sons and daughters at the request of their relatives, usually for disorderly behaviour that might get them into serious trouble or that risked 'dishonour' to the family.⁴⁵ Here we see a Protestant making use of the religious laws to persuade the police to lock up his daughters.

There may have been other similar cases, although Protestant parents were probably reluctant to draw attention to themselves in this way. Some of the girls themselves, however, had no such qualms. In 1719 the Lieutenant-General of Police received a petition from Élisabeth Delaloë, aged twenty, complaining that she and her younger sister were being prevented by their parents from converting to Catholicism. The girls had therefore run away to lodge with a devout lady in the parish of Saint-Roch. They now asked to be admitted to the New Catholic convent and to have their parents obliged to pay their keep, since the family was affluent. The Lieutenant-General personally interviewed the parents and found them harsh and uncaring, and Élisabeth and Marie-Anne were duly confined to the New Catholic convent 'by order of the King'.⁴⁶

This is not the only example of girls being admitted to institutions by royal order, but in fact at their own request. Marie Marguerite Créquerelle sought a place in the New Catholic convent in 1731: both her parents were dead, so a royal order was required. A few years later, fifteen-year-old Louise Estave seized the opportunity presented by her father's absence from Paris – her mother was dead – to persuade the curé of Saint-Eustache to get her a similar order. But in the three years she spent there she refused to convert, and one can only conclude that she was desperate to escape from home. Another fifteen-year-old named Gastebois – we do not learn her first name – also convinced the authorities that she wished to convert and that only the threats of her mother

⁴⁴ AN LL1642, fols. 36 (20 June 1709), 38 (20 November 1709). Arsenal MS 10587, fols. 4–37.

⁴⁵ Arlette Farge and Michel Foucault, *Le Désordre des familles. Lettres de cachet des Archives de la Bastille* (Paris: Gallimard/Juliard, 1982).

⁴⁶ Élisabeth was later arrested for fraudulently claiming to have been cured of breast cancer by praying to the Jansenist deacon Paris, whom many people in Paris claimed was a saint. Arsenal MS 10663, dossier Laloe. AN LL1642, fol. 81, 20 June 1719.

were preventing her from doing so. She was taken to the Ursuline convent, but in less than a week the Mother Superior was asking for her to be removed because she was very obstinate in her Protestant faith and a bad influence on the other girls!⁴⁷

These are some of the cases where detailed files have survived, but there were no doubt others. They show that there were specific circumstances in which the police continued to lock girls up, and this explains why royal orders were still very occasionally being issued even in the 1780s. They were being employed very differently from the way they had been used in the early years of the century. While the authorities continued to facilitate the conversion of Protestants, they were less and less likely to initiate action, and the circumstances in which they intervened became far more limited.

The same official reluctance to enforce the anti-Protestant laws is confirmed by other evidence. The government remained concerned about emigration and about the export of capital from France and therefore continued to require New Catholics to seek permission before selling valuable real estate. When Pierre François Houssemaine sought to sell a farm in 1734 the Lieutenant-General of Police stated bluntly that '[H]e professes the Reformed Religion, as does his wife, even though they sometimes go to church; the account I have had of their conduct leaves me in no doubt on this score.' But, he went on, Houssemaine was having some difficulty in his business and needed cash. 'This individual, furthermore, runs a large cloth business throughout the kingdom ... and there is no sign that he intends to use the proceeds of this sale to go abroad. I therefore think, my lord, that there is no inconvenience in granting his request.'⁴⁸ The police took the same view of the Girardot family, similarly well known for their continuing Protestantism. Already in 1719 the government had granted them permission to sell a number of rural estates on condition that they plough the money into their business. Ten years later they again applied to sell land and the Lieutenant-General reported that they were 'all new converts who accomplish badly their Catholic duty. They have, however, a very good reputation among the merchants and I am assured that they conduct their business as wood merchants with great probity; furthermore, since they are all rich and well established in Paris ... I think there is no inconvenience in granting them permission.'⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Arsenal MS 11137, fols. 214–20, March 1731 (Créquerelle). On Estave, AN LL1642, fol. 139, 17 January 1736 and Arsenal MS 11320, fols. 384–95. For Gastebois, Arsenal MS 11463, fols. 67–82 (1740). For another example, Arsenal MS 10670, January 1719 (Monvoisin).

⁴⁸ ANTT149, fol. 308, 17 April 1734. ⁴⁹ ANTT143, nos. 24–7.

In the same way, the laws ordering the confiscation of the estates of 'lapsed Catholics' were actively disregarded in the capital. In 1738, a lace merchant named Jean Houzel died 'in the errors of Protestant religion', as the local parish priest attested. Someone reported that his widow was about to emigrate, so the authority responsible for administering seized Protestant property immediately swooped. But the Lieutenant-General of Police overturned the confiscation and even made the authority pay the legal expenses, putting the same legalistic argument as his predecessor d'Argenson: the clergy had not actually tried to bring Houzel the Catholic last rites, so he had not technically refused them. The estate was not valuable enough to encourage the heirs to depart, and seizing the estate 'could cause much anxiety and confusion for a huge number of families who are in the same situation as Houzel, who while not professing the Catholic religion are very attached to this Kingdom'. 'New Catholics' living in Paris had little to fear as long as the authorities were persuaded they would stay.⁵⁰

The police nevertheless maintained surveillance of the Dutch chapel, and the arrival in 1740 of a new Lieutenant-General of Police – Claude-Henri Feydeau de Marville – was marked by the publication of an ordinance renewing bans on French Protestants going there.⁵¹ Yet Marville did not take any other action, although following the arrest of a man caught proselytising in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine in 1742, he did obtain the names of local 'New Catholics' from the Catholic priest, and requested a list of French subjects who were attending sermons at the Dutch chapel.⁵²

The threat was never removed, of course. The Paris Huguenots were well aware that the non-enforcement of the laws always depended on the views of particular government ministers and key officials. In 1746 the comte de Maurepas, who after Fleury's death had oversight of affairs in Paris, felt that 'examples are necessary to control the Protestants who live in this city'. He ordered the arrest of a wineshop-keeper named Guimet,

⁵⁰ AN TT149, fol. 322. For later enforcement of the rule on sales see, for example, A. de Boislisle (ed.), *Lettres de M. de Marville, lieutenant général de police, au ministre Maurepas (1742–1747)*, 3 vols. (Paris: H. Champion, 1896–1905), 1: 150 (1 November 1743), 170 (15 February 4). On Houzel and his family, Béatrix de Buffévent, *L'Économie dentelée en région parisienne au XVIIIe siècle* (Pontoise: Société historique et archéologique de Pontoise, du Val-d'Oise et du Vexin, 1984), pp. 350–65, esp. 60. For the functioning of the Régie and the enforcement of these laws in the Berry region see Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, pp. 344–6.

⁵¹ Léonus-Lieppe, 'La Chapelle de l'ambassade de Hollande ... Vecteur', p. 375. On Marville, de Boislisle, *Lettres de M. de Marville, lieutenant général de police*, 1: 1–liv, lxiv–lxxvii.

⁵² Arsenal MS 10200, 19 July 1742.

who had been caught attending the Dutch chapel. Guimet was imprisoned for ten days – a very mild punishment compared with earlier incarcerations – and was released on condition that he did not return. We know that the chapel was again being watched in 1766 but there is no evidence that surveillance continued after that.⁵³

There were always, as we have seen, some things the authorities would not countenance. Emigration, any attempt to convert Catholics and the presence of Protestant pastors were all taken very seriously, as was any form of Protestant organisation, except at the Dutch chapel, which the police could not close but which from their perspective had the advantage of being public and therefore easy to watch. In 1749 the police rounded up a gang that was arranging marriages in Paris for Protestants from the provinces, but those arrested were Catholics and no Paris Huguenots were involved.⁵⁴

The authorities were also nervous about indiscriminate mixing between Catholics and Protestants. Protestants – foreign ones at any rate – were welcomed in the early freemasons' lodges. The Swedish Lutheran nobleman Axel Wrede-Sparre was initiated into the first Paris lodge in 1731. The second lodge, founded by Thomas LeBreton in 1732, received both the British ambassador, Lord Waldegrave, and the comte de Saint-Florentin, the man who directed much of the persecution of French Protestants in the middle decades of the century. Despite this aristocratic participation, or perhaps because of it, the Paris authorities became uneasy. At the Police Assembly of 1 August 1737, the First President of the Paris Parlement, the Lieutenant-General of Police, the King's representative (*procureur général*) in the Parlement and the head of the City Hall (*prévôt des marchands*) decided to ban freemasonry on several grounds, including its tendency to see religious differences as unimportant and its acceptance of people of all ranks, conditions and religions.⁵⁵

It was a long time, too, before the Paris authorities were prepared to countenance Protestants being admitted to offices in the gift of the government, and this ruled out many opportunities for educated men. Alongside direct employment in the law or administration were many thousands of offices that the government invented and sold, and many

⁵³ Arsenal MS 11594, fols. 342–52 (1746). Archives de la Préfecture de Police, Paris, AA 1, nos. 643–50, reports on French Protestants attending the Dutch chapel, March–August 1766.

⁵⁴ AN Y13643, 7 April 1749.

⁵⁵ Pierre Chevallier, *Les Ducs sous l'acacia, ou les Premiers Pas de la Franc-Maçonnerie française, 1725–1743* (Geneva: Slatkine, 1994), pp. 71–97. Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire, *L'Europe des francs-maçons, XVIIIe–XXIe siècles* (Paris: Belin, 2002), pp. 29, 48. BN MS fr. 11356, fols. 333v–334v.

jobs in organisations contracted to do government work. These included the different *fermes* that collected taxes, supplied the army and the hospitals and controlled different sectors of the economy. In all these areas the religion of candidates does seem to have been monitored, since we find hardly any Protestants in these sectors before the middle of the century. Lieutenant-General of Police René-Louis de Voyer d'Argenson, in office in 1720 and again from 1722 to 1724, felt that while Protestants should be allowed freedom of conscience, they should not be allowed to enter the King's service.⁵⁶ He went on to become a direct adviser to the King, well placed to enforce this policy.

The few possible exceptions were men who appeared to be genuine converts. Étienne Perrinet was descended from a dynasty of Huguenot wine-sellers but thanks to the patronage of the duc de Noailles was able to find a job in the *sous-fermes des aides*, which dealt with taxes on wine. Then he was employed in the East India Company and finally, in 1719, in the General Farm, the agency responsible for indirect taxes. There were occasional rumours, but no evidence that he was anything but an orthodox Catholic.⁵⁷ Another employee of the General Farm in the early years of the century, Étienne Chastelain, was certainly Protestant, but we only learn this after his retirement, when at the age of seventy-five he was suspected of trying to convert Catholics. It also seems that in the early decades of the century, one and possibly two of the seventy or so *payeurs des rentes* of the Paris City Hall followed the Reformed faith. Their job was to make interest payments on loans to the Hôtel-de-Ville, one of the major forms of investment in Paris, tightly controlled by the government. It is a surprise to find Huguenots in such an important and prestigious office.⁵⁸

These were unusual cases, but they reinforce the general observation that Paris came in for very different treatment from many other parts of the kingdom. There was certainly no trace in the capital of the widespread renewal of persecution or of the savage repression that took place in Normandy, Languedoc and Dauphiné after the War of the Austrian Succession ended in 1748. Again in 1754–6, when the last bout of kingdom-wide persecution peaked, Paris was untouched.⁵⁹ In essence,

⁵⁶ Nick Childs, *A Political Academy in Paris, 1724–1731. The Entresol and its Members* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2000), p. 155.

⁵⁷ Durand, *Les Fermiers généraux*, pp. 104, 33.

⁵⁸ Arsenal MS 10958, fol. 280 (1727). AN LL1642, fol. 66, 8 October 1714. ANY12026, 27 March 1733. On the *payeurs* see Marcel Marion, *Dictionnaire des institutions de la France aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: Auguste Picard, 1923), pp. 435–6.

⁵⁹ For the general chronology see Richard, *La Vie des protestants français*, pp. 158–9. See also François-Xavier Emmanuelli, 'La Fin des persécutions en Provence au XVIIIe siècle', *BSHPF*, 121 (1977), 516–30; Pappas, 'La Répression contre les protestants'.

then, from a very early date the city authorities left the Protestants alone unless they did things the government considered seditious or openly defiant, and unless there was specific pressure from Versailles. The laws against them were less and less enforced, and the occasional penalties were very mild.

Towards official acceptance

The authorities increasingly turned a blind eye to the Paris Huguenots but could not entirely ignore their presence. While the city authorities and the government never publicly recognised the Protestants, some of the policies put in place unofficially acknowledged them. There are even signs of a growing sympathy for their situation, although it was not shared by all officials.

The most obvious occasion when the Protestants could not be ignored was when they died. Known or suspected Protestants were denied burial in the cemeteries attached to the different parish churches. As mentioned earlier, neighbours or relatives had to find a place to inter them, usually in gardens or in fields on the edges of the city. The police were understandably unhappy about this practice, although as long as the Huguenots were fearful of being identified it was bound to continue. In 1719, however, a Protestant delegation approached the Lieutenant-General of Police, Louis Charles de Machault d'Arnouville, requesting that a single location be found for Protestant burials. This suggests a new confidence among the leading Paris Huguenots but Machault, perhaps smarting from accusations of being too soft on them, refused, simply ordering the police commissaires in each quarter to keep a record of the name, address, rank and occupation of the deceased.⁶⁰ There was some further streamlining of the procedure for registering Protestant deaths during the 1720s, for the police records become more frequent and increasingly uniform both in layout and in the procedure they describe. The police noted the identity of the deceased and checked the corpse, presumably to rule out foul play. They obtained the testimony of one or two witnesses that the deceased had indeed died a Protestant. The burial took place at night, in the presence of a police officer and no more than two witnesses, with no lights or fanfare. After 1723, two of the wood-yards along the river began to be used frequently, in particular one belonging to the Girardot family, although Protestants continued to be buried in fields and gardens until

⁶⁰ Charles Read, 'Les Sépultures des protestants étrangers et régnicoles à Paris, au XVIII^e siècle d'après les dépôts de l'état civil incendiés en 1871', *Bulletin historique et littéraire de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français*, 36 (1887), 25–35, 87–90, 133–41, 203–10, 260–9, 369–77 (26).

the mid 1730s. A spot behind the Capucins monastery was also commonly used. In 1724 a cemetery for foreign Protestants was opened in a secluded spot behind high walls near the porte Saint-Martin, and some French-born Huguenots also found their way into that. Around 1730 there was a further tightening of control, when the Lieutenant-General of Police began to approve all Protestant burials personally. Finally in 1736 a royal declaration required the signature of the royal representative in the Châtelet court, the *procureur du roi*, whose signature always appears on the documents after this date. This bureaucratic process is significant because it constituted official recognition that there were non-Catholic French subjects and that they could be buried without being condemned for abandoning the Catholic faith. After 1737, a wood-yard belonging to Étienne Moreau, on the bank of the river adjoining the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, became the exclusive burial place for French Protestants. The area used for interments had a wall built around it and effectively became an unofficial cemetery. There was a porter at the gate and a register was kept of all burials.⁶¹

The police officials were well paid for registering these deaths. Their official fee for each burial was around 40 to 50 *livres*, but since this represented one to two months' wages for a labourer it is hard to believe it was often paid. Certainly by the late 1740s the police were routinely waiving it for poor foreign Protestants and even for French-born ones, on receipt of an attestation from the chaplain of the Dutch Embassy.⁶² This appears to reflect a certain sympathy for the Protestants, at least on the part of the commissaire in charge of the cemetery, with whom successive chaplains seem to have developed a good relationship. In many cases the pastor made clear that the chapel would pay the fees but expressed his hope that the police would not demand them. 'I am very sorry, Monsieur, to trouble you eternally with fruitless tasks; here is yet another burial deserving of your generous kindness', he wrote in June 1771. Sometimes he stressed the 'frightful poverty' of the deceased – 'her husband is a labourer at 21 or 24 sous per day', he noted in one case in 1773.⁶³

In 1770 the Lieutenant-General of Police, Gabriel de Sartine, made a further change that again revealed a certain sympathy for Protestant

⁶¹ Garrisson, 'Les Infirmeries protestantes', 37–42. For burials behind the Capucins monastery see AN Y14527, 25 September 1732; AN Y12381, 3 February 1736. The register was destroyed in the 1871 fires but was used by Read, 'Les Sépultures des protestants', 134.

⁶² Garrisson, 'Les Infirmeries protestantes', 72. AN Y10990A, 2 March, 21 November 1746; AN Y11566, 18 April 1750; AN Y11570, 17 March, 3 April, 10 April, 8 June, 16 October, 22 October 1754.

⁶³ AN Y15279, 12 June 1771. AN Y15281, quoted in Garrisson, 'Les Infirmeries protestantes', 72.

families. He did not intend, he wrote to his subordinates, to alter the practice whereby each local commissaire recorded the deaths in his own quarter, but because this made it difficult for families to track down the relevant documents he wanted them all to notify the officer who looked after the cemetery for foreign Protestants, who would keep a central record.⁶⁴

Yet another change came in 1777, at the instigation of the Dutch ambassador, who suggested to Sartine's successor, Jean-Charles-Pierre Lenoir, using the courtyard of the cemetery for foreign Protestants to bury French Protestants. Lenoir, having consulted the relevant government minister, agreed. 'The French Protestants not having any official place to bury their dead, it would be sensible, and more proper, to designate one for them that is not used for any other purpose. The courtyard of the Cemetery for foreign Protestants being absolutely empty I think may be used for this purpose, without any confusion.'⁶⁵ This gesture too represents recognition of the existence of the French Protestants and once again a degree of sympathy, since Lenoir was sensitive to the indignity of burials in a wood-yard. Four years later, according to his memoirs, the government decided to permit funerals during daylight hours instead of exclusively at night.⁶⁶

Burials were not the only area in which this kind of tolerance was extended. In 1743 the royal government, always short of money, announced a new street-cleaning tax. The following year, the local police and city officials nominated 160 Paris notables to advise on the best way to collect it. Although this was at the very moment when Huguenots in Poitou and Languedoc were suffering a new round of persecution, at least three of the men chosen were Protestants, the bankers Louis Chabert, Kornmann fils (probably Pierre) and Henri Burrisch. Chabert was from Geneva but was descended from Huguenots; Kornmann was a Lutheran from Strasbourg; while Burrisch's family hailed from Rouen. Their Protestantism rendered these men legally ineligible for public office, yet they were considered suitable to represent the interests of the local bourgeoisie. They were selected, presumably, for their wealth and their prominence in commercial circles, but also because they belonged to the elite networks of the men who nominated the notables. Burrisch and Kornmann lived in the same house as the commissaire Blanchard, who proposed them both and who had attended Burrisch's marriage

⁶⁴ AN Y15114A, 10 January 1770.

⁶⁵ Lenoir to commissaire Duchesne, 30 September 1777, quoted in Read, 'Les Sépultures des protestants', 89.

⁶⁶ 'Mémoires de J.C.P. Lenoir, ancien lieutenant général de police de Paris', in Vincent Milliot, *Un Policier des Lumières* (Paris: Champ Vallon, 2011), pp. 441–1063 (p. 480).

contract ten years earlier. There were thus ties between some police officers and certain wealthy Protestants.⁶⁷ On an institutional level, their selection is further evidence that by the 1740s Catholicism was no longer an indispensable prerequisite for notability.

And in the following decades, we find larger numbers of Protestants holding offices and working in areas from which the government had earlier deliberately excluded them: in the tax system, in the Paris customs and the royal lottery.⁶⁸ In 1751 a Lutheran, Guillaume-Joseph Loeffler, was chief clerk of the royal printery. David Modena de Saint-Wast, who died in 1761, described himself as *commissaire provincial d'artillerie*, presumably in military procurement, while in the 1770s Jacques Burguère was *caissier général des vivres*, no doubt also supplying the army.⁶⁹ There was a proliferation of *contrôleurs* and *officiers*, some of them honorific offices purchased for investment, though the position of *contrôleur des messageries* held by one of the Houzel sons was probably a real job.⁷⁰ Yet even honorary offices were symbolically significant. The title of *contrôleur des trésoriers généraux de la maison du Roi*, held in 1757 by the Paris-born Protestant Michel Jacob, was a grand title for a Huguenot to claim. So too, in local terms, was the office of *dixainier* occupied by the furniture-maker Pierre Migeon in the 1750s, and it did on occasion involve participation in public ceremonies.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Laurence Croq and Nicolas Lyon-Caen, 'La Notabilité parisienne entre la police et la ville: des définitions aux usages sociaux et politiques', in *La Notabilité urbaine, Xe–XVIIIe siècles*, ed. Laurence Jean-Marie (Caen: CRHQ, 2007), pp. 125–57 (pp. 136, 153). I am grateful to Croq and Lyon-Caen for supplementary information on Burrisch and Chabert. See also Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 1: 259; 2: 324.

⁶⁸ Pierre Corsange, commis à la douane, ANY11497, 1 February 1776. Jean Barral, commis aux écritures aux Fermes, ANY10911, 25 June 1777 and ANY15486, 1785. Nicolas Tavernier, employé aux tailles, AN Y15277, 5 September 1769. Jacques Bonneau de Marais, employé dans la régie de la loterie royale, ANY15288, 17 December 1780.

⁶⁹ AN Y12416, 29 January 1751. MC LIX 270, 22 December 1761. AN Y13968, 6 June 1775.

⁷⁰ Nicolas Cury, contrôleur des trésoriers de l'ordinaire des guerres de la maison du Roi, AN Y15286, 29 April 1778. François Porte, contrôleur des trésoriers des gardes françaises et suisses, ANY14660. Jean-Baptiste Lefebvre, officier de la Reine and Jean Delaire, officier de l'Hôtel de Ville, AN Y15289, 22 August 1781. Pierre Chaigneau, contrôleur des fermes générales pour la Régie des bois à Paris, Bibliothèque de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français [henceforth SHPF] MS 326, fol. 172 (1788). Daniel Dupont, ancien officier des chasses, AN Y12417, 20 September 1751. Houzel's position is mentioned in Pierre-Louis-Nicolas Delahaye, *Journal d'un maître d'école de l'Île-de-France (1771–1792): Silly-en-Multien, de l'Ancien Régime à la Révolution*, ed. Jacques Bernet (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2000), p. 125.

⁷¹ AN Y11573, 18 April 1757. Sophie Mouquin, *Pierre IV Migeon, 1696–1758. Au coeur d'une dynastie d'ébénistes parisiens* (Paris: Perrin et fils/Les Éditions de l'Amateur, 2001), p. 21. ANY11573, 18 April 1757.

A new landmark came with the appointment in 1763 of Antoine Court de Gébelin as the official representative of the Reformed Churches of France in Paris. The son of Antoine Court, the well-known pastor and Huguenot activist, he was commissioned by the 1763 synod, which met in Nîmes, to lobby the government on their behalf. The fact that he was a citizen of the Swiss canton of Vaud gave him legal protection, and he was also a respected scholar, but the fact that he was received by government ministers, and allowed to protest when Huguenots in Poitou and Dauphiné and later Béarn and other parts of France suffered renewed persecution, represented de facto government recognition of the existence of French Protestants.⁷²

In 1764 another barrier was breached when the Protestant banker Jean Cottin was ennobled. Two years earlier, the Finance Minister had set a further precedent by appointing Jean-Robert Tronchin – Voltaire's banker – as one of the Farmers-General. Tronchin was Swiss, and the General Farm was not quite a government instrumentality, but it was an integral part of the tax system and the government determined the selection of its sixty directors. This was a clear sign that it was no longer necessary to be Catholic in order to occupy prominent and lucrative positions. It was followed by the appointment of Tronchin's nephew, also named Jean-Robert and also a Protestant, as one of the six adjunct directors. By the mid 1780s, the employees of the General Farm were no longer required to be Catholic, either.⁷³ By then, of course, Jacques Necker – Swiss-born but living in Paris since the early 1750s – had served his first term as Finance Minister, from 1776 to 1781. In 1781 Court de Gébelin was appointed as one of the royal censors.⁷⁴

Another Tronchin, Théodore, came to France from England in 1766 and was appointed as personal doctor to the duc d'Orléans, attending Voltaire in his final illness in 1778, and becoming something of a celebrity in Paris with his theories on the benefits of fresh air. Less than a hundred years after Louis XIV had had Protestants expelled from all the royal academies, Tronchin was received as a member of the Académie royale de chirurgie. His sons were also granted positions in the Duke's household, and despite the laws banning Protestants from holding public

⁷² Paul Schmidt, *Court de Gébelin à Paris (1763–1784). Étude sur le protestantisme français pendant la seconde moitié du XVIIIe siècle* (Saint-Blaise et Roubaix: Librairie Fischbacher, Foyer solidariste, 1908).

⁷³ Durand, *Les Fermiers généraux*, pp. 601–2.

⁷⁴ Sven Stelling-Michaud (ed.), *Le Livre du recteur de l'Académie de Genève (1559–1878)*, 5 vols. (Geneva: Droz, 1959–76), 2: 579. He may never have actually acted in this capacity, however: personal communication from Wallace Kirsop.

offices one of them was permitted to purchase the position of Trésorier général du Marc d'Or.⁷⁵

The price of 'tolérance'

None of this, of course, changed the legal position or represented real religious freedom. Paris Protestants could not legally worship, marry or have their children baptised or educated in their own faith. When they died, no more than two people were allowed to attend their funerals, which had to be held in the middle of the night. Unless they had managed to marry in a Catholic church, their unions and their children were technically illegitimate. They were excluded from most of the offices that enriched many middle-class Paris families and that, equally importantly, conferred honour and prestige. The sons of educated Protestants could not, with rare exceptions, aspire to positions in law or administration.

Even the limited, de facto toleration they enjoyed came at a price. Most of them, to avoid trouble, had their children baptised in the Catholic Church. Until the 1760s they remained under loose surveillance at the Dutch chapel, or if they wished to travel or sell property. They had to keep a low profile, and could never be certain how much leeway would be allowed. Although with hindsight we can see that persecution was always relatively mild in Paris, and that it ended entirely in the 1740s, this does not diminish the suffering of those who were imprisoned or whose children were abducted. Nor could the city's Huguenots ever be sure that the authorities would continue to look the other way. They were well aware of the situation in other parts of France, where many had family members, and where periods of declining persecution – between 1715 and 1724, then again from 1726 to 1748 – were followed by harsh repression. The end of the War of the Austrian Succession in 1748 cleared the way for renewed anti-Protestant action in a number of regions, including nearby Normandy, where after a period of relative calm, Protestant children were again removed from their parents in the late 1740s and 1750s. Two pastors or preachers were put to death in Dauphiné in 1745, two more in Poitou in 1750, another in Toulouse in 1762: this was the last such execution, but no one knew that at the time. The 1760s saw the widely publicised execution of Jean Calas and the condemnation in very similar circumstances of Pierre-Paul Sirven. Arrests took place in the Berry, Beauce and Brie regions and in Picardy in the 1770s, and a preacher was arrested near Bourges as late as 1787. Some of these

⁷⁵ Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 2: 208. 'Mémoires de J.C.P. Lenoir', pp. 588–9. McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment*, p. 266.

episodes corresponded to fluctuations in royal policy, but their incidence often depended on purely local initiatives by a zealous new official, or pressure from the bishop, to which the minister responsible, Saint-Florentin, was particularly receptive. John McManners describes him as a zealous bureaucrat with 'the mentality of the commandant of a concentration camp', and he was responsible for Protestant affairs from 1725 to 1775.⁷⁶ Fortunately for the Huguenots of Paris, he had little authority in the capital, where the Lieutenant-General of Police and the Parlement were responsible for matters concerning religion.

This background explains why in 1764 a group of Paris Protestants tried to persuade Court de Gébelin to abandon his efforts on behalf of the French Reformed Churches, pointing out that if his plans went awry he could return to Switzerland 'whereas their wives, their daughters would be exposed to the most cruel fate'.⁷⁷ In Paris itself, even though the last arrest we know of outside the Dutch chapel was in 1746, an isolated incident, it was not until 1771 that Jean-Philippe Delorme and his French-born wife Marie Gadeau felt confident to marry in the Swedish chapel and declare their two adult children legitimate. Other Paris Protestants apparently did not dare to emerge from clandestinity until the Revolution, since very few of those who were married or who formalised their de facto relationships after 1789 appear in the surviving registers of the foreign chapels.⁷⁸

They may have been right to be cautious. Even at the very end of the Old Regime certain key Paris administrators opposed public recognition of French Protestants. The *procureur général* of the Parlement, Guillaume François Louis Joly de Fleury, was convinced that the so-called Edict of Toleration of November 1787 'will be the end of religion and of the monarchy'.⁷⁹ The Lieutenant-General of Police Louis

⁷⁶ Boisson and Daussy, *Les Protestants*, pp. 248–52, 257–60. Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, pp. 193–6. Krumenacker, *Les Protestants du Poitou*, p. 190. Pappas, 'La Répression contre les protestants', p. 125. Yves Krumenacker, 'L'Application de la législation anti-protestante en France après 1685', in *Normes juridiques et pratiques judiciaires du Moyen Âge à l'époque contemporaine*, ed. B. Garnot (Éditions universitaires de Dijon, 2007), pp. 141–50 (p. 148). McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 593–4, 607–9 (quotation p. 607).

⁷⁷ Court de Gébelin to Végobre, 11 May 1764, quoted in Daniel Robert, 'Court de Gébelin et les Églises', *Dix-huitième siècle*, 17 (1985), 179–91 (187).

⁷⁸ Janine Driancourt-Giroud, *Registres des communautés luthériennes des ambassades de Suède et du Danemark à Paris de 1679 à 1810*, 2 vols. ([Paris]: Cercle Généalogique d'Alsace, Section Île-de-France), vol. II, mariages, Chapelle de Suède, no. 149. For another example, no. 75. SHPF CP 15, 'Notes concernant la bénédiction religieuse des mariages des protestants de Paris', 1793–1814.

⁷⁹ Letter to his brother, 8 December 1787, quoted in Philippe Payen, *Les Arrêts de règlement du Parlement de Paris au XVIIIe siècle. Dimension et doctrine* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1997), p. 345.

Thiroux de Crosne dragged his feet on implementing the Edict, which ordered local authorities to keep a register of Protestant marriages: in late March 1788, admittedly only a little after the Parlement finally approved the Edict, there was still no register for Paris. At that point a group of prominent Protestant bankers hired a meeting room and engaged a pastor to conduct ceremonies. In December they went over de Crosne's head, seeking retrospective permission for private worship from the relevant government minister, Pierre-Charles-Laurent de Villedeuil, citing the precedent of Strasbourg, where such permission had already been granted. The request was sent back to the police chief, who undertook to make inquiries. He did seek advice from the police commissaire responsible for Protestant matters, Pierre-François Simonneau, who discreetly supported the request, telling his reluctant superior on 2 February 1789 that 'I have more than once heard Protestants in Paris complain of being treated more harshly than the Jews, who have several synagogues where they worship peacefully.' De Crosne did not agree, suggesting that it would be stretching the terms of the Edict and that the chapels of the Protestant diplomats already provided these services. He did not respond to repeated reminders from the Minister. So in March 1789 the Protestant leaders turned to the Minister of Justice, who granted them verbal permission to meet for worship. The first service was held on 7 June, a month after the opening of the Estates General and in an atmosphere of growing defiance of the royal government. The negotiations show that some high-ranking officials continued to harbour reservations about allowing Protestants more leeway, even in Paris.⁸⁰

Toleration did not, then, sweep all before it. At no time in the century did Protestants regain positions in the Parlement or major roles in city government. Nevertheless, across the century many of the barriers erected by Louis XIV were breached. Already by the early 1700s the Paris authorities were obliged to recognise the failure of the Revocation. The Huguenots may have been forced to abjure, but they were still resisting quietly. The evolution of official policy reveals some of the practical and ideological contradictions it embodied. Strict enforcement of the law would provoke further emigration, and that threatened the economic policies to which the government was wedded. The most effective forms of conversion involved considerable risks. Bringing soldiers into Paris was likely to produce considerable violence and disorder. Forced conversions raised fears of sacrilege, both for the clergy and for many devout

⁸⁰ SHPF MS 326, quotation fol. 184. For a fuller account see Garrisson, 'Genèse de l'Église réformée'.

magistrates, especially in Paris, where Jansenism was strong. The authorities were also anxious about removing children, because although it was the only really effective way of converting the next generation, it risked undermining parental and particularly paternal authority, and that was one of the underpinnings of absolutism.

Fundamentally important was the commitment of the police to order and to a version of the 'civilising process'. Paris was a turbulent city, and at the time of the Revocation the Fronde was within living memory. Louis XIV's reform of the city's administration, and in particular the creation of the position of Lieutenant-General, was intended to bring Paris under royal control. Successive police chiefs interpreted this to mean not only disarming the city to prevent insurrection but also improving the general behaviour of the population. If La Reynie's vision was a devout Catholic one, his successors pursued a more secular form of 'order'. They tried to rid the city of beggars and thieves, prostitutes and libertines, to combat duelling and riot, to prevent fraud and to guide public opinion. Mob violence – religious or of any other kind – was intolerable, both for the police and for the good bourgeois of the city, undermining what policing, in the eighteenth-century French sense of the term, entailed: sound administration, things functioning properly.⁸¹ Driving the Protestants completely underground, furthermore, would jeopardise the ability of the police to control them and – as the case of unregistered burials reminds us – might allow crime to pass undetected.

This reminds us of the negotiated nature of absolutist rule. Absolutism was a claim made by the French monarchy, not a reality, and like other authoritarian regimes it depended on a degree of support, acceptance and complicity from those it ruled. It could not tolerate open dissent, but nor could it risk undermining prosperity or public order, especially in its own capital, for this would have threatened the bases of its claims to legitimacy. The authorities were aware that they could not punish too many people because that would be a semi-public admission that the laws were not being obeyed. The Paris police did not favour religious toleration, and they certainly did not fear the resistance of such a small minority, but their conception of the interests of the state and of the nature of policing meant that leaving the Protestants alone, even allowing them to prosper, involved far less risk than trying to eradicate them. It was in everyone's interest to conclude an unwritten compact: the Huguenots would pretend to convert and would keep a low profile, and the police would look the other way. This provided a measure of protection for the

⁸¹ Jean Chagniot, *Paris et l'armée au XVIIIe siècle*, pp. 60–3. Paolo Piasenza, *Polizia e città. Strategie d'ordine, conflitti e rivolte a Parigi tra sei e settecento* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1990), pp. 101–70.

rich and influential Huguenots, who were the easiest to identify and to target, and the rest could fairly readily be overlooked.

The reluctance of the authorities to take action against the Huguenots, already very early in the century, sent a silent but powerful message to the rest of the population. Catholic violence was suppressed rather than encouraged. The clergy and those devout Catholics who continued to denounce Protestants soon realised that there was little point, and that the police would intervene only in exceptional circumstances. Equally important, Protestantism disappeared from the public eye and ceased to be an issue about which figures in the courts or in the administration publicly expressed concern.

3 Who were the Huguenots of Paris?

We will never know how many Huguenots lived in Paris in the eighteenth century. Orentin Douen, whose research was exhaustive, estimated their number at 8,000–9,000 on the eve of the Revocation and at around 4,000 after 1687. Francis Garrisson, who knows the eighteenth-century sources intimately, estimates that in 1789 around 7,000 Huguenots and 5,000 or 6,000 Lutherans lived there. If these figures are right, French Protestants represented around 1 per cent of the population at both dates, though what happened in the intervening century is anyone's guess. In the early nineteenth century the Reformed Protestants claimed 25,000 adherents in Paris, a figure advanced in defence of their claims for recognition and probably inflated, but it is likely that their numbers did grow significantly in the final years of the Old Regime and during the Revolution.¹

The difficulties lie in both the paucity and the nature of the surviving sources. In the decades after the Revocation, much of our knowledge is shaped by the preoccupations of the authorities. We are most likely to learn about the people they regarded as community leaders or as trouble-makers, while Huguenots of humble rank or who kept a low profile are less likely to appear in the archival record, although they might be denounced by a neighbour or by the Catholic clergy. On the whole, only the most obstinate and the unlucky came to the attention of the police.

The Protestants had every incentive to hide their beliefs, and this makes it difficult not only to identify them but even to define what a Huguenot was. Some historians have assumed that Huguenot identity was cultural and familial, though not all have gone as far as the Protestant historian André Siegfried, who in 1945 argued that calling a French man a Protestant 'does not mean that he has faith, but that he was born a Protestant and remains one, just as people who are born white remain

¹ Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 477–8; André Encrevé, *Les Protestants en France de 1800 à nos jours. Histoire d'une réintégration* (Paris: Stock, 1985), p. 30; Garrisson, 'Genèse de l'Église réformée', 33, n. 21.

white'.² The examples of genuine conversion are too numerous to sustain this kind of determinism, and – ironically, since that was not what Siegfried intended – it places too little emphasis on religious belief. So too did Herbert Lüthy, who in his wonderful study of Protestant banking sought no evidence that those he was studying were in fact Protestants. 'What defines them', he wrote, 'is not their individual faith, but their belonging to a family, to a group, to a "network" of Protestant connections, none of which, in this period, was except in very rare cases a matter of personal choice, but one of birth and family tradition.'³ Such a sociological definition ignores the many lasting conversions and the bitterly divided families that often resulted.

In considering who the Huguenots were, then, what evidence should we seek? Should we consider only the tiny number who never compromised their faith, never went to a Catholic church, never had their children baptised there? This would be far too restrictive, since many who did these things continued to see themselves as Protestants. It seems more sensible to include people who at some point in their lives declared themselves to be Protestants, even if they had abjured. But what of the children of such people, who might have avoided the Catholic Church but never been able to participate in a Reformed Church ceremony, and whose religious beliefs remain entirely unclear? A number of historians have suggested that many eighteenth-century Huguenots, deprived of church and clergy but remaining hostile to Catholicism, became indifferent or rejected religion entirely.⁴ There are certainly examples of this, but it is clear that significant numbers of people succeeded in passing on to their children something of their faith, and certainly some kind of Protestant identity.

Only at the very beginning of our period are matters reasonably clear-cut. In December 1685, the Paris police counted 5,415 Reformed Protestants in Paris, of whom 3,823 had not yet abjured, although the apparent precision of these lists is misleading, as the authorities themselves recognised when they noted that there were also many Huguenots from the provinces.⁵ A significant number of Paris Protestants had

² André Siegfried, 'Le Groupe protestant cévenol sous la III^e République', in *Le Protestantisme français*, ed. Marc Boegner and André Siegfried (Paris, 1945), pp. 29–30, quoted in Poland, *French Protestantism*, p. 4.

³ Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 1: ix.

⁴ Labrousse, *La Révocation*, p. 192. McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 598. Michel Vovelle, 'Jalons pour une histoire du silence, les testaments réformés dans le sud-est de la France du XVII^e au XVIII^e siècle', in *Cinq Siècles de protestantisme à Marseille et en Provence* (Marseille: Fédération historique de Provence, 1978), pp. 2–59 (p. 57).

⁵ BN MS fr. 7051. There is more than one version of this enumeration, and I have followed Douen, *La Révocation*, 1: 158–9.

already left, but this was before the mass emigration of 1685–7. Nor do we know how many of the subsequent conversions were lasting ones. Douen's estimate of 4,000 remaining Huguenots in 1687 assumed that the vast majority of those who nominally converted to Catholicism in fact continued to be Protestant, but it also took no account of newcomers from the provinces or of people who emigrated and later returned.

For the eighteenth century we have few reliable figures. In 1703, the police estimated that there were 500 Huguenots living in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine alone, well down from the 4,000 they counted there in 1685. At Easter 1719, the Anglican chaplain claimed that 700 people, mostly French Protestants, had taken communion either in his chapel or in the Dutch one, and he guessed that 1,000 had attended either his sermon or that of the Dutch chaplain. The following year he estimated the number of communicants at the Anglican chapel alone at 400. In around 1720 there were, according to an employee at the Dutch Embassy, some 1,500 communicants on the books of its chapel, and other testimony speaks of up to 700 people attending individual services.⁶ These numbers certainly fell with the renewed official crackdown in the 1720s, but at Easter 1754 the pastor, Paul Bosc, estimated that 1,400–1,500 people had taken communion, 780 of them on Easter Sunday.⁷ Round numbers like these have little real statistical value, and in any case these figures represent only those who were bold enough to come forward publicly. They are primarily evidence of a significant and continuing Protestant presence.

Many of the sources that would enable us to construct a more accurate picture have disappeared. The police archives were stored in the Bastille and were ransacked in 1789, so we possess only some of the relevant dossiers. Most of the records of the Paris prisons, convents and monasteries, which might inform us on incarcerated Protestants, are fragmentary. The registers of the church at Charenton were lost in the fires of 1871, and so were the eighteenth-century registers of Protestant burials. According to Charles Read, who saw them before their destruction, the one used for foreign Protestants recorded 2,000 burials between 1720 and 1779 and the second, for interments of French-born Protestants, contained 1,117 entries, but began only in 1737 and ended in 1777.⁸ Again, the

⁶ Douen, *La Révocation*, 1: 158, n. 1; Grès-Gayer, 'L'Ambassade de Grande-Bretagne', 41–2; Alain Thillay, *Le Faubourg Saint-Antoine et ses 'faux ouvriers'. La liberté du travail à Paris aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Seysssel: Champ Vallon, 2002), p. 174; Francis Waddington, 'Influence de l'ambassade de Hollande à Paris sur les affaires des protestants de France au XVIIIe siècle, 1715–1728. Établissement d'un cimetière pour les protestants étrangers, en 1720', *BSHPF*, 3 (1854–5), 595–601 (600).

⁷ Lindeboom, 'Un Journal de Paul Bosc', 68.

⁸ Read, 'Les Sépultures des protestants', 29, 134.

numbers seem significant, since for every Huguenot who died in Paris there were presumably several more living there. Yet the burial figures are harder to interpret than they may seem. Some hundreds of the original *procès-verbaux* from which these registers were compiled have survived, and they reveal that the apparently neat division between foreign and domestic Protestants is misleading. The French-born wives and children of foreign Protestants were often buried in the foreign cemetery, as were people from Alsace. On the other hand, many Swiss- and German-born individuals, mostly men who died in the Dutch infirmary in the 1740s and 1750s, were taken to the wood-yard where French-born Protestants were buried. The burials include many visitors to Paris who had the misfortune to die there, and a good proportion of the foreign burials were not of Reformed Church followers but of Lutherans. A further complication is that an unknown number of Protestants were buried in the Catholic cemeteries. We must also bear in mind that not all residents of Paris died in the city. In particular, quite a few people returned, in old age, to their province of origin.⁹

Along with the scattered burial records, we have material on Protestant children who were removed from their parents, some of it in the police files and some in the register, already analysed in [Chapter 2](#), of girls and women admitted to the New Catholic convent. There is also information on people who attended the chapels of the Protestant ambassadors. Some comes from police spies, but more reliable are the registers kept by the various pastors. There are lists of some 400 French Protestants admitted to communion at the Anglican chapel from 1715 to 1720. We have marriage and baptismal records from the Danish and Swedish Lutheran chapels that include some Huguenots, particularly in the 1770s and 1780s.¹⁰ And the registers from the new Reformed church that opened in 1788 also provide some records, most importantly of marriages conducted after March 1788 and of baptisms after June 1789. Both registers give information on the individuals most directly concerned and on their parents.¹¹

The most comprehensive list of Reformed Protestants is of people, mostly in their late teens, who were admitted to communion at the Dutch

⁹ For burials in Catholic cemeteries see [Chapter 4](#). For examples of retirements to the provinces, Didier Boisson, 'La Bibliothèque d'un marchand de vin protestant à la fin du XVIIIe siècle', *BSHPF*, 147 (2001), 201–24; Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, pp. 658, 63.

¹⁰ Driancourt-Girod, *Registres*; Jacques Gres-Gayer, '1715–1720: les admissions dans la communauté anglicane de Paris', *BSHPF*, 131 (1985), 349–404.

¹¹ SHPF MS 411A, Baptêmes du 29 juin 1789 au 30 décembre 1792. SHPF MS 411B, Mariages du 30 mars 1788 au 18 décembre 1792. SHPF MS CP 15, 'Notes concernant la bénédiction religieuse des mariages des protestants de Paris', 1793–1814.

chapel between 1727 and 1781. The registers include 2,657 names, although since there is a gap from 1731 to 1752, 1,885 (70 per cent) are for the years 1752–81.¹² Addresses are not consistently given, but from context or from other sources I calculate that around half were resident in Paris. Of the 1752–81 cohort, those I have identified as Parisians represent 556 different family names. We do not know if these young people remained Protestant throughout their lives, and since the registers cover a thirty-year period, they do not tell us how many were attending the chapel at any one moment. Once again, the data simply give us an order of magnitude.

The question of sources is not the only difficulty in identifying the Huguenots of Paris. Only a proportion of them attended one of the embassy chapels or married or had their children baptised there. Even the burial records are incomplete, since not all were willing to declare themselves even at this moment of truth. The law, after all, ordered the confiscation of their property if they ‘relapsed’.

The evidence of Protestant beliefs was often ambiguous. Soon after Samuel Favre died in 1734, his sister Élisabeth, who claimed to be a good Catholic, denounced him as a closet Protestant. She was clearly motivated by the desire to get hold of his generous estate, since if he were declared a Protestant his goods would legally go to his nearest Catholic relatives. She particularly objected to the fact that Samuel had left a significant sum to their cousin Daniel Perillau de Villiers, whom she described as ‘the most extreme and stubborn Calvinist in the kingdom’. Villiers had also been named executor of her brother’s will, a deliberate attempt, she claimed, to exclude the Catholic relatives. She and her sister, she asserted, had already been expelled from the family home by their Protestant mother as punishment for their conversion.¹³

Police inquiries revealed that Samuel Favre was born into a Protestant family, but had converted to Catholicism, and soon afterwards was appointed as steward to the illustrious Bouillon family. His sister said that he had only pretended to convert in order to obtain this lucrative post, pointing out that he had remained in close contact with his Protestant relatives and that he had even paid for the education of his Calvinist cousin’s son. She also claimed that he had died without the final sacraments, something the police were apparently unable to verify. Favre’s will, included in the police file, contained no explicit reference to Catholic doctrine, no mention of the saints or of the Virgin, and no

¹² SHPF MS 410. Léonus-Lieppe, ‘La Chapelle de l’ambassade de Hollande ... Vecteur’, p. 370.

¹³ All the information on Favre comes from the dossier in AN TT134–5.

request for prayers for the salvation of his soul. Instead it contained formulae that were perfectly acceptable to Protestants: 'In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit ... from the depths of my heart I give my soul to God my creator, beseeching him to grant me mercy through the merit of the precious blood of his son Our Lord Jesus Christ.' The deceased did leave some money to the poor of the parish and requested a simple funeral in the parish graveyard, but this was not firm evidence one way or the other. There was thus only circumstantial evidence for Élisabeth's claims, which were clearly economically motivated.

Another ambiguous example is that of the wine-seller Étienne Perrinet de Jars, who abjured his Reformed faith in 1686 and whose subsequent rise to wealth and social prominence was startling. In 1719 he became a Farmer-General, one of those commissioned to collect taxes on behalf of the government, and ten years later purchased the highly sought-after office of *secrétaire du roi*, which conferred nobility. His career, and the future of his children, depended on the authorities remaining persuaded that he was a sincere Catholic, and he seems to have accepted the Catholic last rites when he died in 1762. Yet the duc de Luynes claimed in 1757 that he was a closet Protestant. Once again the evidence is purely circumstantial. Born into a Protestant family, in 1697 he married a cousin, also a 'New Catholic'. His second marriage, at the age of eighty, was to another distant relative, Louise Lemaistre, also of Protestant background. He never lost touch with his Huguenot relatives, who were present in force at his daughter's marriage in 1735, and his first wife's sisters married the Protestant bankers Vincent Pierre Fromaget and Jean Gastebois.¹⁴

There is no doubt that Perrinet conformed to basic Catholic practice. Did he accept all the dogmas of the Church of Rome, or did he retain certain Protestant beliefs? Or again, did religion become a matter of indifference to him? The pastor Paul Bosc was persuaded that the Perrinet family remained Protestant at heart and had been tipped into error by Perrinet de Jars's success: '[O]ne of them having become a Farmer-General, all the others no longer dared to show themselves to be Protestants and they even engaged in various Catholic observances.'¹⁵ This reminds us of the familial nature of religious ties. One black sheep might jeopardise the fortunes of the extended family, so all were forced to hide or to change their beliefs.

¹⁴ Durand, *Les Fermiers généraux*, pp. 357, 75, 599–600; Christine Favre-Lejeune, *Les Secrétaires du roi de la Grande Chancellerie de France. Dictionnaire biographique et généalogique (1672–1789)*, 2 vols. (Paris: Sedopols, 1986), 2: 1067–8. MC CXV 495, 19 July 1735. Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 1: 416, n. 2.

¹⁵ Lindeboom, 'Un Journal de Paul Bosc', 85.

Many former Protestants, like Favre and Perrinet de Jars, had powerful reasons for appearing Catholic. The statutes of some trade guilds continued to limit entry to Catholics until the 1770s, although the rules were enforced to varying degrees. This was why some Huguenots converted, like Beaumarchais's father André Charles Caron in 1721.¹⁶ Similarly, anyone wanting to purchase one of the thousands of offices sold by the government had to present a certificate from a priest and in many cases was obliged to attend Catholic masses. This included positions as humble as that of officer in the Paris watch, one of whom, named Desaux, declared himself a Protestant when he died in 1736.¹⁷ Perhaps the most extraordinary career of successful secrecy was that of the stockbroker Pierre Valmalette. At his death in 1763 he was a *capitoul* (municipal magistrate) of Toulouse, a hugely prestigious post that conferred nobility. By then he was eighty-nine and living in Paris. He could not, as a Protestant, hold either the office of stockbroker or that of *capitoul*, but on his death-bed he proclaimed his Reformed faith.¹⁸ Some individuals who conformed to Catholic practice for much of their lives clearly regarded themselves as Protestant in their hearts. Yet we cannot assume that, because someone was baptised in the Reformed Church or had family members who remained Protestant, their apparent conversions were simply a smokescreen.

Nevertheless, even if we can only guess at the overall numbers of Huguenots, and in particular cases cannot always be sure who was Protestant, it is possible to identify a large number of people who, on a fairly conservative definition, can reasonably be considered as Huguenots. From the different sources described above, I have identified 5,104 individuals who lived in Paris and who at some point between 1690 and 1790 behaved in a way that identified them as followers of the French Reformed Church. Some were arrested for participating in a Protestant assembly or for attempting to emigrate, or came to the notice of the police and admitted to being Huguenots. The communion lists of the Dutch chapel are firm evidence, as are the surviving records of Protestant burials, and I have added Paris residents admitted to the Anglican chapel in 1715–20, when it welcomed Huguenots and held services in French. In addition, I have included people for whom there is more than one kind

¹⁶ Louis de Loménie, 'Origine protestante de Beaumarchais', *BSHPPF*, 1 (1852), 116–19 (118); McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 601.

¹⁷ Charles Rabache de Fréville, *Histoire de la paroisse de l'Abbaye de Saint-Germain-des-Prés à Paris* (Paris: Paris-Musées, 2004), p. 239.

¹⁸ MC LXVII 646, 13 April 1763. I am grateful to Tim LeGoff for alerting me to Valmalette and for passing on this document. See also Thierry Claeys, *Dictionnaire biographique des financiers en France au XVIIIe siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris: Éditions SPM, 2008), 2: 1131

of circumstantial evidence. For example, someone born into a Reformed family and whose spouse or children appear in the records as Protestant, or an individual who appears as a witness at several different death-beds and also at Huguenot marriages and baptisms. I have not, however, used evidence from before 1685, nor drawn on the lists of abjurations from 1685 and 1686, since some of these people remained in the Catholic Church for the rest of their lives. I have also excluded people explicitly identified, in the burial records for example, as Lutherans or Anglicans, as well as those who were living in a hotel or otherwise clearly indicated as visitors to Paris. Nor have I automatically assumed that the spouse of a known Huguenot was of the same faith, since although marriages between Protestants and Catholics seem uncommon, the possibility was always there.

Included, as 'Paris Huguenots', are those members of the Reformed faith who were born outside France but lived in Paris. There were few border controls and little impediment to foreigners coming to live in the city. Some remained for decades, like the Swiss banker Jean-Henri Labhard, born in 1675, who was in Paris by 1708 and died there in 1753. His daughter was baptised at the Dutch chapel in 1719 and married the son of a Protestant merchant from Marseilles.¹⁹ The Dutch cloth manufacturer Pierre Vanrobais had family and business interests in Abbeville but was living in Paris in 1728 and died there in 1767.²⁰ Such people became full participants in the economic life of the city. Many bankers were Swiss and a few were Dutch – one of the ironies of eighteenth-century French history is that the intolerant Catholic state was generously funded by Protestant financiers! Genevans resident in Paris directed the royal glass manufactory in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine and foreign-born Protestants played a major role in the *Compagnie des Indes*.²¹

Many immigrants were very much part of the Reformed community of Paris. The Neuchâtel-born cabinet-maker Antoine-Pierre Jacot, who may have come to Paris with his father in the 1720s, was cantor of the Dutch chapel and from 1747 until 1781 appeared at the death-beds of many Protestants, French-born and foreign. So did, from 1734 until the early 1770s, the wood merchant Isaac Penet, originally from Geneva. Jacot's sons shared and subsequently took over this task and one of them continued to serve the re-established Reformed Church during the Revolution. The first consistory of the new church also included the Berlin-born

¹⁹ Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 1: 343; 2: 213–14. MC CXVIII 257, 9 July 1708. AN Y12422, 24 February 1753.

²⁰ SHPF, MS 66, fol. 258. AN Y15275, 4 June 1767.

²¹ Herbert Lüthy, *Le Passé présent. Combats d'idées de Calvin à Rousseau* (Monaco: Éditions du Rocher, 1965), p. 211.

Pierre-Frédéric Empaytaz and the Dutch businessman Pierre-Nicolas Van Hoorn.²²

Contact between immigrants and the French-born Protestant population was fostered by the Dutch chapel, which welcomed the Huguenots and played an important part in the lives of those who were bold enough to defy the law and attend regularly. The chaplain there in the early 1720s, Marc Guitton, was strongly suspected of having assisted many Huguenots to escape to the Netherlands and in 1725 was accused of deliberately encouraging French Protestants to come to services. Whether this was true or not, nearly half of those admitted to communion at the chapel were born in France, and there were many French subjects in the fragmentary lists of marriages and baptisms.²³ From 1753 to 1789 the Dutch chapel also ran an infirmary, whose first administrator, Michel Thieux, came from Nogent-le-Rotrou, south-west of Paris. Its first surgeon was a Provençal, Louis Silvy, and the infirmary took in French as well as foreign Protestants.²⁴ The level of contact between immigrants and French-born is also indicated by frequent intermarriage. In the second half of the eighteenth century the registers of the Swedish chapel record unions between Huguenots and Dutch, Swiss and German immigrants, and the birth registers document the arrivals of their children, who, of course, became little Parisians.²⁵ There can be no doubt about their sense of belonging among the Reformed Protestants of Paris.

Furthermore, many of those who came to Paris across the eighteenth century were descendants of Huguenot refugees. Most prominent were the Genevans who dominated Paris banking in the early eighteenth century: Tourton, Guiguer, Thellusson, Mallet, Chabert and others. The Tronchin family, important in finance and medicine, came from Lyons via Geneva, while the Mallet family were bankers who had originally emigrated from Rouen. Some of those who returned already had relatives in Paris, like Esther Fabre, born in Stuttgart of Huguenot stock, who married her cousin Jean-Étienne Fabre, a merchant born in Paris in 1743.²⁶ It is often impossible to separate foreign-born immigrants who settled in Paris from the French-born population.

²² Garrisson, 'Genèse de l'Église réformée', 57; Garrisson, 'Les Infirmeries protestantes', 68–9.

²³ Arsenal MS 10958, fol. 270 (1727). Arsenal MS 10884, fols. 309–12. *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse, by the Hon. Lady Margaret Pennyman* (London: E. Curll, 1740). Léonus-Lieppe, 'La Chapelle de l'ambassade de Hollande ... instrument', p. 1604. SHPF MS 66.

²⁴ Garrisson, 'Les Infirmeries protestantes', 52–5, 64.

²⁵ Driancourt-Girod, *Registres*.

²⁶ Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 2: 41–2, 249; Richard, 'Les membres laïques du consistoire', 469.

Admittedly, their legal status was in theory quite different. While they had to obey French law, and therefore could not worship in public or proselytise, they were permitted to be openly Protestant and to attend the foreign embassy chapels. The different ambassadors sometimes intervened if they got into trouble with the French authorities.²⁷ They were also exempt from the draconian punishments prescribed for 'New Catholics' who 'relapsed'. Yet in practice the authorities did not always differentiate. An English fan-maker named Humphrey Ware was arrested in March 1719 outside the Anglican chapel. Overriding a protest from the British ambassador, the Lieutenant-General of Police had him imprisoned because he had been living in Paris for nineteen years and was 'established' there: no doubt his being married to a French Protestant was a contributing factor.²⁸

Most crucially, the police considered the locally born children of foreigners to be French, and therefore subject to the anti-Protestant laws even if their parents were not. Vincent Zéba argued in vain that he was Swiss because his father came from Bern. Nor was any consideration given to the Swiss nationality of Pierre Solliet, whose two daughters were imprisoned in the New Catholic convent in 1704: both were born in Paris.²⁹ Yet even those born outside France were sometimes treated as Huguenots. The police arbitrarily removed the two Swiss-born daughters of the Widow Roland, a lace-worker, even though their father had come from Lausanne. The widow was born in France, though her parents too had been Swiss. Crucially, in the words of the parish priest, she was 'without means, name, or protection'.³⁰

In most respects, therefore, the experience of foreign-born Protestants was similar to that of the Huguenots, and there seems no reason to regard them as less Parisian than those who hailed from Languedoc or Provence and who did not speak French when they arrived. Of course the largest immigrant Protestant group, the Swiss, mostly spoke French as their native language and they were perfectly at home in French culture. They had French names and often we find out their place of origin only by accident.

Because I have required fairly strong evidence of people's Protestant faith, the resulting database certainly understates the Huguenot

²⁷ For example, Arsenal MS 10858, fol. 120 (1724); Arsenal MS 11231, fol. 74 (1734); Arsenal MS 10903, fol. 270 (1725); Arsenal MS 11314, fols. 172–4 (1736); Arsenal MS 10024, fol. 102 (1742).

²⁸ Grès-Gayer, 'L'Ambassade de Grande-Bretagne', 40. On Ware see Mouquin, *Migeon*, p. 12.

²⁹ Arsenal MS 10903, fols. 229–82. AN LL1642, fol. 3. See also fols. 18, 68.

³⁰ Arsenal MS 10855, fols. 146–76.

presence. The data also remain very incomplete. The communion books, for instance, do not usually give occupations or addresses. Certain types of analysis are impossible because of the nature of the sources: we cannot identify the age distribution of the Huguenot population, since the two principal sources concern particular age groups: the communion books include mainly those in their late teens and the death records primarily old people. Nevertheless, the database undoubtedly includes the core of the eighteenth-century Paris Huguenot population and gives an indication of birthplaces, occupations and geographical distribution within the city. In all of these areas there were very significant changes across the period, so aggregated data are meaningless. I have therefore divided the data into three periods, each corresponding to thirty of the first ninety years of the century.

Place of birth

We need to remember that because foreign Protestants were in theory not subject to the draconian anti-Huguenot laws, there was an incentive for people to claim foreign birth, or at least citizenship, and that when they are described in the burial documents as ‘Swiss’, it is impossible to know if they were actually born there. Nevertheless, such falsification seems to be minor: even in dealing with the police, many Huguenots indicated a place of birth inside the kingdom. Even allowing for some inaccuracies, some general trends are clear.

Overall, just over a third of the sample (Table 3.1) was born outside metropolitan France, and the proportion grew across the century. In the first period, 1700–29, just under a quarter (23.1%) were foreign-born. This rose to 33.4% in 1730–59 and finally to 39.8% in 1760–89. These percentages are far larger than those for the population as a whole. In Alain Thillay’s analysis of marriage contracts from the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, the proportion of brides and grooms whose parents were born outside France rose steadily from 2.5% in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries to 6% in the 1750s, 9% in the 1770s and 12.5% in the late 1780s. Yet a significant proportion of Thillay’s sample were Protestants who came to Paris to gain experience in the industries for which the city was famous.³¹ The earliest censuses show that individuals born outside France represented just under 2% of the total population of the place Royale Section in 1791, 2.6% of that of the Popincourt Section in 1793–4 and 4.5% of the male population of the Fontaine-Grenelle Section in 1793–4 – admittedly following the departure of

³¹ Thillay, *Le Faubourg Saint-Antoine*, pp. 166–77.

Table 3.1 *Places of birth of Huguenots in eighteenth-century Paris*

	1700–29						1730–59						1760–89						1700–89	
	Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total		Male		Female		Total		No.	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Switzerland	50	34.3	11	4.5	61	15.6	122	34.3	41	13.8	163	24.9	245	37.6	73	17.6	318	29.8	542	25.7
England	3	2.0	12	4.9	15	3.8	2	0.6	7	2.3	9	1.4	–	0	11	2.6	11	1.0	35	1.7
Germany	2	1.4	2	0.8	4	1.0	26	7.3	–	0	26	3.9	53	8.1	10	2.4	63	5.9	93	4.4
Sweden	0	0	7	2.9	7	1.8	2	0.6	–	0	2	0.3	2	0.3	–	0	2	0.2	11	0.5
Holland	1	0.7	–	0	1	0.3	10	2.8	1	0.3	11	1.7	15	2.3	6	1.4	21	2.0	33	1.6
Scotland and Ireland	–	0	1	0.4	1	0.3	2	0.6	–	0	2	0.3	–	0	1	0.2	1	0.1	4	0.2
Denmark	–	0	–	0	0	0	3	0.8	–	0	3	0.5	–	0	–	0	0	0	3	0.1
Saint- Domingue	–	0	–	0	0	0	1	0.3	–	0	1	0.2	1	0.2	–	0	1	0.1	2	0.1
Piedmont	–	–	–	0	0	0	1	0.3	–	–	0	0	–	0	1	0.2	1	0.1	2	0.1
America	–	–	1	0.4	1	0.3	–	–	–	–	0	0	–	0	1	0.2	1	0.1	2	0.1
Other*	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	0	0	0	3	0.5	1	0.5	4	0.5	5	0.2
Foreign- born	56	38.4	34	13.9	90	23.1	169	47.6	49	16.4	218	33.4	319	49.0	105	25.4	424	39.8	732	34.7
Paris	31	21.2	101	41.4	132	33.8	65	18.3	114	38.3	179	27.4	162	24.9	153	36.9	315	29.5	626	29.7
Paris region	6	4.1	15	6.1	21	5.4	9	2.5	13	4.4	22	3.4	12	1.8	23	5.6	35	3.3	78	3.7
Normandy	15	10.3	19	7.8	34	8.7	17	4.8	26	8.7	43	6.6	25	3.8	22	5.3	47	4.4	124	5.9
South	6	4.1	6	2.5	12	3.1	17	4.8	7	2.4	24	3.7	35	5.4	13	3.1	48	4.5	84	4.0
Centre	17	11.6	42	17.2	59	15.1	40	11.3	60	20.1	100	15.3	57	8.7	70	16.9	127	11.9	286	13.6
North	6	4.1	10	4.1	16	4.1	13	3.7	9	3.0	22	3.3	11	1.7	13	3.1	24	2.3	62	2.9

East/south-east	4	2.7	6	2.5	10	2.5	7	1.9	9	3.0	16	2.5	5	0.8	6	1.5	11	1.0	37	1.7
Alsace/Lorraine	2	1.4	1	0.4	3	0.8	8	2.3	1	0.3	9	1.4	14	2.1	5	1.2	19	1.8	31	1.5
West	3	2.1	9	3.7	12	3.1	5	1.4	7	2.4	12	1.8	6	0.9	4	1.0	10	0.9	34	1.6
South-west	–	0	1	0.4	1	0.3	5	1.4	3	1.0	8	1.2	6	0.9	0	0	6	0.6	15	0.7
French-born	90	61.6	210	86.1	300	76.9	186	52.4	249	83.6	435	66.6	333	51.0	309	74.6	642	60.2	1,377	65.3
TOTAL	146	100	244	100	390	100	355	100	298	100	653	100	652	100	414	100	1,066	100	2,109	100

Note: * Other: South Africa 1, Russia 1, Poland 1, unidentified 'étranger' 1.

many foreign workers following the economic slump that accompanied the Revolution.³²

In the early eighteenth century the proportion of French-born Protestants was deeply affected by the emigration, particularly of males. But after that, the rising percentage of foreign-born Protestants must reflect substantial immigration that was increasing the overall size of the Huguenot population, since it is unlikely that males born in Paris in the early part of the century either died or emigrated in large numbers. The increase in the foreign-born also points to the ongoing impact of laws that advantaged them over French-born Protestants. The French government actually encouraged foreign Protestants to come to Paris, particularly the Swiss, who had the right to live and work in the city in the same way as French subjects. The Dutch, by contrast, who did not enjoy such privileges, came in much smaller numbers. Most of those born in the Low Countries who lived in Paris seem to have been of Huguenot descent.³³

The difference in the numbers of male and female immigrants is very significant. While the proportion of foreign-born women among the Paris Huguenots doubled in the course of the century, it remained far below that of foreign-born men. This reflects a more general demographic phenomenon of men travelling more, and further, than women. But it also reflects the gendered impact of the Revocation: as a result of largely male emigration, French-born women were over-represented in the remaining Huguenot population. This in turn explains why so many foreign-born male Protestants married French-born women, and helps to account for their rapid integration.

It is worth noting, in passing, that the origins of the foreign-born Reformed population are quite different from those of arrivals recorded

³² Jean Ibanès, 'La Population de la place des Vosges et de ses environs en 1791', in *Contributions à l'histoire démographique de la Révolution française*, first series, ed. Marcel Reinhard (Paris: Commission d'histoire économique et sociale de la Révolution, 1962), pp. 71–97 (p. 83). Martine Sévegrand, 'La Section de Popincourt pendant la Révolution française', in *Contributions à l'histoire démographique de la Révolution française*, third series, ed. Marcel Reinhard (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1970), pp. 9–91 (pp. 54–5). J.-C. Goeury, 'Évolution démographique et sociale du faubourg Saint-Germain', in *Contributions à l'histoire démographique de la Révolution française*, second series, ed. Marcel Reinhard (Paris: Commission d'histoire économique et sociale de la Révolution, 1965), pp. 25–60 (p. 47). Haim Burstin, *Le Faubourg Saint-Marcel à l'époque révolutionnaire* (Paris: Société des Études Robespierriennes, 1983), p. 319. See also the discussion in Daniel Roche, *The People of Paris* (Leamington Spa: Berg, 1987. First published 1981), pp. 23–4.

³³ Jean-François Dubost and Peter Sahlins, *Et si on faisait payer les étrangers* (Paris: Flammarion, 1999), pp. 316–18. Garrisson, 'Les Infirmeries protestantes', 51, 74–5; Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 2: 321.

by the French Foreign Ministry, on the basis of the lodging-house registers and police reports. This information survives for the 1770s and 1780s, and records the 'English' (possibly including Scots and Irish) as the most numerous arrivals (25%), followed by Germans (13%), with the Swiss (11%) and the Dutch (10.5%) coming in similar numbers. These data include many temporary arrivals – 'tourists', in the case of the English – but also reflect the preoccupations of the police authorities and hence include hardly any women.³⁴ Calvinist immigrants obviously included far fewer English or German arrivals, since these groups mostly belonged to other branches of Protestantism. The Huguenot population, with its large number of men and women born in the French-speaking Swiss cantons, was in a cultural and linguistic sense far less different from the rest of the inhabitants of Paris than the foreign-born population as a whole.

If we look at the origins of the French-born Protestants, we see that the proportion from Paris itself was not dramatically different from the figure for the city's population as a whole, approximately one third. In the Place Royale Section in 1791, before the revolutionary wars took many of the men away, 40% of the population was born in Paris, almost certainly slightly higher than for the city as a whole. In this Section, and probably throughout the city, the difference between the sexes was very significant: 35.6% of the men and 49.9% of the women were born in Paris.³⁵ In my Huguenot sample, for the 1760–89 period, the corresponding figures are 24.9% of the men and 36.9% of the women, just under 30% for the two sexes taken together.

The birthplaces of provincials form, not surprisingly, a map of Protestant northern France, although the proportions from some areas are a little unexpected. The Paris region, overwhelmingly Catholic, is under-represented for both sexes. A few small pockets, particularly around Villiers-le-Bel to the north of the city and in the Brie region to the east, account for the general average of 3.7% (again with significantly more women than men). This contrasts with 9% from the Paris region for the Place Royale in the 1791 census, and 15% for the Faubourgs Saint-Marcel and Saint-Antoine, figures which were almost certainly higher than for the pre-revolutionary period. The highest numbers of provincial Huguenots were drawn from central France, the crescent of Protestant populations to the south of the Loire valley, from southern Burgundy,

³⁴ Jean-François Dubost, 'Les Étrangers à Paris au siècle des Lumières', in *La Ville promise. Mobilité et accueil à Paris (fin XVIIe-début XIXe siècle)*, ed. Daniel Roche (Paris: Fayard, 2000), pp. 220–88 (pp. 238–41).

³⁵ My calculations, based on the census of 1791, F7*2502. For Paris as a whole, Roche, *People of Paris*, pp. 22–3.

the Berry region, across to Poitou. These areas accounted for 11.9% of the Paris Huguenots in 1760–89, down from just over 15% for the earlier parts of the century. The later figure was slightly higher than for the Faubourg Saint-Antoine (14.2%) in 1793–4, but much higher than for the Place Royale. Normandy, on the other hand, was surprisingly under-represented, accounting for between 5% and 8% of the Huguenot population, even though there were significant Reformed communities there. The West in general, La Rochelle and its hinterland, sending very few immigrants to Paris, and the same was true of Champagne and Dauphiné. The South and the South-West, the most populous Protestant areas in France, contributed just under 5% of the Paris Huguenots, as against 2% and 3.3% respectively of the overall populations of the Place Royale and the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. Northern France also seems under-represented, providing only 2.3% of the Paris Huguenots in 1760–89, compared with 5.6% and 13.4% in the Place Royale and the Faubourg Saint-Antoine and 7.1% in the Faubourg Saint-Marcel.³⁶

The provincial percentages are reduced by the large numbers of foreign-born Protestants, yet Normandy, Picardy and Champagne were all areas with long-standing links to Paris. What seems to differentiate them from the parts of central France that provided the largest numbers of provincial Huguenot immigrants is their proximity to the kingdom's borders. It is likely that Protestants from the peripheral areas left the kingdom to join family members in England, Switzerland and Germany, or the Low Countries, whereas this was more difficult for those from the central regions. Paris probably represented, for the Huguenots of central France, an alternative to emigration.³⁷

Occupation

Once again, the data on occupations are very incomplete, and it is often hard to know what particular descriptions mean. A 'tapissier' was a worker who made the fabric for chairs, whereas a 'marchand tapissier' sold furniture and might be enormously rich. A 'marchand de vin' could run a small drinking establishment, or could be an wholesale importer of expensive wines. A term like 'bourgeois' was highly ambiguous, referring sometimes to a man of independent income and sometimes to retired

³⁶ Ibanès, 'La Population de la place des Vosges', p. 83. The figure for central France is impossible to calculate for this Section because of the way the data is aggregated. Burstin, *Le Faubourg Saint-Marcel*, pp. 82, 318–19; Raymonde Monnier, *Le Faubourg Saint-Antoine (1789–1815)* (Paris: Société des Études Robespierriennes, 1981), p. 300.

³⁷ This is consistent with Didier Boisson's observation that migration to Paris from the Berry region increased after 1685: *Les Protestants du Berry*, p. 285.

domestic servants or to shopkeepers who for some reason did not wish to declare their actual trade.³⁸ It is equally difficult to know how to categorise the vast range of individual, specialised trades in a way that makes sense. I have chosen broad categories that may enable us to observe, on the one hand, what access the Paris Huguenots had to particular kinds of occupations, and on the other, what their work might reveal about their relationships with the Catholic population.

Throughout the eighteenth century, the most important sectors in which male Huguenots were employed were manufacturing trades, retail shopkeeping trades and banking and finance. The first two categories were among the most important for the Paris male population as a whole, but the Huguenots were concentrated in particular areas, notably jewellery and clockmaking, highly specialised and skilled occupations. In 1700–29 there were no fewer than thirty Protestant clockmakers, and by 1760–89 there were 175. Here the Swiss immigration was crucial, providing many accomplished clockmakers, but the numbers of jewellers also rose significantly, from twelve in 1700–29 to sixty-five in 1760–89, and these craftsmen came from all over the Protestant world, including different parts of France. To them we can add many goldsmiths and related specialists such as enamellers, painters of miniatures, cutters and engravers of precious stones.³⁹ There were also significant numbers of Huguenots engaged in luxury furniture-making, particularly in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, where German Lutherans congregated. It is likely, too, that some of those scattered across several sectors were in fact working together. The carriage-builders are a good example of this. The work was often co-ordinated by a *sellier*, technically a saddle-maker, but in practice an entrepreneur who brought together blacksmiths, carpenters, wheelwrights, leather-workers, upholsterers, painters and gilders to manufacture luxury vehicles.⁴⁰ There were small numbers of Huguenots in all these specialist areas.

In the textile sector, Huguenots were particularly numerous among the tailors. There were eight of them in 1700–29, fifteen in 1730–59 and thirty-five in 1760–89, although they represented a tiny proportion of the 1,900 master tailors active in Paris in the 1730s and 1740s, some 2,800

³⁸ For an illuminating discussion of occupational descriptions see Fanny Cosandey (ed.), *Dire et vivre l'ordre social en France sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2005).

³⁹ Michèle Bimbenet-Privat has estimated that 150 of the 1,000 or so goldsmiths in Paris were Protestants: Michèle Bimbenet-Privat, *Les Orfèvres et l'orfèvrerie de Paris au XVIII^e siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris: Commission des travaux historiques de la Ville de Paris, 2002), 1: 203.

⁴⁰ Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens de Paris*, pp. 170–82.

Table 3.2 *Occupations of Paris Huguenots, 1700–89*

	1700–29		1730–59		1760–89	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Finance	62	16.7	63	10.1	63	5.8
‘Bourgeois’	29	7.8	60	9.6	82	7.6
Bureaucracy	9	2.4	19	3.0	31	2.9
Domestic service	10	2.7	36	5.8	57	5.3
Office-holders	4	1.0	5	0.8	13	1.2
Law (includes some offices)	6	1.6	7	1.1	6	0.6
Medical professions	6	1.6	15	2.4	22	2.0
Nobles	3	0.8	8	1.2	10	0.9
Soldiers	6	1.6	34	5.4	26	2.4
Merchants and wholesalers	23	6.2	47	7.6	80	7.4
Service trades	12	3.2	9	1.4	9	0.9
<i>wigmakers/hairdressers</i>	7	1.9	3	0.5	4	0.4
<i>other service</i>	5	1.3	6	0.9	5	0.5
Manufacturing trades	129	34.8	228	36.7	477	44.2
<i>metal</i>	8	2.1	18	2.9	48	4.4
<i>wood</i>	16	4.3	38	6.1	50	4.6
<i>jewellery</i>	68	18.5	116	18.7	265	24.6
<i>textiles and footwear</i>	29	7.9	52	8.4	95	8.8
<i>other manufacturing</i>	8	2.1	4	0.6	19	1.8
Retail shopkeeping trades	63	17.0	69	11.0	121	11.2
<i>food</i>	9	2.4	9	1.4	27	2.5
<i>clothing</i>	1	0.2	4	0.3	2	0.1
<i>wine merchants</i>	53	14.4	56	9.0	93	8.6
<i>other shopkeepers</i>	–	–	2	0.3	–	–
Street trades	–	–	1	0.1	5	0.5
Construction	4	1.1	4	0.6	27	2.5
Unskilled labourers	2	0.5	10	1.6	15	1.4
Other occupations	3	0.8	10	1.6	35	3.2
TOTAL	371	99.8*	621	100	1,080	100

Note: * Rounding error.

in 1780.⁴¹ Reformed Protestants also went into shoe-making, where the numbers were smaller but once again grew significantly across the century. Within the retail shopkeeping trades, Huguenots were conspicuous in running wineshops, and some were also engaged in wine importing – it is difficult to separate the two, since some families did both. The Sancerre merchants were particularly numerous, dominating the trade with that

⁴¹ Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing. Dress and Fashion in the Ancien Régime*, trans. Jean Birrell (Cambridge University Press, 1994. First published Paris, 1989), p. 310.

region. Although in my sample the percentage of Paris Huguenots in this business fell across the century, their numbers actually doubled.

The other noteworthy sector was finance, where in the early eighteenth century the fifty-six bankers stand out, most of them Swiss. But there were others, such as the Huguenot bankers Jean Gastebois and Pierre-Vincent Fromaget, who from the 1720s to the 1740s were directors of the French East India Company, a very powerful enterprise that was private but closely connected with government finance and with the military. They in turn found jobs for young relatives like Jean-Baptiste Lestache. A whole dynasty of French Protestants had interests there and the banker Jean Cottin, who married Fromaget's daughter, was to become a director of the Company in 1759.⁴² In the 1760–89 period there were still forty-nine Reformed Protestant bankers, now including some from the Low Countries, as well as Huguenots like Cottin, Poupart, Girardot, Montz and others, often allied to the Swiss and Dutch families. They dealt with huge flows of national and international capital.

These areas of focus are not a coincidence. Given the deliberate exclusion of Protestants from many trades, it is not surprising to find them well represented in occupations that did not require guild membership, like banking. Others bought a 'privilege': at moments of financial difficulty, the Crown was only too happy to sell exemptions from guild membership. Even before Louis XIV's death, Jacques Molinier was able to purchase the title of 'marchand privilégié suivant la Cour', which enabled him to run a prosperous business manufacturing and selling gold and silver ribbons, without needing to belong to a guild.⁴³

In many cases there was little distinction between large-scale commerce and finance. Those described as 'négociants' were often involved in both, like Pierre Massé who was a member of the mercers' guild and ran a huge international business, but also had investments in ships, land and government bonds.⁴⁴ The presence of family members all across Europe, as a result of the Huguenot emigration, gave those like Massé invaluable contacts. They often, like the bankers, represented overseas clients, French and foreign, who had interests in France. Thus Jacques René Benjamin Docagne, described variously as a 'négociant', merchant,

⁴² Philippe Haudrère, 'La Compagnie française des Indes (1719–1795)'. Thèse pour le doctorat d'État, Paris IV (Paris-Sorbonne), 1987, p. 207. Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 1: 300; 2: 302–12. See also Jean Bouchary, *Les Manieuvres d'argent à Paris à la fin du XVIIIe siècle*, 3 vols. (Paris: Librairie des Sciences politiques et sociales, Marcel Rivière et Cie, 1939–43), vol. III, and Claeys, *Dictionnaire biographique des financiers*, 1: 906.

⁴³ MCVII 248, 13 October 1729.

⁴⁴ MC XCVII 502, 1 July 1778. On these connections between international trade and finance see Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 1: 43, and passim.

'bourgeois de Paris' and banker, acted for Jacques René chevalier de Clinchamp, an officer living in Port Louis, concerning the estate of Clinchamp's father-in-law.⁴⁵

Where they were involved in guild-dominated industries, some Huguenots may have got around the restrictions by presenting a baptismal certificate and hence technically meeting the requirement to be Catholic. Benjamin Houssemaine, having been baptised in the parish church in his native Alençon, was able to join the prestigious mercers' guild in 1746.⁴⁶ The silk lace merchants from the village of Villiers-le-Bel north of Paris, in particular members of the Tavernier and Houzel families, seem to have done the same thing, though they were notorious Protestants, and so did successive generations of the Migeon dynasty of furniture-makers.⁴⁷ In clockmaking, jewellery, the wine trade and also in the supply of wood for burning, the situation was rather different. In these industries, Huguenots were already well established in the seventeenth century, and as a result the Catholics in these guilds were either more tolerant or were simply unable to drive them out. In the eighteenth century, the large numbers of foreigners among the clockmakers, the jewellers, the carriage-makers and in the furniture trades probably protected the smaller numbers of French-born Protestants, accounting for their continuous presence in these sectors. Tailoring and shoemaking, too, were trades favoured by Alsatian and German immigrants.⁴⁸

The few areas where Protestants were largely absent are as interesting as those where they were concentrated. Few worked in the building trades, and except for the goldsmiths, few were members of the prestigious Six Corps, the rich and powerful guilds that dominated the Paris municipality and the commercial court. The leading one, the drapers, seems to have kept Protestants out almost entirely. Hardly surprisingly, very few Huguenots were found in education, since this was largely controlled by the Catholic Church. They were also severely under-represented among unskilled workers and street traders, which in the earlier period may reflect the preoccupations of the authorities, who were mainly concerned about the wealthier Protestants. In the 1760–89 sample, however, we

⁴⁵ MC LXXXVI 691, 16 August 1761. MC XC 504, 31 January 1785. He is described as 'banker' when appearing as a witness for François-Gabriel Collet in 1783: Favre-Lejeune, *Les Secrétaires du roi*, 1: 386.

⁴⁶ AN TT148, dossier Houssemaine. Laurence Croq, 'Être et avoir, faire et pouvoir: les formes d'incorporation de la bourgeoisie parisienne de la Fronde à la Révolution', habilitation à diriger des recherches, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris, 2009, p. 20.

⁴⁷ Buffévent, *L'Économie dentellière*, pp. 350–64. MC XLI 573, 17 July 1761. Thillay, *Le Faubourg Saint-Antoine*, pp. 293–7.

⁴⁸ Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens*, pp. 187–9.

Table 3.3 *Female Huguenot occupations, 1700–89*

Occupation	No.
Servant	62
Governess	5
Seamstress	11
Textile worker	12
Nurse	7
Wineshop-keeper	5
Laundrywoman	3
Unskilled worker (<i>ouvrière, journalière</i>)	3
Lodging-house-keeper	2
Other	15
TOTAL	125

find Huguenots in a wider range of artisanal occupations, in a handful of agricultural trades and in a small number of street trades. By the late eighteenth century, although they were still concentrated in particular areas, Huguenots were nevertheless to be found in every sector of the Parisian economy.

Female occupations are only infrequently indicated in the sources. The most common one was domestic service, in all its diversity – ‘domestique’, ‘cuisinière’, ‘femme de chambre’ – representing just under half of all the trades listed, just over half if we include governesses. Well behind come textile workers, six working in lace. Next are seamstresses, three of them mistresses in the guild, and they are followed by nurses and one midwife. There were also four women described as beggars. Some of the occupations listed clearly refer to a husband’s trade rather than to the woman’s own work: ‘banquière’, ‘marchande de bois’. But others, particularly for widows, point to the woman having taken over the business – ‘marchande de galons’, ‘tapissière’ – or point to the wife’s equal role in running a business with her husband, particularly wineshops and lodging houses. We know that most wives of Paris artisans and shopkeepers worked with their husbands, generally dealing with customers and often collecting the money, and this was presumably true of Huguenot women, too.⁴⁹ There is insufficient information to draw any real conclusions, and

⁴⁹ David Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community in Paris, 1740–1790* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 113–14. On widows see Janine M. Lanza, *From Wives to Widows in Early Modern Paris. Gender, Economy, and Law* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 83–152.

the list of female occupations tells us only that Protestants worked in a similar range of occupations to other Paris women.

Distribution within Paris

Table 3.4 shows the distribution of Huguenot households in the city, by parish. I have attempted to identify households rather than individuals because place of residence is most likely to reflect the choices that adult individuals and couples made: their children did not make such decisions until they formed their own households. The choices may reflect a response to persecution and hence reflect relationships with Catholics in different parts of the city. For this reason, I have used the Catholic parish, which at first might seem odd in mapping Protestants. This also has the advantage that it is the information most commonly provided in the sources.

The table immediately reveals that certain parishes were particularly favoured by the Huguenots. At both the beginning and the end of the century, nearly half of the households were concentrated in just four parishes: Saint-Barthélemy, Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs, Saint-Eustache and Saint-Sulpice. There were also significant numbers in the parishes of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, Saint-Séverin, Saint-André-des-Arts and Sainte-Marguerite. Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs, Saint-Eustache and Saint-Sulpice were the three parishes with the largest overall populations, and the proportion of Protestants living there is not dissimilar to the percentage of the Catholic population. But Saint-Barthélemy was a relatively small parish, and the number of Huguenot households was disproportionately large. They were also apparently over-represented in Saint-André-des-Arts and Sainte-Marguerite.⁵⁰

The parishes with surprisingly low numbers of Huguenot households, given the overall population and the large areas they covered, are Saint-Martin-du-Cloître, Saint-Hippolyte and probably Saint-Médard, all in the south-eastern part of the city. Also under-represented are the adjacent Left Bank parishes of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont, Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet and Saint-Benoît. On the Right Bank, Saint-Laurent, Saint-Gervais and Saint-Jean-en-Grève also contained quite low numbers of Huguenot households. Nevertheless, even in the early eighteenth century when fears of persecution remained high, at least some Huguenot

⁵⁰ Using the rough population figures for the parishes given by Jean-Jacques Expilly, *Dictionnaire géographique, historique et politique des Gaules et de la France*, 6 vols. (Amsterdam, 1762–70), 5: 480, Saint-André-des-Arts contained approximately 1.9% of the city's population and Sainte-Marguerite contained around 4.6%. However, as Expilly himself shows in his other calculations (p. 482), the figure for Sainte-Marguerite is probably far too low.

Table 3.4 *Distribution of Huguenot households by parish*

Parish	1700–29		1730–59		1760–89	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Bonne Nouvelle	1	0.2	2	0.2	5	0.4
Gros Caillou	0	0	0	0	2	0.2
Sainte-Madeleine-en-la-Cité	0	0	5	0.6	12	1.0
Madeleine-de-la-Ville-l'Évêque	1	0.2	4	0.5	20	1.6
Quinze Vingts	3	0.7	1	0.1	9	0.7
Saints-Innocents	0	0	0	0	2	0.2
Saint-André-des-Arts	11	2.5	28	3.4	67	5.4
Saint-Barthélemy	64	14.6	29	3.5	112	9.0
Saint-Benoît	0	0	0	0	2	0.2
Saint-Côme	9	2.1	8	1.0	12	1.0
Saint-Denis-de-la-Chartre	0	0	0	0	2	0.2
Saint-Étienne-du-Mont	4	0.9	5	0.6	10	0.8
Saint-Eustache	50	11.4	93	11.4	188	15.1
Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois	38	8.7	45	5.5	58	4.6
Saint-Germain-le-Vieux	4	0.9	6	0.7	10	0.8
Saint-Gervais	7	1.6	11	1.4	16	1.3
Saint-Hilaire	0	0	3	0.4	0	0
Saint-Hippolyte	0	0	1	0.1	1	0.1
Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie	3	0.7	18	2.2	23	1.8
Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas	1	0.2	1	0.1	3	0.2
Saint-Jean-en-Grève	1	0.2	1	0.1	6	0.5
Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre	1	0.2	0	0	1	0.1
Saint-Louis-en-l'Île	3	0.7	7	0.9	4	0.3
Saint-Landry	1	0.2	0	0	0	0
Saint-Laurent	4	0.9	17	2.1	34	2.7
Saint-Leu-Saint-Gilles	9	2.1	9	1.1	9	0.7
Saint-Martin-du-Cloître	2	0.5	0	0	3	0.2
Saint-Médard	8	1.8	7	0.9	11	0.9
Saint-Merri	15	3.4	41	5.0	37	3.0
Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs	51	11.6	115	14.1	108	8.7
Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet	20	4.6	13	1.6	22	1.8
Saint-Pierre-aux-Boeufs	1	0.2	0	0	2	0.2
Saint-Pierre-des-Arcis	0	0	5	0.6	3	0.2
Saint-Paul	3	0.7	7	0.9	32	2.5
Saint-Roch	8	1.8	28	3.4	51	4.1
Saint-Sauveur	12	2.7	24	2.9	30	2.4
Saint-Séverin	12	2.7	44	5.4	43	3.4
Saint-Sulpice	47	10.7	109	13.3	172	13.8
Saint-Symphorien	4	0.9	38	4.7	42	3.4
Saint-Thomas-du-Louvre	0	0	0	0	1	0.1
Sainte-Chapelle	0	0	3	0.4	2	0.2
Sainte-Croix-en-la-Cité	1	0.2	0	0	8	0.6
Sainte-Geneviève-des-Ardents	1	0.2	0	0	0	0

Table 3.4 (*cont.*)

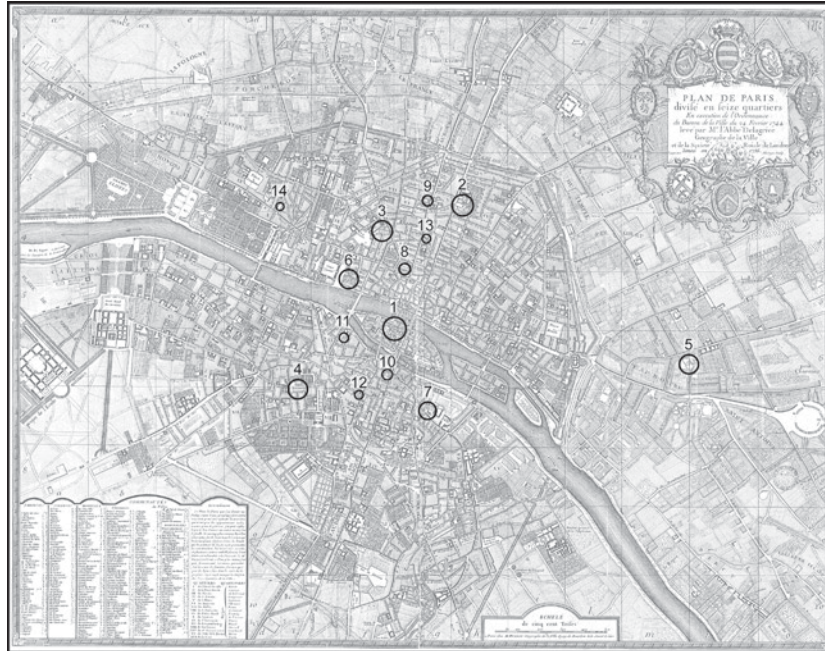
Parish	1700–29		1730–59		1760–89	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sainte-Marie-du-Temple	0	0	0	0	5	0.4
Sainte-Marguerite	38	8.7	89	10.9	64	5.1
Sainte-Opportune	1	0.2	0	0	1	0.1
TOTAL	439	99.9*	817	100	1,245	100

Note: * Rounding error.

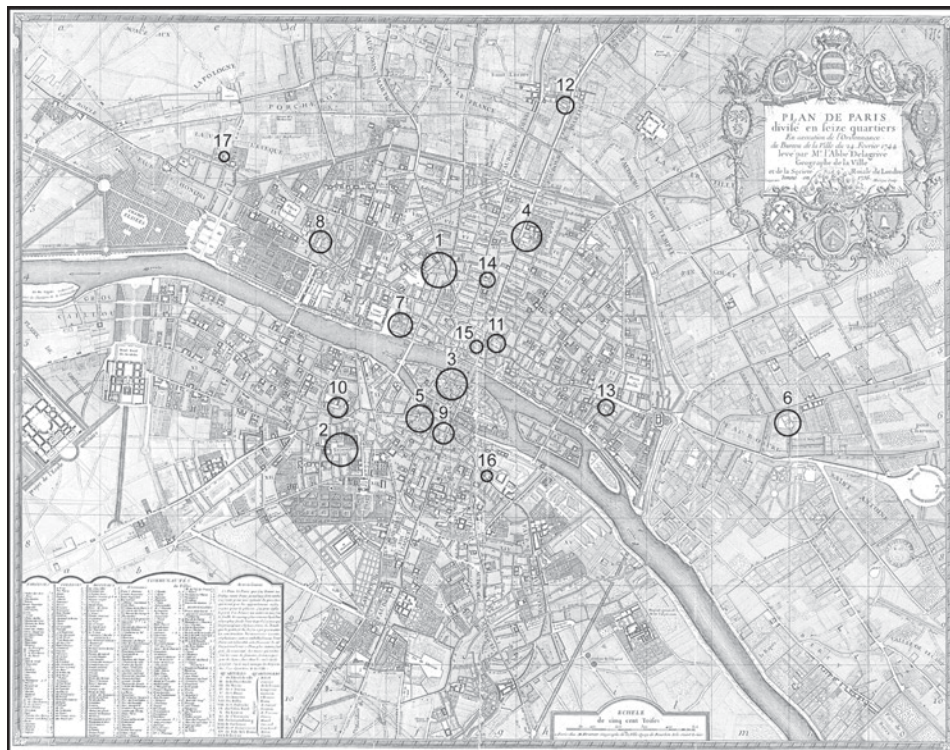
households were to be found in thirty-six of the fifty-odd parishes. Most of the parishes where there seem to have been none were very tiny.

Table 3.4 shows some small changes across the century. The main one was a shift towards the western end of the Right Bank. The parishes of Saint-Eustache, Saint-Roch and the Madeleine-de-la-Ville-l'Évêque, taken together, accounted for 12% of the Huguenot households in the first part of the century but for 17% on the eve of the Revolution. The proportion in the Faubourg Saint-Germain also rose slightly, from 11% to 14.5%. Meanwhile the total for the parishes on the Île de la Cité fell from 16.4% to 11.9%. A second apparent trend was a gradual dispersal of Huguenots across the city. In the first two periods they were to be found in thirty-five and thirty-three parishes respectively, whereas in 1760–89 there were households in forty-three different parishes. In 1700–29, 65.6% lived in just six parishes, whereas by the end of the period this had fallen to 57%. These are very small changes, and they may result from the unreliability of the data, but might equally point to a growing confidence among the Protestants.

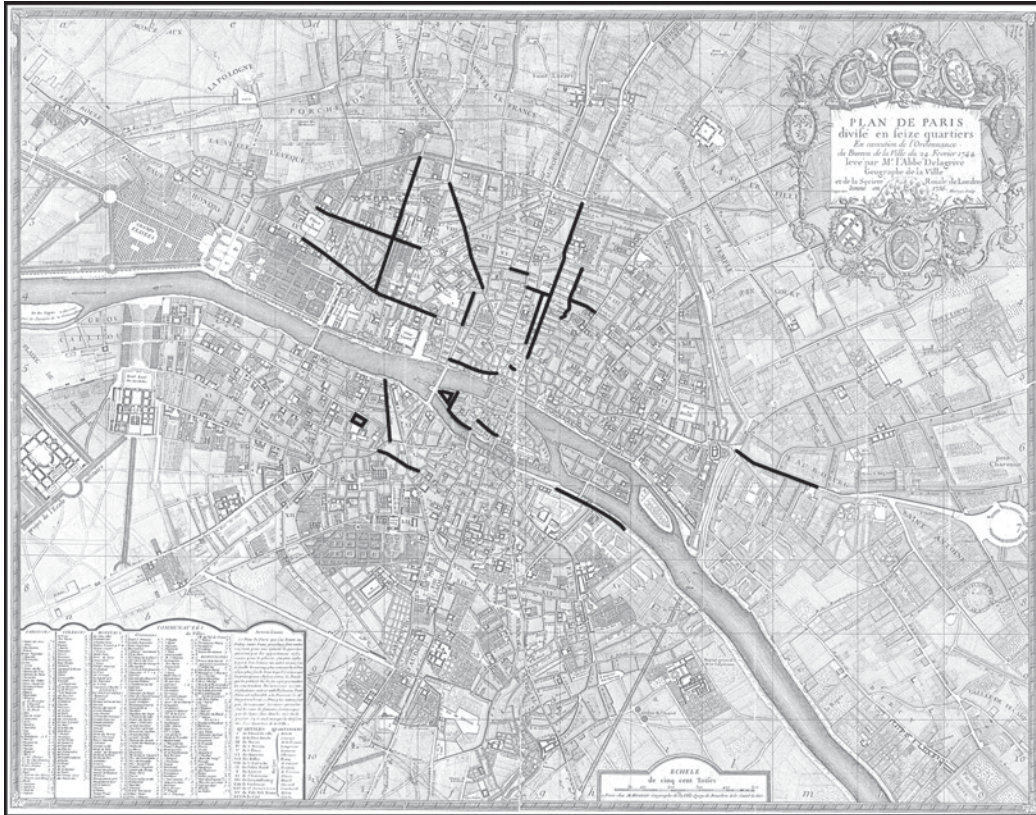
We can refine the analysis a little by looking at the streets where most Huguenot households were to be found. In the early decades of the century, although the data are very incomplete, a number of areas stand out: that around the abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés; the Île de la Cité and the nearby rue de la Huchette on the inner Left Bank; the north-central district along the rue Saint-Martin and the rue Quincampoix; parts of the Faubourg Saint-Honoré; the Faubourg Saint-Antoine; and the quais at the eastern end of the Left Bank. In the 1760–89 period, most of these same clusters remained, with a denser implantation and an apparent expansion into the surrounding areas that may simply result from the better data. Only the group on the south-eastern quais had all but disappeared. The under-represented areas of the southern and south-eastern parts of the city, and of the northern suburbs, remain. Major streets like



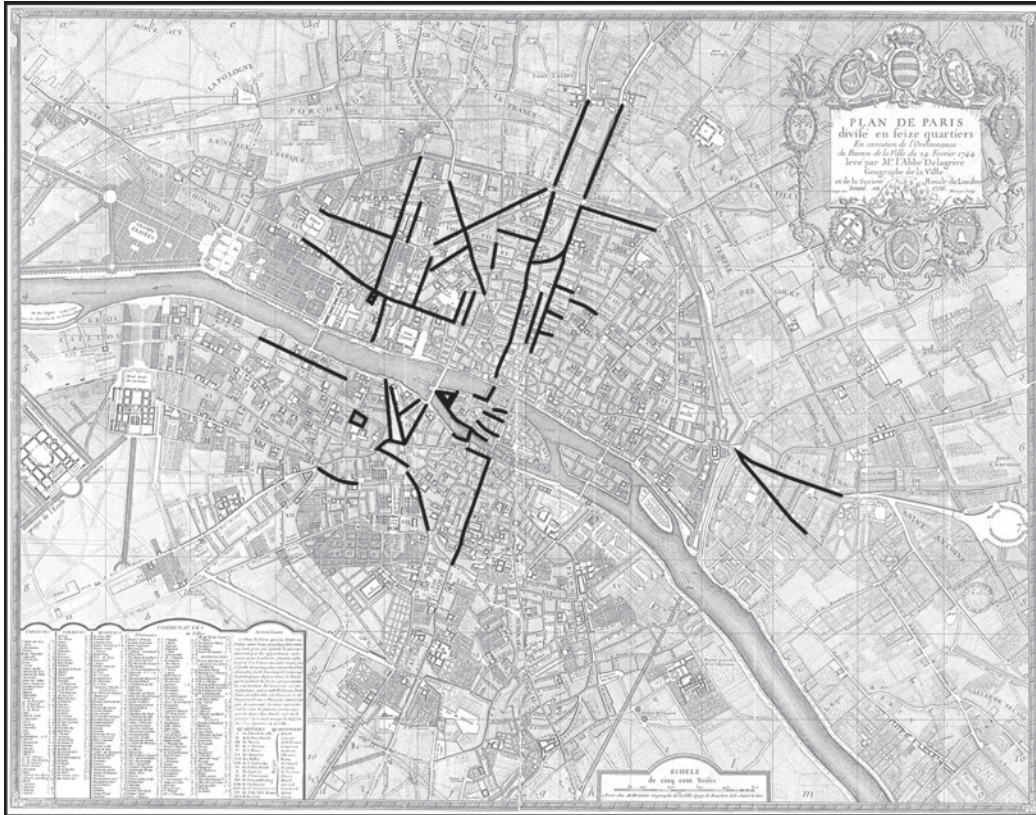
Map 3.1 Protestant households by parish, 1700–29; 1. Saint-Barthélemy 64; 2. Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs 51; 3. Saint-Eustache 50; 4. Saint-Sulpice 47; 5. Sainte-Marguerite 38; 6. Saint-Germain-l’Auxerrois 38; 7. Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet 20; 8. Saint-Merri 15; 9. Saint-Sauveur 12; 10. Saint-Séverin 12; 11. Saint-André-des-Arts 11; 12. Saint-Côme 9; 13. Saint-Leu-Saint-Gilles 9; 14. Saint-Roch 8



Map 3.2 Protestant households by parish, 1760–89; 1. Saint-Eustache 188; 2. Saint-Sulpice 172; 3. Saint-Barthélemy 112; 4. Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs 108; 5. Saint-André-des-Arts 67; 6. Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois 58; 7. Sainte-Marguerite 64; 8. Saint-Roch 51; 9. Saint-Séverin 43; 10. Saint-Symphorien (Saint-Germain-des-Prés) 42; 11. Saint-Merri 37; 12. Saint-Laurent 34; 13. Saint-Paul 32; 14. Saint-Sauveur 30; 15. Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie 23; 16. Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet 22; 17. Madeleine-de-la-Ville-l'Évêque 20



Map 3.3 Streets and squares with five or more Protestant households, 1700–39



Map 3.4 Streets and squares with five or more Protestant households, 1760–89

the rue de la Harpe, the rue Saint-Victor and the rue Mouffetard in the south, the rue du Temple and rue Vieille du Temple in the Marais, but also the rue de Vaugirard and the rue de Sèvres in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, contain few or no Huguenot households.

The apparent distaste of the Huguenots for some parishes and quarters might have been a result of the hostility of the clergy or of the Catholic population. Yet the parish priest of Saint-Symphorien, in the close of the abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, was resolutely hostile to Protestants and did his best to drive them out, but was unable to get support from either the abbot or the police. The priest at Sainte-Marguerite, in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, was also hostile but was similarly unsuccessful.⁵¹ It seems to have been ‘pull’ factors rather than ‘push’ ones that led to concentrations of Protestants in particular areas. This was certainly true of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, where the Huguenots were not required to join the guilds that controlled access to the trades in the rest of the city.⁵² After 1674 this applied only to the abbey close, but many remained in the area. The same privilege extended to the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, since 1657, and there too we find a significant number of Protestants.⁵³ That is not the whole explanation for their distribution, though, for there were other privileged areas where they were not numerous: in the Temple or the rue de l’Oursine in the Faubourg Saint-Marcel. Some of those who lived in the Faubourg Saint-Germain or the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, furthermore, had joined the relevant guild, having presented a certificate of baptism in a Catholic church. This was the case of the three furniture-makers named Pierre Migeon – grandfather, father and son – who all lived and worked in the privileged Faubourg Saint-Antoine.⁵⁴ In their case it was because that was where the furniture industry was concentrated, and since they produced items like chests of drawers that required subcontracting to artisans who did the veneers, made the locks, the brass handles and the marble tops, and did gilding and other fancy work, it was convenient to be in the same area.

⁵¹ Fréville, *Saint-Germain-des-Prés*. Arsenal MS 10171, fol. 15.

⁵² Cécile Houzard, ‘La Communauté protestante de Saint-Germain-des-Prés (1635–1640)’, *BSHPF*, 142 (1996), 389–440 (391).

⁵³ Thillay, *Le Faubourg Saint-Antoine*, esp. pp. 173–7. Cissie Fairchild, ‘The Production and Marketing of Populuxe Goods in Eighteenth-Century Paris’, in *Consumption and the World of Goods*, ed. John Brewer and Roy Porter (London and New York: Routledge, 1993). Steven Kaplan, ‘Les Corporations, les “faux ouvriers” et le faubourg Saint-Antoine au XVIIIe siècle’, *Annales: ESC*, 43 (1988), 453–78.

⁵⁴ ANY68, fol. 238 (Monvoisin). Mouquin, *Migeon*, pp. 14, 6, 22.

The presence of a cluster of Huguenots in the rue de la Huchette, a small street less than 200 metres long, appears to have been pure coincidence: it was where tapestry-makers from Aubusson came to live in the early seventeenth century when they obtained an exemption from import duties.⁵⁵ On the other hand, the significant numbers of Protestants on the Île de la Cité, especially the parish of Saint-Barthélemy, are clearly linked to their trade, since that was where the goldsmiths and jewellers were concentrated, both Catholic and Protestant. The early eighteenth-century cluster of Huguenots on the quai Saint-Bernard and the quai de la Tournelle was also directly related to occupation, since they were wood merchants. Those who lived in the rue Quincampoix and the rue Saint-Martin were engaged largely in banking and finance or in lace-making. As the century went on, the former group spread to the west, following the more general trend for finance to move to the Faubourg Saint-Honoré.⁵⁶

Alongside the resident Huguenot population was a sizeable 'floating' population, living in hotels or in the many 'garnis', establishments letting shared rooms by the night.⁵⁷ Some of these people may have remained in the city, but when they did they usually moved into longer-term rentals (although when Simon Pellorce, from the Dauphiné region, died in 1725 it was noted that he had been living in a *garni* for three years).⁵⁸ This population is difficult to identify, and cannot be numbered among the Paris Huguenots, but their presence is worth mentioning, as they may have been just as visible, in the eyes of Catholic Parisians, as the permanent Reformed community. The scattered records of those who died at the Dutch or Swedish *infirmaries*, or whose address is given as a *garni*, reveal an overwhelmingly foreign-born group of some 227 individuals, 85 per cent of them male. Their origins mirror those of the foreign-born resident Reformed population, with nearly three-quarters coming from different Swiss cantons. Around one in eight was German, with smaller numbers from other Protestant countries. Only one tenth were French-born, although that included four native Parisians. Except for a substantial number of servants, one in eight of the total, most were in skilled occupations: clockmakers, jewellers, wood-workers, shoemakers and tailors, but, as one would expect, all employees (journeymen

⁵⁵ Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, p. 279.

⁵⁶ Yves Durand, 'Répartition de la noblesse dans les quartiers de Paris', in *Contributions à l'histoire démographique de la Révolution française*, second series, ed. Reinhard, pp. 21–3 (p. 23).

⁵⁷ Gilles Chabaud *et al.*, 'La Géographie parisienne de l'accueil', in *La Ville promise*, ed. Roche, pp. 109–71. Jeffrey Kaplow, 'Sur la population flottante de Paris à la fin de l'Ancien Régime', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 39 (1967), 1–14.

⁵⁸ Read, 'Les Sépultures des protestants', 34.

or apprentices). The women, where their occupations are given, were mainly textile workers or servants.⁵⁹ This group was therefore not very different from the immigrant Reformed population as a whole.

Despite the fragmentary nature of the sources and the problems of identifying the Paris Huguenots, then, we can trace a significant number of them. The data point to a core population of Huguenots that grew steadily during the century. Given that there were undoubtedly many more people who do not appear in the extant records, a total population of several thousand is quite consistent with these figures. It is also clear that the Paris Reformed population was very diverse in its origins, nearly 40 per cent being born outside France and the others coming from many different parts of the kingdom. Yet nine out of ten were native French-speakers, so they were unified by language and culture as well as similar religious belief. The two largest groups, by place of birth, were Parisian and Swiss, together making up over half of the Reformed Protestants identified. Males made up the largest proportion of the immigrants, and the evidence is that they quickly became Parisians, although there was a periphery of others who did not stay in the city long. Although the Reformed Protestants did not come from exactly the same places as the rest of the Paris population, and included particularly large proportions of people from outside France, their origins did not make them particularly conspicuous.

Nor were there any Protestant ghettos, even though some quarters and neighbourhoods contained more Huguenots than others. Even where they were most numerous, in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine and around Saint-Germain-des-Prés, they were swamped by the Catholic population. No doubt their neighbours often knew they were Protestants, but there is no evidence of certain quarters being identified by their presence. The same is mostly true of their occupations, since although they favoured particular trades, they were found in almost every area of the economy and, with two exceptions, did not dominate any of these sectors. The exceptions were clockmaking and banking, both dominated by the Swiss, although by the later eighteenth century the Paris-based Protestant bankers were much more diverse. In so far as Protestants were, through their physical presence, visible to the Catholic population, it was likely to be either as foreign skilled workers or as wealthy, highly skilled, well-educated men and women who played a significant role in the city's economy.

⁵⁹ A very similar profile emerges from Francis Garrison's more detailed analysis of those who died at the two infirmaries, except that he does not single out the Calvinists from the Lutherans and therefore finds a larger proportion of Alsacians, Germans and Scandinavians: Garrison, 'Les Infirmeries protestantes', 70–84.

4 Keeping the faith: family and religious culture

The undeclared official policy of making Paris a ‘ville de tolérance’ was a key factor enabling the Huguenots to survive there. Because the laws against them were not rigidly enforced, they were more easily able to work, to run shops and businesses and to inherit property. But the price of this was that the Protestants had to pretend to be Catholics, at least to the extent of observing Catholic feast days and public practices. Most of them could miss weekly mass without being pursued, yet there were some Catholic requirements they could not avoid. A baptismal certificate was required for entry to the guilds and to various offices, and in some jobs regular attendance at religious services was indispensable. Unless people married in the Catholic Church, their children would be considered illegitimate.

Paris remained, throughout the eighteenth century, a strongly Catholic city. The calendar was dominated by religious festivals and the church bells sounded the daily timetable. Many Paris houses bore the names of saints and had statues or pictures above the door, while the vast majority of ordinary households owned religious objects like crosses, reliquaries and holy pictures.¹ Religious ritual regularly reclaimed the city streets, assaulting the senses with its colour, music and incense. The late eighteenth-century observer Louis-Sébastien Mercier described the impact of the Corpus Christi processions on the imagination of children, who re-enacted them in their street games: ‘[T]hey chant as they carry the host, say the mass, give benediction, and force their comrades to get down on their knees.’²

Huguenots who had grown up before the Revocation had a lifetime of Protestant religious observance behind them and found Catholic practice repellent, but their children had no such protective barriers. French-

¹ Annik Pardaill -Galabrun, *La Naissance de l’intime. 3000 foyers parisiens, XVIIe–XVIIIe si cles* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1988), pp. 403, 16–17, 29, 37–44, 48; Roche, *People of Paris*, pp. 222, 5.

² Jean Delumeau, *Rassurer et prot ger. Le sentiment de s curit  dans l’Occident d’autrefois* (Paris: Fayard, 1989), pp. 174–5; Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, 3: 80.

born Protestants, unlike most immigrants, had no separate language or ethnic identity to help maintain their distinctiveness. And the younger generation had far greater exposure to Catholicism: they were likely to be obliged to attend catechism classes in the local parish and to go to mass with their school class. Even the fee-paying *petites écoles*, the alternative to the free parish schools, stipulated that children in the first level would learn 'to pray to God, the principal [religious] mysteries, the elements of the catechism'. At the second level they were beginning to read, using the Catholic catechism, and they were taught about the sacraments.³ After the Revocation, there were few ways to counter these influences with the Reformed version of Christianity: no Protestant schools or Sunday catechisms, and no sermons except at the foreign chapels, which were watched by the police. It was very difficult to obtain advice on matters of conscience or of orthodoxy. One way around all this, for affluent families, was to send the children to school in Geneva or another Protestant state, particularly after the authorities relaxed their vigilance: in 1787 the son of the wineshop-keeper Daniel Ourry and his wife Suzanne Tavernier attended boarding school in Greenwich.⁴ But this solution was not available to most people.

Remaining Protestant in the face of these obstacles was not easy, and many Huguenots did convert or allowed their children to grow up as Catholics. It is clear, nevertheless, that many others retained their faith and passed it on to their children. French Reformed Protestants, particularly in the cities, had already developed strategies for living in a largely Catholic society, and most were prepared to make concessions that did not compromise the most important principles of their faith. Theirs was a religion, furthermore, that in many ways was well suited to clandestinity because of the emphasis it placed on individual conscience and on religious practice in the family.

Theology and practice

The major challenges facing Paris Huguenots were Catholic beliefs about the sacraments, the cult of saints and of the Virgin. An elderly widow told the police, under interrogation in 1699, that having abjured her Protestant faith she was now a Catholic, but 'she does not believe in the reality of the body of [the Saviour] in the Holy [Eucharist] and

³ *Règlement et méthode pour les écoles* (Paris: Muguët, 1709), chapter 5, quoted in Martine Sonnet, *L'Éducation des filles au temps des Lumières* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1987), p. 205.

⁴ ANY15015, 6 May 1787.

so she has always refused to go to mass'.⁵ The same issue was raised by the parents of Élisabeth Delaloë in trying to persuade their daughter, when she came home from the New Catholic convent, of the falsity of Catholic doctrine. It was the main impediment both for people who went to the parish church but did not participate in the mass, and for those who refused to go: Charles-Auguste Berthe admitted having attended a couple of times, but added that he had not knelt down: that would have been to acknowledge the sanctity of the sacrament.⁶

This provoked particular difficulties when a Protestant met the consecrated host on its way to the sick or the dying. As it passed, all the people in the street and even in nearby shops would kneel and men would remove their hats. For Catholics this was acknowledging the body of Christ, but for Calvinists it was equivalent to bowing before an idol. The cabinet-maker Pierre Migeon was denounced for mocking the idea that the host was really the body of Christ: '[T]here is your god', he had told his Catholic apprentice, 'he is mad, he roams the streets.'⁷ The Swiss pastor Jean Hollard felt he was lucky when he suddenly met a little procession in the rue de Grenelle: 'I was nevertheless allowed to cross over and to flee hurriedly, without arousing any murmurs, either because no one noticed, or as is more probable, because there is in France consideration given to Foreigners.'⁸

Crucifixes and images could also cause a problem because some Huguenots found them so offensive. Jacques Fenou, a former tax clerk (*commis des aides*) was denounced for tearing up pictures of saints and of the Virgin, and a journeyman baker married to a Catholic woman was accused of having burned one, along with his wife's rosary, saying 'he would not venerate devils'. Yet however uncomfortable Protestants may have felt about such objects, these kinds of reactions were very unusual in Paris.⁹ As Élisabeth Labrousse has pointed out, the Huguenots were in a completely different position from their coreligionists in Switzerland, the Netherlands or Scotland. They had long lived in a country with a Catholic government and a largely Catholic population. Indeed, the way the Reformed religion had spread in France, in individual families rather than being imposed on an entire population by princely or municipal fiat, meant that most French Protestants had Catholic relatives and neighbours. The obligations of family and community took them to each

⁵ Arsenal MS 10519, fol. 61.

⁶ Arsenal MS 10663, dossier Laloe (1719). Arsenal MS 10572, fol. 52, 19 February 1707. See also Arsenal MS 10511, 29 April 1697 and 11 May 1698.

⁷ Arsenal MS 10543, fol. 28. For another example, Arsenal MS 10512, fol. 51 (1698).

⁸ Hollard, *Relation*, p. 19.

⁹ Arsenal MS 10540 (1703). Arsenal MS 10494, fol. 313, 15 October 1692.

other's baptisms, marriages and funerals, and they shared many aspects of mentality and behaviour. Seventeenth-century Huguenot nobles had conformed to the social norms of their rank, fighting duels, dressing richly, going to the theatre, whatever the pastors might say about such behaviour. Nowhere was this more common than in Paris, where Huguenots of high status insisted on the prerogatives of their class. Card-playing was common among all ranks, and so was dancing, despite condemnations by both Churches. French Protestants often joined in community festivals like Carnival. They also, before the Revocation, frequently disregarded the Reformed Church rules on burials, insisting on sermons, funeral processions and sometimes other ceremonies.¹⁰ Huguenots rarely expressed the visceral objections that foreign Protestant visitors often displayed.

Those who lived in the city and knew its customs could generally avoid Catholic religious processions. They could also, in general, evade the official requirement to attend church. Charles-Auguste Berthe told the police in 1707 that in the past fifteen years he had not been to a mass and no priest had come near him. The parish churchwardens had tracked him down once, demanding that like other affluent householders he provide some bread to be blessed by the priest, but it seems he did not stay for the mass.¹¹ Even where 'New Catholics' were obliged to attend church services, subterfuges were often possible: standing at the back in crowded churches where it was difficult to kneel down and where no one could really tell who took communion and who did not; even, as in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine in 1725, coming late so that the church was full. In any case, some sections of the Paris population were so highly mobile that the clergy could not keep up with those who came and went from the parish, and since many Parisians preferred to attend monastery churches anyway, the priests did not know their entire Catholic flock.¹²

The feature of church services that Huguenots missed most was the sermons, and those who found a congenial Catholic preacher might go to listen. The rich banker Pierre Foissin and his wife Marie Hardy did occasionally attend sermons, without ever taking the sacraments, and the priests may have hoped that the Word would eventually bring them into the fold. Just after the Revocation Suzanne Marchand, the widow of another leading banker, did not go to her own parish but she did attend the church of Saint-André-des-Arts to hear the abbé Lambert,

¹⁰ Labrousse, *La Révocation*, pp. 64, 7–72; Luria, *Sacred Boundaries*, pp. 120–9.

¹¹ Arsenal MS 10609, 26 April 1713. Arsenal MS 10572, fol. 23, 8 January 1707.

¹² Arsenal MS 10171, 1 November 1725. Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community*, pp. 108–12, 32, 58–9, 89, 228–40; Sabine Juratic, 'Mobilités et populations hébergées en garni', in *La Ville promise*, ed. Roche, pp. 175–220; Roche, *People of Paris*, pp. 67–72, 124–5.

a speaker much appreciated by 'New Catholics' because 'he preached like the ministers' and did not evoke either the saints or the cult of relics.¹³ During this period, when many Catholics still hoped to convert the Huguenots, awareness of Protestant sensitivities led some priests to place less emphasis on the Virgin Mary and even to remove the 'Ave Maria' from services.¹⁴ The Jansenist catechism produced for the diocese of Montpellier, owned by a great many Parisians, was explicitly designed for 'old and new Catholics' and referred repeatedly to the authority of Scripture, rather than emphasising that of the Church fathers or of papal rulings.¹⁵ Many educated Catholics in fact shared Protestant concerns about 'superstition'. In 1701 the police seized a prayer book being sold in the city that claimed to protect anyone carrying it against magicians, sorcerers, the devil and sudden death, and that informed readers that the Pope had given Catholics the authority to deliver two souls from Purgatory, provided they said the 'Our Father' five times and repeated seven times an 'Ave' in honour of the Holy Shroud. This booklet, wrote the police chief, was superstitious and was scandalising former Protestants.¹⁶ Such attitudes, fostered by the Catholic Reformation and widespread in Paris, made it easier for Huguenots to conform to some aspects of Catholic practice.

Most, however, were able to avoid both mass and confession. The baptism of children, on the other hand, was indispensable not for religious reasons but because a certificate of baptism was required for access to many jobs and to establish one's identity for a variety of purposes, even sometimes in order to invest in government bonds. Fortunately for the Huguenots, the Reformed Churches recognised Catholic baptism and no Catholic priest would ever refuse to baptise a child, even one brought by notorious Protestants!¹⁷ Most Paris-born Huguenots were therefore baptised in the parish church. The banker Jean Cottin and his wife Louise-Aimée Fromaget even managed to have their three children baptised without setting foot in a Catholic church: they sent their servants as proxies for themselves and for the godparents.¹⁸ It was more usual,

¹³ Arsenal MS 10609, 26 April 1713. Arsenal MS 10572, 8 January 1707.

¹⁴ Jean de Viguerie, *Le Catholicisme des Français dans l'ancienne France* (Paris: Nouvelles Éditions Latines, 1988), p. 90.

¹⁵ Marie-Hélène Froeschlé-Chopard, 'Les Livres, témoins du dialogue entre jansénisme et protestantisme? L'exemple de la bibliothèque de Charles-Joachim Colbert de Croissy', in *Port-Royal et les protestants*, ed. Christian Belin, Hubert Bost, Claude Lauriol *et al.* (Paris: Bibliothèque Mazarine, 1998), pp. 277–302 (pp. 279–80).

¹⁶ BN MS fr. 21622, fol. 56, d'Argenson to Delamare, 31 August 1701.

¹⁷ McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 602.

¹⁸ Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 2: 314, n. 22. For other examples see Arsenal MS 10672, dossier Gigot; Arsenal MS 10707, fol. 79.

though, for the father and the godparents to attend, but the baptism was conducted in a side chapel with a very simple ritual.

Burial was more of a problem. Calvinists did not feel it necessary to be buried in consecrated ground or to have formal funeral services. But the law that condemned the bodies of 'relapsed' Protestants to be dragged on a hurdle through the streets was still on the books. Even after the Protestant cemetery was established in the 1730s, some may have feared that their children would suffer, and that even if the Paris authorities did not take any notice, if they owned any property in the provinces they might face prosecution there. Some Huguenots therefore tried to procure a Catholic burial. In 1687 Suzanne Marchand or her family managed to persuade the curé of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois to allow her to be interred in the Saints-Innocents cemetery. A generation later, Marie-Anne Babault admitted that her parents had been Protestants, yet they were buried – her father in 1717 and her mother in 1727 – at Saint-Barthélemy. The clergy may have been fooled, but it is likely that the deceased had fulfilled the basic minimum requirements. This was what a naval officer named Rodon did, making his confession to an unidentified monk so he could be buried at Saint-Sauveur. When the priest from the parish arrived he was told that Rodon had died unexpectedly quickly, so no further examination was possible. The Protestant trick was to hide their illness, said a hard-line priest from Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie, not notifying the clergy until it was too late, and the same practice was reported in other parts of France.¹⁹

Marriage was the most difficult issue of all. Until the 1760s it was recognised by the courts only if conducted in the Catholic Church. This meant that the children of a couple who married in any other way – or who did not marry at all – would be illegitimate and their inheritance could be challenged. Some couples tried to get around this problem by drawing up a marriage contract, notarised or legitimised by another legal officer, without any religious ceremony at all.²⁰ But if challenged, these arrangements were risky. Even families of very modest means gave their daughters dowries that in theory the husband could not squander, since after the woman's death an equivalent amount had to be given to the children or returned to the family. But the dowry was unprotected if the marriage was not recognised by the law. Once again, there was no theological problem: marriage by a priest was technically legitimate since for Calvinists it was not a sacrament but a simple

¹⁹ Arsenal MS 10572, fol. 23, 8 January 1707. Arsenal MS 11037, fols. 2, 9, 19. Arsenal MS 10519, fol. 13 (1699). AN Y14948, 16 July 1733. See McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 604.

²⁰ Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, pp. 652, 61.

ceremony. Admittedly, the seventeenth-century consistories had condemned anyone who even went into a Catholic church, let alone had their children baptised or married in one, and Reformed consistories outside France continued to do so.²¹ But that was an unrealistic standard. On the Catholic side, most of the clergy refused to marry those they knew to be Protestants, and this led to conflict with the secular authorities, who preferred to see 'New Catholics' inside the churches, even if they were only pretending. Many priests worried about the sacrilege that might be involved in Huguenots receiving sacraments they did not believe in. Others, however, saw an opportunity to force the French Protestants to come to the Catholic Church, believing that this offered a chance to convert them. In some places the clergy imposed a nuptial mass, but as one Huguenot told the police in 1707, this was not a requirement in Paris.²² There the main problem was the certificate of confession that couples had to provide. They could, of course, pretend to be real Catholics until the marriage was concluded, but for many this was unacceptable.

So the Huguenots resorted to a variety of stratagems. At the turn of the century a little group at Ville l'Évêque, on the western fringe of Paris, organised a number of marriages, forging some of the necessary documents and paying a priest to publish the banns and conduct the ceremony, in one case at four in the morning, without asking questions. In 1719 a couple living in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine were told by the curé of Sainte-Marguerite that he would never marry a Protestant, so they arranged for their daughter to get married in the adjoining parish of Saint-Laurent and left before the mass was said. 'The Protestants marry as they can', admitted Jeanne Cailly, 'and there are often untruths told.' In 1716 the clockmaker Louis Bruslefer was able to marry at Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs without being asked anything about his religious beliefs, but he and his wife did hear mass there. A police investigation reported that the Huguenots 'avoid the parishes where they are living in order to arrange marriages, because they are known there, and they seek out churches where the priests make fewer difficulties, and where they do not trouble themselves whether they are Catholic or Protestant as long as they pay'.²³ Between 1730 and 1780, many members of the

²¹ Philippe Chareyre, 'La Coexistence d'après les registres des consistoires méridionaux', in *La Coexistence confessionnelle à l'épreuve*, ed. Boisson and Krumenacker, pp. 73–88 (pp. 79–81).

²² Pierre Grosclaude, 'Comment Malesherbes élabore sa doctrine sur le problème des protestants', *BSHPP*, 103 (1957), 149–72; Émile Léonard, 'Le Problème du mariage civil et les protestants français au XVIIIe siècle', *Revue de théologie et d'action évangéliques*, 3 (1942), 241–99. Arsenal MS 10572, fol. 52, 19 February 1707.

²³ Arsenal MS 10511, 24 April 1697. Arsenal MS 10707, fols. 69–79.

Huguenot elite found another solution: going to one of the villages near Paris where the parish priest was willing to conduct a marriage without asking questions.²⁴

The marriage problem was not finally resolved until 1787, but after the 1730s the Paris police largely lost interest. Nevertheless, it was not until the 1760s that many Paris Protestants felt safe enough to marry at the Dutch or Swedish chapel. Until then, and sometimes even after that, they continued to marry in the Catholic Church. In 1788 a number who had retired to the town of Châtillon declared these marriages to local officials: Jeanne Louise Quéting, now widowed, had married in 1769 at Saint-Paul; Jean-Pierre Méry and Anne-Louise Quéting at Saint-Merri in 1758; the locksmith Germain-Philippe Péteineau and Catherine-Françoise Habert as late as 1773, at Saint-Sulpice.²⁵

It was thus quite possible, albeit at the cost of some dissimulation, for the Huguenots to conform outwardly to many aspects of Catholic practice without feeling that they were compromising their key beliefs, thanks to the nature of Reformed doctrine and religious practice. While the restrictions placed on them did succeed in getting some families to raise their children as Catholics, as in other parts of France many Paris Protestants not only got around the laws, but successfully conveyed the basic elements of their religion to their children.²⁶ It is clear that they did so privately, within the family, something the police were well aware of when they removed children from their parents.

Household and family culture

Within the Reformed Church, salvation was believed to depend on God's grace, not on going to church regularly or even on receiving the sacraments. Certainly, it was important to spread the Christian message, and Protestants saw sermons as central, yet in the end only the ones God had chosen would see the light. As Madame de Courcelle told the priest who reproached her for never taking her daughter to church, 'she and her daughter did not believe it necessary to attend church in order to go to heaven'.²⁷

The family, on the other hand, was of crucial importance. The patriarchal household was the central unit of faith and worship, the father presiding each day at Bible readings and prayers: each family, Calvin had written, was 'a small Church of Jesus Christ', and even before the

²⁴ Garrison, 'Le Mariage à la campagne'.

²⁵ Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, pp. 658, 63.

²⁶ Joutard, 'The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes', p. 360.

²⁷ Arsenal MS 11137, fol. 166, 14 November 1731.

Revocation there were attempts to realise this ideal.²⁸ There was a catechism that set out the central articles of faith and that children learned at home as well as at church.²⁹ This made it relatively easy for the Huguenots to avoid standing out in a Catholic city, especially a large one. With their church services banned, the singing of psalms at work or at home was almost the only religious practice that might draw them to Catholic attention, and it was not vital to their faith. Prayers and Bible readings could be done discreetly at home. Communion was infrequent anyway, and while the reassurance and reaffirmation of faith it provided was valued, it was no more necessary for salvation than going to church.

Household practices, however, are very difficult for us to penetrate. Families tend to present a public face that does not necessarily reflect what was going on behind closed doors, and Protestant families were doubly secretive. Yet there are some indications of the way they maintained their beliefs and raised their children in the faith. Family responses to the Catholic city outside the windows reinforced the sense of difference and of Protestant identity. Huguenot families did not participate in processions or other Catholic rituals, avoiding mass as much as they could. Unlike Catholics they probably did not crowd around the windows as the Corpus Christi procession passed, though it was very unwise to close the shutters, as two women from the provinces did in 1687.³⁰ Children must have realised at a very young age that they were different from those around them. They observed the Sabbath but not other feast days, although discretion required avoiding outdoor or noisy work on Catholic holy days.

Calvinist preachers insisted on the importance of making the home into a temple, praying together and reading the Bible. It is clear that this happened in many Paris households, which often included not only the family but also servants and sometimes other employees. In the early 1680s a journeyman button-maker converted to Protestantism as a result of the evening prayers he attended in his employer's home; and when the minister Jean Givry made a clandestine visit to Paris in 1692 he officiated at forty or fifty small meetings of 'between six and twenty people including children and servants'.³¹ Just over twenty years later Marie Hardy explained that taking in the two young daughters of a widow who had emigrated had made no difference to her routine: 'We say prayers

²⁸ Quoted in Yves Krumenacker, 'La Place du culte privé chez les protestants français au XVIIIe siècle', *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, 217 (2000), 623–38 (625). Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed*, pp. 509–11.

²⁹ Boisson and Daussy, *Les Protestants*, p. 191.

³⁰ BN MS fr. 7052, fol. 3.

³¹ Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 571. Arsenal MS 10495, fol. 30, 24 May 1692.

at home morning and evening, there is a New Testament on the table, and the two aforementioned little girls come to prayer like the others, [and] read the books they want.' But it was not only the Bible: a police spy denounced Jacques de Rosemont in 1702, reporting that he 'lives with impunity in the daily practice of certain prayers and reading certain Reformed religious books together with Marthe Lehayer the widow of Estienne LeMaistre (nicknamed Bouvet) his governess'.³²

Just what these readings might be is suggested by the books confiscated from a silk-weaver in 1693: two editions of the Psalms of David; a New Testament; a book called *Du combat chrestien* (On the Christian Struggle) by the pastor Dumoulin; *Holy Prayers; Instructions pour les enfants* (Readings for Children); a catechism; and various pamphlets and sermons. This was a common selection that we also find in inventories of the libraries of Protestant artisans and shopkeepers.³³ Such works provided the basis both for instructing children in the basic tenets of Reformed Church faith and for reflection and discussion among adults.

In families where religious practice was central, core elements of Calvinist theology were passed on as habits of thought. In 1730 Pierre Migeon, a luxury furniture-maker born in 1696, who therefore belonged to the first generation after the Revocation, began a new account book for recording payments to his employees and subcontractors. On the first page he wrote:

As I have nothing in the world more dear to me than my son, and as I have nothing closer to my heart than his advancement, I pray God from the bottom of my heart to grant me through his divine grace the ability to conduct my trade with probity ... Declaring before God that I have no other goal but to leave him the small amount that I have been able to accumulate, with much hard work, though it will never be very substantial, and to convey to him the grace that God has granted me, being persuaded that any goods acquired honestly will often be passed on even to the great grandsons, and that those which are acquired through deception will often scarcely reach the first generation. That is why, for the order of my affairs, should God take me from this earth, I begin this register fully aware of his divine goodness; and pray him with all my soul to grant me his holy grace so that I may know eternal happiness, Amen.³⁴

Migeon's emphasis on honesty and hard work was not specifically Calvinist, but his insistence on the primacy of God's will and grace was. Similar sentiments were expressed by other Huguenot artisans, like the Horry brothers, wealthy carriage-makers who attributed their fortune 'to

³² Arsenal MS 10609, 26 April 1713. Arsenal MS 10531, fol. 213.

³³ BN MS fr. 21621, fol. 268, 29 January 1693. See also Arsenal MS 10499, fol. 16, 31 January 1693; AN Y15015, 6 May 1787; MC LXXIII 944, 28 April 1773; MC XXIV 840, 14 June 1768; MC LXXIII 897, 29 December 1767, inventory dated 3 July 1767.

³⁴ ArchP D5 B6 5491.

the sweat and toil that each of them contributed for the common good and to the blessing that God bestowed on it'. Gilles Joubert, another successful furniture-maker, also attributed his fortune to 'the work of my hands that the Good Lord has seen fit to bless'.³⁵ At the same time such statements hint at the Calvinist sense of belonging to the Elect: material success was a sign of God's grace, no doubt something that helped sustain their faith through the years of persecution. Here we can glimpse something of the sense of being different that was vital to Huguenot identity and to maintaining their faith across the generations.

As these examples show, the religious language used by Huguenots was subtly different from that of orthodox Catholics. Wills illustrate this most clearly, despite the fact that the notaries who drew them up often used stock formulae. Michel Vovelle observed, in his study of 5,000 Protestant wills in Provence, that they were more Christ-centred than Catholic wills, emphasising the grace acquired through the suffering and death of Jesus. This is also true in Paris, where Huguenot wills often referred to the need for divine grace and to the hope of salvation through 'the infinite merit of our divine saviour and redeemer'.³⁶ These formulae are sometimes found in Catholic wills too, particularly those of Jansenists, who placed a similar emphasis on divine grace.³⁷ Yet while not exclusively Protestant, they appear to have been part of a way of thinking and speaking that was central to Huguenot culture, even in the midst of a Catholic city.

Children surely quickly realised, too, that their homes were furnished in subtly different ways from Catholic households. Protestants never had crucifixes and pictures of saints or of the Virgin on their walls. They did not have statues or holy medallions, prayer-stools, rosaries, holy-water containers, or – unlike particularly pious Catholic families – tiny altars with holy candles and reliquaries. Catholics were likely to have an engraving of their personal patron saint, or that of their trade. The absence of such objects was not necessarily something that a Catholic entering a Protestant home would notice, but they were important in conveying a particular view of the world. Protestants grew up in a different domestic environment, one that deliberately rejected Catholic iconography, especially the cult of the saints.³⁸

³⁵ Mouquin, *Migeon*, p. 25. MC CXVII 872, October 1775.

³⁶ Vovelle, 'Les Testaments réformés', p. 46. See also Jacques Marcadé, 'Les Protestants poitevins au XVIIIe siècle (tentative d'approche par les testaments)', *BSHPF*, 129 (1983), 318. MC III 1181, 15 January 1787. AN Y51, fol. 279, 6 May 1733. AN Y54, fol. 456v–457, 25 May 1740. AN Y59, 3 January 1767, fol. 261v.

³⁷ Lyon-Caen, *La Boîte à Perrette*, pp. 281–7.

³⁸ This point and what follows is developed in David Garrioch, 'Religious Identities and the Meaning of Things in Eighteenth-Century Paris', in *French History and Civilisation. Papers from the George Rudé Seminar 3*, ed. Gemma M. Betros (The George Rudé

Huguenot families did have pictures, crude prints for the poor and paintings in gilded frames for the well-to-do, often landscapes or classical subjects, with occasional New Testament themes. Sometimes they had religious pictures, including Old Testament subjects that were less usual in Catholic apartments: a goldsmith displayed a painting of Lot and his daughters in the living room; another goldsmith owned a 'burning of Sodom'; two wood merchants had representations of Abraham and Isaac in their bedrooms.³⁹ It is possible that the stories of Lot and of Abraham had particular significance for Huguenots, since both were about individuals who were isolated, with their families, in the midst of sinners and unbelievers. Lot lived a holy life in the city of Sodom (to which Paris was sometimes likened), while Abraham lived among the Philistines. In both stories, God tested their faith to the limit.⁴⁰ These seem appropriate models for Huguenots.

The other kind of picture that both Catholics and Protestants possessed was portraits, but they might mean many different things. Paris Jansenists displayed pictures and sometimes busts of members of the Arnauld family, of bishops like Caylus, Colbert of Montpellier and Soanen, and especially of the Jansenist 'saint' François de Pâris.⁴¹ Huguenots had few similar heroes, but Marguerite Girardot de Préfonds had in her bedroom a portrait of the family of Jean Calas.⁴² Surprisingly, Paris Protestants frequently displayed portraits of Louis XIV, as well as depictions of the battles of Alexander the Great, which conventionally represented the victories of the Sun King. This was a choice consistent with their impassioned efforts to show themselves to be loyal French subjects, not the republicans that their Catholic opponents portrayed them to be. Portraits were not merely decorative: hence Jean-Baptiste de La Salle's insistence in his etiquette book of 1716 that one should never sit with one's back to a portrait of a person one respected.⁴³

Society, 2009), pp. 17–25. See also Krumenacker, *Des protestants au Siècle des Lumières*, pp. 214–24.

³⁹ MC X 305, 16 December 1712. MC X XII 425, 28 July 1733. MC V 708, 20 April 1779. VII 230, 2 September 1721. On Huguenot attitudes to religious paintings, Philip Benedict, 'Towards the Comparative Study of the Popular Market for Art: The Ownership of Paintings in Seventeenth-Century Metz', in *Faith and Fortunes*, pp. 191–207, esp. pp. 202–3.

⁴⁰ Genesis 19: 1–29; 22: 1–19.

⁴¹ Lyon-Caen, *La Boîte à Perrette*, pp. 19, 59, 96–101. Mathieu Marraud, *De la Ville à l'État. La bourgeoisie parisienne, XVIIe–XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2009), pp. 232–4.

⁴² MC LXXIII 897, 29 December 1767, inventory of 3 July 1767.

⁴³ AN Y11071, 21 March 1756. MC XXVI 413, 17 May 1742. MC LXXIII 897, 29 December 1767, inventory of 3 July 1767. On paintings of Alexander, Marraud, *De la Ville à l'État*, p. 493; [Jean-Baptiste de La Salle], *Règles de la Bienséance et de la civilité chrétienne* (Paris: Veuve Oudot, 1716), p. 124.

Most prominent of all were family portraits. These were by no means confined to Huguenots, nor to the social elites: most prosperous artisan and bourgeois couples in eighteenth-century Paris proudly displayed their parents, grandparents and sometimes more distant ancestors. Such portraits were almost always of individuals, not groups, and were conventionally passed on to the eldest son as reminders of the family's lineage. This was certainly their function in noble households, and because of their association with nobility they were (consciously or unconsciously) a symbol of status. The props, expression, posture, clothing and background were statements about the individual, but also about the family to which they belonged. This was certainly the case in England, where displaying the portraits of parents or earlier forebears was a form of filial piety. The notaries who drew up inventories of deceased estates always listed but never valued family portraits, as they did other paintings, and it is likely that as in England, selling them symbolised the end of the family line.⁴⁴ It is always difficult to know how people interpreted pictures, but it is likely that because Calvinism was so focused on the family, the portraits in Huguenot households were reminders of their religious tradition. There is a hint of this in the will left by Jean-Baptiste Massé, a painter of miniatures, who was buried in the Protestant cemetery in 1769. He left his collection of family portraits to his niece's husband, a Huguenot living in London, 'to have and to hold with them the memory of my ancestors and to imitate them'. His will requested a Catholic burial, a ploy used by Protestants to make the confiscation of assets more difficult, but contained no mention of the saints or any other specifically Catholic reference, and he thanked God 'for my birth to a father and a mother whose piety and eminent qualities have always been for me objects of emulation'.⁴⁵

A further element of Calvinist culture that characterised some Paris families was the choice of biblical baptismal names. In the sixteenth century, Protestants had adopted this practice as a way of differentiating themselves publicly from Catholics, and as Philip Benedict has shown, in places like Rouen it was possible to say with a fair degree of accuracy, on the basis of given names, who belonged to each faith. The Council of Trent suggested that all Catholic children be given the name of a saint

⁴⁴ Louise Lippincott, 'Expanding on Portraiture. The Market, the Public, and the Hierarchy of Genres in Eighteenth-Century Britain', in *The Consumption of Culture, 1600–1800. Image, Object, Text*, ed. Ann Bermingham and John Brewer (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 81–2; Marraud, *De la Ville à l'État*, p. 218.

⁴⁵ ANY11584, 26 September 1767. MC XCVII 502, 1 July 1778, containing extracts from will of 28 November 1767, and ANY59, fol. 333v, 28 November 1767. On religion and family tradition in the Cévennes see Joutard, 'The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes', pp. 367–8.

who would then become their protector and advocate before God, and in response the French Protestant churches in the seventeenth century had recommended the adoption of biblical names as a deliberate rejection of the cult of the saints.⁴⁶ This advice was adopted to varying degrees. Many Protestants continued to give their children the names of Catholic saints, thanks to the widespread custom of naming children after their godparents.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, in some regions Protestant families adopted Old Testament names with enthusiasm, some 61 per cent of boys and 70 per cent of girls receiving them in the area around Château-Thierry in the 1670s, although this was higher than average. As persecution increased after the 1670s, however, all but the most determined Huguenots abandoned the practice.⁴⁸

Paris followed this pattern. In the years leading up to 1685, around 16 per cent of the baptismal names given to Huguenot children in Paris were Old Testament names like Daniel, Isaac, Suzanne and Esther: the figure may have been higher before 1660. In the eighteenth century, though, it fell to just over 7 per cent. Nevertheless, since Catholics used these names hardly at all, they remained a marker of Protestant identity.⁴⁹ Thus in 1748, when a couple came to be married in the parish church of Saint-Côme, near the Sorbonne, the priest was suspicious: 'The name 'Élie borne by the Sieur Giraudeau [the groom's father] and his occupation of merchant in La Rochelle placed him in some doubt.' But the paperwork was in order and he went ahead with the ceremony. The deception came to light thanks to the requirement that banns be published in the parishes of both parties. The second priest at Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs explained that he had checked on the bridegroom's address when the name 'Élie' aroused his suspicions. None of the neighbours knew the

⁴⁶ Philip Benedict, *Rouen during the Wars of Religion* (Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 256–60; Jacques Dupâquier, 'Introduction', in *Le Prénom. Mode et histoire*, ed. Jacques Dupâquier, Alain Bideau and Marie-Élizabeth Ducreux (Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1984), p. 5; Stephen Wilson, *The Means of Naming. A Social and Cultural History of Personal Naming in Western Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 198.

⁴⁷ Wilson, *Means of Naming*, pp. 221–30.

⁴⁸ Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, pp. 427–33; Daniel Fauvell, 'Choix de prénoms et tradition familiale: Pays de Caux, 1600–1900', in *Le Prénom. Mode et histoire*, ed. Dupâquier et al., pp. 99–108 (p. 105); Suzanne Hoyez and Andrée Ruffelard, 'Prénoms protestants au XVII^e siècle en Brie et en Provence', in *Le Prénom. Mode et histoire*, ed. Dupâquier et al., pp. 223–30 (p. 226); Krumenacker, *Des protestants au Siècle des Lumières*, p. 125.

⁴⁹ The figures given are based on a sample of 367 Protestants born in Paris 1640–85 and 645 born between 1700 and 1790. The figures for Catholics are those for 1,626 Paris-born inhabitants of the place Royale Section. For discussion of these sources and methodology see David Garrioch, 'Suzanne, David, Judith and Isaac ... Given Names and Protestant Religious Identity in Eighteenth-Century Paris', *French Historical Studies*, 33, no. 1 (2010), 33–67 (41–7).

groom, so he raised the alarm. But this was not the only name that officials in Paris took to be Protestant. The police briefing note added that a document intended to prove the legitimacy of another marriage was signed by a surgeon's apprentice named Isaac Lys, 'which demonstrates clearly that the Demoiselle Toustelot is a Protestant ... since the name Isaac is a Protestant name'.⁵⁰ They seem to have forgotten about the Jews, but since Paris Jews could marry in their own religion they were not likely to be coming to the Catholic Church.

Precisely because they were so identifiable, most Huguenot families in Paris abandoned these distinctive Old Testament names in the eighteenth century. Some turned instead to New Testament names, consistent with the Protestant tradition but also acceptable to the Catholic Church, names like Jean, Pierre and Jacques for boys, Marie, Anne and Élisabeth for girls. Suzanne remained popular, as unlike other Old Testament names it was also the name of an obscure Catholic saint, an early Christian martyr. Yet even where Catholics and Huguenots drew on the same pool of names there were still some significant differences in the choices they made. Suzanne was rarely selected by Catholics: it retained a Protestant ring, which was undoubtedly why when Nicolle Tesson converted to Calvinism in 1693 and moved to Paris, she began calling herself Suzanne.⁵¹ Marthe, which was reasonably common among Protestants, had a similar flavour and was a very unusual Catholic choice. Other New Testament names were also significantly more popular among Paris Huguenots. They chose Jean 15.9% of the time, against 11% for Catholics; and also Pierre, Anne, Élisabeth and Madeleine (12.7%, 8.9%, 6% and 5.7% respectively, compared with 8.3%, 6.4%, 2.3% and 2.9% respectively for Catholics). On the other hand, they very rarely used Jean-Baptiste, which seems to have had very Roman associations: certainly a sixteenth-century English Puritan had condemned it as Papist. Even where Paris Huguenots gave their children the names of Catholic saints, they did not consistently choose the same ones as Catholic families did. Geneviève, for example, patron saint of Paris, was chosen by 3.5% of Catholics but by fewer than 1% of Protestants. Joseph, which was pushed hard by Catholic missionaries in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was also less popular among the Huguenots.⁵² Catholics, on the other hand, continued to favour later saints like François (8%) and its derivative Françoise (5.6%), Charles (5.3%), Antoine and Nicolas (both 4.6%) and Catherine (4.3%). Overall, in my sample around 70% of Huguenot

⁵⁰ AN Y13643, 24 April 1749. My thanks to Nicolas Lyon-Caen for drawing this document to my attention.

⁵¹ Arsenal MS 10496, fol. 14, 9 February 1693.

⁵² Wilson, *Means of Naming*, pp. 189, 91–4.

children baptised in Paris in the eighteenth century received at least one biblical name (Old or New Testament), compared with 20% of Catholic boys and 46% of girls (the higher figure because of the popularity of Marie).

These confessional differences were not necessarily part of a conscious strategy, except in the case of Old Testament names. Many families clearly decided not to use them after the 1680s, and the few who did were making a statement. Yet the selection of names certainly reflects a cultural difference, even if it resulted in part from the choice of Protestant relatives as godparents. Names like Geneviève and Jean-Baptiste were not common among Huguenots and did not appeal to them, whereas New Testament names did. All given names have associations, sometimes positive and sometimes negative, often with someone else who has borne them. This, then, was another respect in which Huguenot culture was distinct from that of the broader Catholic population. Along with particular family practices, certain forms of language, and a subtly different material culture, names were part of a family inheritance that helped to forge a confessional identity.

Closed households

Because the household was where Huguenots continued their illicit religious practice, it needed to be shielded from the outside Catholic world. In the early part of the century there was a risk of denunciation, as Pierre Migeon discovered when he disparaged the Catholic religion in the hearing of his apprentice.⁵³ We do not know whether subsequently he chose only Huguenot apprentices, but there is scattered evidence from early in the eighteenth century that other Protestant employers did so. In 1707 Pierre Chair, from a local Huguenot family, was taken on by the wine-shop-keeper Perrinet. It was fairly common in Paris to employ nephews or nieces as apprentices, so no one found it odd that Bastien Panseron came from Sancerre to work with his uncle Jacques Duguay in the rue Saint-Martin.⁵⁴ But this was a way of protecting the household from potentially hostile eyes.

The same issue arose with other employees. It was a widespread practice for journeymen and shop-boys and -girls to be lodged by their employer, though not necessarily in the same apartment, and here too it was common for Protestants to take on coreligionists. In the middle years of the

⁵³ Arsenal MS 10543, fol. 28 (1703).

⁵⁴ SHPF MS 410, fol. 6v, 23 December 1707. Garrisson, 'Les Infirmeries protestantes', 84. For another example, MC XV 573, 20 May 1733.

century Migeon's son and grandson employed François Bécasson and another man who was to become an important figure in Paris Huguenot networks, Antoine-Pierre Jacot. In the furniture, jewellery and watch- and clockmaking industries, where there was a ready supply of skilled Swiss and German workers, this was quite easy.⁵⁵ Some Huguenot wineshop-keepers took on Protestant employees, and the rich baker Jacques-Alexis Monvoisin had three journeymen, all Huguenots.⁵⁶ This was even more crucial in the case of servants, since they were full members of the household, often sleeping with the family or in an alcove in the apartment. They were employed not only by the rich but by many artisan and shopkeeper families, and might take particular responsibility for the children, so it was vital not only that they be relied upon not to denounce their employer, but that they participate in family prayers and be able to contribute to the children's religious education. They were therefore selected very carefully, with an eye to their own family and religious background. In the mid 1750s two Protestant girls came from Sancerre to work for the Estave family, no doubt recruited by relatives in the region. Suzanne Lejay, also from Sancerre, served the notoriously Huguenot Girardot family until she got pregnant and was sent back home.⁵⁷

Given the difficulties that Protestant families faced, it is not surprising that parents attempted to maintain fairly strict control of their households. As mentioned in [Chapter 2](#), a number of Protestant girls approached the authorities claiming they wanted to convert, largely it appears to escape from their families. This was certainly the case for fifteen-year-old Marie-Anne Falaise, a watchmaker's daughter, who sought out the local priest asking to be admitted to the New Catholic convent. So did Geneviève Monvoisin, aged nineteen, whose father beat her severely when he learned she had been to a Catholic church. Such attempts by middle-class parents in Paris to control the behaviour of children, particularly girls, were not confined to Huguenots by any means. But what is specific to Protestant families is that religion was the flashpoint for

⁵⁵ Mouquin, *Migeon*, p. 91. AN Y12419, 2 April 1752. AN Y12420, 17 November 1752. AN Y15277, 2 December 1769. AN Y15276, 26 January 1768. AN Y15289, 22 August 1781. Arsenal MS 10696, fol. 279 (1720).

⁵⁶ AN Y11574, 13 November 1758. SHPF MS 410, fol. 12v, 30 November 1729. Arsenal MS 11233, fol. 283 (1733).

⁵⁷ SHPF MS 410, fol. 31 (May 1756). Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, p. 288. For further examples, Arsenal MS 10696, fol. 289 (1720); Arsenal MS 10672, dossier Gigot, n.d.; AN Y10749, 12 August 1729; AN Y15765, 9 September 1721. On servants more generally see Cissie Fairchild, *Domestic Enemies. Servants and Their Masters in Old Regime France* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984); Sarah C. Maza, *Servants and Masters in Eighteenth-Century France. The Uses of Loyalty* (Princeton University Press, 1983).

youthful rebellion and the issue over which conflict erupted, even if other tensions – over sex or willingness to work – were also at stake. In Catholic families, on the other hand, religion was rarely mentioned.⁵⁸

Despite these episodic tensions, what is most striking is the cohesive nature of Huguenot families, a quality that enabled them to protect both their property and their religion. Despite attempts by the authorities to divide them by promising that members who converted to Catholicism would receive property confiscated from those who remained Protestant, the overwhelming pattern is one of solidarity. Another measure of this is the failure, by some wealthy Huguenots, to draw up inventories after the death of their father or mother. This was quite unusual, because engaging a notary to describe in detail the effects belonging to the estate was a protection for the heirs. It guaranteed (in principle) that nothing could be removed or overlooked, and was designed to prevent disputes. But for Protestant families it meant that the authorities could easily identify their property if they chose to confiscate it. This was presumably why no inventory was drawn up of the estate of Gabriel Bouffé in 1759, even though he left over 300,000 *livres*. Only six years later, when there presumably was no further risk of legal proceedings against their father either in Paris or in his home town of La Rochelle, did his son and daughter commission a formal division of the estate.⁵⁹

Some families did split along religious lines, particularly where the children had been forcibly removed and raised as Catholics. In the case of the Foissin family, the authorities suspected, but could not prove, that the Protestant members had conspired to deprive the Catholic ones of part of their inheritance. After Pierre Foissin died in 1713, his banking portfolio was estimated by some observers to be worth 1 million *livres* but only a much smaller amount was traceable, and the police believed that his widow had concealed some of the promissory notes and other assets. They also suspected that his son Paul had inherited a large amount from in-laws in England, but since there was no inventory it was very difficult to trace.⁶⁰ Not all families divided in this way, but where there was acrimony the solidarity between those of the same religion was very strong.

A different arrangement, also relying on trust between family members, was made by the Jallot family in 1706. Pierre Jallot's mother had emigrated, and since he was Protestant he was unable to claim her property.

⁵⁸ Farge and Foucault, *Le Désordre des familles*. Arsenal MS 11282, fol. 28 (1735). Arsenal MS 11233, fol. 283 (1733).

⁵⁹ ANY11582A, 21 June 1765.

⁶⁰ Arsenal MS 10609, interrogation of Marie Hardy, Widow Foissin, 26 April 1713.

He therefore transferred it to his daughter, who was able to present certificates from the clergy at Saint-Eustache. The authorities strongly suspected that hers was a conversion of convenience but once again there was no proof.⁶¹ The use of women for this purpose seems to have been widespread. As we saw earlier, they were less likely to emigrate: it was easier for men to travel without arousing suspicion, and the Huguenots may have thought, probably correctly, that women who remained Protestant were less likely to attract attention. Wives were therefore left to mind the shop, often literally, their continued presence and often their formal abjuration serving to protect the family assets. After the former Elder of the Charenton church, Louis Gervaise, was exiled to England in 1688, his wife and daughter stayed in Paris, converted to Catholicism and were granted all his property. We cannot, in this case, be certain of their motives, but another example seems much clearer. Anne Chauvin, wife of Pierre Falaiseau, was denounced by her husband's uncle, who said her conversion was fraudulent and that he as the nearest Catholic relative should receive the couple's property. She, however, maintained that her husband had left her and emigrated to Prussia, 'because of the hatred he bore her for abjuring the so-called Reformed Religion'. This had not, however, stopped her from rejoining her husband in Berlin for a year. Nor did it prevent her from going to Leiden, where she attended the Huguenot church, although the French authorities seem to have been unaware of this. They were clearly suspicious, though, since they placed her husband's property in a trust, against which she was granted an annuity.⁶²

The Paris Huguenots were obliged to compromise with Catholicism to varying degrees. Some, particularly in occupations requiring Catholic practice, attended the parish church and even received the sacraments, keeping their reservations to themselves or expressing them only within their close family circle. We only learn who these people were if they died refusing the Catholic sacraments or, very occasionally, when their children later revealed that despite their apparent conformity, in their hearts they had remained Protestant. The sources more often tell us of those who refused Catholic practice. In occupations where the guild officials did not rigorously exclude Protestants, or where they were not required to join a guild, it was easier to get by, and probably more so for women than for men. These individuals might attend the chapels of the

⁶¹ ANTT150. MC X 289, 8 October 1708.

⁶² ANTT133 dossier 9, fols. 61–71. Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 54, 7–60.

Protestant ambassadors, but it was nearly impossible to avoid Catholic practice altogether, particularly for baptisms and marriages.

Thus the survival of Paris Protestantism depended on family solidarity. Loyalty to lineage was very much part of the culture of eighteenth-century Paris, but in Huguenot families it was strongly reinforced by the centrality of the household in religious practice and by the experience of persecution. Because the institutional structure of the Reformed Churches was weak and because a pastor was not indispensable for most aspects of religious practice, the destruction of the church at Charenton and the vicious persecution of the Protestant clergy did not succeed in destroying Paris Protestantism. Instead, it went underground, into households where both family members and carefully chosen employees said their prayers, read sermons and psalms, taught their children the basic tenets of Reformed Church belief and reinforced one another's faith.

Equally important, as we have seen, was a family culture embedded in material surroundings and in particular ways of thinking and speaking. As a police report on the clockmaker Mathieu Marguerite said succinctly in 1711, 'he lives in the manner of those of the Reformed Religion'.⁶³ Yet this was not something absolute and permanent: not all Huguenot households were the same. On the contrary, they were as varied as Catholic ones, with different provincial origins, levels of wealth and education, and a wide range of occupations. All of these things, as well as contact with relatives in Geneva or other parts of the Huguenot Refuge, influenced family cultures, as well as the collective willingness and capacity to avoid Catholic practice. Yet in every case, Huguenot children grew up knowing they were different, that their family traditions were Protestant ones. Those who grew up in the city absorbed from their family environment values that were rooted in the spartan and scripturally based religion of their forebears. It was these, as much as explicit religious instruction, that inoculated them against the efforts of the Catholic clergy, of schoolteachers and against the less obvious influences of everyday life in a Catholic city.

⁶³ ANTT136-7, fol. 21.

5 Networks: the Protestants in the city

Some elements within the Paris police were persuaded that an underground Protestant organisation survived in the city in the early eighteenth century. In 1727 a zealous inspector accused the clockmaker Jean Foullé of being behind the resistance of all the Protestants living on the Île de la Cité, ‘and he is even said to be the holder of the Boîte à Perrette of his group’.¹ The ‘Boîte à Perrette’ was the war-chest of the militant Jansenists, cleverly concealed and used primarily to fund underground publications.² There was no such fund or organisation among the Huguenots. The police were right, however, in linking their resistance to the connections that existed between them. Although Paris Protestantism had retreated into the household, individual families were not entirely isolated. They were sustained and comforted by networks of different kinds, including provincial and international ones and, as the years passed, those reconstructed around the embassy chapels. Although the Reformed faith was particularly well suited to clandestinity, it could not have survived successfully for a century without these wider connections.

Élisabeth Labrousse has pointed to the communitarian aspects of French Protestantism, observing that religion was not solely an individual choice.³ In Paris the hold of family and neighbours was far weaker than in small towns and villages where there were strong Huguenot communities, so it was much easier for those living in the city to give in to official pressure and convert to Catholicism. But even there, children born into traditionally Protestant families were usually raised as Protestants, unless they were forcibly removed. Huguenot resistance was strengthened by a sense of community that on the one hand provided moral and practical

¹ Arsenal MS 10989, fol. 413, Vaneroux to Lieutenant-General of Police, 11 March 1727.

² Nicolas Lyon-Caen, ‘La Boîte à Perrette. Le financement des oeuvres jansénistes au XVIIIe siècle’, *Paris et Île-de-France. Mémoires de la fédération des sociétés historiques et archéologiques de Paris et de l’Île-de-France*, 57 (2006), 147–91; Catherine Maire, *De la cause de Dieu à la cause de la Nation. Le jansénisme au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1998), pp. 131–5.

³ Labrousse, *La Révocation*, p. 63.

support, and on the other helped to control the behaviour of its members, creating a powerful disincentive to conversion.

The police knew this, and while they were prepared to overlook private religious practice they clamped down hard on any organisation. They were also well aware of the potential of family networks to encourage resistance: 'There is no means more efficacious to prevent the spread of Calvinism than to keep watch on the education of children and on the marriages the Protestants contract among themselves', a police official reflected.⁴ This was why they removed the children of the most obdurate Huguenots, although their commitment to patriarchy made them nervous about such intervention, because it broke the control of parents, particularly fathers, over their children. Nevertheless, they sometimes deemed it necessary in order to save souls. And the police also tried to isolate Protestant households and to surround them with Catholics. This was an explicit policy for some years, certainly in the early 1690s, when the clockmaker Gaudron was forced to move from his lodgings on the Île de la Cité, on the Lieutenant-General's instructions, in accordance with 'the general ban that does not permit several New Catholics to remain together'.⁵

Despite the best efforts of the police, however, there is ample evidence of active networks among the Paris Huguenots throughout the eighteenth century. The recruitment of apprentices, journeymen and servants, mentioned in the last chapter, demonstrates their capacity to find their coreligionists in the big city. A wineshop waiter named Legrand, returning from England in the late 1690s, worked first in an establishment in the rue des Fossés Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois and then in one near the central market, both owned by a Protestant named Babot. He then spent a couple of years in the army before returning to Paris, where he found a job with another Huguenot, Lemaistre, also next to the central market. After another absence, he was taken on by a third Protestant wine-shop-keeper in the rue Montmartre.⁶ He clearly had no trouble finding employers of his own confession. We can see similar informal networks in operation through the renewed emigration after 1699, since people wishing to leave Paris were somehow able to find out where and when to meet. In 1702 a police investigation into the activities of a woman nicknamed 'L'Esprit', who guided emigrants safely across the border, discovered that there were particular lodging houses where her clients

⁴ Arsenal MS 11037, fol. 27, police memo, 1727.

⁵ BN MS fr. 21622, fol. 34, La Reynie to commissaire Delamare, 3 May 1692. See also Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 575.

⁶ Arsenal MS 10584, fol. 108, 26 September 1708.

stayed until they received confirmation of their departure, and most of the contacts seem to have been women.⁷

We know, too, that certain individuals played a key role in maintaining Huguenot networks, men like Jacques Falaiseau: thin and pale, dressed in black but often wearing a red cloak, in the 1690s he reportedly visited dying Protestants and exhorted them to die in the faith. The same accusation was levelled at Pierre Hamon in 1713, and the presence among his papers of a Protestant catechism and of explanatory notes on Bible verses suggested a role as a teacher as well.⁸ Right up to the 1730s – and perhaps later, though after that the police took less interest – there were rumours of discreet gatherings in safe houses, such as those of the foreign Protestant bankers.⁹ There are also hints from the 1720s and 1730s that families with children were visited by lay teachers like the elderly Étienne Chastelain, a retired employee of the tax office, though he denied the charge. The widows Saulnier and Grumé, living on the Île de la Cité, were similarly accused of teaching Protestant children in 1731.¹⁰ Wills reveal other intriguing connections, some of which crossed class lines, as when Louise Girardot left 50 *livres* to a poor woman named Deschamps who lived in the rue de la Huchette: the will does not say that Deschamps was Protestant but as her street was a Huguenot stronghold it is likely. In 1767 Nicolas Houzel left money to be distributed to poor people whose names he discreetly did not mention, and twenty years later Guillaume Terral did the same: their identity, wrote Terral, ‘I have made known to my executor’.¹¹

Before 1685 the church at Charenton had provided many connections, and they continued long after it had been destroyed. Most Protestants – as the police pointed out – married others of the same faith, usually of a similar age and rank, whom they succeeded in identifying among the half-million inhabitants of Paris. How, one wonders, did the journeyman goldsmith Jacques Guillemain, son of a silk-weaver in Orleans, meet his future wife Marie-Anne Collas, whose father was a cloth-maker in Normandy. He lived in the place de Grève on the Right Bank, she in the rue Saint-Victor on the Left Bank, some distance away. There was no

⁷ Arsenal MS 10531, fols. 199–201.

⁸ Arsenal MS 10519, fols. 5–15 (1699). Arsenal MS 10609 (1713). In 1734 Daniel Perillau de Villiers was accused of the same thing: ANTT134–5, dossier 12.

⁹ Arsenal MS 10522, fol. 89 (1700); Arsenal MS 10523, fol. 185 (1700); Arsenal MS 10543, fol. 28 (1703); Arsenal MS 10831, fol. 14 (1724); Arsenal MS 10826, fols. 144–59 (1725). Arsenal MS 11138, fol. 41 [1731].

¹⁰ Arsenal MS 10958, fols. 272, 280 (1727). Arsenal MS 11148, fols. 78, 81 (1731).

¹¹ MC X 485, 4 July 1748. MC XCIX 572, 6 August 1767 (Houzel). MC III 1181, 15 January 1787 (Terral). See also the will of Marie Durand, widow of the wineshopper François Almain, ArchP DC6 249, fol. 209, 21 December 1767.

obvious connection between them, yet both were Huguenots and they were married in August 1749.¹²

As we saw in [Chapter 3](#), Huguenots clustered in particular neighbourhoods and streets, such as parts of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, around the abbey close of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, or the rue de la Huchette on the Left Bank. None of these was dominated by Protestants, but they congregated there and were able to give one another moral and practical support. The police strongly suspected that Pierre Hamon had helped his neighbour Pierre Foissin resist pressure to convert on his death-bed, and that another Huguenot neighbour, Vanderhult, had stored property from his estate that the family threw out the window to avoid the authorities discovering it. Sometimes, despite police attempts to separate them, Huguenots did live in the same house. The building occupied by the candle-maker François Mongendre and then by his widow Jeanne Marguillier, on the corner of the grande rue du Faubourg Saint-Antoine and the rue Saint-Nicolas, was a veritable Protestant refuge. In 1741 it was home to a seventy-year-old perfume-maker from Troyes; to Marie-Madeleine Mignot, aged 62, widow of a Swiss soldier but herself probably from the Brie area, who lived with her brother-in-law, the stonemason Pierre Jacot; to the gauze-maker Jean Hannechart and his family; to a German shoemaker named Hartmann; as well as to the Mongendre family themselves. The other residents included the wood-turner Antoine Doublet, a cooper named Louis Gilbert, the clockmaker Jean Creuzé and the tobacco-seller Charles Dhier, almost certainly all Protestants.¹³

It is hardly surprising to find a persecuted minority clustering together for support. Faced with the threat of denunciation, Huguenots breathed easier if their neighbours were people of the same religion. It made them more secure, and facilitated bringing up children in their faith, reducing neighbourhood pressure to conform to Catholic practice. They might even be able to risk singing psalms and holding slightly larger prayer meetings without fear of spying neighbours. In 1720 a Huguenot shop-keeper confided to an English visitor that ‘there were many Hundreds in that City, of the same Opinion, and who had their Meetings on Sabbath-Days; but this was the greatest Secret in Life’.¹⁴

Yet while such clustering seems natural, it is not as easy to explain as it might seem. How did Protestants recognise one another? Unlike Quakers or Jews, they wore no distinctive dress or external sign, and

¹² MC XI 569, 30 August 1749.

¹³ Arsenal MS 10609. ANY10987B, 13 February, 11 May, 16 May, 3 September 1741. For another example of several Huguenot families in one house, ANY15764, 31 July 1721.

¹⁴ *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse, by the Hon. Lady Margaret Penmyman*, p. 40.

certainly did not advertise their identity. There is no evidence that they had particular distinguishing codes – it is very unlikely that these would have remained secret – and the culture I discussed in the last chapter was too subtle to be apparent other than to people who already knew one another well: it was marked by absences and silences more than distinctive signs. The only people readily identifiable were those from Protestant regions whose accent or dress might give them away, but Paris was full of migrants, speaking a bewildering variety of local dialects.

Certainly, those brought up in Paris in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth centuries were born into networks that had existed before the Revocation, yet these were seriously disrupted by the emigration of half the Huguenot population. And how did the majority of Protestants who came from the provinces or from outside France find coreligionists in a city of that size? Certainly, in some trades there were lots of Huguenots, but they did not dominate any occupations to the extent that they could openly declare their religious beliefs to newcomers. Only foreigners could afford to be openly Protestant, but it was not to their advantage to ‘out’ themselves in a strongly Catholic city like Paris. When they encountered strangers, people generally had no idea who they were, and while it was easy to get into conversation with others, it was safest to avoid contentious issues.¹⁵

It was not a given, therefore, that Protestant networks within Paris would survive. Yet they did, and some of them involved people of different occupations, social conditions and origins. Their formation and continuation depended, particularly in the first half of the eighteenth century, on extensive kinship ties and on close connections with each family’s place of origin in the provinces or in some cases outside France. All of these bonds were actively maintained through work, through endogamy and through forms of voluntary sociability.

Family and occupational clusters

In many Paris Protestant families there were long traditions of endogamy. Some of these crossed occupational boundaries, for example between the Migeon dynasty of furniture-makers and the Foullé family, nearly all goldsmiths or clockmakers.¹⁶ More common were alliances within particular trades. Many of the Protestant wineshop-keepers were related: the Lemaistre, Foubert, Mariette, Dargent and Perrinet families, for

¹⁵ Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community*, pp. 227–8.

¹⁶ Mouquin, *Migeon*, p. 11.

example, had intermarried for generations.¹⁷ So had the Jallot, Girardot and Stample families, most of whose members were wood merchants or in related sectors.¹⁸ Many of these patterns were reproduced throughout the eighteenth century. The Protestant furniture-makers also intermarried: the Migeon, Joubert, Guerne, and Collet families were all connected.¹⁹ Similar marriage practices can be found among the clock-makers, goldsmiths and jewellers: thus the Foullé, Mitoire, Caron and Dugué families were all related, as were the Regnier, Berchère and Lorin families.²⁰ The same was true of the Aubusson tapestry merchants, the Coulloudon, Deschazeaux, Arthaud and Jallasson lineages.²¹

If Huguenots wanted their children to marry in the same religion they had a small pool to choose from, particularly given the need to find partners of similar rank and wealth. This meant that levels of endogamy were high, both within occupational groups and within kinship networks. Alliances between families were often renewed in successive generations, so the bride and groom might already be related. First-cousin marriages were particularly common: when Louise Dargent and Étienne Perrinet were united in 1697, many of the family members present declared that they were cousins of both bride and groom, and the two most senior relatives were great-aunts to both of them! David Perrinet was simultaneously the first cousin and the brother-in-law of the groom, having married Étienne's sister Jacqueline Perrinet.²² Sometimes there were multiple alliances in the one generation, as when Benjamin-Pierre Houssemaine and his cousin Pierre-François Houssemaine de Boullay married the sisters Élisabeth and Marguerite Dargent. Jean-Jacques Molinier and his brother Jacques also wed sisters, Catherine and Marie Guimet. In 1754 Jean Girardot and his sister Catherine married Madeleine Cottin and her brother Jean-Louis respectively.²³ Such alliances strengthened the

¹⁷ Thomas Berthod, 'Les Marchands de vins protestants parisiens de 1660 aux lendemains de la Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes', unpublished *mémoire*, Paris IV, 2005, pp. 81–91; Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, p. 277.

¹⁸ Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, pp. 278, 525–30.

¹⁹ MC LXXXII 209, 2 February 1714. MC CXVII 872, 16 October 1775. Mouquin, *Migeon*.

²⁰ MC XXIII 470, 28 August 1729. MC XXVI 453, 9 July 1750. MC VII 146 bis, 9 July 1692.

²¹ AN Y10768, 6 June 1754. AN Y14536, 14 April 1744. See also entries under these names in the index of 'scellés après décès', Archives nationales, Paris.

²² MC XV 354, 15 June 1697. For other examples see Guy Antonetti, *Une Maison de banque à Paris au XVIIIe siècle. Greffulhe Montz et Cie (1789–1793)* (Paris: Éditions Cujas, 1963), p. 21 (Girardot-Foissin). Garrisson, 'Genèse de l'Église réformée', 40 (Lemaistre–Empaytaz).

²³ MC VII 245, 27 July 1727. MC VII 259, 24 February 1737. Antonetti, *Une Maison de banque*, p. 23.

interdependence and loyalty between lineages and moved the connections into the next generation.

Occupational endogamy was also common among the Catholic middle classes in Paris. Sometimes, where couples worked together, it was a significant advantage for the bride to have prior experience of her husband's trade, for example in baking, market gardening or running a wineshop. We also find endogamous marriages among the local elites in parts of the city like the Faubourg Saint-Marcel, where there were few matches of suitable status. They could also be a way of consolidating family wealth, since if first cousins married their inheritance was combined rather than divided. And kinship provided guarantees of trustworthiness in a period when fraud and bankruptcies were common.²⁴ But for the Huguenots, seeking marriage partners of the same religion was a crucial way of ensuring that the children were brought up in the faith and that their sense of family and individual identity was a Protestant one. Occasionally, too, endogamy might be a way of getting around the anti-Protestant laws. Didier Boisson gives the example of Marie Stample, whose brothers had fled to England. She transferred a very significant amount of property to her cousin Étienne Paris, who later married her niece.²⁵ The advantages of such alliances, and the connections they created, went far beyond the individual household, since marriages brought together not only individuals but two lineages. It was only among the labouring classes, and particularly immigrants, that marriages were organised primarily by the couple themselves.²⁶

Not all marriages were between families that were already connected, though. New connections were always valuable, if they were reliable ones, and family members were on the lookout for potential partners as their young relatives reached marriageable age. They knew who, among their Protestant contacts, had a son or daughter of the right age and of the appropriate rank. Where there was no existing alliance between the families, the parents or guardians of the young people would meet and evaluate each other. Marriage contracts, while fairly formulaic, did require negotiation, particularly over the level of the dowry and over how much each party would contribute to the marriage community. In Paris customary law, possessions that did not go into joint ownership remained the property of the original family and would be reclaimed if the couple

²⁴ David Garrioch, *The Formation of the Parisian Bourgeoisie, 1690–1830* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 63–82; Marraud, *De la Ville à l'État*, esp. pp. 39–71, 123–72.

²⁵ Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, pp. 529–30.

²⁶ On the process of finding marriage partners see Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community*, pp. 63–75, and for the very wealthy, Durand, *Les Fermiers généraux*, pp. 330–2.

had no children. Once the arrangements were finalised, the two families gathered for the marriage. The witnesses who signed the marriage contracts were overwhelmingly family members, invited either by the couple or no doubt more often by the parents, so it is clear that people knew where to find their uncles, aunts and cousins – occasionally second cousins but rarely more distant relatives.²⁷

The new connections created by such marriages could be mobilised for other purposes. The family basis of Protestant banking networks has been amply documented by Herbert Lüthy. After Marie-Jeanne Girardot married Georges-Tobie de Thellusson, the bride's cousin, Jean Girardot de Marigny, became an associate of the Thellusson–Necker bank and later took over its operation.²⁸ Sometimes a successful alliance between previously unrelated families, such as that between Guillaume Houssemaine and Marie-Anne de Valframbert, would lead to a further marriage, in this case between Houssemaine's niece and de Valframbert's nephew. Some marriages between children of business associates were probably designed to consolidate the commercial partnership, but simultaneously created new ties between Huguenot families, as when Jeanne-Olympe Lemaistre married Louis-Jacob Féline.²⁹ Extended families were a relatively safe source of capital and provided reliable business partners. Thus François Almain supplied a number of relatives among the Protestant wine-sellers in 1766. There is some evidence of credit networks, for instance between the Houzel family and the wineshop-keeper Daniel-Jean Ourry, who was married to one of their relatives.³⁰ These networks were rarely exclusively between Protestants, however: except in banking, they were not numerous or powerful enough to operate independently of Catholics, but such connections did help to protect them in a very uncertain world.

Even distant family relationships might be actively maintained. When the former pastor Salomon LeClerc visited Paris for a month in 1697, almost every day he had gone to see his wife's aunt, Madame Coudrai, a few streets away from where he was staying in the rue de la Huchette. Since she lived with her sister-in-law and her niece he had naturally seen them, too. There were at least three other households of 'New Catholics' in the same house, including Madame Coudrai's nephew, and since he

²⁷ On marriage partners, Adeline Daumard and François Furet, *Structures et relations sociales à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1961), pp. 73–83. Little work has been done on witnesses. They were examined briefly by Daumard and Furet, and for the Farmers-General by Durand, *Les Fermiers généraux*, pp. 366–93. They have been used extensively by Marraud, *De la Ville à l'État*, and Lyon-Caen, *La Boîte à Perrette*, to establish social and religious networks among the Paris middle classes.

²⁸ Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 2: 232–3.

²⁹ MC VII 261, 30 June 1739. SHPF MS CP 15, no. 11. MC XXXII 26, 10 May 1789.

³⁰ MC XXI 436, 5 February 1766. MC III 1170, 18 February 1766.

was apparently a suitable match for LeClerc's daughter a marriage was being negotiated. Another person LeClerc had visited frequently was his brother-in-law Bagnaux in the rue Quincampoix, and there he had met other in-laws. LeClerc's best friend was his wife's first cousin, a man named Fréguevet, whom he went to see almost every day and whose other friends and relatives he therefore also met. He explained to the police that 'if he makes certain visits to people of the Protestant faith, it is solely to satisfy the duties of kinship'.³¹ It was the 'solely' they did not believe, since his account demonstrates perfectly the way that sometimes quite distant family connections were maintained, on the female as well as the male side. They gave rise to friendships and further marriage alliances. It also meant that someone with a dense network of kin ties could spend most of their time in the company of people of the same religion, which in turn helped to maintain Protestant unity.

Provincial and international networks

The LeClerc example also illustrates how Protestant family networks linked the city with the provinces. He was just visiting, but those who migrated would find welcoming connections to assist them with work, lodgings and generally making their way around. Quite a number of Protestant wineshop-keepers – the Almain, Melot, Habert, Perrinet, Estave, Leguay families and others – were from the Berry region, and as Didier Boisson has shown, they maintained close ties with their places of origin. Inventories of their estates show that they often continued to own land there long after moving to Paris. The widow of Jean Perrinet d'Orval claimed, in a dispute with the wine-sellers' guild, that she was a 'bourgeoise' of Paris and therefore had the right to sell the wine she produced from her vines in Sancerre.³² It was common for young relatives from the same area to find their way smoothed by family connections: the nephew of Madame Corsange, who ran a wineshop in the rue Saint-Denis, came from Sancerre in 1766 to work with a jeweller in the rue de la Monnaie, not far away. On another occasion the Ourry brothers found a good Protestant home and possibly work for a twelve-year-old relative from Menars-la-Ville, near Blois, provoking a complaint from the boy's mother, who wanted him raised as a Catholic.³³ Movement also took place in the other direction, since successful Paris merchants

³¹ 'Interrogatoire du ministre Salomon Le Clerc, prisonnier à la Bastille, 1697', *BSHPF*, 14 (1865), 14–24.

³² MC XV 406, inventory of 11 October 1706. AN Y13092, 26 April 1741.

³³ SHPF MS 410 bis, fol. 5. Arsenal MS 10643, fol. 86 (1718).

sometimes returned to their native region, leaving their adult children in the capital.³⁴

Similar connections existed with many parts of northern France. The Lemaistre and Mariette families both came from Orleans and intermarried there and in Paris.³⁵ The Protestant wood merchants from the heavily forested Morvan area, the Girardot, Jallot and Stample families, retained extensive properties and close economic ties in the region. There was a trade that required close supervision of each stage of production, from harvesting the trees to assembling rafts of floating timber on the major rivers above Paris, but the connections could equally serve to keep them in touch with their coreligionists.³⁶ Another Huguenot population lived in Normandy, which also had a tradition of migration to Paris. Antoine Asselin, a banker living near Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs, had a sister who had married into the Massieu family, a powerful Protestant cloth-manufacturing clan in Caen. In 1726 Asselin acted as guardian to his niece when she came to Paris to marry Jacob Feray, a wealthy young merchant from Le Havre. This alliance connected the Massieu and Asselin families not only to the Feray dynasty, but through them to the Vanrobais family of Abbeville, further north, since Samuel Vanrobais, who had a bank in Paris, was married to Marie Feray, and his brother Salomon was to wed her sister Élisabeth in 1728. There were similar networks linking the capital to major centres close to the border with the Netherlands, Saint-Quentin in the case of the Crommelin, Cottin and Fromaget families, Sedan for the Poupart and Bechet lineages, all involved in banking and manufacturing.³⁷

Much closer to Paris was Villiers-le-Bel, an important lace-manufacturing centre just to the north, where the staunchly Huguenot Houzel and Tavernier families had long intermarried and moved back and forth between city and village. In 1776 Françoise-Adélaïde Houzel married Pierre-Louis Houzel: the existing kinship between them is hard to establish because of the complexity of their genealogies. A select group of relatives gathered at Villiers, where the couple lived, to witness the marriage contract. The groom had invited two uncles and four cousins who all lived in Paris, while on the bride's side the Parisians included three cousins.³⁸ Villiers-le-Bel also provided a direct link with other, more distant relatives, the Foissin family, who retained a secondary residence

³⁴ Boisson, 'La Bibliothèque d'un marchand de vin', p. 202; Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, pp. 269, 87, 323–5.

³⁵ Berthod, 'Les Marchands de vins protestants', p. 91.

³⁶ Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, pp. 525–30. Francine Rolley, 'Entre économie ancienne et économie de marché: le rôle des réseaux de parenté dans le commerce du bois au XVIIIe siècle', *Annales de démographie historique* (1995), 75–96.

³⁷ MC CXII 503A, 1 February 1726. Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 1: 25; 2: 148–9.

³⁸ MC XV 573, 7 February 1776. MC XLI 573, 28 September 1761.

there after they moved to Paris. Presumably there were not many wealthy Protestant households in Villiers, so it is not surprising that they should have socialised. This explains why Louise Girardot, wife of Paul Foissin, left 1,000 *livres* each to Denise and Marie-Anne Tavernier, both living in Villiers. She also left 100 *livres*, a typical bequest to faithful servants, to Catherine Bourdon, who was also resident there. Women in particular commonly left gifts to friends and employees, generally other women, providing evidence of female networks, in this case between Paris and the surrounding region.³⁹ Such examples can be multiplied for many other towns, although primarily in the north of France, since immigrants from the south were usually more isolated.

Networks of this sort were common among Catholic immigrants too, but Protestant connections were often more extensive, going beyond the borders of the kingdom. Some families, split by emigration, nevertheless remained in touch. 'Separation has not changed the tender sentiments we will always have for you and your whole family', read a letter to a Madame Godron that Suzanne Berthe brought back after a covert visit to Holland in 1694. Even a generation or two later, many Huguenot families retained their international connections. Pierre Massé, a jeweller in the place Dauphine in central Paris, clearly remained in regular contact with his uncle Étienne, a merchant in Amsterdam, who in successive wills of 1744 and 1754 left him a substantial sum and appointed him to administer property in Holland, France and England. Étienne was godfather to Pierre's eldest daughter, to whom he left 4,000 florins and a diamond ring, plus a special bequest to compensate her for the business misfortunes her father had suffered.⁴⁰ In 1774, Suzanne Marie Perrinet left 1,000 *livres* to a distant relative, whom she nevertheless described simply as 'Isaac Ardesoif of London, our friend'.⁴¹ Some wealthy Paris families, thanks to relatives who had left France, maintained considerable overseas investments that provided an insurance policy in case they had to emigrate in the future. In 1769, Catherine Girardot de Préfond's estate included 230,000 *livres* in English shares and annuities. This practice became less common in the second half of the eighteenth century, as fear of persecution faded.⁴²

³⁹ MC X 485, 4 July 1748 (will of 18 March 1748). Buffévent, *L'Économie dentellière*, p. 360.

⁴⁰ Arsenal MS 10500. MC XCVII 502, 1 July 1778, will of 8 October 1744 and codiciles of 1754 and 1760.

⁴¹ MC XCVII 480, 25 January 1774. MC XCVII 509, 27 September 1779. On the way family and financial ties intersected, Carolyn Lougee-Chappell, 'Family Bonds across the Refuge', in *Memory and Identity: The Huguenots in France and the Atlantic Diaspora*, ed. Bertrand van Ruymbeke and Randy J. Sparks (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 172–93.

⁴² MC LXXIII 917, 1 December 1769. Antonetti, *Une Maison de banque*, p. 20.

The Huguenot emigration led to the formation of international business networks.⁴³ When in 1708 the banker Noé Dufour drew up a list of those who owed him money, most were outside France and a great many of the names were French.⁴⁴ The bankers who came or returned to France had privileged and unrivalled access to the money markets in Amsterdam, London, Geneva and other cities where French refugees were numerous, and the financial difficulties of the French monarchy made them indispensable intermediaries. Ironically, they proved much more willing than Catholic bankers to take the risk of lending to the French state. As Charles-Auguste Berthe, a Protestant banker based in Paris, argued when arrested in 1707, '[T]he King has no more faithful subjects than those of the Reformed religion, that His Majesty even made use of their credit in the most important matters.' He cited 'those of Paris such as Messieurs de Mennes, Tourton, Guignières, Cadet, Vanderus [Vanderhult] and Fromaget who handle most of the remittances for foreign countries and for the payment of the troops'.⁴⁵ It remained common, throughout the century, for Huguenots abroad to invest in France, and even in the 1780s they continued to deal with Reformed bankers in Paris, such as Jean-Frédéric Perregaux and Louis Féline. Similar networks underpinned the commercial empires of some of the great manufacturing dynasties, like the Crommelins – textile manufacturers originally from St-Quentin – who did business with relatives not only across Europe but also in America.⁴⁶

Ties between far-flung branches of Huguenot banker and merchant families were also reinforced by the practice, which was by no means confined to Protestants, of sending sons to serve an apprenticeship with relatives in different parts of the world where they might later do business. In the final decades of the Old Regime, freemasonry also came to play a key role in welcoming foreign visitors, and since by then Paris merchants were participating in the lodges, they too offered a forum for maintaining international ties.⁴⁷

⁴³ John Boshier, 'Huguenot Merchants and the Protestant International in the Seventeenth Century', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 52 (1995), 77–102.

⁴⁴ Thierry Du Pasquier, *Genealogies huguenotes* (Paris: Éditions Christian, 1985), p. 107.

⁴⁵ Arsenal MS 10572, fol. 31, 15 January 1707.

⁴⁶ MC X 744, 7 January, 23 and 25 February 1785; MC X 745, 11 March, 18 April 1785. Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 1: 70, n. 24. See the nuanced analysis by L. M. Cullen, 'The Huguenots from the Perspective of the Merchant Networks of W. Europe (1680–1790): The Example of the Brandy Trade', in *The Huguenots and Ireland: Anatomy of an Emigration*, ed. C. E. J. Caldicott, H. Gough and J.-P. Pittion (Dun Laoghaire: Glendale Press, 1987), pp. 129–50.

⁴⁷ Yves Krumenacker, 'Des Négociants protestants dans la France catholique', in *Commerce, voyage et expérience religieuse, XVIe–XVIIIe siècles*, ed. Albrecht Burkhardt, with Gilles Bertrand and Yves Krumenacker (Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007), pp. 303–13. Beaurepaire, *L'Europe des francs-maçons*, p. 124–8.

Some bourgeois Huguenots in Paris pursued other forms of education abroad as well. Excluded from the University but anxious for their sons to acquire a classical education and presumably also more advanced tuition in Calvinist theology than they could obtain in France, a small number of leading families enrolled them at the Académie de Genève. The rectors' book lists two members of the Girardot family, who went to study there in 1734 and 1747 respectively; two of the Mallet banking dynasty; Jacob Marcet, also a banker; and a man named Charles Périllau, 'from Paris', whom I have not been able to identify. There they certainly met members of the Genevan bourgeoisie, perhaps Jacques Necker and his brother or members of the Thellusson family, who were later to move to Paris; Ami Pictet, who established his own bank in the French capital in 1739; or Robert Dufour, who was to be a partner in the Mallet bank in Paris from 1736 to 1762. And because the Académie de Genève attracted Reformed Protestants from all over Europe, they may also have formed links with men like Antoine Court de Gébelin, or Charles-Étienne Jordan, from Berlin, later a pastor and author of a book recounting his travels in Europe, including a visit to Paris.⁴⁸

Maintaining contact across international boundaries was relatively easy for wealthy families, whose connections were reinforced by shared inheritance and financial interests. It was much more difficult for poorer people to keep in touch with their distant relatives. Travel was expensive, and for some decades the authorities were nervous about Paris Huguenots departing if they did not have property in the city that offered a guarantee of their return. In 1697, Simon LePlastrier was arrested when he tried to go to London using false papers: he claimed that he was desperate to see his eighty-five-year-old father, who had emigrated.⁴⁹ Even maintaining a correspondence was difficult for those of modest means. Postage was expensive and was paid by the recipient, so people hesitated to write without a very good reason. The usual arrangement, therefore, was to wait until someone they knew was undertaking the journey, as Thomas Olivier did in 1697, and when he learned that his messenger had already left he did not write.⁵⁰ The more distant the destination and the more difficult the journey, the less frequent contacts were: Berlin had a sizeable Huguenot population, but only a tiny proportion came from Paris and we have little evidence of regular contact.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Stelling-Michaud (ed.), *Le Livre du recteur de l'Académie de Geneve*, 2: 579; 3: 164, 474; 4: 163, 407, 411; 4: 428; 5: 119, 171.

⁴⁹ Arsenal MS 10509, 15 May 1697. ⁵⁰ Arsenal MS 10509, fol. 227.

⁵¹ Emilie Coque, 'La première génération de réfugiés huguenots à Berlin: étude des catégories socioprofessionnelles et des lieux d'origine: 1672-1809', mémoire de maîtrise, University of Toulouse-Le Mirail, 2005, pp. 44, 79.

There was more movement between the French capital and England, though the sea crossing made it less easy to reach than the Low Countries or Switzerland. Isaac Simon Ledet had a shop in the Huguenot quarter in London and made numerous business trips to Paris that the police suspected of being cover for his real purpose of assisting other Protestants to leave. In the early 1730s, presumably thinking that by then it was safe, Anne Suzanne Gohard brought her young daughter Ester back to Paris so that she could improve her French.⁵² Some emigrants returned permanently: Charles-August Berthe had gone first to Liège, then to England, where he married a woman from Bordeaux and lived for three years before rejoining the Huguenot community in Paris. A number of the girls confined in the New Catholic convent were born in England, Holland, various German states and even Ireland, but since one or both of their parents had French names they too were presumably daughters of returned refugees. In other cases the children of emigrants returned independently, like the soldier and wineshop waiter Legrand or the clockmaker Vaulois, whose parents had taken them to England but who as adults came back to France.⁵³ While such movement did not necessarily preserve or create permanent bonds between Paris and the Huguenot Refuge, it did offer the opportunity to courier letters or banned Protestant books.

The most frequent international connections were with the Swiss cantons. The French government was far less nervous about such contacts than it was about England or the Dutch Republic. Geneva was not hard to reach, and artisans as well as bankers travelled readily between the two cities. The ties created by the initial emigration were reinforced by movement in the other direction: as we have seen, numerous Protestant immigrants to Paris were Swiss. Indeed, many of the Swiss who arrived in Paris had Huguenot origins. There are famous examples like Isaac Thellusson, but a much humbler one is the Potin family. They were probably originally from Gien but at least one branch had emigrated to Switzerland. So when Jeanne-Élisabeth Potin died childless in 1768, her heirs were her first cousins, five living in Geneva and Lausanne and the sixth in Paris. None remained in her native Nivernais region.⁵⁴ Swiss immigrants brought younger relatives to France to work with them, maintained active ties with their place of origin and sometimes returned there for family reasons or when they retired.

⁵² Arsenal MS 10543, fol. 162. Arsenal MS 11231, fol. 73.

⁵³ Arsenal MS 10572, fol. 23. AN LL1642, 1 December 1705, 2 August, 10 September 1707, 12 February, 18 March 1708, 24 April, 9 August 1713, 21 January, 20 July 1722, 30 June 1723, 27 September, 13 October, 15 November 1725, 22 February 1728, 17 January 1770. Arsenal MS 10584, fol. 99. Arsenal MS 11342, fol. 176.

⁵⁴ On Thellusson, Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 1: 401–13. MC XXIV 840, 14 June 1768.

Although the active Huguenot international was largely a club of wealthy families with wide business interests, for whom travel and correspondence were relatively easy, some humbler families nevertheless maintained international connections. Yet even where ongoing ties were lost, those living in France retained the memory of family and friends in other places. They remained aware that they were not alone, that the traditions of the French Reformed Church were being preserved elsewhere and that emigration was always a possibility if things became too difficult. Even intermittent contact provided the moral support that international opinion and news could bring. In all these ways, it helped maintain the resistance of the Paris Huguenots.

The integration of networks

Family and geographical networks were vital, but they do not explain all the ties we can observe among the Paris Protestants. By the middle of the eighteenth century, there is intriguing evidence from a variety of sources that hitherto largely separate provincial, family and even international networks were linking up to create a denser web of connections among the Paris Protestants.

First, we find marriage alliances between groups that until then seem to have remained fairly distinct. In the early years of the eighteenth century, the Sancerre wineshop-keepers mainly married among themselves, as did the Protestant clockmakers, jewellers and goldsmiths. So too did the lace manufacturers from Villiers-le-Bel and the tapestry-makers from Aubusson. These alliances continued throughout the century, but there are growing indications of convergence with other groups. One of the Girardot family, wood merchants on the quai de la Tournelle for at least two or three generations, married a woman connected with the Aubusson tapestry-makers, and the couple moved to the rue de la Huchette, where the Aubusson immigrants clustered. Then in 1749 a marriage between the daughter of wood merchant Paul Girardot and Marguerite Foissin and the businessman (*négociant*) Jean Abraham Poupart created direct ties with the Protestant manufacturing interests of northern France and indirectly with the bankers Tassin and Bechet.⁵⁵ Similarly, members of the Perrinet family, originally wineshop-keepers, intermarried with bankers and financiers, though they never lost contact with their Sancerre relatives.⁵⁶ A further set of alliances brought together the lace-making and the wine-seller families. In the 1740s or thereabouts, two of the Houzel girls,

⁵⁵ ANY11454, 8 August 1734. MC LXVII 565, 7 January 1749.

⁵⁶ MC XV 668, 20 September 1748. MC X 476, 17 April 1747.

from the Villiers lace-making dynasty, had married into the Ourry family, both wineshop-keepers with existing Villiers connections. Meanwhile Marie-Anne and Marie-Geneviève Houzel, from another branch of the same lineage, had married the wineshop-keepers Pierre Guillerault and Claude Leblond respectively. Most were present in 1776 when Pierre Houzel married his cousin Françoise.⁵⁷

We can also observe growing connections between the tapestry-makers of the rue de la Huchette and other Paris Protestants. Perhaps because of their origins in the south of France, the tapestry-makers for some time formed alliances primarily among themselves, although one of the Girardot family had married into their ranks. By the 1740s there were at least three Protestant wineshop-keepers in the rue de la Huchette, although the first firm evidence of a family connection comes in 1751, when Cyprien Chair, a wineshop-keeper of impeccable Sancerrois origins, married Marie-Catherine Coulloudon, from an Aubusson family related to most of the other tapestry-makers in the street. In the late 1750s and early 1760s we find still other Protestants there: the widow of a royal office-holder, a goldsmith and a mercer. By the 1770s there were two clockmakers and a number of their journeymen.⁵⁸

Another important dimension of this broadening of ties between Protestant groups who were not previously related to one another was the inclusion of foreign Protestants. In 1756 an important link between the Paris and the Swiss bankers was created when Marie-Jeanne Girardot de Vermenoux married Georges-Tobie de Thellusson. He was a Genevan citizen, descended from émigré Huguenots, who had recently set up his own bank in partnership with his fellow Genevan Jacques Necker. The relatives' signatures on the marriage contract read like a list of Paris banks: Tourton, Guiguer, Vernet, Labhard, Dupont, Darras, Foissin, Girardot de Marigny, Montz. Added to these were Necker, as well as the Genevan ambassador, Jean-François Sellon, and his wife, Suzanne Chabert, both of them also from banker families.⁵⁹ Alliances between international bankers are perhaps not surprising, but they were not alone. In the late 1740s Marie-Anne Tavernier, born in Villiers-le-Bel to one of the principal

⁵⁷ MC XLV 639, 7 February 1776. MC XLI 573, 28 September 1761.

⁵⁸ Tapestry-sellers Coulloudon, Arthaud, Jallasson, ANY14536, 8 February 1743, 14 April 1744. MC XCII 572, 24 July 1751. ANY10768, 6 June 1754; Archives de la Préfecture de Police, AA1 28 (1766). Winshop-keepers: Leroux, Arsenal MS 10988, fols. 60, 63 (22 May 1727); Piron, AN, index of 'scellés après décès'; Perrinet, AN Y54, fols. 456v–457. ANY10773, widow of office-holder, 6 May 1759. Grimperet, mercer, and Lecanut, goldsmith, in AN, index of 'scellés après décès'. Clockmakers Delorme, AN Y15281, Gavelle, AN Y15277, and AN Y15284, and journeymen clockmakers from Geneva, ANY15276, and Bourges, Arsenal MS 11342, fols. 164–6 (1736).

⁵⁹ MC LXVII 565, 7 January 1749. Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 2: 232–4.

lace-making families, abandoned her family's traditional allegiances to marry Jacques Gandereau, from Geneva.⁶⁰ Catherine Desfontaines, from the Perche region of France, married a Swiss clockmaker, Jean-Pierre Guerin, probably in the 1730s. Another important connection was created in 1767, when Marie Panseron, descended from wineshop-keeper dynasties through both parents, married a Swiss engraver.⁶¹

The Swiss, as French-speakers who were very much at home in Paris, formed connections with French Protestants earlier than did other foreign immigrants. Most of the Germans either had spouses with German names or seem to have died single, but in the second half of the eighteenth century German names begin to appear among the witnesses at weddings. In 1750 Louise Belin, from Normandy, married François Rodier, born in Cassel but presumably of Huguenot stock. Two of the witnesses had French names and two had German ones. But before long Germans appear as the marriage partners of French-born Protestants. In 1754 Marie-Charlotte Longuet, from the Berry region, married a German jeweller, Jean-Charles Wein. He had no family in Paris and she apparently had only her aunt, so this was probably not an arranged marriage. Shortly afterwards, Marie-Madeleine Foucart married Christian Lenitz, an inlayer from Berlin.⁶² In 1769 Godefroy Pzirembel, a master joiner from Germany, married Madeleine-Louise Martin at the Swedish chapel. Her father was a clockmaker, but she was related through her mother to the Duguay, Péteineau and Leblond dynasties of wineshop-keepers.⁶³ A year later another significant union united Marie-Anne Houzel, born in Villiers-le-Bel, with a German musician and instrument-maker, Jean-Conrad Walster. It may have been through Walster that her cousin Marie-Anne Denise Houzel met her future husband, another German musician named Leon Scheiffele. The witnesses included the wineshop-keeper Daniel-Jean Ourry and the clockmaker Jean-Pierre Tavernier: it therefore brought together three of the key Paris Huguenot groups and allied them with the immigrant German community.⁶⁴ These were all alliances that broke with earlier patterns.

An even greater departure was the development of strong ties with German Lutherans. From 1750 onwards, Huguenots and Swiss

⁶⁰ ANY15279, 29 April 1771; ANY12413, 24 May 1750.

⁶¹ AN Y15280, 26 December 1772. Driancourt-Girod, *Registres*, vol. II, marriages, Chapelle de Suède, no. 115.

⁶² Driancourt-Girod, *Registres*, vol. II, marriages, Chapelle de Suède, no. 29. MC XXXVIII 411, 28 April 1754. Driancourt-Girod, *Registres*, vol. II, baptisms, Chapelle de Suède, no. 60.

⁶³ Driancourt-Girod, *Registres*, vol. II, marriages, Chapelle de Suède, no. 128.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 155.

Protestants also appear with increasing frequency in the Lutheran chapel registers as witnesses to weddings and as godparents to children being baptised. The three children of Christian Lenitz and Marie-Madeleine Foucart were baptised at the Swedish chapel but later went to catechism classes at the Dutch chapel. By then their father's first name had been Gallicised as Chrétien.⁶⁵ In 1767 a Calvinist and a Lutheran were present as witnesses at the funeral of Jeanne Guiardel, a French Protestant from Bordeaux, breaking the pattern which saw only those of the same faith attending such ceremonies.⁶⁶ In the 1770s this was to become a frequent practice. It sometimes seems to have happened when a Reformed Protestant died at the Swedish infirmary or when a Lutheran died at the Dutch one, and this co-operation between the two institutions is further evidence of the growing connections between the two Protestant communities. Even more significant were marriages between the two religious groups. Two stalwarts of the Dutch chapel, the *ébéniste* Antoine-Pierre Jacot and the silk-weaver Jean-Clair Paindorge, both married their daughters to German Lutherans, the marriages being conducted in the Swedish chapel. Another such marriage was that, in 1774, of the Lutheran Christophe-Philippe Oberkampf, founder of the famous printed cotton manufactory at Jouy, with the daughter of a Sancerre merchant, Louise Péteineau.⁶⁷

This was a very significant development. Although Catholics did not see Lutherans and Calvinists as very different, the two confessions were certainly not natural allies. Many clergy of both persuasions frowned on fraternisation and certainly on intermarriage, and in both Germany and Scandinavia the Lutheran Churches were openly hostile and tried to keep the Huguenots out, regarding them as heretics. In Paris, there was little contact between the two groups in the seventeenth century. In Paris, the Danish chapel never welcomed Reformed Protestants, and only after 1742 did the Swedish chapel open its doors to the Huguenots.⁶⁸ The two churches had very different beliefs, including on some of the most fundamental issues that divided the Calvinists from the Church of Rome:

⁶⁵ Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens*, pp. 160–1. Driancourt-Girod, *Registres*, vol. II, marriages, Chapelle de Suède, nos. 180, 183; baptisms, Chapelle de Suède, nos. 60, 107, 128. Garrisson, 'Les Infirmeries protestantes', 69, n. 75. SHPF MS 410, fols. 93v, 106.

⁶⁶ ANY15275, 22 August 1767.

⁶⁷ Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens*, pp. 160–1. Driancourt-Girod, *Registres*, vol. II, marriages, Chapelle de Suède, nos. 180, 183.

⁶⁸ Miriam Yardeni, *Le Refuge protestant. Assimilation et culture* (Paris: Champion, 2002), p. 83. Pierrick Pourchasse, 'Les Huguenots et l'élite négociante scandinave au XVIIIe siècle', *Histoire, économie et société*, 29 (2010), 81–92 (83). Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens*, pp. 131, 59–64.

the Lutherans accepted the doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and they observed the feast days of many of the saints and of the Virgin. Even the physical layout of the Swedish chapel might be expected to alienate members of the Reformed churches, since it had a marble altar on which was placed a crucifix and two candelabra. Behind the altar was a large picture in a gilded frame, admittedly of a crucifixion, but these were items that to mainstream Calvinists smacked of popery. So too did the silver communion ornaments.⁶⁹

Despite these differences, and notwithstanding the further cultural barriers between predominantly German or Scandinavian Lutherans and the Swiss or French Calvinists, links did develop in the second half of the century, not only within the Swedish chapel but in the households and workshops of the city. We need to remember, too, that while the number of marriages was small, even in artisan families a marriage was an alliance between two lineages. Parental consent was required for men and women up to the age of twenty-five. Marriage to someone of another religion, therefore, indicates more than the attraction of one individual to another and involved acceptance by a wider group.

The role of the foreign chapels

The growing contact between the different Protestant groups in Paris crossed the boundaries of rank, occupation, origin and language. Most surprising of all, it even leaped the chasm between Lutheranism and Calvinism. Certainly, discrimination against all Protestants, and a shared hostility to Catholicism, may have pushed Lutherans and Calvinists together, yet the growing contacts coincided with declining persecution. While those with international connections – the bankers and merchant-manufacturers – clearly knew one another well and built new alliances that advanced the interests of their respective lineages, the reasons for growing ties between the other groups of Paris Protestants are less obvious.

While workplace contacts were sometimes important, particularly in the furniture trades, the principal factor appears to have been the growing importance of the foreign chapels, especially the Dutch one. As noted earlier, the Anglican, Swedish, Danish and Dutch chapels were officially for the embassy households and by extension for subjects of each of the monarchs represented. But in the years after Louis XIV's death in 1715,

⁶⁹ Driancourt-Girod, *Ainsi priaient les luthériens*, pp. 57–61, 69–75, 85–6; Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens*, p. 106. On the liturgy and decor of the Reformed churches see Richard, *La Vie des protestants français*, pp. 31–4.

the British ambassador's chapel welcomed large numbers of French Protestants. However, after it abandoned sermons in French in 1724 it seems to have lost its Reformed clientele, particularly as the Dutch chaplain continued to preach in French.⁷⁰

The Danish chapel was established in 1660, and after 1685 the pastor provided assistance to some French Protestants. In 1700 there is a reference in the police files to one of the Sancerre wineshop-keepers named 'Argent' (no doubt one of the Dargent family), going 'daily to the Danish envoy's to practise his Protestant religion and to bring up his children within it'. But the chapel closed completely from 1703 to 1744, and when it reopened it provided services only in German. After 1747 its services became public, but Janine Driancourt-Girod has demonstrated that its clientele was largely composed of newly arrived and poorly integrated migrants who, as they became more comfortable in Paris society, tended to move to the Swedish chapel. The long-serving Danish pastor, Mathias Schreiber, refused to condone marriages between his Lutheran flock and Calvinists.⁷¹

The Swedish chapel had existed since the early seventeenth century, and in the 1670s opened its doors to a wider Lutheran community comprising mainly Swedish and German migrants. After the Charenton church was closed, the Swedish pastor, too, assisted the French Protestants, but from 1689 until 1698 the Swedish chapel was closed by war. After it reopened, its charitable aid to the Protestant poor of both persuasions resumed, but it remained very small and like the Danish chapel conducted services in German. There are no indications that French Protestants went to worship there during this period. It did experience a growth in membership, since in 1721 it purchased fifty chairs, roughly doubling its capacity, yet this was probably because of the arrival of new Lutheran migrants.⁷²

Little is known of its functioning during the early eighteenth century, but after 1742 it underwent a renewal following the appointment of a new pastor, Friedrich Carl Baer, from Strasbourg. It was he who established, on a firm footing, a joint Swedish–Danish infirmary. The Danish embassy had opened the first 'chamber for the sick poor' in 1737 but it had struggled. The Swedish embassy had created a similar institution in 1739, but this initiative too seems to have foundered, and it was not until Baer proposed a collaborative arrangement that the infirmary was

⁷⁰ Gres-Gayer, 'Les Admissions dans la communauté anglicane'.

⁷¹ Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens*, pp. 147–65. Arsenal MS 10522, fol. 30, 7 July 1700.

⁷² 'Le Culte protestant célébré à Paris, dans le commencement du XVIIIe siècle, aux hôtels des ambassades d'Angleterre, de Hollande et de Suède', *BSHPPF*, 13 (1864), 8–9; Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens*, pp. 77–97, 147–9.

securely established in 1745. It was to last until 1786, and while it does not seem to have taken in Huguenot patients, it provided an important model for the Reformed community to follow.⁷³

Until Baer's arrival the Swedish chapel did not welcome people from other branches of Protestantism. He, on the other hand, was keen to establish co-operation both with the other chapels and with the Huguenots. He immediately, in 1742, initiated monthly services in French. Later he actively supported greater rights for the Huguenots. Even so, there were occasional tensions, in the 1760s, for example, when a Lutheran preacher named Lobstein persisted in threatening the Calvinists in his audience – proof that some were present – with damnation unless they repented. Baer was much more ecumenical and was happy to bless 'mixed' marriages, of which as we have seen there were growing numbers in the second half of the century. He even conducted significant numbers of weddings between Calvinists, such as that between the Swiss goldsmith Daniel-Louis LeCoultre and the French Protestant Marie-Henriette Guillemain in 1769.⁷⁴ After 1784 the new Swedish chaplain, Christian Carl Gambbs, who like Baer came from Strasbourg, continued his predecessor's policies. It was he who married Germaine Necker, born in Paris and raised in the Reformed Church, to the Lutheran baron de Staël in 1786. The culmination of this ecumenism came in May 1789, when the former Dutch chaplain Marron, now employed by the reopened French Reformed Church, conducted the marriages of two Huguenot couples in the Swedish chapel.⁷⁵ The welcome that all Protestants received at the Swedish chapel almost certainly explains many of these unions, both between Lutherans and Calvinists and even between the different groups of Huguenots.

Of all the foreign chapels, as mentioned earlier, by far the most important was the Dutch Reformed one. In the early eighteenth century its chaplains had welcomed French subjects and conducted sermons and services in French. Both police reports and the lists of new communicants indicate that many of those attending were French, coming from Paris itself and the surrounding region. They include, significantly, people drawn from all the different Protestant clusters, with the wineshop-keepers the most numerous.⁷⁶ Most of those present in 1748,

⁷³ Garrisson, 'Les Infirmeries protestantes', 45–50. On the Dutch chapel, Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens*, pp. 147–65.

⁷⁴ Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, pp. 274–5; Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens*, pp. 127–31, 59, 87, 92; Driancourt-Girod, *Registres*, vol. II, marriages, Chapelle de Suède.

⁷⁵ Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens*, pp. 213–19; Garrisson, 'Genèse de l'Église réformée', 41, n. 2.

⁷⁶ Archives de la Préfecture de Police, AA1, dossiers 643–50 (1766). SHPF MS 410. This point is made by Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, p. 276.

when the wineshop-keeper Pierre Doucet and Suzanne Lanson were married there, appear in the lists of communicants of the chapel: the witnesses included thirty-four relatives and forty-two friends, overwhelmingly members of wine-seller families from the Berry region, although also including several wood merchants and two clockmakers, all of whom were probably related in some way to the wineshop-keepers.⁷⁷ Their provincial, family and occupational alliances were powerfully strengthened by regular meetings at sermons and at communion.

Successive pastors of the Dutch chapel, who until 1789 were nearly all of Huguenot stock, provided increasingly overt support to French Protestants. In the early 1720s a journeyman *ébéniste* from the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, Vincent Zéba, helped put out the chairs for the chapel on Sundays, and on Mondays he went around the prisons to see whether any Protestants had been arrested. It was claimed that he worked directly for the chaplain, Marc Guitton, who was also accused of organising a secret consistory to ensure that those admitted to the chapel respected the rules of the Reformed Churches. Guitton had supposedly introduced a system, similar to that used in the French Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and in France before the Revocation, of medallions (*méreaux*) that were distributed to the faithful ahead of each communion and that had to be presented at the door of the chapel.⁷⁸ It is also possible that the Dutch chapel hosted clandestine visits by pastors. Certainly in 1753–4, the physician Paul Bosc, officially attached to the chapel as doctor to the poor, was secretly operating as a Reformed pastor in Paris and the surrounding area, proselytising and conducting baptisms in liaison with the chaplain de La Broue. Bosc was in close contact with Antoine Court, who was training pastors and organising their return to France.⁷⁹

As Bosc's official appointment indicates, the Dutch chapel provided important pastoral services, in principle only to foreign Protestants but in practice to Huguenots as well. There is fragmentary evidence from the late 1720s of a network of assistance to the poor. When a young German shoemaker fell seriously ill in June 1727, the chaplain paid for him to be taken in a carrying-chair to Pierre Bellier's house in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, where he was cared for until he died two days later. The same Vincent Zéba declared his death to the local police commissaire.⁸⁰ This was one of the earliest examples of what was to become a widespread

⁷⁷ MC XV 668, 21 September 1748.

⁷⁸ Arsenal MS 10903, fol. 234. Arsenal MS 10884, fols. 309–12 (31 March 1725). On the pastors of the chapel, Yves Krumenacker (ed.), *Dictionnaire des pasteurs dans la France du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Champion, 2008).

⁷⁹ Lindeboom, 'Un Journal de Paul Bosc', 73–9, 86.

⁸⁰ ANY14843, 6 June 1727.

practice of men linked to the Dutch chapel turning up at the bedsides of dying Protestants. Until then the death was always declared by family members, or by an employer, neighbours, friends or workmates, but in the late 1720s and across the 1730s the names of witnesses apparently unrelated to the family start to recur. The Swiss bankers Antoine Mallet-Genoud, Jacob-Pierre de Bary and Gaspard Jobart appeared at the bedsides of several of their compatriots.⁸¹ A little later two more bankers began to turn up, the German Jean-Henri Labhard and another Swiss, Jean-Antoine Sarasin: in 1733 they came to the police together to report the death of Jacques Duval, a servant at the Dutch embassy.⁸² In parallel, among the poorer households in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, the Swiss stone-cutter Pierre Jacot fulfilled the same role. By the mid 1740s, as the Protestants grew more confident, the practice became more open and even institutionalised. The wood merchant Isaac Penet, another Genevan, witnessed dozens of burials between 1741 and 1771. His close connection with the Dutch chapel is well attested, and he was present at the interment of its chaplain Sageran Vanlaan in 1752. He was soon assisted in this work by a box-maker, Pierre-Jean Maréchal, and a little later, from the late 1740s, by the son of Pierre Jacot, Pierre-Antoine. In the 1770s the younger Jacot was joined by his own two sons, Isaac and Abraham-Henri, who continued this role for the next three decades.⁸³ Another man of whom we know little, Louis Dupuis, assisted the Jacot family in the 1770s. He invariably appears at the death-beds of poor Protestants, journeymen and domestic servants, often people assisted by the chapel. Several other individuals appear from time to time, one of whom was employed as a gravedigger at the cemetery for foreign Protestants, at least in 1765. Occasionally the chaplain himself attended a death-bed, almost always that of a prominent and wealthy bourgeois.⁸⁴

The precise role of these individuals is not clear, though reporting the death was in itself important: it is probably no coincidence that all the men who played this role before 1747 (with the possible exception of Maréchal, whose origin is unknown) were Swiss and therefore immune from prosecution. They may also, if they arrived in time, have prayed with the dying person and their family, bolstering their faith and helping

⁸¹ ANY14843, 17 March 1727, 14 September 1727, 19 April 1729, 19 June 1730, 27 June 1729; ANY10749, 25 February 1728.

⁸² ANY14843, 4 October 1733. Also ANY14843, 23 March 1732, 22 September 1736. On Labhard, Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 1: 260.

⁸³ ANY12420, 1 September 1752. ANY10990A, 2 March 1746. ANY12425, 24 January, 7 April 1754. ANY14097, 27 March 1770. On Jacot, Maréchal and Penet, Garrisson, 'Les Infirmeries protestantes', 68–9.

⁸⁴ ANY14843, 17 February 1727. ANY15276, 12 March 1768. ANY15279, 6 October and 7 December 1771. ANY15280, 13 July 1772.

to prevent Catholic neighbours and clergy from applying pressure to convert. It is equally possible, though, that they were summoned only after the individual had died, as there is almost always a gap of a couple of hours and often more between the report to the police and the time of death that was given. Yet there may be a different explanation for the delay. Even though French Calvinists did not officially conduct funerals, even before the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in practice families often wanted prayers and sometimes some kind of service.⁸⁵ There was certainly time, in nearly every case, for friends and relatives living in Paris to be gathered for a short ceremony of this sort. Whether or not this happened, the representatives of the Dutch chapel certainly assisted the relatives with the funeral arrangements, including the official declaration to the police. They may have gone to the local parish to obtain the necessary statement that the deceased person would not be granted Catholic burial. This was an important service to the bereaved, not only because it relieved them of an onerous task at a difficult moment but also because it meant they did not have to reveal their identity to the clergy, to go in person to the residence of the commissaire or to answer questions about the death. In some cases it is likely that the chapel officials also arranged the burial. By the 1770s they were routinely indicating to the police whether the deceased should be taken to the foreign or the domestic cemetery. In 1778 one of the Jacot brothers irritated the commissaire Leger with his 'insolence' in insisting that a man from Basle should be buried in the foreign Protestant cemetery. He may even have suggested that the commissaire would not receive his fee if this were not done, since Leger went to the unusual lengths of putting his seals on the deceased's belongings in order to ensure payment.⁸⁶

By the 1770s the representatives of the chapel were routinely, in the case of poor Protestants, furnished with a letter from the chaplain to the police commissaire, informing him that the interment would be at the expense of the chapel and sometimes requesting him to waive or reduce his fee. Occasionally, faced with yet another pauper's burial, the chaplain Frédéric-Guillaume Labroue let show his exasperation about 'foreigners who leave their homeland thinking they will eat roast quail that fall from heaven; they require us to carry out acts of humanity; such is Henri Baillet from La Chaudefon, canton of Berne, deceased yesterday'.⁸⁷

Successive chaplains did their best to assist the Protestant poor in life as well as death. Labroue confided to the commissaire, in January 1773, that 'Jean Boignon was a sort of domestic servant, earning his way

⁸⁵ Luria, *Sacred Boundaries*, pp. 119–29.

⁸⁶ ANY15286, 21 May 1778. ⁸⁷ ANY15280, 27 April 1772.

working by the day; I knew and assisted him.’ ‘She was one of our pensioners’, he wrote in April 1772 of Jeanne Joyon, a seventy-two-year-old Swiss woman. And of another recently deceased Protestant: ‘Madame Jeanne Julien, born in Paris aged thirty-eight years, widow ... had absolutely nothing, being sustained entirely by the charity of the chapel.’⁸⁸ The institutional nature of this assistance is indicated by the fact that some of the wealthier communicants, Marie-Marguerite Jallot in 1770, Marie-Jeanne Girardot de Vermenoux in 1781 and Germaine Larrivée in 1784, left money ‘for the poor of the chapel of Holland’. Bequests in wills were registered with the authorities, and it is surely no coincidence that these examples all occur very late in the century, when it was possible to be more open. Even then, though, these three wills were all handwritten by the testators, not – as was more usual – drawn up by the public notaries, so their provisions remained concealed until after each woman’s death. It is likely that in other cases similar gifts were included in the separate instructions given to executors, leaving money to poor people whose names were not recorded in the will itself.⁸⁹

In the early 1750s the Dutch embassy extended its services to include an infirmary, on the model of the one already run by the Swedish embassy. The first firm evidence of its existence comes in 1754 when a series of Protestant deaths were reported by a man named Michel Thieux, described as ‘keeping the infirmary of the embassy of Holland’ and a little later as ‘servant of the infirmary’.⁹⁰ Little is known about him, except that he came from Nogent-le-Rotrou, near Chartres, and that his two wives were also Protestants, the first French – she died in the infirmary in the same year – and the second from Geneva. It is likely that the infirmary had actually begun operating in 1753, since on 1 May that year Thieux had reported the death of Jeanne Lair, aged eighty-six and living on alms from ‘the consistory of the Embassy of Holland’, whom he had taken in shortly before her death, then those of at least two other Protestants, one of whom ‘had come to stay with him to be looked after’.⁹¹

Until 1765 the Dutch infirmary had around twenty-five beds in three rooms of a house in the rue de Seine, long a Protestant area. At times, this was not enough, since in November 1777 we find a Protestant neighbour, Madame Perrinet, taking in a man who was waiting for a bed. But then the building was sold and the new owner was unsympathetic,

⁸⁸ ANY15281, 26 January 1773. ANY15280, 27 May, 13 April 1772.

⁸⁹ ArchP DC6 272, fol. 20v, 25 March 1770. ArchP DC6 275, fol. 42v, 10 June 1781. For another bequest to the poor of the chapel, ArchP DC6 278, fol. 36, 23 January 1784.

⁹⁰ ANY11570, 10 February, 25 April 1754.

⁹¹ Garrisson, ‘Les Infirmeries protestantes’, 52. ANY11570, 10 April 1754. ANY15289, 21 May 1781. ANY11569, 30 May, 11 November 1753.

prompting a move to the nearby rue Saint-Benoît. At around the same time a 'concierge' or 'gardien' was engaged and a doctor was appointed, suggesting that the resources of the infirmary had grown, perhaps as rich Protestants felt more willing to support it. From 1755 to 1758 the medic was Pierre Bousqueyrol, a Huguenot from the Périgord region who married Suzanne-Françoise Deschazeaux, from one of the Aubusson families. He was succeeded, surprisingly, by a Catholic, Louis Silvy. The other assistants seem to have been French-born Protestants, the most notable of whom was René Barillet, who also seems to have been employed at the chapel – again an indication of the growth in the congregation. The infirmary was to move twice more in the 1780s before closing definitively, probably in late 1788 or early 1789.⁹² This was the moment when some of the most influential Paris Protestants deserted the Dutch chapel to establish their own French Reformed church, so the funds may have evaporated.

There is ample evidence, therefore, that a Paris-wide network had developed around the Dutch chapel by the early decades of the eighteenth century. The services of the chapel expanded significantly in the second half of the century as it became clear that being openly Protestant was unlikely to have grave consequences. It is likely, in fact, that there was something resembling a system of 'elders', although unlike the seventeenth-century Charenton church they do not seem to have divided the different quarters of Paris between them. Their reach nevertheless extended into every area of the city and to all the different clusters of Reformed Protestants, whatever their geographical origins and their date of arrival. Of course, those who called on the services of the chapel volunteers after the death of a relative were not necessarily permanent members of the congregation. But they knew where to go, and this in itself indicates the existence of wide informal networks.

By the 1760s the Dutch chapel had a regular congregation of Huguenots. A series of police reports between Easter and August 1766 provides the names of some ninety Paris Protestant families who attended the sermon almost every week. They were supplemented, especially for the Easter communion, by a number of one-off participants and by several hundred people who came from outside Paris. We know from the chapel records that these were mainly peasants from the city's periphery. The impression of a relatively small and stable core congregation is reinforced by the account left by a Madame Leclerc (née Dury), a descendant of Huguenots who visited Paris in 1773. She noted with surprised disapproval that the congregation was exhorted to pray not only

⁹² ANY15285, 30 November 1777. ANY15287, 29 April 1779.

for divine help in general but also with individual matters such as court cases. Where these were successful, the following week thanks were given for God's assistance. This suggests a community that was small enough to occupy itself with the concerns of individual members and close-knit enough to know about them.⁹³

The relatively intimate sociability of the chapel probably accounts for some of the apparently mysterious links evoked earlier in this chapter: for example, for marriages between people who had no obvious connection at all. The way it created at least some unexpected bonds is clear from the list of witnesses at the marriage in 1749 of Pierre-Antoine Jacot, one of those who appeared regularly at Protestant death-beds. He worked as a journeyman *ébéniste*, for the furniture-maker Migeon amongst others. His father, a stone-cutter from Neufchâtel, had been the lector at the chapel as well as assisting poor Protestants in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine in the 1730s. Pierre-Antoine was born in Paris and lived with his mother in the Faubourg. His bride was Marie-Louise Leroux, living in central Paris, daughter of a small-time merchant from Sacy-sur-Marne, not far from the city. They were socially well matched: he had few possessions but as a highly skilled craftsman offered a good catch for a woman whose inheritance amounted to a tiny amount of land and a house in Sacy. Her parents were dead, but her cousin, who lived in Paris, was present, and her uncle had come to town for the wedding. Jacot's mother was the only member of his family there. A number of friends signed the marriage contract, among them a locksmith and a 'marchand fabricant'. But it is the other witnesses whose presence comes as a huge surprise, a battalion of bankers: Vimielle, Pictet, Emminck, Voullaire, Sarasin, Choudens and the widow and two daughters of Louis Tassin. Also present were the chaplain of the Dutch embassy, Pierre Sageran Vanlaan, and another stalwart of the Dutch chapel, Isaac Penet. It was not uncommon for people of high rank to sign the marriage contracts of humbler subjects, as a form of patronage, but that was not the case here. Rather, the presence of these luminaries at the wedding of a poor craftsman was an acknowledgment of the role played by Jacot senior, and at the same time a statement of loyalty by the Huguenot elite.⁹⁴

Another wedding fifty years later demonstrates the cohesion of this new elite. In 1789 Jacob-Louis Féline, the son of a silk merchant turned banker, originally from Alès in the south of France, married Jeanne-Olympe Lemaistre, daughter of a Swiss banker whose forebears were

⁹³ Archives de la Préfecture de Police, Aa 1, nos. 643–50. 'Paris en 1773. Lettre d'une descendante des huguenots', *La Cité. Bulletin de la Société historique et archéologique du IV^e arrondissement de Paris*, 3, no. 9 (1904), 47–51 (49).

⁹⁴ MC XCIX 494, 19 April 1747.

Huguenot refugees. Of Jeanne-Olympe's family, only her brother and two sisters attended. A handful of Féline's relatives were present: his uncle Étienne Fabre, a silk merchant probably from Nîmes, and some of the younger generation born in Paris. But a host of friends included prominent Paris Huguenots from the Houssemaine and de Valframbert families. There was Pierre Alary, a merchant who may also have hailed from Nîmes and been involved in the silk industry. Pierre-Antoine Cluzel was present: he was pharmacist to the duc d'Orléans and his wife was related to the wineshop-keepers, since her father was a Minot and her mother a Doucet. Another friend who signed the marriage contract was a Mademoiselle Perimony, presumably Élisabeth-Marguerite, who had been admitted to communion at the Dutch chapel in 1754. She was of Dutch extraction, though her mother had a French name. Pierre-Frédéric Empaytaz was listed as a 'friend' but was actually Jeanne's cousin. He was a merchant, born in Berlin, his father an engraver-enameller from the Drôme. The date of his return to France is not known, but another friend, Paul-Jérémie Bitaubé, likewise a descendant of Huguenot refugees, had arrived from Germany only in 1786. The chaplain of the Dutch embassy, Paul Henri Marron, was present, along with a number of other people who are not readily identifiable as Protestants.⁹⁵ The common denominator, once again, is the chapel, although at the very moment this wedding took place, Lemaistre, Féline, Étienne and Antoine Fabre, Empaytaz, Cluzel and Marron were engaged in negotiations to establish an independent French Protestant chapel. In December 1791 Féline himself and five of his witnesses were all members of its first consistory.⁹⁶

Paris Protestantism was able to survive and to regroup thanks to the variety of networks that provided crucial assistance to those recently arrived, helping to find employment and lodgings, and that for all their members provided business contacts and marriage alliances, succoured the old and the sick within their own ranks. If the core of these networks was families already in the city before 1685, new arrivals constructed their own sets of connections. By the middle of the eighteenth century the webs embraced occupational, provincial and even foreign groups that

⁹⁵ MC XXXII 26, 10 May 1789. ANY15287, 1 June 1779 (Alary). SHPF MS 410, fol. 23v (Perimony), fol. 77v (Minot). François-Frédéric Empaytaz, 'Vie et descendance de deux "anciens" du premier consistoire de l'Église réformée de Paris', *Cahiers du Centre de Généalogie protestante*, no. 36 (1991), 193–205. On Bitaubé, Eckart Birnstiel, 'Le Retour des huguenots du Refuge en France. De la Révocation à la Révolution', *BSHPF*, 135 (1989), 763–90 (764). For another example of the coming together of this elite, at the marriage in 1767 of the chaplain of the Dutch chapel, Duvoisin, with Anne Calas, see Francis Garrisson, 'Les Élités parisiennes et la seconde réhabilitation de Jean Calas', *BSHPF*, 152 (2006), 19–55.

⁹⁶ Garrisson, 'Genèse de l'Église réformée'.

had no long-standing connection with the Paris Reformed Church. Here the most crucial contribution to rebuilding came from the foreign chapels, particularly the Dutch one, which reshaped Paris Protestantism as the persecution subsided. The chapels increasingly provided a safe haven, allowing the Huguenots to attend sermons and even to take communion, and they subsequently created new institutions that to a certain extent replaced those destroyed by the Revocation. By the 1760s, the bolder Huguenots were marrying and having their children baptised there. The Swedish and Dutch chapels established infirmaries that, thanks to the co-operation between them, served both the Lutheran and the Huguenot poor. They were never able to re-establish Protestant schools, although the Dutch chapel did provide limited catechism classes, and the small attendances at sermons probably meant that the pastors were never able to exert a great influence over the religious beliefs or the behaviour of the Paris Huguenots. Not until the end of 1791 was there a true consistory able to represent the Huguenot community, to co-ordinate services and to impose religious and moral discipline.

Only a small proportion of the Huguenots living in Paris, even among those well established in the city, attended the different chapels. These institutions nevertheless had a considerable impact on the sociology of the Protestant minority, creating new city-wide networks that brought the different groups into contact. In the process, the Dutch chapel created new hierarchical bonds, helping to shape an eighteenth-century Reformed elite to replace the one dispersed by the late seventeenth-century persecution, and it was this elite that spearheaded the reconstruction of institutional Protestantism in Paris at the beginning of the Revolution.

6 Catholics and Protestants: hostility, indifference and coexistence

Without a fierce determination to maintain their faith and their identity, against all the odds, the Protestants of Paris would not have survived as a religious minority. Yet nor could they have continued to live in the city had the Catholic population been uniformly and resolutely hostile towards them. The promiscuity of urban life and the impossibility of forming distinct Protestant communities, unlike in parts of France where Huguenots were more numerous, meant that relations with Catholic neighbours were crucial. Protestants could not meet for prayers without attracting attention, even where households were self-contained and discreet, and consistent failure to attend mass could be noticed by neighbours. Catholic tradespeople, employers and landlords could make it hard for Huguenots to conduct their business and to find work and lodgings, and there was always the danger of direct conflict, even violence, or of denunciation to the authorities. The local priests could not, in most parishes, hope to know the entire population, and their main way of identifying Protestants was through being tipped off by a hostile or devout parishioner. The police too, although they watched the foreign embassies and, especially in the late seventeenth century, kept an eye on leading Huguenots, depended heavily on information from the public. They well knew that denunciations could be motivated by self-interest or individual hatred, so each tip-off was followed by inquiries in the neighbourhood. Thus the fate of those accused, whether they ended up in prison or had their children taken away, might depend on the willingness of neighbours to confirm or deny the denunciation.¹ Even after the police began turning a blind eye, they did so only as long as there was no 'public scandal'. In their eyes, a public scandal occurred when dissident behaviour attracted attention and people complained, so here too Catholic reactions were crucial. This chapter looks first at the seventeenth-century

¹ Farge and Foucault, *Le Désordre des familles*, pp. 35–43, and Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community*, p. 66, touch briefly on the role of neighbours in family disputes: the police procedure was the same.

background, then at the impact of shifting official policies on relations between the two confessions in the first half of the eighteenth century. It suggests that most Paris Catholics, while hostile or at best indifferent, were nevertheless prepared to coexist with Protestants.

The seventeenth-century background

The picture painted by most writing on seventeenth-century Paris, if it mentions Protestants at all, is of Catholic hostility, less virulent than in the sixteenth century, but intermittently breaking into open violence. Orest Ranum tells us that when Protestants went to services at Charenton by boat they were likely to have stones thrown at them as they passed through the city, and they had to be particularly cautious on major Catholic feast days. In winter, boys in the place de Grève would sometimes pelt them with snowballs.² Any overt disrespect for Catholic ceremony could provoke violence: an early seventeenth-century English visitor warned that 'If any Godly Protestant ... should ... forebear to worship the Sacrament as they doe, perhaps he may be presently stabbed or otherwise most shamefully abused.'³ Things could also get nasty when some local or external event converted latent prejudice into a desire to punish. In 1642 and again in 1679 a number of Catholic priests who had been hanged in England were celebrated as martyrs in Paris, and there were threats of violence against the Huguenots. In 1643 and 1648, against the background of the Revolution in England, fears of attack by Catholic mobs produced near panic among Paris Protestants, for whom the memory of the St Bartholomew's Day massacres was all too fresh. In 1669, when a Huguenot was executed for murder, the crowd tore down his body and dismembered it, then put the pieces on poles and paraded them outside the houses of Protestant merchants.⁴ The police files also contain evidence of at least two more religious riots in 1671. In June, according to the chief of police,

the people of [the Faubourg Saint-Antoine], long inclined to insult those of the so-called Reformed religion, gathered for the procession from the church of

² Douen, *La Révocation*, 1: 139–40; Ranum, *Paris in the Age of Absolutism*, p. 168.

³ Thomas Coryate, *Crudities Hastily gobled up in five Moneths travells in France ...* (London, 1611), quoted in Lough, *France Observed*, p. 217.

⁴ Benoist, *Histoire*, vol. III, part ii, p. 128; Menna Prestwich, 'Religious Frontiers and Co-existence in Paris in the Age of Richelieu and Mazarin (1624–1661)', in *Les Frontières religieuses en Europe du XV^e au XVII^e siècle*, ed. Ducelier et al., pp. 259–71 (p. 262). See also John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture. Religious Intolerance and Arguments for Religious Toleration in Early Modern and 'Early Enlightenment' Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 24–5.

Sainte-Marguerite which was taking place with the Blessed Sacrament at seven in the evening, having seen some dispute between a man of the Faubourg and a lackey, persuaded that this was some Huguenot, threw themselves with such fury on the first carriage they encountered that Monsieur Dumay, the passenger, although a Catholic ... was pulled forth violently, struck with a thousand blows, dragged in the mud and reduced to a pitiable state.⁵

In the second incident, in the equally plebeian Faubourg Saint-Marcel, a Protestant who had been seriously wounded in a fight was visited by a priest, who urged him to convert. When he refused, a crowd reported to number seven or eight hundred gathered outside the house, broke all the windows and tried to force their way in, shouting 'These are Huguenots and heretics, we will bash them and set fire to the doors if they don't hand over the injured man.'⁶ Soon afterwards, there was an apparent attempt to burn down the Protestant church at Charenton.

Some similar events occurred in the 1680s. In 1681 an angry crowd attempted to prevent a pastor from attending a dying Huguenot woman in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, and the police were forced to intervene, though there was no actual physical violence.⁷ Just after the Revocation there were at least two further outbreaks of violent hostility, one when soldiers attacked a fruit shop owned by a Protestant merchant, and the second a month or two later when they disinterred and desecrated the bodies of Huguenots buried in fields on the edge of the city.⁸ From time to time, too, both before and after the Revocation, there were near-riots when Protestants refused to kneel as the Blessed Sacrament passed along the street. This happened on 24 July 1689, when a large crowd threatened to force the door and burn the house where the offending young man had taken refuge.⁹

These incidents point to the persistent hostility of at least some sections of the Catholic population towards the Huguenots. Across the second half of the seventeenth century, we also have abundant evidence of negative attitudes towards Protestants in many of the Paris guilds, where the masters and mistresses voted for new regulations excluding those of the Reformed religion. These took two forms. Some contained a 'strong' requirement: explicit evidence of Catholic faith (a baptismal certificate). Others required attendance at mass on a more or less regular basis, a 'weak' requirement because it was harder to enforce and implied

⁵ La Reynie to Chancellor, 28 June 1671, quoted in Saint-Germain, *La Reymie*, p. 301.

⁶ BN MS fr. 7050, fol. 65, quoted in Douen, *La Révocation*, 1: 481. See also Dethan, *Paris au temps de Louis XIV*, p. 102.

⁷ Benoist, *Histoire*., vol. III, part ii, p. 424.

⁸ Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 191, 208–9.

⁹ BN MS fr. 17421, fol. 24.

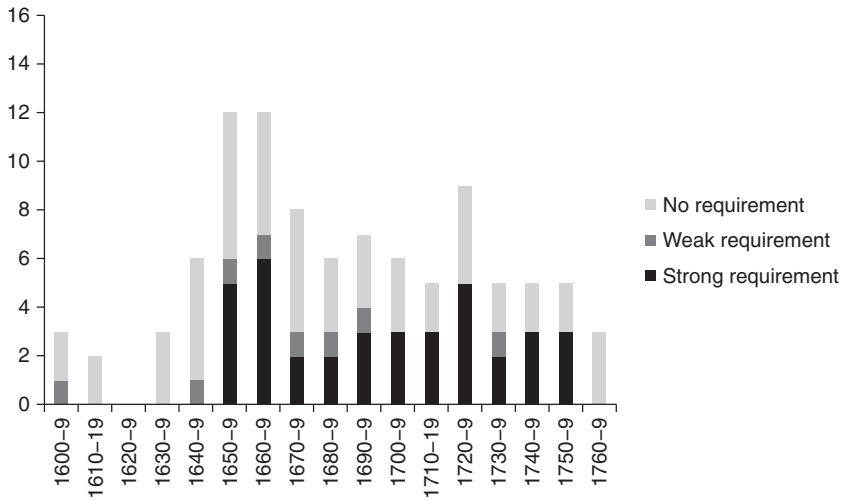


Figure 6.1 Requirement of Catholic religion in the statutes of the Paris guilds, 1600–1770

expelling noncompliant members, a very unlikely scenario. Although many statutes required membership of the religious confraternity of the trade, this often involved only paying a fee and unless attendance was explicitly required it was not an exclusionary clause at all.

The chronology of these clauses is revealing. While not all the guild statutes have survived, the remaining sixteenth-century ones suggest that, despite the conflicts that followed the Reformation, none of the trades explicitly required new guild members to be Catholic, although they routinely obliged masters to pay an annual fee to the religious confraternity and from time to time to pay for communion bread. Some (like the belt-makers and the cobblers) had a ‘weak’ requirement, stipulating that masters should attend mass on particular occasions.¹⁰ Quite a number restricted governance of the trade to Catholics by specifying that guild officials had to have served as administrators of the confraternity. These practices were broadly consistent with the Edict of Nantes that opened the trades to all. It is only in the second half of the seventeenth century that we begin to find explicit rules that new masters, apprentices or journeymen must be Catholic. Figure 6.1 gives the results of analysis of ninety-nine sets of statutes produced for sixty-eight different trades

¹⁰ René de Lespinasse, *Les Métiers et corporations de la ville de Paris, XIV^e–XVIII^e siècle*, 3 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1886–97), 3: 362, 94.

(just over half of the Paris guilds) across the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The chart shows that, in total, over half (54%) of the statutes imposed no explicit religious requirement and only thirty-eight (38%) had a 'strong' requirement, obliging all new members to be Catholic. Of course, the absence of a Catholic requirement does not necessarily indicate a preparedness to accept Protestants. Sometimes there were laws that made such a clause unnecessary. A royal decree of May 1685, for example, allowed only Catholics to join the printers' guild, though the 1694 statutes were silent on this question. Protestants were also banned, by a law of 1685, from the surgeons' guild, though the earliest statutes I have found that incorporate this requirement date from 1732.¹¹

The overall chronology of the statutes indicates that in many cases the religious requirement was introduced as part of an overall renewal and tightening of guild rules during Louis XIV's reign, from 1643 on. Admittedly, this may simply reflect the better survival of records at a time when administrative structures were undergoing more general renewal. Nor do we know if these were the earliest statutes to incorporate such a requirement, but it does seem likely. If so, the chart offers a broad chronology of anti-Protestant sentiment within the Paris trades, particularly for the seventeenth century, since in the eighteenth century statutes that were renewed may simply have carried over an earlier rule that no one saw any need to change.

It is possible that in some cases the religious clauses were introduced by the police authorities. This was certainly true for the printers, the surgeons and the midwives. These were all sensitive trades, the printers because the government wanted to stop the production of Protestant literature, the surgeons because of their potential influence over people who were dying and the midwives so that children who died at birth could be baptised as Catholics. More often, however, the initiative seems to have come from within the guilds themselves. The linen drapers, a female guild, decreed as early as 1644 that any mistress found to belong to the Reformed religion would be immediately excluded and her business shut down. The mercers, drapers, grocers, apothecaries, silk-weavers, furriers and the goldsmiths – the most prestigious guilds in the city – all attempted to exclude Protestants in the early 1670s, even though at that point their statutes had no requirement to be Catholic. Already in the 1660s, the officials of the goldsmiths' guild had made it difficult for Protestant journeymen to work in Paris, and when in 1679 a quota was placed on the number of masters, and fifty-seven were expelled, Huguenots were

¹¹ Deursen, *Professions et métiers interdits*, p. 90.

disproportionately represented among those cast out.¹² The sellers of used clothes and the makers of gold and silver cloth also introduced a religious requirement clause early, in the 1660s. The booksellers too, another prestigious guild, were ahead of royal legislation, since their statutes of 1683 required new members to be Catholics. Not only the early date but also the prominence of this requirement in some of the statutes seems to point to particular concentrations of anti-Protestant feeling. In the 1666 statutes of the flax-sellers the religious restriction was the very first article, whereas usually it appeared much later and often as a sub-clause pertaining to the way new members were received. The haters also gave this item pride of place in their 1658 statutes, in which an elaborate frontispiece displayed a portrait of the Virgin.¹³

The new rules were probably, in most cases, proposed by the guild leaders but supported by a majority of members, who in principle voted on changes to the statutes. It is not clear that this always happened, but sometimes the date of a meeting is recorded. The new rules of the master tinsmiths, for example, were ‘approved by all the said Masters, and signed, for this purpose assembled on Sunday 25 November 1663, beneath the porch of the church of Saint-Sépulcre, following the mass of the confraternity’.¹⁴ The revised rules were then submitted to the police or to the Parlement for endorsement. Occasionally we find evidence that the police suggested further amendments, but there are no surviving examples where this involved adding a religious restriction. Most often the new rules seem to have been approved by the authorities without further changes.¹⁵ We do need to remember that in slack periods, when there was sometimes not enough work to go around, the exclusion of minority groups – those from outside the city or of different religion – was likely to win majority support. It is nevertheless evidence of a certain level of hostility towards the Huguenots.

¹² Benoist, *Histoire*, vol. III, part ii, pp. 153–4, 401; Bimbenet-Privat, *Les Orfèvres et l’orfèvrerie de Paris*, 1: 204; Alfred Franklin, *Dictionnaire historique des arts, métiers et professions exercés dans Paris depuis le treizième siècle* (Paris, H. Welter, 1906), p. 130.

¹³ AN AD XI 26 and BN MS fr. 21795, fol. 135 for the sellers of used clothes, AN AD XI 17 and BN MS fr. 21794, fol. 301 for cloth-of-gold-makers. AN AD XI 19, booksellers. AN AD XI 16, flax-sellers. BN MS fr. 21793, fols. 89–90.

¹⁴ BNF F-26471, *Statuts, reglemens, arrests et sentences des maîtres taillandiers-ferblantiers de la Ville et Fauxbourgs de Paris* (Paris, 1754), p. 5. See also BNF F-22410, *Confirmation des statuts des Facteurs Garçons Marchands de la Ville de Paris* (n.p.: n.d.), meeting of 13 January 1658.

¹⁵ BN MS fr. 21793, fol. 263 (sealing-wax makers). BN MS fr. 21794, fol. 186 (sellers of old iron). AN AD XI 10, no. 23, *Confirmation des statuts des Facteurs Garçons des Marchands de la Ville de Paris* (Paris, 1749). AN AD XI 18, *Extrait du registre des délibérations de la communauté des Maîtresses Linières, Filassières & Chanvrières de la Ville & Fauxbourgs de Paris*, 9 décembre 1729.

The enthusiasm of French Catholics for the Revocation, in October 1685, supports the idea that anti-Protestant feeling was widespread. Reading the reports sent to the prince de Condé, who had a wide network of correspondents around the kingdom, the euphoria is striking. The King's confessor, the Jesuit François Alix de La Chaise, announced at Court that there had been a flood of conversions. Bishop Bossuet likened the King to Constantine and to Theodosius, before declaring him to be a second Charlemagne. If such sentiments were to be expected from Church leaders, Madame de Sévigné's enthusiastic reaction is a better indication of opinion in one section of Catholic society. The playwright Racine, too, praised Louis in verse as the only king prepared to fight God's good fight. We know little about reactions among the ordinary people of Paris: there is no evidence of rejoicing in the streets, but most historians suggest that the Revocation revived Louis XIV's popularity in the city.¹⁶ The Protestant scholar Pierre Bayle asked rhetorically 'where is the courtier who did not say *Amen*, where the Bourgeois and the Peasant who did not watch with malign joy the progress of these dishonest measures, and ... is there a single noble Catholic or churchman who indicated disapproval of this barbarous manner of converting? You have thus all been complicit in these crimes?'¹⁷

Such evidence suggests that Catholic hostility to Protestants was widespread in Paris in the second half of the seventeenth century. Yet we must take into account both the motives of those who have recorded these tensions and the other evidence that they ignore or play down. A key source for many later accounts, including my own, is the massive *Histoire de l'Édit de Nantes* by Élie Benoist, published in Delft in 1693–5. Benoist's purpose was to reveal to the world the barbarous persecution of the Huguenots. In the 1890s his account was supplemented by the scholarly but equally partisan history of the Revocation in Paris written by the former Protestant pastor Orentin Douen. Douen made extensive use of the police archives and his story of Catholic hostility and persecution is nuanced but unrelenting. Both Benoist and Douen record instances of coexistence and even friendly relations between Catholics and Protestants, but either dismiss them as exceptions or simply swamp

¹⁶ Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, pp. 19–25; Bluche, *Louis XIV*, pp. 608–10; François Gonin and Frank Delteil, 'La Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes vue par les informateurs du Grand Condé', *BSHPF*, 118 (1972), 115–72 (118–19); McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 585; Ranum, *Paris in the Age of Absolutism*, pp. 251–2; René Pomeau, 'Une Idée neuve au XVIIIe siècle, la tolérance', *BSHPF*, 134 (1988), 195–206 (195).

¹⁷ Pierre Bayle, *Ce que c'est que la France toute catholique*, ed. Elisabeth Labrousse (Paris: J. Vrin, 1973. First published 1686), p. 35.

them alongside harrowing tales of persecution.¹⁸ Many subsequent historians have relied heavily on these two works and to varying degrees have repeated their judgments.

At the other extreme, conservative Catholic historians have cited seventeenth-century Catholic hostility towards Protestants as a contrast to more tolerant eighteenth-century attitudes that they regard as disastrous. For modern apologists of the Revocation, such as Jacques Saint-Germain, widespread Catholic hostility justified royal action against the Protestants, either because the King can be seen as following the will of the majority of French people or because they argue that outlawing Protestantism was a way of avoiding further religious conflict.¹⁹

A detailed study of the seventeenth-century sources is outside the scope of this book, but a careful reading of the available literature suggests a more variegated pattern. Douen himself records, for example, the private doubts that many Catholics expressed about the Revocation. He suggests that prominent figures such as the marquis de La Vrillière, Secretary of State in charge of Protestant affairs, the Chancellor Michel Le Tellier and key Paris administrators like the Lieutenant-General of Police, the King's representatives in the Parlement and even the Archbishop of Paris were unhappy about the Revocation. None of these men questioned the aim of converting France's Protestants, but some of them doubted the legality of the 1685 Edict. Many Catholics became increasingly critical of forced conversion, which they believed would not achieve sincere changes of heart and was likely to lead to the profanation of the Catholic sacraments by Protestants forced to take them without believing in them. Even the Dauphin, the heir to the throne, was reportedly hostile to the persecution, and the duchesse d'Orléans wrote that 'I pity them from the bottom of my heart. I wish the King knew that the cruelties perpetrated against the poor Protestants have made the Catholics into Calvinists' – that is, just as bad! A few figures, like the military engineer Vauban, argued that true conversion could only come from God and suggested (at least implicitly) that the King could not legitimately attempt to control the consciences of his subjects.²⁰

¹⁸ Benoist, *Histoire*; Douen, *La Révocation*. Another history much used by later historians is Abbé Joseph Dedieu, *Histoire politique des protestants français*, an excellent account of government policy and its implementation. But Dedieu was not interested in Catholic-Protestant relations.

¹⁹ Saint-Germain, *La Reynie*, p. 303.

²⁰ Douen, *La Révocation*, 1: 88–94. See also de Negroni, *Intolérances*, pp. 90–4. Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, pp. 19–30; Catherine Bergeal and Antoine Durrleman (eds.), *Éloge et condamnation de la Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes* (Carrières-sous-Poissy: La Cause, 1985); McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 573–84; Orcibal, *Louis XIV*,

As the Revocation was enforced, many people in Paris demonstrated sympathy for individual Protestants. The English physician John Northleigh, visiting the city in the late 1680s, reproached Louis XIV for his 'hard Usage of his Protestant Subjects, which I have known even under his Nose, Papists in Paris condemn'.²¹ When in 1686 Louis de Marolles, a Protestant scholar and highly regarded magistrate of the Paris Parlement, was condemned to the galleys for attempting to leave the kingdom without permission, according to Douen 'all of Paris' – meaning high society – came to salute him. Douen also tells us that the King was informed that many Catholics, including 'several seigneurs at his Court, have Protestants in their service and are hiding them in their town houses'. Another report named the prince de Condé, a member of the royal family, as one of them: one of his bodyguards, his apothecary and another man were all Huguenots and had taken refuge in his Paris residence.²²

While Catholic hostility to the Huguenots was undoubtedly widespread, there are hints, therefore, that the picture was more complex. This is confirmed by some recent studies. Menna Prestwich has shown that in seventeenth-century elite and artistic milieux, religious frontiers were always present but often porous: the Protestant scholar Valentin Conrart was welcome in the prestigious salon of Madame de Rambouillet, although when he dined with Catholics he was careful to avoid getting into discussion of religious matters. At the Collège de Harcourt, part of the University of Paris, even as late as the 1680s Protestant students were allowed to retire during catechism classes. At another social level, Jean Nagle shows that in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, until the middle of the seventeenth century, it was possible for a Protestant not only to belong to a guild but even to be elected as a guild official, although after that there was a campaign by certain Catholic artisans to drive the Huguenots out.²³ This is consistent with the chronology of official policy and suggests that the hardening of government attitudes strengthened the hand of those in the Paris trades who were hostile to Protestants. But it did not happen everywhere, and guilds in which Huguenots had long been numerous, such as the clockmakers or the ribbon-makers, remained open much longer than some of the others. It is not clear whether this was because

pp. 122, 32–3, 37–8. *Correspondance de Madame, duchesse d'Orléans* (Paris, 1890), 1: 220, quoted in Bimbenet-Privat, *Les Orfèvres et l'orfèvrerie de Paris*, 1: 211.

²¹ Lough, *France Observed*, p. 264.

²² Douen, *La Révocation*, 1: 99–102.

²³ Prestwich, 'Religious Frontiers and Co-existence'. Arsenal MS 10572, fol. 23, 8 January 1707. Jean Nagle, 'Histoire sociale du faubourg Saint-Germain-des-Prés (XVII^e siècle–1674)', quoted in Thillay, *Le Faubourg Saint-Antoine*, p. 173.

Protestants had more power in these trades, or because Catholic masters were less hostile in guilds where there were many Protestants. Studies of the world of work in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine suggest a similar situation. Many Huguenot craftsmen moved there after 1657, when it became one of the areas of the city where men and women could enter trades without needing to be members of the guild. Alain Thillay points out that until the early eighteenth century, apprenticeship contracts drawn up in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine rarely required Catholic practice, despite the law banning Protestants from entering into apprenticeships in Paris.²⁴

There is also evidence that peaceful coexistence was the norm in everyday relationships. A police inquiry of 1664 into an illegal Protestant school in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine is very revealing. Protestant schools were not allowed in Catholic towns such as Paris, so the authorities descended when Perine Beaucorps was discovered to be teaching local children in a room on the ground floor of a house named 'Le Roy de Suède' (the King of Sweden) in the main street of the Faubourg. The commissaire Vendosme heard eight witnesses, all of whom lived in the immediate vicinity. One was the principal tenant, Jean Balthazar Oudin, who rented the whole house and then sub-let to others. It is likely that he too was a Protestant, since he was one of the Cent Suisses du Roi, elite soldiers drawn from the different Swiss regiments and who formed part of the King's entourage.²⁵ The name of the house also suggests Protestant affiliations. Oudin was in a delicate position, since he was indirectly responsible for illegal activity on the premises, and this perhaps frightened him into testifying that Perine Beaucorps had told him she was a Calvinist and that the children under her instruction were those of local Protestants. But the other witnesses said the same thing. Guillaume Martin, a tailor living next door, reported that the accused woman had come to live at 'Le Roy de Suède' some six months earlier, that he didn't know her name but had learned in the neighbourhood that she was a Huguenot and that she was openly running a public school for Protestant children, whom he had seen coming and going. His wife, Louise Misglat, was able to name some of the children, 'whom she knows in the neighbourhood to be of the Reformed Religion' and 'of the said children she had asked out of curiosity whether they went to the school run by the said Beaucorps'. Another neighbour had been told by Beaucorps that she was a Protestant, and

²⁴ Thillay, *Le Faubourg Saint-Antoine*, p. 174. On the ribbon-makers in the seventeenth century, Christian Aubrée, 'Protestants et catholiques dans le marché du crédit parisien au XVIIe siècle', in *La Coexistence confessionnelle à l'épreuve*, ed. Boisson and Krumenacker, pp. 127–49.

²⁵ Marion, *Dictionnaire*, p. 355.

had seen the children come each day, 'numbering more than ten, whom the witness knows for the most part, and knows that their fathers and mothers also profess the said so-called Reformed Religion'. Others said much the same thing, and two witnesses said the children could be heard through the window reciting their lessons.²⁶

We do not know how the police found out about the school: presumably someone had denounced Beaucorps, yet only after several months. There was nothing particularly hidden about her activity: the neighbours, at least some of whom appear to have been Catholic, all knew about it, just as they knew the children and their parents, and Beaucorps had been quite open about her religion. She had recruited the children and obtained books for them. The witness testimony was very matter-of-fact, suggesting that religious difference was a fact of life and not something anyone was shocked by or that aroused particular hostility, although the fact that everyone knew who the Protestants were also indicates that it was a difference that people were well aware of. It is noticeable that the neighbours made no attempt to protect the accused woman or to avoid naming the local Huguenots who had placed their children in her custody. This was quite different from many cases brought by the trade guilds or by tax collectors, where the neighbours made a conviction difficult by claiming to know or to have seen nothing. Whether for personal or religious reasons, they were not prepared to defend Beaucorps.

Other scattered evidence suggests that this kind of indifferent coexistence was common. Alain Thillay and Jacob Melish, both of whom have studied the police archives for the Faubourg Saint-Antoine in the late seventeenth century, have found only a scattering of disputes where a Catholic called an opponent a 'bougre de huguenot' (Huguenot scoundrel) or something similar. These very low levels of conflict hardly point to the widespread hostility that most histories suggest and they underline the hyperbole of official statements like the report from the commissaire Vendosme, incorporated in the subsequent police ordinance, that asserted that 'Catholics fear to live there [in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine].'²⁷ Despite some reciprocal hostility, cohabitation appears to have been the norm.

In the light of a generation of work on other parts of seventeenth-century France, this conclusion is not surprising. Family contact and peaceful coexistence were common in Languedoc, Aquitaine, Poitou and

²⁶ ANY12238, 7 May 1664.

²⁷ Thillay, *Le Faubourg Saint-Antoine*. Jacob Melish, personal communication. Melish's forthcoming book is entitled *Controlling Public Violence: Gender, Justice and Neighborhood in Paris under Absolutism*. ANY12238, 7 May 1664.

Béarn, where Catholics and Protestants sometimes even participated in one another's religious festivals, sometimes despite the fulminations of Church leaders on both sides.²⁸ The apparent incompatibility of Calvinist and Catholic symbolic systems that historians have stressed for the sixteenth century did not necessarily apply in the different circumstances of the seventeenth century. Religious beliefs and the cultural meanings attached to ritual, while they may continue to be expressed in very similar language, in fact change over time, and this made coexistence possible in many places.²⁹

The evolution of inter-confessional relationships across the seventeenth century that some of these authors describe also seems to apply in Paris. The broad pattern of coexistence in the mid seventeenth century, marked by occasional tensions but operating within the broadly accepted framework of the Edict of Nantes, began to break down as Louis XIV's government began to reinterpret the terms of the Edict to the disadvantage of the Huguenots. As Keith Luria points out, the Edict of Nantes had made the French monarchy the arbiter of disputes between Protestants and Catholics, and when the umpire changed the rules in favour of one side it undermined the confidence of the Huguenots and encouraged Catholics to take advantage of the new situation. It is no coincidence that intolerance appears to increase after 1661, when Louis XIV began, hesitantly at first but with increasing vigour, to move against the Huguenots. The shift in royal policy was not a response to public pressure, but it served to generate demands for stricter measures against the Protestants and to make peaceful coexistence more difficult. The growing volume of complaints from both sides, but particularly from Catholics, was evidence not so much of growing hostility as of attempts to force changes to the law or to have it interpreted in a more restrictive way.³⁰

After October 1685 this was no longer necessary. The militant Catholics had won. Even though the Revocation made it far easier to target Protestants, hundreds of whom failed to attend church and to receive the Catholic sacraments, surprisingly few were reported to the Paris authorities. This was despite the fact that in 1685 and 1686, and again towards the end of the century, the police actively encouraged Catholics to denounce recalcitrant 'converts', while for some decades many priests actively tried to track down covert Protestants. Had relations between

²⁸ See *Introduction*, n. 42, above.

²⁹ Denis Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu. La violence au temps des troubles de religion, vers 1525-vers 1610* (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1990); Natalie Zemon Davis, 'The Rites of Violence: Religious Riot in Sixteenth-Century France', *Past and Present*, 50 (1971), 51-91; Luria, *Sacred Boundaries*, esp. p. 5.

³⁰ Luria, *Sacred Boundaries*, pp. xxii, 45.

Catholics and Protestants been poor, had there been intense latent hostility that only awaited the opportunity to express itself, one would expect a flood of denunciations. Yet that is not what happened.

There were certainly some Catholics who reported their Huguenot neighbours. Someone informed on Anne Bellettes for holding prayer meetings in her apartment in 1686. A neighbour denounced a journeyman tapestry-maker and his wife, a laundrywoman, for the same reason: she could hear their Scripture readings and psalm-singing through the wall and told a priest, who informed the police. She was particularly indignant at hearing her Huguenot neighbour tell his family that they had a choice between the law of God and that of the devil. Another man, Jean Beck, was denounced by people in the vicinity who became suspicious when they saw carriages coming and going from his house. But Beck was a German, employed by the Elector of Brandenburg, hardly a typical Huguenot. A year later the authorities received several accusations against a doctor named Amyot, but dismissed them because they suspected professional jealousy.³¹ Wary of self-interested denunciations, the police almost always sought verification from neighbours, whose reactions are revealing. In January 1686 Olivier de Cuville, a mercer living in the rue du Petit Lion, said that he knew the Protestant banker André de Crommelin as a neighbour and had met him at his door the previous Sunday. Crommelin had recounted being summoned several times before the *procureur général* and the Lieutenant-General of Police, but said he had refused to abjure because he did not believe he could be saved outside his own religion. Although the police officer seemed to be prompting Cuville to say that Crommelin was a dangerous fanatic who claimed to be prepared to die for his religion, the witness refused to endorse this judgment.³²

The renewal of persecution that began in 1698 did provoke a modest number of denunciations – or perhaps the police were simply recording and following them up once more. In 1703 a house-painter and a mason came to the police to report the cabinet-maker Migeon, his father-in-law Saint-Amand and a wood-turner named Martin. These men, they said, organised Protestant meetings on holy days and Migeon had said wicked things against Catholics and even against the King. The source of this information was one of Migeon's apprentices, a young Catholic who had been horrified to hear his master say that Versailles should be burned down. The boy had not wanted to report these words to the authorities

³¹ Douen, *La Révocation*, 3: 5, 73. BN MS fr. 7052, fol. 140, 24 April 1686. Arsenal MS 10436, fol. 18, 6 November 1686.

³² Arsenal MS 10436, fol. 93.

'because if they were known they would cause his said master to be broken on the wheel', but he had told the priest when he went to confession. The two men who brought the denunciation had also talked to the boy's cousin, who was likewise apprenticed to Migeon and who had confirmed hearing similar things, but his parents had asked them 'never to say anything about it, because that would entirely destroy the said Migeon'. It is not clear whether this denunciation resulted from a personal grievance or from genuine horror at what the apprentices had reported. One of the denouncers said he had been investigating for several months to find out where the Huguenots were meeting, so his coming forward was not a sudden and spontaneous act. He may even have been a paid police informer, or may have entertained a deep-seated hostility towards all the local Protestants. Yet the reactions of the apprentice and of the parents suggest that however much they disapproved of Migeon's words they did not want to see him denounced.³³

Given that there were no more than a few thousand Huguenots in Paris, living alongside hundreds of thousands of Catholics, it is remarkable that so few denunciations and instances of conflict are recorded. Even after the Revocation, when informing was strongly encouraged, few Paris Catholics were prepared to see their neighbours imprisoned and perhaps sentenced to the galleys for their religious beliefs. The vast majority of arrests in 1685–6, and again in 1698–1703, did not result from denunciations but were for offences the police found out about for themselves: refusals to abjure by known Protestants, attempts to emigrate and assisting others to leave. The laws themselves point to the same lack of active support from the Catholic population: in December 1685 a royal declaration required neighbours of 'New Catholics' to notify the authorities of those who died, a sure indication that they were not doing so! Again at the end of the 1690s an ordinance instructed the owners of houses in Paris to notify their parish priest whenever they accepted 'New Catholics' as tenants, again clear evidence that they were not routinely making such reports.³⁴ When reproached, Catholics often responded that they did not know that their neighbours were former Protestants, a highly unlikely claim and one that the authorities did not believe.

Throughout the seventeenth century, therefore, there was general, if unenthusiastic, acceptance of the Huguenot presence in Paris. After that, as we have seen, while the draconian laws remained in place across the

³³ Arsenal MS 10543, fols. 18–37.

³⁴ Jacqueline David, 'Les Solidarités juridiques de voisinage de l'ancien droit à la codification', *Revue historique de droit français et étranger*, 72 (1994), 333–66 (344); Douen, *La Révocation*, 2: 603.

eighteenth century and the Protestants never knew when they might be revived, a measure of official tolerance returned: the Protestants could not engage in any public ceremonies, but they were not required to convert and could maintain discreet religious practice in their households. Within the world of work the restrictions remained in place but the authorities asked no questions when 'New Catholics' produced Catholic baptismal certificates and had themselves admitted to the guilds or even to certain public offices.

The eighteenth century

In the neighbourhoods of the city, where Protestants were in daily contact with Catholics, we encounter a remarkable continuity in relationships from the mid seventeenth century well into the eighteenth, yet also a clear shift. If anything, there were fewer points of conflict, partly because the Protestants were now too vulnerable to assert any religious rights and kept a lower profile than before the Revocation. But religious difference was not something that most ordinary Catholics wished to emphasise, either. Because both confessional groups lived and worked within the same local community, rather than as separate ones as they did in some parts of France, the unwritten rules of neighbourhood dictated that conflicts be resolved internally. While people did take complaints to the police, and occasionally to the courts, these too were gestures aimed at the local audience: their purpose was usually to win over the neighbourhood and to force the opponent to back down, but not to destroy them. People were reluctant to involve the authorities if it meant that neighbours risked imprisonment and perhaps even more serious consequences. Where the stakes got too high, local communities tended to close ranks and witnesses would say they had seen nothing.³⁵ This means, of course, that the paucity of denunciations does not by any means indicate complete harmony. And there were, as we shall see, instances where neighbourhood solidarity did not prevail.

Two cases from the 1730s illustrate these points. In 1736 a police official received a letter from a priest denouncing a journeyman clockmaker named Vaulois (we never learn his first name). The priest had been told by one of his parishioners, whether on her initiative or in the confessional, that Vaulois had tried to convert her and had promised he could get her to England. The priest was clearly aware that the police were by this stage

³⁵ Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community*, esp. [chapter 1](#). See also David Garrioch, 'Verbal Insults in Eighteenth-Century Paris', in *The Social History of Language*, ed. Peter Burke and Roy Porter (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 104–19.

not very interested in Protestants, so he directed his denunciation to a police official who was, he believed, 'religious enough to communicate my letter to Monsieur Hérault', the Lieutenant-General of Police. Since attempts to convert Catholics were one matter the police did take very seriously, the letter was forwarded to the local police inspector for investigation. He reported that Vaulois was actually a convert to Calvinism, had claimed to be prepared to give his own life to see France defeated by the Austrian forces and was supported by other Paris Protestants. This was dynamite, and Vaulois was immediately arrested. Under interrogation, he said that his Huguenot parents had taken him to England after the Revocation, but that he had returned to France. He was the victim of calumnious accusations, he insisted, probably from two of his former neighbours with whom he had quarrelled. He supplied three character references from local Catholics. One was signed by the principal tenant of the house where he lived and a second by several neighbours, who asserted that they had all known him for several years, and that he was incapable of doing anything evil. The third certificate was jointly from four of his former employers, who said he had worked for them for nearly two decades, was a man of 'honour and probity' and that he had never spoken to them about religion. The police inspector reported that '[T]he people who have signed the two attached certificates are very honourable people, all good bourgeois and well established, who know the said Vaulois to be a very honourable man who is, admittedly, a good Protestant but whom they have never observed to try to preach to others.' The police then seem to have decided to release the poor man on condition that he left the kingdom.³⁶

Vaulois's Catholic neighbours and employers knew he was a Protestant – it was clearly no secret. But their relationship with him was cordial enough to impel them to defend him, and his religion had not prevented the four master clockmakers from employing him. On the other hand, someone had denounced him, although it looks very likely that this was because of a grudge rather than for purely religious reasons. The Catholic priest was the only one whose actions seemed to be influenced by Vaulois's religious identity.

The second case was a little more complicated. It dates from 1733, when Angélique Bivelat died in the house she shared with her son's family on the Pont-au-Change. The parish clergy refused to bury her, saying that all the neighbours confirmed that she was a Protestant. One of the senior priests recounted that the previous week someone had come to tell him that she was dangerously ill but, not wishing to incur the wrath

³⁶ Arsenal MS 11342, April 1736.

of the family, had specifically asked not to be named. The same priest had been present when Bivelat's husband died several years earlier and had succeeded in converting him to Catholicism. Hoping for the same outcome, he went to visit her, but Angélique and her family were hostile. She shouted that she didn't need him, and she wanted to know who had sent for him. She then asked him if it was a nice morning, to which he answered that it was evening, but he believed this was a transparent attempt to suggest she was not in full possession of her senses and therefore in no state to make her confession. When he exhorted her to die a good death like her husband had, she replied that she did not believe in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist and that her husband was a fool. He then warned her that she risked having her body dragged through the street and that her soul would go to hell, but she refused to listen. The custom of the Protestants, he added, was to call the priest only when it was too late, in the hope that they would simply agree to the burial. Angélique's son had begged him to allow her to be buried in the parish, for the honour of the family, but several other people had told him it would be scandalous if she were interred in holy ground.

The son, a master goldsmith, told a different story. He said that his mother had been so ill when the priest came that she had been unable to make her confession. The following morning she was even worse and he had sent for a priest to deliver the last rites but none had come. It was public knowledge, he asserted, that Angélique's father had been a Catholic and that her mother, who was still alive, was also a practising Catholic – indeed, she had to be, because she was a midwife and no Protestant would be accepted into the midwives' guild. He – the son – was a Catholic, and so was Angélique's deceased husband. It was not fair that she should be denied burial because of some rumour about her being a Protestant.

The neighbours largely backed up the son's story, though with just enough dissimulation to arouse suspicion. François Dubellay, a master dyer and family friend who lived around the corner, said he had known the deceased for thirty years and had seen both her parents buried as Catholics. He had seen her daughter take up collections in the parish church and did not believe that she could have been a Protestant. Pierre Goblet, a silk merchant also living on the Pont-au-Change, said he had seen Angélique's father receive the final sacraments and that he had never heard her say anything against the Catholic religion or anything that might make him think she was a Protestant. Another neighbour, and relative by marriage, gave the same circumstantial evidence but admitted he could not say what religion she professed, while the woman who had nursed Angélique in her final illness evaded the issue altogether and

simply reported what the priest had said. Only one witness, a next-door neighbour, gave more positive evidence, confirming that he had seen the deceased fall to her knees in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, that he had seen her reading a Catholic book and that she had told him of a confessor in whom she had particular confidence. But even this was hardly conclusive, and the magistrate decided that she should be buried in the wood-yard where the bodies of Protestants were taken.³⁷

Once again we can see the neighbours, who this time included two Catholic relatives, closing ranks. It seems to have been public knowledge that Angélique Bivelat was a Huguenot, and the general picture, once more, is of Catholics enjoying cordial everyday relations with Protestants and not wishing to see them punished. Some friends and neighbours were willing to tell half-truths, though not actually to perjure themselves. But for others there was a limit to this solidarity. Clearly, some local people felt very uncomfortable about a Protestant being buried as a Catholic. There was a sentiment that in some matters – and death rites were a very serious issue for devout Catholics – a line had to be drawn. The suggestion from the son that the family honour might be tarnished by the rumour that Angélique was a Protestant is also suggestive of attitudes in Catholic Paris. Yet the denunciation was made on condition of anonymity, the accuser not being prepared to jeopardise her or his relationship with the family or with other local people. This was not, as far as we can tell, because the family was particularly powerful, but more probably because in obeying the dictates of conscience the denouncer was betraying a neighbour.

These kinds of attitudes appear to have prevailed throughout the early decades of the eighteenth century. Live and let live was the general attitude, and there are many other examples in the police archives where the testimony of witnesses demonstrates that they were well aware of the religion of their Huguenot neighbours but did not let this interfere with normal relationships. Even in the case of Vincent Zéba, a very assiduous Protestant who in the mid 1720s helped out every Sunday at the Dutch chapel, the Catholics in his street were quite prepared to sign a petition to have his son released from prison.³⁸ Many Catholics no doubt prayed for the souls of their Huguenot neighbours. According to the parish priest of Saint-Séverin in 1713, the wine-seller Jacob Roy and his wife Marie Ragnier were well regarded by their neighbours, ‘who nevertheless ardently desired the conversion of this family’.³⁹ There were even Catholics who were prepared to become accomplices in arrangements

³⁷ ANY14948, 16 July 1733. ³⁸ Arsenal MS 10903, fol. 260.

³⁹ Arsenal MS 10608, fol. 72 (1713).

that enabled Protestants to get around the law. After fourteen-year-old Marie-Anne Babault was orphaned, the police found out that she had not been going to catechism classes and decided to confine her in a convent. But her Protestant brothers assured the Lieutenant-General that she was apprenticed to a Catholic seamstress and that this was not necessary. It subsequently emerged that while the seamstress was indeed a Catholic, she made no attempt to convert the girl but instead allowed her to go home on Sundays and feast days.⁴⁰

There were some specific circumstances, nevertheless, where Catholics were divided, and the case of Angélique Bivelat illustrates one of these. Some felt that if an adult Protestant wished to reject the Roman Church and risk going to hell, that was their business, while others felt the risk of eternal damnation for a neighbour was enough to make them try to effect a death-bed conversion. Others again were incensed at the thought of a Huguenot benefiting from a Catholic burial. In another, similar case, not sending for a priest when someone was about to die seemed so wrong that the woman nursing a naval officer in his last illness first tried to persuade him but then did it anyway.⁴¹

Where children were concerned, too, some Catholic Parisians felt that saving their souls was more important than the loyalty owed to neighbours. In 1724, this sentiment impelled a lace-worker, who had taken the ten-year-old daughter of a Protestant widow as her apprentice, first to try to convert the girl, then when the mother objected, to denounce her to the parish priest.⁴² It is worth noting, though, that she went not to the police but to the clergy, and it was they who involved the secular authorities. Concern for children was particularly strong where newborn babies were concerned, as was demonstrated as late as 1763 when a German musician set off by carriage to take his baby daughter to the Swedish chapel to be baptised. The owner or principal tenant of the house, a pastry-cook, with the support of 'the people' – we do not know if they were other neighbours or simply passers-by – hijacked the carriage and took the child to the Catholic church, where the clergy promptly conducted the baptism. They nevertheless accepted the proposed godfather and godmother, both of them were apparently Lutherans.⁴³

Another instance where many Catholics became hostile was when they realised that Protestants were gathering for worship. In the late seventeenth century this was one of the most common targets of denunciations,

⁴⁰ Arsenal MS 11037, fols. 1–27 (1729).

⁴¹ Arsenal MS 10519, fol. 9 (1699). See also AN Y15245, 22 October 1738.

⁴² Arsenal MS 10855, fol. 146, 7 October 1724.

⁴³ Charles Kobler, *Les Actes religieux des protestants à Paris pendant les XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: Wattier, 1884), pp. 14–5.

and it continued, much more sporadically, in the eighteenth century. In 1724 Gédéon Fevot reportedly preached to groups of people and even conducted baptisms in his room, leading the owner of the house to try to expel him, and when that failed, to denounce him to the police. As late as 1746 the inhabitants of a house in the rue des Saints Pères, in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, objected to the chaplain of the Danish ambassador conducting ceremonies there, ‘scandalised to the point of threatening that if he did not cease to convoke the said meetings of Protestants they would take their complaint to the Lieutenant-General of Police’. They do not seem to have done so, since we learn of their anger only when a Lutheran medical student who also lived in the house complained, in defence of his own reputation and position, that the ambassador thought he was responsible for the hostility of the neighbours.⁴⁴ Despite their strong feelings, as in many other local disputes the Catholic neighbours saw going to the police as a last resort.

They were prepared to breach the usual conventions of neighbourliness, however, when Protestants behaved in ways that were considered completely beyond the pale. Jacques Fenou was accused of tearing up pictures of saints and a portrait of the King, and of taking the side of France’s enemies. The witnesses were divided, some defending him, but one accusing him of lending money at usurious rates, so there may have been other issues at stake. In another case, Madeleine Meure was accused by eight neighbours of ‘saying extraordinarily scandalous things against the honour of the Catholic religion’, including ‘insults against the Blessed Virgin which even recounting upsets them’. She also said bad things about the King and the government. She was mentally unstable, they added, since she insisted on bringing a mule into the house and sharing her meals with it, and they were afraid she would burn the house down. This was in 1726. The latest denunciation by neighbours that I have found in the police archives is from 1741, when a Swiss Protestant was accused of holding meetings of ‘convulsionaries’: his contortions were ‘so frightful’ that they were driven to complain.⁴⁵ In these last two instances it is likely that even had the individuals not been Protestants the neighbours would have tried to get rid of them.

Economic life was not bound by the same obligations and conventions as neighbourhood. Contact was not necessarily so intimate, although the importance of credit in business meant that trust was crucial. Yet there too, because the Protestants were such a small minority, they could not

⁴⁴ Arsenal MS 10826, fols. 144–59 (1724). ANY14536, 7 February 1746.

⁴⁵ Arsenal MS 10542, fols. 13–34 (1703). Arsenal MS 10937, fols. 146–55 (1726). Arsenal MS 11489, fol. 396 (1741).

cut themselves off. Whether they were international bankers and merchants, shopkeepers, artisans or unskilled workers, they were obliged to deal with Catholics.

We have seen that Protestants were relatively numerous in some occupations but rare in others. One of the key economic sectors in which Catholics and Protestants came into regular contact was banking and finance. Although most of the Huguenot bankers emigrated after 1685, the gap was largely filled by Genevans. Throughout the eighteenth century, Protestant bankers played a vital role not only in the finances of the French state but also in the international trade of which Paris was one of the key centres. They often also handled money transfers for exports of furniture, clothing, *objets d'art* and innumerable other Paris products. Protestant bankers raised funds for French industrial and commercial development, for example for the French East India Company and the textile industry. There appears to have been little hesitation among Paris Catholics in dealing with Protestant bankers and merchants.⁴⁶

This was true of other areas of commerce. Protestant artisans sold their wares freely on the Paris market. The account books of the furniture-maker Pierre Migeon (son of the man arrested in 1703) list 750 clients, including members of the royal household, many magistrates of the Paris Parlement and Court nobles. Madame de Pompadour, it seems, particularly liked his work and ordered many items. He dealt with over 250 different suppliers and like most leading furniture-makers subcontracted out much of his work. Those he worked with included both Catholics and Protestants, and two men with whom he did a particularly large amount of business, the *ébéniste* François Mondon and the bronze-caster Jacques Guinand, who lived in the same neighbourhood as Migeon, were both Catholics. Guinand's second marriage was to Mondon's daughter, and the witnesses included the senior priest and one of the churchwardens from the parish church. Another of Migeon's close collaborators was the *ébéniste* Louis Delaitre, who was one of the administrators of the confraternity of the Blessed Virgin at the same church. These men were not nominal Catholics, but active participants in their parish.⁴⁷

The same picture emerges from the lists of creditors of merchants and artisans in a wide range of trades. The wine-seller Pierre Poupardin owed money to different suppliers of wine, to the tax agents and to the

⁴⁶ Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 2: 227–8.

⁴⁷ Mouquin, *Migeon*, pp. 30–2, 45–56. On Mondon see Alexandre Pradère, *French Furniture Makers. The Art of the Ébéniste from Louis XIV to the Revolution*, trans. Perran Wood (Malibu: J. Paul Getty Museum, 1989), p. 203. MC VI 734, 27 October 1758. On Delaitre, Sophie Mouquin, 'Pierre IV Migeon, 1696–1758. Au coeur d'une dynastie d'ébénistes parisiens', *mémoire de maîtrise*, Paris IV, 1998, Appendix, p. 16.

wagoners who transported his goods. The heirs of Jacques Molinier, a prosperous ribbon-maker, were confronted with demands for payment from button-makers, embroiderers, the ubiquitous ‘négociants’ (businessmen) and even a cavalry officer, as well as having to collect outstanding monies from those to whom their father had sold luxury ribbons, few of whom are identifiable as Protestants.⁴⁸ Huguenot tradesmen and merchants, therefore, were full participants in the economic life of the city. This is hardly surprising. As Catholics at Saint-Germain-des-Prés told the local parish priest in the 1730s, ‘[M]oney has no country, and is just as good coming from a Huguenot who often pays better than a Catholic.’⁴⁹ Parisians had no qualms about doing business with Protestants.

The place of Huguenots within the guilds raises other issues, because the trade corporations were not solely economic associations. They were imagined as social communities, with particular bonds and loyalties to each other, and they gave men and women a particular status in the city. They had a strong religious dimension, each trade having its patron saint and its confraternity, and in fact in earlier centuries there was often little distinction made between the religious, legal and economic elements, as in an edict of Henri III from 1585 that referred to the ‘corps, communauté et confrairie’ of Paris wine-sellers.⁵⁰ This was in part why some Catholic artisans tried, in the seventeenth century, to push the Protestants out. Yet it is perfectly clear that in the eighteenth century many Huguenots were being accepted, even though their religious identity was known. I have already quoted an anonymous document from 1710 claiming that for the previous two decades the authorities had never demanded any documentary evidence that those admitted to the guilds were Catholic. ‘They are taken at their word, and on that of the guild officials’, it read, suggesting that the leaders of the trades were complicit in this deceit.⁵¹ A senior official of the goldsmiths’ company referred, in 1707, to the ‘apparent conversion to the Catholic faith’ of a number of the masters who had been admitted following their abjurations in 1686. His scepticism is clear, but he was clearly unwilling or felt unable to do anything about it.⁵²

Admittedly, most Huguenots admitted to the guilds in the eighteenth century, like the notoriously Protestant Pierre Migeon, who became a master in 1720, had been baptised in the Catholic Church and could

⁴⁸ AN Y12731, 11 August 1738. MCVII 248, 13 October 1729.

⁴⁹ Fréville, *Saint-Germain-des-Prés*, p. 160.

⁵⁰ BNF F-13081, *Ordonnances, statuts et règlements des marchands de vins de la Ville et Fauxbourgs de Paris* (Paris: Jacques Vincent, 1782).

⁵¹ AN K1244B.

⁵² AN T*1490 (16), fol. 50v. For an example of an *épiciier* see ANY9322, 28 June 1689. My thanks to Mathieu Marraud for indicating this document to me.

therefore meet the official requirement.⁵³ Similar laxity characterised entry to the trade at the apprentice level. Steven Kaplan has noted that unlike seventeenth-century apprenticeship contracts, eighteenth-century ones very rarely mention religion. This was the case even in trades where there was a formal requirement for apprentices to be Catholics. I have found only two examples where a boy's Catholic faith is asserted, one for a vinegar-maker in 1708 and the other for a candle-maker in 1762. Usually nothing was said, least of all when Protestants like Jacques Foullé, son of a Huguenot goldsmith, were apprenticed, in his case to a master engraver in 1707.⁵⁴ Yet it is extremely unlikely that Protestants would go unnoticed, either as apprentices or as masters and mistresses. Certainly, the parish priest of Saint-Symphorien was easily able to find out who the local Protestant employers were. He was told about one, a mistress embroiderer, by a worker she took on who 'was not there for long without noticing that she was not of the Catholic religion'. A Genevan clock-maker in the same quarter, around 1740, employed 'sometimes Catholics, sometimes Huguenots, depending on who is available'.⁵⁵ Religious difference was difficult to hide from those with whom people worked closely, and usually did not matter.

There were, nevertheless, significant differences between the trades, as we saw in [Chapter 3](#). The drapers seem to have admitted very few Protestants, perhaps because they were dominated by wealthy Jansenist families like the Quatremeres, Naus and the Brochants, but possibly because, as the most prestigious guild in the city and playing a role in civic ceremony, they were close to the centre of power.⁵⁶ I have found only one draper who was definitely Protestant, in 1704, and another who may have been, in 1786. The few Huguenots in this industry obtained a royal 'privilege', like the Vanrobais family, or joined the mercers' guild and operated in the ambiguous margins between these two trades, as did Pierre-François Houssemaine.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, the mercers too admitted few Protestants. I have found around 25 out of some 2,000 mercers in Paris – it is difficult to be precise, since those who purchased a royal 'privilege' were not guild members but described themselves as if they were.⁵⁸

⁵³ Mouquin, *Migeon*, p. 16.

⁵⁴ Steven L. Kaplan, 'L'Apprentissage au XVIIIe siècle: le cas de Paris', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 40 (1993), 436–79 (439). MC CXVIII 257, 8 July 1708. MC IV 638, 13 January 1762. MC CXXII 522, 25 July 1707.

⁵⁵ Fréville, *Saint-Germain-des-Prés*, pp. 201, 160.

⁵⁶ Marraud, *De la Ville à l'État*, pp. 46–52. Lyon-Caen, *La Boîte à Perrette*, pp. 157–8, 180–1, 212–13, 353.

⁵⁷ On Vanrobais, Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 2: 147–50. AN LL1642, fol. 6, 1 October 1704. ANY15487. On Houssemaine, ANTT149.

⁵⁸ Arsenal MS 10572. MC X 485, 4 July 1748. MCVII 334, 10 July 1761. MC CXV 405, 6 October 1722. I am indebted to Laurence Croq for verifying which mercers were

On the other hand, in the furniture trades and among the goldsmiths, jewellers, clockmakers and wine-sellers, Protestants were exceptionally numerous. In the female guilds, as noted earlier, the linen drapers seem to have been particularly hostile to Huguenots: even in the second half of the eighteenth century I have only found two Protestant women in this trade, both apparently employees, not mistresses. The seamstresses were more open, and their statutes never explicitly excluded Huguenots. The young Marie-Antoinette Godebin had the 'misfortune' to come under the influence of a 'Protestant mistress seamstress' in 1734, and Françoise Monvoisin, daughter of a rigidly Protestant baker, was accepted into this guild in around 1740.⁵⁹

There were certain sectors of the Paris economy, therefore, where Huguenots concentrated, and a few where they were clearly unwelcome. On the whole, though, merchants and artisans apparently took little notice of religious difference. Even at the height of the anti-Protestant campaigns of the 1670s and 1680s they do not seem to have discriminated against Huguenots in their business dealings, and as we saw above, many of the 120 or so guilds never introduced specifically anti-Protestant rules. Even some of those that did, in practice turned a blind eye to the small numbers of Huguenots in their ranks. As in neighbourhood relationships, Catholic guild members seem to have been quite prepared to coexist with the Protestants, even if some of them were hostile to Calvinism.⁶⁰

Work and neighbourhood relationships were rarely voluntary ones, but other kinds of relationships were. Personal friendships between Catholics and Protestants can be found throughout the period, from the late seventeenth century to the late eighteenth. In 1713, when the merchant and banker Pierre Foissin lay dying, various friends came to see him, and most of them were 'old' Catholics – that is, not former Protestants. This information came from his wife, but since she gave names to the police it seems likely to be true.⁶¹ Such connections probably arose from the everyday business contacts between Catholics and Protestants. When Louise Audry, wife of a prominent goldsmith, was in solitary confinement in the Bastille in 1700 after trying to emigrate, she desperately asked to be allowed to see her Catholic friends, naming two goldsmiths and a gilder all living in the rue Saint-Louis. Another gilder in the same

admitted to the guild. For the numbers of mercers, Expilly, *Dictionnaire géographique*, 5: 418.

⁵⁹ Douen, *La Révocation*, 1: 188. Arsenal MS 11284, fol. 165, 5 April 1734. AN Y68, fol. 238, will of 28 May 1762.

⁶⁰ On credit networks, Aubrée, 'Protestants et catholiques'.

⁶¹ Arsenal MS 10609, 26 April 1713.

street, whose wife was described by the police as ‘a good Catholic’, was prepared to pay 1,400 *livres* for the upkeep of Audry’s children while she was in prison.⁶²

It is clear that for many people the rules of friendship, like those of neighbourhood, took precedence over religious loyalties. Thus the Catholic tailor Thomas Olivier helped his Protestant former neighbour and friend of twenty-eight years, Simon LePlastrier, to obtain a passport, and a Catholic shop-assistant living near the Halles allowed his Protestant friend, recently returned from England, to stay with him while looking for work.⁶³ There seems to have been a very cordial friendship between the bookseller and publisher Prosper Marchand and Congnion, one of the senior priests at Saint-Hilaire, who after Marchand emigrated in 1709 wrote of his hope that their close relationship might continue despite the distance between them.⁶⁴ Catholics sometimes expressed concern for the spiritual welfare of their Protestant friends and at least in the early years of the eighteenth century did make some effort to convert them. Louis Armand Cochart de la Boulaye, a cavalry officer, managed to persuade Prevost de Besse, apparently a convert to Protestantism, to return to the Catholic fold, taking him to mass at Saint-Eustache and later to see a confessor at the Oratorian church.⁶⁵

Family relationships, while rarely voluntary, were different again. As mentioned earlier, one of the factors making French Calvinism different from its English, Dutch or Swiss cousins was the frequency of family connections with Catholics. The Revocation increased such bonds in cases where it successfully brought some people into the Roman Church but did not convert all their relatives. Abducted children were raised as Catholics, often leaving parents, uncles, aunts and cousins in the Reformed Church. Such conversions pitted religious beliefs and obedience to Church rules against powerful kin loyalties, and the way these ‘mixed’ families worked is a further important indicator of relationships between the two religious groups.

We are far more likely to find out about cases where there were disagreements, because conflict left more traces than harmony, so it is important to note that some ‘mixed’ families apparently maintained

⁶² Arsenal MS 10524, fols. 112, 134.

⁶³ Arsenal MS 10509, fol. 227, May 1697. Arsenal MS 10584, fol. 108, 26 September 1708.

⁶⁴ University of Leiden Library, Prosper Marchand Collection, March; 2: dossier Congnion. On Marchand’s idiosyncratic Protestantism, see Hunt *et al.*, *The Book that Changed Europe*, pp. 66–8.

⁶⁵ MC XCV 83, 17 August 1725. I am grateful to Mathieu Marraud for drawing this document to my attention. For another example, Douen, *La Révocation*, 3: 73.

good relationships. In the case of the Plu family, in 1732 and again in 1737 Catholic relatives signed the marriage contract of a Protestant cousin. The strongly Calvinist Dargent family invited their cousin Louis Laurent, who was a priest, to sign the marriage contract of their daughter.⁶⁶ When a new pastor arrived at the Dutch chapel in 1748, he too was gratified to be very cordially received by his relatives in Paris, 'despite the difference in religions'.⁶⁷ There are also examples of practical support across confessional lines. Magdeleine Babault, the widow of a lawyer, was born and remained Catholic but having few resources relied on her Huguenot relatives. She in turn was prepared to take in her fifteen-year-old orphaned Protestant niece, Marie-Anne, apparently without pressuring the girl to convert. Later, Magdeleine petitioned the police to send her niece back to her after the youngster was imprisoned in the New Catholic convent. The aunt's petition stressed that 'blood ties, kindness and a good example will more easily persuade her niece than rigid constraints, which embitter a young person instead of convincing her'.⁶⁸

On the other hand, there are certainly many examples of family conflict arising from religious difference. Despite Marie Hardy's denials, it is highly likely that she and her husband Pierre Foissin attempted to limit the inheritance of those of their ten children who converted to Catholicism. In return, their Catholic sons-in-law ensured that Pierre was denied a Catholic burial.⁶⁹ We sometimes find Catholic family members attempting to convert Protestant relatives, particularly just after the Revocation, when Catholic euphoria about 'reunion' with the 'schismatics' was strong. The niece of a man named Colonia, of Dutch birth but now a French subject, denounced him to the police in November 1686, claiming that he was on the verge of converting and that the threat of arrest would persuade him. He had already given her the house he owned in the rue Mazarine. Fifty years later the same hopes remained in some hearts, since in 1736 Louise Poupardin left 500 *livres* to her husband's niece, on condition that she abjure her heretical beliefs.⁷⁰

Even where 'mixed' families lived in apparent harmony, there were particular touch-points that were likely to spark conflict. They were much the same as those that moved neighbours to action. One was the death of a loved one, whose soul was believed to be in dire danger. This

⁶⁶ MC VII 252, 3 January 1732. MC VII 259, 24 February 1737. MC VII 245, 27 July 1727.

⁶⁷ University of Leiden Library, Prosper Marchand Collection, March; 2: dossier Tomloo, C. J. Tomloo to Marchand, 12 May 1748.

⁶⁸ Arsenal MS 11037, fols. 1–27 (1729).

⁶⁹ Arsenal MS 10609 (1713).

⁷⁰ BN MS fr. 7052, fol. 286. ArchP DC6 224, fol. 149, 2 April 1736.

led the Catholic wife of a naval officer to try to persuade him to convert on his death-bed. He refused, but as we saw earlier, family pressure was apparently successful in the case of Nicolas Bouillerot, though his widow Angélique Bivelat did not give in when she died in 1733.⁷¹ Another source of conflict was the religious education of the children of mixed marriages. The Widow Dantragues took in her orphaned granddaughter, Marie Banquet, but when the father's Protestant family claimed the child she persuaded the authorities to place her in a convent, where Marie remained for ten years.⁷² This kind of action was not confined to Catholics, since in 1719 a Huguenot river-worker had his eighteen-year-old son buried as a Protestant, even though the boy had been brought up a Catholic by his pious mother. People also intervened, on occasion, to save the souls of their godchildren: this was a spiritual relationship that was considered a form of kinship. Thus when the wineshop-keeper Claude LeGuay learned that his god-daughter Marie-Anne Belle was being raised as a Protestant, his conscience led him, he explained, to have her taken to the New Catholic convent.⁷³

It is hard to tell, in cases of conflict, whether religion was the only issue, since it was a strong argument that Catholics could use to win official support. For that very reason, the extant examples mostly date from before 1730. Yet even then the number of instances is small, which suggests that family solidarity, too, generally took precedence over religious difference.

The Catholic clergy

The element within the Catholic population of the city that took longest to accept the presence of Huguenots in Paris was the Catholic clergy, whose attitudes are particularly significant because of their influence over their congregations. Unlike the royal government and the city authorities, the clergy did not adopt a tolerant position. Although Church and state were very closely aligned in absolutist France, there were important ways in which their preoccupations diverged. Issues of religious belief and of conscience, and the standing and authority of the Church, were naturally uppermost on the agenda of churchmen, while for them the secular authorities' concerns about the economy, and even public order, were secondary considerations. Yet there were divisions among the

⁷¹ Arsenal MS 10519, fol. 9 (1699). ANY14948, 16 July 1733.

⁷² Arsenal MS 11081, fols. 98–101 (1730) and AN LL1642, fol. 127.

⁷³ Arsenal MS 10675, curé of Saint-Gervais to Lieutenant-General of Police, 13 December [1719]. Arsenal MS 11214, fol. 129, October 1733. For another example, AN LL1642, fol. 215, 27 July 1777.

clergy, particularly over the best means of converting the Huguenots. And like their secular counterparts, the clergy had many other issues to distract them.

Throughout the early years of the eighteenth century, clerical hostility to Protestants is very evident. They were the ones who usually came forward with denunciations, and these conform to a number of patterns. They peaked at moments when there was renewed government repression, as in 1699–1700 and 1719, and it is no coincidence that it was during another clampdown, in 1725, that the curé of Sainte-Marguerite complained about the ‘New Catholics’ who were deliberately coming late to mass so that they would find no room in the church.⁷⁴ A second pattern is that after 1700, almost all the denunciations concern children. There were several instances where priests got word of girls who said they wanted to convert and went to the police to get them removed from their parents. The curé of Saint-Merri maintained that nine-year-old Adrienne Possel had come to him of her own free will, although since she was born in Geneva she should have been exempt from the laws concerning French Protestants. A related matter led the curé of Saint-Gervais, four years later, to seek a royal order to remove another girl of the same age, Marie Roy, from her Huguenot parents. She was leading astray the other girls at the parish school, repeating to them things that her parents had said about Catholic practice. In 1731 the curé of Saint-Barthélemy requested royal orders to remove two young girls from their Huguenot parents and to imprison two widows who were teaching the Protestant religion to children in his parish.⁷⁵ There were similar denunciations in 1734 and 1735. As the parish priest of Saint-Barthélemy wrote in 1731, ‘it is a matter of saving two little girls in my parish’, though perhaps it was also a way of demonstrating his efficacy as pastor to his superiors and to his parishioners, and perhaps even to himself.⁷⁶

Any suggestion that Protestants might be interfering with the faith of Catholics brought swift action by the clergy. In December 1719 the curé of Saint-Gervais denounced a man who was preventing his Catholic wife and their children from attending the parish church. They had only recently arrived and had come to the notice of the clergy when their eighteen-year-old son died and the priest was called too late to deliver the last rites. Again in 1742, the curé of Sainte-Marguerite sought police intervention when he learned of a Catholic woman who had married a

⁷⁴ Arsenal MS 10171, 1 November 1725.

⁷⁵ Arsenal MS 10709, fol. 231 (1720). Arsenal MS 10899, fol. 262, 14 November 1723. Arsenal MS 11148, fol. 41, 29 September 1731; fol. 81.

⁷⁶ Arsenal MS 11284, fol. 165, 5 April 1734. Arsenal MS 11282, fol. 28, 27 January 1735. Arsenal MS 11148, fol. 41, 29 September 1731.

Dutch Protestant and converted. Once again, though, the priest's primary concern seems to have been for the children, since he particularly asked the secular authorities to require the local midwives to inform him of births of Protestant children so that he could have them baptised as Catholics.⁷⁷

Protestant marriages also led to occasional denunciations, although this was a matter over which the clergy were divided. In 1718 the Archbishop himself complained about the marriage of a Reformed Protestant at the Anglican chapel, and the reported marriage of a clockmaker's daughter by a Protestant minister provoked the curé of Saint-Barthélemy to write to the police when his personal intervention proved fruitless. The curé of Sainte-Marguerite told a couple who approached him 'that never would he ever marry any Protestant'.⁷⁸ The primary concern of the clergy seems to have been the possibility of sacrilege if Protestants participated in a sacrament they did not believe in. This may explain why, as the banker Charles-Auguste Berthe told the police in 1707, '[I]n Paris the curés have no hesitation in marrying Protestants without requiring them to take communion, but only to go to confession.' He was able to give several examples. The Archbishop of Paris rejected the allegation, saying that the Paris curés were, if anything, too strict towards 'New Catholics'.⁷⁹ Yet it is clear that some clergy were less rigorous. In 1697, the Protestant clockmaker Godet found 'an easy priest' to marry one of his cousins: for 1 *écu* the marriage was performed at 4 a.m., without a mass and no questions asked. It was concern about such practices that apparently motivated the Paris archdiocese to require all couples to present a certificate of confession when applying to be married, a measure that was later to be used against Jansenist dissidents.⁸⁰ Even then, however, there were priests in some of the villages around the capital where, for a fee, the priest would not require the usual certificates or would accept those he knew to be false. Between 1730 and 1782 there were many such marriages, predominantly of wealthy Protestants.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Arsenal MS 10675, 13 December [1719]. Arsenal MS 10024, fols. 102, 104, 5 and 24 October 1742.

⁷⁸ Arsenal MS 10647, 1718. Arsenal MS 10989, fol. 409, 7 February 1727. Arsenal MS 10707, fol. 77, 29 August 1720.

⁷⁹ Arsenal MS 10572, fol. 49 (1707). BN MS fr. 7046, fol. 8, Cardinal de Noailles to comte de Pontchartrain, 18 February 1708.

⁸⁰ Edmond-Jean-François Barbier, *Journal historique et anecdotique du règne de Louis XV*, 4 vols., ed. A. de La Villegille (Paris: J. Renouard, 1847–56), 3: 370. Chaunu *et al.*, *Le Basculement religieux de Paris*, pp. 278–81; McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 486–505; Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution*, pp. 135–52.

⁸¹ Arsenal MS 10511, interrogation of Jean Colombet, 24 April 1697. For other examples, Arsenal MS 10903, fol. 234 (marriage of around 1707); Arsenal MS 10707, fol. 75 (marriage of 1716), fol. 77 (marriage of 1719). Garrisson, 'Le Mariage à la campagne'.

Some priests tried hard to establish good relations with the Protestants, wishing to convert them by example. In 1724, the parish priest of Saint-Leu paid for ten-year-old Jeanne Roland to learn a trade with a Catholic lace-maker, clearly hoping that she would convert and that this might also win over her family. The curé of Sainte-Marguerite felt obliged to call in the police in 1735, when he learned of a Protestant girl whose parents were preventing her from becoming a Catholic, but he asked that his role be kept secret 'so as not to alienate the Protestants of my parish'. A recent conversion, he believed, showed that his efforts were bearing fruit.⁸²

Nor did the clergy cease trying to convert adult Huguenots. Some, perhaps aware that the promise of conversion was not always what it seemed, were cautious. In 1728, the curé of Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs, doubting the sincerity of a Swiss woman who had agreed to convert in order to marry a man by whom she was pregnant, insisted that she announce this news to her brother. On seeing him, '[S]he threw herself on his neck, she said to him that she did not believe she could save herself in our religion, that she had not dared to say this to me, that it was only because she was pregnant and that she wanted to marry the man by whom she was pregnant.'⁸³ The curé then found a good Catholic midwife who could be trusted to remove the baby when it was born. Given the mortality rates in institutions for foundlings, it was unlikely to survive, but that was a secondary consideration.

There was little sympathy for those who persisted in their 'errors'. In 1736 the curé of Saint-Gervais expressed concern about the multiplication of Protestants, who were 'perverting' some parishes of the city. A few years later Charles Rabache de Fréville, the parish priest at Saint-Symphorien in the abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, wrote of 'this rabble [*espèce de canailles*] who are widespread in several provinces of France'. They were to be found in different quarters of Paris, he continued, where they were tolerated as long as they did not hold religious meetings. 'It is a subject of tears [to him] that this bad seed is scattered even in the Abbey.'⁸⁴ He did his best to prevent it taking root, first trying to convert the local Huguenots and when this failed, putting pressure on the owners of the houses to expel them. Over the ten years he had been in the parish, he wrote proudly, he had succeeded in ridding the central abbey courtyard of all but one, a Swiss man who sold liqueurs and who was protected by Maurepas, the King's minister.

⁸² Arsenal MS 10855, fols. 146–71 (1724); Arsenal MS 11282, fol. 28, 27 January 1735.

⁸³ Arsenal MS 11010, fol. 168, 25 September 1728.

⁸⁴ Arsenal MS 11311, fol. 309, 12 July 1736. Fréville, *Saint-Germain-des-Prés*, p. 158.

However, there were still a number in other parts of the abbey close. The priest was particularly proud of the number of abjurations he had extracted. The details take up forty printed pages of his text, although he warns of the need to be very careful, since '[T]he spirit of huguenotism is to agree to change religion in order to reap temporal benefits, and thus insult God and rob the Catholics.'⁸⁵ The disappearance of denunciations after about 1740 therefore does not mean that the clergy were resigned to the presence of the Protestants.

Rabache de Fréville's account allows a rare and precious insight into the attitudes of a rather austere priest: he was a reformed Benedictine with strong Jansenist leanings, to judge from the books he mentions.⁸⁶ It is not clear how many other curés, particularly those in the larger parishes, pursued Protestants with similar vigour, but it is likely that he was not alone. In the middle and later decades of the century, when the secular authorities were no longer pursuing the Huguenots, we have far less evidence, although there are occasional hints that some of the parish clergy were reaching an accommodation with the Huguenots, or at any rate with the wealthier ones. Louise Girardot, who died in 1748, trusted the parish priest to dispense the 200 *livres* she left to the poor of the Catholic parish, while in 1764 Marguerite Girardot de Préfond left 500 *livres*, stipulating that the priest would not be required to give any account of his use of the funds.⁸⁷ These examples suggest a cordial relationship, although it may be that these priests, like Rabache de Fréville at Saint-Symphorien, were simply making the best of a bad situation. 'There is no remedy', he wrote in 1744,

but to edify them by leading an exemplary life and trying to bring them back to the faith through persuasion. To this end, one must go to visit them from time to time, give them a warm greeting to insinuate oneself into their confidence, then inject some friendly hint of controversy into the conversation, observe what fruit it bears, pray and seek the grace of God to achieve a conversion. One must especially visit them if they are sick, sympathise with their troubles, provide them, if necessary, some assistance, in the hope of a future promise of conversion.⁸⁸

Religious difference remained a divisive issue throughout the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. It was something that people were uncomfortably aware of, even in otherwise friendly relationships. The

⁸⁵ Fréville, *Saint-Germain-des-Prés*, p. 158.

⁸⁶ The Jansenist *Catéchisme de Montpellier* and two works by Pierre Nicole: *Instructions théologiques et morales sur les sacrements* (Paris, Élie Josset, 1700) and *Instructions théologiques et morales sur le symbole* (Paris, Charles Osmond, 1706).

⁸⁷ MC X 485, 4 July 1748. ArchP DC6 249, fol. 74v, will of 18 April 1764.

⁸⁸ Fréville, *Saint-Germain-des-Prés*, pp. 160–1.

spiritual stakes were high, since both sides believed, and regretted, that neighbours, friends and family members were doomed to go to hell. The worldly stakes were also a barrier, since Protestants always feared denunciation and as a result the relationship was uneven, always to some degree dependent on Catholic goodwill. Tensions did arise, particularly where Huguenots risked public religious manifestations. Nevertheless, the situation was predominantly one of peaceful but indifferent coexistence.

After the 1680s some hostility remained, but violence – even verbal – became very rare, and it is striking that there were so few denunciations, even in the years following the Revocation when the potential rewards were greatest. Ironically, the Revocation may have been partly responsible for this, by removing all Protestant rights and driving them underground. The Huguenots were not in a position, numerically, to threaten Catholics, and as the tensions provoked by persecution declined after the 1690s, most Catholics were willing to accept them, on equal terms, as neighbours and workmates, often as employers and employees, and even, occasionally, as family members and friends. These relationships, which were most often involuntary ones, imposed norms and obligations that in general overrode religious differences, although loyalties were tested severely in certain specific contexts. Many Catholics felt that adults were responsible for their own salvation, but worried about the souls of children who might die before they had the opportunity to convert. People were also understandably anxious about the spiritual welfare of their loved ones, and always hoped for conversion, even at the eleventh hour.

Clerical attitudes were different. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, some priests were apparently willing to accept the Huguenot presence, but increasingly the diocese clamped down. As part of the campaign against Jansenism, the clergy, particularly in the parishes, were far more carefully scrutinised, and perhaps for that reason there seems to have been a hardening of clerical attitudes towards Protestants. Up to the 1750s, the Catholic clergy seem to have tried actively to eradicate them, seconded by an unknown but small proportion of devout followers, but they were unable to carry the majority of Catholics with them. Not only was there less overt hostility, but many of the guilds, even some that had earlier refused access to Protestants, were now prepared to admit them without asking questions. Not only, therefore, were most Catholics prepared to live and work alongside French Protestants, even to help and occasionally defend them, but there are signs that Catholic hostility was declining. In the second half of the century, as we shall see, much more positive attitudes were to develop, towards both individual Huguenots and Protestants as a group.

7 Growing acceptance

In mid 1751 a young theology student from Strasbourg, visiting Paris for the first time, attended the renowned Corpus Christi procession of the Saint-Eustache parish. 'No vehicle dares traverse the streets on that day, before midday', he observed. 'However, you can watch *le bon Dieu* going past without kneeling, religious zeal no longer being as great in Paris, as it was in the time of the Huguenots.'¹ Here we have anecdotal evidence of a significant change in attitudes, as processions of this kind had been one of the flashpoints for religious violence, where Protestant rejection of 'idolatry' clashed head-on with one of the mysteries that Catholics held most sacred. As late as 1720, an English visitor, failing to kneel upon meeting a similar procession in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, reported that 'I had like to have been knocked o' the Head, before I knew what they were doing.'² In 1724 a Swiss Protestant living near the Louvre deliberately provoked such reactions, keeping his hat on until people began to murmur, then running away. Admittedly, around 1716 no one said a word when the Swiss pastor Hollard hurried across the street in front of the priest in order to escape; but he attributed his escape to being recognised as a foreigner. In the same year, the Lutheran Nemeitz reported that 'in the Fauxbourg St. Germain a Protestant is not obliged to kneel in adoration before the Sacrament ... they demand this deep respect only of Catholics, and are satisfied, if those of a different religion remove their hats'. One would never get away with this in Flanders or in other Catholic countries, he commented, but he nevertheless advised that even in Paris it was preferable to go into a house or another street, 'rather than standing there stiffly, like a statue, and shocking [*donner du Scandale*] those present by such behaviour'.³ The Catholic reaction

¹ Jürgen Voss, 'Paris im Sommer 1751: Notizen zum wissenschaftlichen und religiösen Leben aus dem Reisetagebuch Andreas Lameys', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 56 (1974), 198–216 (207).

² *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse, by the Hon. Lady Margaret Pennyman*, p. 39.

³ Arsenal MS 10826, fol. 145, 8 August 1724. Hollard, *Relation*, p. 19; Joachim Christoph Nemeitz, *Séjour de Paris, c'est-à-dire, instructions fidèles, pour les Vóiageurs de Condition ...*

may have depended both on whether they recognised the Protestant as a foreigner and on the quarter of the city: the Faubourg Saint-Germain was an area frequented by tourists. 'In some Quarters', advised Charles-Étienne Jordan in 1733, 'you have nothing to fear', he wrote, 'but in the Halles [the central market area] it can be risky.'⁴

This is merely anecdotal evidence of changing Catholic attitudes to Protestants, but it is consistent with other sources. As we have seen, denunciations became extremely rare after the early eighteenth century, and were made almost exclusively by the Catholic clergy, although in some cases the priest was probably tipped off by local people. This may reflect a realisation that the police were not going to take any action, although that would not necessarily have deterred militant Catholics from trying, particularly since the authorities did continue to clamp down on proselytising and on any form of public demonstration. There were ample opportunities for denunciation, and they could still make life difficult for those accused.

A second key change was the disappearance of both verbal and physical attacks on Protestants. The term 'Huguenot', already rare as a term of abuse in the late seventeenth century, vanished entirely from the vocabulary of insult in the eighteenth. The latest example I have found is from 1699, when a police observer posted outside the house of a suspect overheard a conversation between three coachmen who were waiting for their employers. One of them said to the others 'that these were devils of Huguenots who believe they are praying to God'. Yet despite this being an illegal gathering, occurring at a moment when the police were cracking down on just such activities, none of the coachmen reported it to the police or even to the clergy.⁵ Nor have I have found any eighteenth-century instances of actual violence. Religion seems to have become an issue that, in everyday relationships, was either avoided or was becoming increasingly irrelevant. Even the passing references to the religion of Protestant neighbours or workmates that sometimes occur in witness testimony in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries later disappear, and by the second half of the century there are few indications in the police archives of any religious tensions at all.

While these kinds of evidence indisputably point to a long-term change in attitudes, they reflect declining hostility, the absence of conflict

durant leur séjour à Paris (Leiden: Jean van Abcoude, 1727. First published 1716), p. 467.

⁴ Charles-Étienne Jordan, *Histoire d'un voyage littéraire fait en MDCCXXXIII, en France, en Angleterre, et en Hollande* (La Haye: Adrien Moetjens, 1735), p. 35.

⁵ Arsenal MS 10519, fol. 15. On the use of 'huguenot', Thillay, *Le Faubourg Saint-Antoine*, p. 345. On insults more generally, Garrioch, 'Verbal Insults'.

rather than anything positive. Yet in the course of the eighteenth century, and particularly after 1750, there is growing evidence of cordial contact between the two religious groups and of more sympathetic Catholic attitudes. The changes were gradual, uneven and not necessarily continuous. Nor are they easy to trace, since the destruction of key records means that in Paris we have no way of measuring marriages between Catholics and Protestants, and friendships or other types of positive contact are even harder to evaluate. Yet when individual examples are set within the context of changes in public discourse and in collective memory, they point to a broad chronology of growing Catholic acceptance both of individual Huguenots and of Protestantism in general. This chapter looks first at voluntary forms of sociability, then at the images of Huguenots that are reflected in Catholic writing and in the debates on toleration that took place in the second half of the eighteenth century. It then examines what light the events of the early revolutionary years can shed on changing attitudes to religious difference.

The Revocation put an end to the easy mixing of Catholics and Protestants that had characterised some of the seventeenth-century salons. I have found no evidence that openly Protestant French subjects, even wealthy and cultivated ones, participated actively in elite sociability in the early part of the eighteenth century. Foreign Protestants, on the other hand, were readily accepted. Aristocratic visitors from England or Germany moved easily in the equivalent French circles, and it was almost a social obligation, among the fashionable elites of Paris, to invite wealthy or famous foreigners to their salons and society dinners.⁶ Intellectual circles were also very open. On the eve of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes Gilbert Burnet, later to become an Anglican bishop, was impressed to find the Jesuit Bourdaloue 'not at all violent against Protestants'. In 1714 the new Dutch pastor in Paris, Godefroy Clermont, was taken under the wing of the abbé Bignon, of Antoine Galland and of Pierre-Daniel Huet, Bishop of Avranches, all major Catholic scholars.⁷ But Clermont was a foreign citizen, and as a German visitor noted in 1713, 'people in France are very graciously polite to foreign Protestants'.⁸ Charles-Étienne Jordan, a Calvinist pastor descended from Huguenot refugees, found the same thing in 1733: '[W]hen you are a foreigner you are received everywhere: you may be a

⁶ Dubost, 'Les Étrangers à Paris', pp. 246–9, 83.

⁷ Anne Goldgar, *Impolite Learning. Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680–1750* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 187; Lough, *France Observed*, p. 210.

⁸ University of Leiden Library, Prosper Marchand Collection, March; 2: dossier Fritsch, Fritsch to Marchand, 4 November 1713.

pastor, you may be a Protestant, no one is the least concerned.' He also pointed to the respect enjoyed by the Dutch chaplain.⁹ There is no evidence of French Reformed Protestants receiving the same kind of welcome, although it is possible that some Huguenot intellectuals continued to be received discreetly by Catholic scholars.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, there were certainly close contacts between Catholic scholars and some Huguenots. When Paul Bosc arrived in Paris in the early 1750s he frequented the scientists René-Antoine Ferchault de Réaumur and the abbé Jean-Antoine Nollet, and subsequently had two of his papers read at the Academy of Sciences, although it is unlikely that his Huguenot background was a secret. He had studied medicine in Montpellier, but being unable to graduate because he was a Protestant, had taken a qualification in the Netherlands.¹⁰ Antoine Court de Gébelin's origins were certainly well known, since he had been appointed by a synod of the newly reorganised French Reformed churches as their representative, yet he too, in the mid 1760s, soon had a wide network of Catholic friends in Paris. These connections contributed, however, to his being rebuffed by the Paris Protestant bourgeoisie. They did not welcome his political activities, deeming them premature and likely to be counterproductive, but they also reproached him for having too many Catholic friends. He found this odd: '[W]hat good', he wrote in 1765, 'are all these magnificent precepts about tolerance ... if we form connections only with those who think as we do?' He found certain Catholics, especially among the nobility, to be far more open-minded, although it is worth noting that he was refused membership of the Académie des Inscriptions because of his religion.¹¹

Of course, while Bosc and Court de Gébelin were French Protestants, both were also outsiders (the latter had Swiss citizenship).¹² The reactions of elite Paris Huguenots to Court de Gébelin suggest that it was they who did not wish to socialise with Catholics, and it was probably not until the later 1760s and 1770s that their social networks widened. The first known Protestant-led 'salon' was that of Germaine Larrivée, who enjoyed a prosperous widowhood after the death in 1757 of her abusive husband, Paul-Louis Girardot de Vermeux. She offered a rendezvous

⁹ Jordan, *Un voyage littéraire*, pp. 33, 51.

¹⁰ Lindeboom, 'Un Journal de Paul Bosc', 69, 73.

¹¹ Schmidt, *Court de Gébelin*, pp. 22–4, 85–7, quotations pp. 36, 87. On Élie de Beaumont see David A. Bell, *Lawyers and Citizens. The Making of a Political Elite in Old Regime France* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 132; Wallace Kirsop, 'Cultural Networks in Pre-Revolutionary France: Some Reflexions on the Case of Antoine Court de Gébelin', *Australian Journal of French Studies*, 18 (1981), 231–47 (238).

¹² On Court de Gébelin's ambiguous status see Kirsop, 'Cultural Networks', 235–6.

for Swiss residents of Paris and for many key figures of the Enlightenment. She was friendly with the abbés André Morellet and Guillaume-Thomas Raynal, with Jean-François Marmontel, and both Friedrich Melchior Grimm and Denis Diderot visited her. In his memoirs written some thirty years later, Morellet remembered Madame de Vermenoux to be Genevan, whereas in fact she was the daughter of a cloth merchant in Sedan. This illustrates the extent to which, in the final decades of the Old Regime, bourgeois Paris Huguenots merged with the Swiss both in their sociability and in the minds of their Catholic acquaintances.¹³

The Necker network crossed even more boundaries. From the late 1760s Jacques Necker and his wife ran their own salon, which was also attended by Morellet, Marmontel, Diderot and Raynal, later by Jean-Baptiste Suard, Domenico Caraccioli and Jean Le Rond d'Alembert. Various diplomats also came, mainly Protestant ones it would seem, though not necessarily on the same occasions. But it was there that Jean-François La Harpe read his latest play in March 1775, before the British ambassador. The gatherings at the Neckers' secondary residence at Saint-Ouen were, it seems, somewhat more aristocratic than those held in the city, but it is not clear to what extent they brought their Huguenot acquaintances into contact with Paris high society or with its literary stars.¹⁴ Even the wealthiest Protestants were rarely, if ever, received in the best-known salons, which is hardly surprising since, as Antoine Lilti has shown, these were almost entirely restricted to the Court nobility, although diplomats – including Protestant ones – and occasionally literati were present. The Paris magistrates – the *noblesse de robe* – were similarly excluded, but they had their own networks. The financial elites, too, had separate gatherings where bankers could meet diplomats and Farmers-General. In the 1770s and 1780s the banker Tourton, of Huguenot background and still in close contact with his Genevan and French relatives, held regular dinners to which he invited many diplomats of different religions. Swiss Protestants and diplomats, and possibly their French relatives and associates, were also received regularly at the Paris residence of the comte d'Affry, commander of the Swiss Guards, who had served as

¹³ Edouard de Callatay, *Madame de Vermenoux, une enchanteresse au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris and Geneva: La Palatine, 1956), pp. 44–7; Henriette Louise de Waldner, baronne d'Oberkirch, *Mémoires de la Baronne d'Oberkirch sur la cour de Louis XVI et la société française avant 1789*, 2 vols. (Paris: Charpentier et Fasquelle), 1: 254; Antoine Lilti, *Le Monde des salons. Sociabilité et mondanité à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 2005), pp. 144, 207; André Morellet, *Mémoires de l'abbé Morellet de l'Académie française sur le dix-huitième siècle et sur la Révolution* (Paris: Mercure de France, 2000), p. 163.

¹⁴ Robert D. Harris, *Necker. Reform Statesman of the Ancien Régime* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), pp. 41–2; Lilti, *Le Monde des salons*, pp. 67–8, 103, 106, 133, 138, 147, 177, 297, 370–7; Morellet, *Mémoires*, pp. 163–4, 243–4.

French ambassador to the Dutch Republic but who retained his Swiss estates and interests.¹⁵

There thus appears to have been a shift in the 1760s, at first timid but later accelerating. The chronology was broadly similar for that other key form of elite sociability, freemasonry, which was later to be closely associated with Protestantism. Membership of a lodge certainly implied mutual acceptance. It involved not only participation in masonic ceremonies but also in the dinners held after meetings, and therefore points to shared cultural norms, certainly to an ability to conform to the rules of conversation and other aspects of elite sociability. It is significant, therefore, that only quite late in the eighteenth century do we begin to find numbers of French Protestants among the Paris freemasons. Before this, they may not have wished to participate, since the early French lodges certainly did not exclude Protestants. The Lutheran Christophe-Jean Bauer was very active in the Paris lodges in the 1730s and 1740s, but he was foreign-born and married to a devout Catholic. Then in the 1750s, if Pierre Chevallier is correct, control of Paris freemasonry was seized by a Jansenist-leaning commercial and manufacturing bourgeoisie who rejected the lodges' earlier ecumenical tendencies. Indeed, in 1755 the new statutes of the Grand Lodge required members to be baptised and to attend mass regularly.¹⁶

In 1773, however, French freemasonry was reorganised into the Grand Orient, with new rules and a more centralised structure, and this may have reopened the door to French Protestants. Although most of the Huguenot elite were never lodge members, in the late 1770s at least seven of them belonged to the Frères Initiés lodge: Louis-Étienne Dargent, a former jeweller; Antoine-François Fabre, a 'businessman' (*négociant*); three bankers, Guillaume-François Valette, Louis-Daniel Tassin and Pierre-Charles Lambert, as well as Valette's brother-in-law Marc-Antoine Barré, also described as a *négociant*; and an ex-army officer, Louis Ragueneau de la Chenaye. It is likely that Joseph-César Bacot and Prosper-Jean-Baptiste Bacot, also listed as members between 1777 and 1782, belonged to the Huguenot blanket-manufacturing family. Fabre's brother later joined the same lodge. In 1786 there were also at least six

¹⁵ Lilti, *Le Monde des salons*, pp. 148–51, 32; Mathieu Marraud, *La Noblesse de Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Seuil, 2000), p. 457.

¹⁶ Pierre Chevallier, *Histoire de la Franc-Maçonnerie française*, 3 vols. (Paris: Fayard, 1974–5), 1: 120–2, 4–6, 84. See also Daniel Ligou, 'Franc-maçonnerie et protestantisme', in *Franc-maçonnerie et religions dans l'Europe des Lumières*, ed. Charles Porset and Cécile Révauger (Paris: Champion, 1998), pp. 45–56 (p. 52). Some Paris Protestants may have belonged to a masonic-like group, the Ordre de l'Etoile: Daniel Ligou, 'Antoine Court, l'Ordre de l'Etoile et la maçonnerie vaudoise entre 1740 et 1760', in *Entre Désert et Europe, le pasteur Antoine Court (1695–1760)*, ed. Hubert Bost and Claude Lauriol (Paris: Champion, 1998), pp. 247–59.

Protestants, all within or close to Swiss circles, in an irregular and very fashionable musical lodge named the Société Olympique: Jean-Jacques Hogguers, de Rougemont, Jean-Louis Julien and three of the Thellusson family. A few years earlier some of the same individuals had participated in the Amis Réunis lodge alongside Antoine Court de Gébelin.¹⁷

The picture here is of Huguenots clustering in particular lodges, probably because of the practice of recruitment by personal invitation, because these were certainly not Huguenot lodges. The Frères Initiés had at least 106 members between 1776 and 1792, the Amis Réunis over 300 in the same period, an extraordinary cross-section of the Paris elite, while the Société Olympique had 363 members – many of them diplomats and international visitors to the city – in 1786 alone.¹⁸ Several Huguenot freemasons belonged to two or even three different lodges: overall, this small number of individuals belonged to sixteen separate lodges at different times. All of this suggests that from the 1770s on, they were well received by at least some Catholic freemasons.

Both the lodges and the salons, although correctly associated with the Enlightenment, were in certain respects quite formal types of sociability, closely linked to elite and government circles, so it is not surprising that Huguenots were not numerous in either before the later decades of the century.¹⁹ Their growing presence points both to new kinds of contacts across religious boundaries, but also to more equal ones. In salons run by Huguenots, the hosts were in control and determined the composition of the gathering. Within the lodges too, despite a certain hierarchy, there reigned a relatively egalitarian ethos. The same applied to the *musées* and *lycées* that followed Court de Gébelin's creation in 1780 of the Musée de Paris, 'a private society of sciences, letters, and arts' that brought together Catholic and a few Protestant intellectuals on equal terms.²⁰

¹⁷ Alain Le Bihan, *Francs-maçons parisiens du Grand Orient de France (fin du XVIIIe siècle)* (Paris: Commission d'histoire économique et sociale de la Révolution française, 1966) (alphabetical listing). Claeys, *Dictionnaire biographique des financiers*, 1: 1156 (Jean-Louis Julien). On the Société Olympique, Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire, *L'Autre et le Frère. L'Etranger et la Franc-maçonnerie en France au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Champion, 1998), pp. 460–3.

¹⁸ Le Bihan, *Francs-maçons parisiens du Grand Orient*. Beaurepaire, *L'Autre et le Frère*, pp. 86, 454–5, 461–71. Pierre-François Pinaud, 'Une Loge prestigieuse à Paris à la fin du XVIIIe siècle', *Chroniques d'histoire maçonnique*, 45 (1992), 43–53. Pierre Chevallier, 'Nouvelles Lumières sur la Société Olympique', *Dix-huitième siècle*, 19 (1987):135–47.

¹⁹ Lilti, *Le Monde des salons*, pp. 69–80. The chronology of elite sociability appears to be similar in Lyons: Krumenacker, *Des protestants au Siècle des Lumières*, pp. 216–24.

²⁰ Michael R. Lynn, *Popular Science and Public Opinion in Eighteenth-Century France* (Manchester University Press, 2006), pp. 80–2. A. M. Mercier-Faivre, 'Franc-maçonnerie et protestantisme: le mythe des origines à travers le *Monde primitif* de Court de Gébelin (1773–1782)', in *Franc-maçonnerie et religions*, ed. Porset and Révauger,

Other, less formal kinds of inter-confessional contacts are more difficult both to trace and to evaluate, but we have some examples. Manon Philipon's conventionally Catholic family, who lived right next to the place Dauphine where many Protestants also dwelled, had a watchmaker from Geneva as a close family friend in the 1770s.²¹ An earlier friendship was that between Marie-Catherine-Renée Darcel, a wealthy and pious Catholic, and the Lutheran Christophe-Philippe Oberkampf and his French Protestant first wife Marie-Louise Péteineau. Between 1764 and 1789, Darcel's husband, Alexandre Sarrasin de Maraise, was Oberkampf's business partner, providing much of the capital, and Darcel herself, who was trained in accounting, kept the books for the business. She deliberately consolidated the relationship by multiplying contacts between the two families. She invited Oberkampf to be godfather to her eldest daughter, Renée-Justine, and Sarrasin de Maraise was in turn godfather to Marie-Julie Oberkampf.²² The children played together at Darcel's home. Yet they were not her only Protestant friends. She was particularly close to the wife of the Protestant banker Dangirard and had a good relationship with the Necker household, with the Estave family and the banker Jacques Mallet. These all seem to have been reciprocal and equal friendships. While Darcel lent Oberkampf religious books, she does not seem to have been trying to convert him.²³ She was clearly aware of the religious difference but accepted it. Oberkampf himself wrote, in 1787, of 'the perfect union and friendship that has not ceased to exist between us for twenty-five years, and that will be extinguished only when my life ends'.²⁴

Individual examples of close and apparently equal friendships across religious boundaries do exist, therefore, but we have no way of knowing if they were becoming more frequent. Since the Paris parish registers have not survived, the best evidence we possess comes from records of Catholics who attended Protestant rites of passage: baptisms and marriages. Fortunately, some archives of the Swedish chapel have survived, and while most of them concern Lutherans, after the arrival of the

pp. 57–76. On the *musées* and *lycées* see Michael R. Lynn, 'Enlightenment in the Public Sphere: The Musée de Monsieur and Scientific Culture in Late-Eighteenth-Century Paris', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 32 (1999): 463–76, and Hervé Guénot, 'Musées et lycées parisiens (1780–1830)', *Dix-huitième siècle*, 18 (1986), 249–67.

²¹ Siân Reynolds, *Marriage and Revolution. Monsieur and Madame Roland* (Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 15, 26.

²² Serge Chassagne (ed.), *Une Femme d'affaires au XVIIIe siècle. La correspondance de Madame de Maraise, collaboratrice d'Oberkampf* (Paris: Privat, 1981), pp. 26, 50, n. 34.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Serge Chassagne, *Oberkampf. Un entrepreneur capitaliste au Siècle des Lumières* (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1980), p. 83.

ecumenical chaplain Friedrich Carl Baer in 1742 they begin to include some Huguenots. Any Catholic presence among the witnesses, of course, even at Lutheran ceremonies, is also evidence of attitudes towards Protestants. The baptismal registers commence in the 1680s, but there are very few French names before the 1760s, most of them identifiable as Alsatian Lutherans or Huguenots. I have not been able to identify any Catholics among the godparents. (The baptism in 1777 of Oberkampf's daughter, to whom Sarrasin de Maraise was godfather, presumably took place at the Dutch chapel.) But the marriage registers are more encouraging. They commence in 1743, and once again the early entries contain overwhelmingly witnesses with German or Scandinavian names. A small but growing number of French names mostly belonged to Huguenot or Swiss families, but it is possible that Michel Duc, former colonel of the Paris city guards, and the infantry captain Jean Bartouilh, both of whom also held the office of inspector of the Louvre, were Catholics. They witnessed what was almost a celebrity Huguenot wedding, in September 1772, between Salomon Vanrobais and Marthe de Camp. Vanrobais was a wealthy manufacturer from Abbeville, while Marthe had recently, in August, had her first marriage annulled following a messy and much publicised law suit against her Catholic husband, the marquis de Bombelles. Voltaire had become involved, and she had been awarded significant damages.²⁵ The next identifiable Catholic in the marriage registers is Sarrasin de Maraise, who witnessed Oberkampf's second marriage in 1774. In 1780 we encounter Louis de Grandmaison, *maître des comptes* (a magistrate of the prestigious financial court), who witnessed a marriage between a German-born businessman and Jeanne Marie Élisabeth Couillette d'Hauterive, a member of a prominent Huguenot family. Then in 1783 a Paris notary, Jean-Antoine Dossant, and his principal clerk Antoine Charpentier attended the wedding between a merchant named Jean-Martin Doriot and the daughter of a *bourgeois de Paris*, Catherine Honorine Merigault. Another of the witnesses was Valentin Rousseau, a *procureur* (minor legal official) at the Châtelet courts.²⁶ Since no Protestants are known to have occupied the offices held by these individuals, they were almost certainly all Catholics. In 1784 another marriage was witnessed by a *commis greffier des productions du conseil privé* and by two other unidentifiable men with French names, who may also have been Catholics.²⁷

²⁵ Driancourt-Girod, *Registres*, vol. II, marriages, Chapelle de Suède, no. 158. On the Camp trial, Gargett, *Voltaire and Protestantism*, pp. 358–9.

²⁶ Driancourt-Girod, *Registres*, vol. II, marriages, Chapelle de Suède, nos. 253, 300.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 305.

The Swedish chapel registers, therefore, appear to confirm the chronology observed earlier, of close and accepting relationships between Catholics and Protestants only in the final decades of the eighteenth century. For a practising Catholic deliberately to disobey Church teaching and attend a Protestant religious service was a sign of particular devotion, suggesting a long-standing relationship, and it may have been something that Huguenots hesitated to suggest. Alternatively, of course, it may point to religious indifference, but it was still a major and semi-public statement for a prominent individual to make. What is perhaps most surprising is that there are any examples at all, and they point to very significant attitudinal changes taking place in the 1770s and 1780s.

It was far less challenging for a Catholic to sign the marriage contract of a Protestant couple. These contracts, drawn up by a Paris notary, generally include a list of 'friends' of the bride or groom, sometimes only one or two but occasionally as many as twenty or thirty. The significance of witnessing a marriage contract varied. It could be evidence of real friendship, but on other occasions was a form of patronage, where a person of superior rank attended as a gesture of favour. Since it required only signing the document and not going to church, we are more likely to find people crossing confessional boundaries, yet in the mid seventeenth century, even in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, where business contacts between the two religious groups were widespread, it was rare.²⁸ In the early part of the eighteenth century, however, there are some significant examples. The police commissaire Blanchard and his wife witnessed the marriage contract of Henry Burrisch, a Protestant banker from Rouen, who married in 1732. Blanchard was in charge of the foreign Protestant cemetery, so he certainly knew Burrisch's religious identity, but he would also have known Burrisch as a local notable since they lived in the same quarter.²⁹ It is perhaps even more surprising to find the signature of Jean-François Sifflet, the administrator in charge of the records of the Châtelet civil and police courts (*greffier des chambres civile et de police au Châtelet*), on the marriage contract of Anne-Charlotte Monvoisin and the butcher Noel Moreau in 1741. Sifflet's connection seems to have been with Anne's father, Jacques-Alexis Monvoisin, a rich baker in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, since some years later he was to be executor of Monvoisin's will and was to have him buried in the Protestant cemetery. How the two men met is a mystery, but the link may have been

²⁸ Aubrée, 'Protestants et catholiques', p. 147. On witnesses to marriage contracts, Marraud, *De la Ville à l'État*, pp. 55–6.

²⁹ MC LXI 387, 16 February 1732. I am indebted to Laurence Croq for this reference.

a rich wood merchant named Sifflet who lived in the Faubourg, quite close to Monvoisin.³⁰ Another early example, from 1739, is the signature of Marie-Anne De Beaune, widow of the *secrétaire du roi* Guillaume LeGrand, on the marriage contract of the *négociant* Théodore Delacroix and Jeanne Girardot. Since the religious background of the *secrétaires du roi* was closely examined before they were admitted to the office, she too was as far as we can tell a Catholic, though her connections with the Delacroix and Girardot families remain mysterious.³¹

In some cases, occupational ties, perhaps reinforced by personal friendship, could override religious differences. The earliest example I have found dates from 1748, when three officials of the wine-sellers' guild attended the marriage between two members of prominent Huguenot families, Pierre Doucet and Suzanne Lanson. Two of these officials were almost certainly Catholic, while the third was married to a Protestant.³² The wine-sellers' guild contained many Protestants, so it is not surprising to find this happening in their ranks.

It may be, of course, that some Catholic witnesses were not very religious people, who could easily overlook confessional differences. But others were probably very pious. Marie-Marguerite Lorimier, who witnessed the marriage contract of Jacques Girardot de Chancourt and Louise-Marie Foissin in 1715, belonged to a strongly Jansenist family: her nephew, the notary Pierre-Louis Laideguive, was to be a key player in organising the Boîte à Perrette, the secret fund that kept the Jansenist movement alive in Paris.³³ A similar example, from 1736, was the *procureur* Joseph Hyacinthe Hullin de Boischevalier, also known for his Jansenist sympathies, who signed the marriage contract of a surgeon attached to the Swiss Guards. Yet another was Nicolas Savouré, secretary to Chancellor d'Aguesseau, who signed the contracts of both daughters of the lace merchant Guillaume Baron and his wife Suzanne Estrang in 1738 and 1740. Savouré too belonged to a strongly Jansenist family associated with the convulsionaries of Saint-Médard, but in 1738 he actually attended the ceremony at the Dutch chapel.³⁴ The Molinier family also had Jansenist connections, although in their case through inter-marriage. Jacques Molinier, a Huguenot ribbon merchant, had married a Catholic, Madeleine Plu, probably in the 1690s. Around the time of his death in 1729 she was admitted to the Dutch chapel. Their children were

³⁰ MC LXXXVI 608, 20 June 1741. ANY14087, 20 October, 13 January 1760.

³¹ MC LXV 277, 5 November 1739. ³² MC XV 668, 20 September 1748.

³³ MC LXV 187, 2 June 1715. Lyon-Caen, 'La Boîte à Perrette'. On Laideguive, Lyon-Caen, *La Boîte à Perrette*, pp. 391, 411.

³⁴ MC XCV 132, 5 February 1736. MC CXV 509, 12 May 1738. ArchP, État civil reconstitué, paroisse Saint-Eustache.

brought up as Protestants and the two sons married into the Guimet family, Huguenots living in the same neighbourhood. The marriage contracts were signed by their Catholic Plu cousins and their spouses, who included the draper Jean-Jacques Gleizes, a recent churchwarden of Saint-Eustache and a strong Jansenist. In 1737, among those listed as friends of the groom was Gleizes's business colleague, the draper Marc-Antoine Nau, from one of the leading families in the Paris municipal government. He too was a strong Jansenist. There may also have been a Jansenist connection behind the presence, on the same occasion, of the *secrétaire du roi* François Morel: he lived in the same parish as Molinier, and when appointed as *secrétaire du roi* he presented a certificate from the senior priest at Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois. This was in 1736, when the parish was run by Jansenist-leaning clergy.³⁵ Jansenism was also strong in legal circles in Paris, and it is possible that the presence of Catholic lawyers at Protestant marriage formalities in 1736 and 1742 is also linked to these sympathies.³⁶

To find prominent Jansenists associating in this way with Huguenots is intriguing, since we know that from the 1750s onwards, leading Jansenists, especially lawyers, began to write in support of civil rights for French Protestants. But these family connections and friendships are earlier, from a time when the Jansenist theologians were still hostile. These individuals were no doubt following their individual conscience, but at the same time were engaging the reputations of their respective families.

Signing a marriage contract as a 'friend' was in some cases a form of patronage, a very important social bond throughout the Old Regime that was crucial in gaining trade advantages, access to offices, pensions and many other privileges. It is therefore revealing to find Catholics clearly acting in this capacity, as they did when Pierre Bousqueyrol married Suzanne-Françoise Deschazaux in 1770. She was the daughter of an Aubusson tapestry merchant, and Bousqueyrol was the resident surgeon at the infirmary run by the Dutch chapel. While her witnesses all seem

³⁵ MC VII 252, 3 January 1732. MC VII 259, 24 February 1737. SHPF MS 410, fol. 12, 6 October 1729. On the Nau family see Marraud, *De la Ville à l'État*, pp. 46–52. At least one other member of the Nau family had a Protestant connection, since the financier Pierre-Louis Nau was to be executor for the Lutheran banker Jean-Philippe Kornmann in 1777 and was described in Kornmann's will as 'my old friend': MC XCIX 618, 11 June 1776. On Morel, Favre-Lejeune, *Les Secrétaires du roi*, p. 986. On the clergy of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, Nicolas Lyon-Caen, 'Labrûe au paradis, Chapeau aux enfers: les notables de Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois face à leurs curés au XVIIIe siècle', *Revue d'histoire de l'Église de France*, 92 (2006), 117–46 (122–6).

³⁶ MC XCV 132, 5 February 1736 (*procureur au Châtelet*). MC XXI 349, 22 September 1742 (*procureur au Châtelet*).

to have been Protestants, eight cousins and two friends, his twenty-nine witnesses included an extraordinary selection of people, none of them relatives. Some were professional colleagues: seven other surgeons, one of whom worked for the *gendarmerie*, one for the police, while another taught at the Académie de chirurgie. More unexpected, although still in the medical field, were three professors from the Faculty of Medicine. There were also two *avocats* – barristers accredited by the Parlement, though not necessarily working there – and a *procureur* attached to the Parlement. The fourth legal professional was a *commissaire au Châtelet*. These were all occupations from which Protestants were systematically excluded. But signing ahead of all this crowd were a number of nobles, starting with a member of one of the most powerful robe families in the city: Charlotte Marguerite Daligre, widow of Lepelletier de Saint-Fargeau, a magistrate of the Parlement of Paris. Her signature was followed by those of three military nobles, one of them a member of the royal bodyguard, and by that of Jean-Baptiste Baillon, first valet of the Queen-to-be. The nobles were clearly there as Bousqueyrol's patrons. It is a mystery how a man of modest extraction, working in an occupation that was not very highly esteemed, and a Protestant to boot, could have managed to assemble such a distinguished gathering. He was not wealthy, his declared worth only 3,000 *livres*, but his bride's far larger dowry of over 20,000 *livres* suggests that he had very promising connections or prospects. If so, these did not translate into great wealth, since at his death in 1786 he left only a respectable middle-class estate. It is unlikely, given his place of work, that his witnesses were unaware of his Protestantism.³⁷

Bousqueyrol was not the only Paris Huguenot who was able to obtain high-level patrons. The old prince de Condé had employed quite a few Protestants before the Revocation and, according to Herbert Lüthy, retained 'a certain sympathy' for them.³⁸ So, it seems, did the young prince de Conti, Louis XV's cousin. His well-known plotting with Protestant leaders in the south of France in the 1750s does not necessarily indicate genuine support for their cause, though his adviser, the Jansenist lawyer Adrien Le Paige, seems to have embraced the idea of

³⁷ MC XCIII 96, 23 February 1770. AN Y12694, 9 December 1786. Garrisson, 'Les Infirmeries protestantes', 63–4.

³⁸ Douen, *La Révocation*, 3: 1; Richard H. Popkin, 'Skepticism about Religion and Millenarian Dogmatism: Two Sources of Toleration in the Seventeenth Century', in *Beyond the Persecuting Society. Religious Toleration before the Enlightenment*, ed. John Christian Laursen and Cary J. Nederman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), pp. 232–50 (p. 244). SHPF MS 66, fol. 199. Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 1: 20.

civil toleration around that date. Conti certainly did not mind having Protestants in his entourage, since in 1756 he appointed Jean-Louis Lecointe de Marcillac, apparently a zealous Huguenot, as gentleman of his bedchamber. He also assisted Madame de Beaumer, the outspoken Protestant editor of the *Journal des Dames*, by allowing her to live under his legal protection in the enclosure of the Temple.³⁹ Another prince of the blood, the duc d'Orléans, also employed a number of Protestants in the 1760s, including two doctors – François Paul and the high-profile Théodore Tronchin – and subsequently some of Tronchin's sons. The next duc d'Orléans carried on this tradition in the 1780s, as one of his doctors was another Genevan, Jean-Louis Gallatin, and his pharmacist in 1789 was Pierre-Antoine Cluzel, who was to become a member of the new Reformed Church's first consistory. The Duke also employed at least two Protestant servants, who were married at the Anglican chapel in 1786.⁴⁰ These examples of patronage at the highest level are further evidence of the way the government's religious policy was undermined from within. Even members of the royal family disregarded the anti-Protestant laws, and while this did not help the mass of Huguenots it did send a message to people in Paris who came into contact with protégés of the princes that religious belief did not matter at that level.

The signatures on marriage contracts, whether indicating personal friendship or patronage, like the other evidence pointing to increasing voluntary sociability across religious boundaries, indicate more positive acceptance of Protestants in a range of areas, accelerating in the second half of the century. This parallels the change in official attitudes, documented in [Chapter 2](#), which saw the admission in 1744 of several leading Protestants to local assemblies established to discuss tax reform. By the 1750s, Huguenots were being allowed to occupy a variety of offices from which the government had earlier excluded them. These appointments, which gave the Protestants increasing visibility in the city, apparently provoked no adverse comment either from those they were now working with or from the public more generally. Had there been serious opposition we are likely to know about it.

³⁹ Dedieu, *Histoire politique*, 1: 287; Nina Rattner Gelbart, *Feminine and Opposition Journalism in Old Regime France. 'Le Journal des Dames'* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), pp. 97, 113, 23–4; John D. Woodbridge, *Revolt in Prerevolutionary France. The Prince de Conti's Conspiracy against Louis XV, 1755–1757* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), pp. 32–3, 48–71.

⁴⁰ Lüthy, *La Banque protestante*, 2: 208. AN Y15279, 8 September 1771. Garrisson, 'Genèse de l'Église réformée', p. 38. The National Archives, Kew, RG33/58, 1 January 1786. I am grateful to Robert Nelson, who is undertaking a PhD at the University of California-Berkeley, for providing me with this document.

Simultaneously, the guilds were becoming increasingly open. A number removed the anti-Protestant clauses in their statutes, such as the pork butchers, whose 1705 statutes allowed only Catholics to be admitted but who took out this requirement in 1745. The metal polishers did the same in 1765 when they renewed their statutes of 1744.⁴¹ Since old articles were generally carried forward automatically when guild statutes were renewed, the removal of a Catholics-only clause required a deliberate decision, and may have provoked discussion at the guild meeting. This points, at the very least, to a sense in these trades that such clauses were out of date. The changes were not universal: the *fripeliers* (sellers of used clothes) and the makers of gold and silver cloth, both very early to introduce a requirement that all members be Catholic, retained this rule when renewing their statutes in 1751 and 1755 respectively.⁴² But these appear to be the last, in any of the Paris trades, explicitly to exclude Protestants.

In many other trades the statutes were apparently not renewed during the eighteenth century, and there the old rules remained in place until the Edict of February 1776 that disbanded all but a handful of the guilds and opened the others to everyone, regardless of religion or origin. It also abolished the guild confraternities, and neither they nor any religious requirement were re-established by the August 1776 Edict that restored the guilds in modified form. This aroused comment only in relation to Jewish merchants, who continued to be excluded.⁴³ By the late 1770s, it seems, no one any longer had an objection to admitting Protestants.

Nor did the Catholic population of Paris object when, in 1777, the first public funeral of a rich Protestant was held, although the clergy and the lay administrators of the parishes did (and were ignored). Henceforth, Protestant burials were routinely held in the daytime.⁴⁴ By then, too, the city's butchers routinely served meat to Protestants (and probably in fact to anyone) during Lent.⁴⁵ At moments that had in the past been

⁴¹ BHVP 104300, *Nouveaux Statuts de la communauté des maîtres et marchands chaircuitiers de la Ville et fauxbourgs de Paris* (Paris, 1754). For the metal polishers, AN K1030.

⁴² AN AD XI 26. BN MS fr. 21795, fol. 135. AN AD XI 17. BN MS fr. 21794, fol. 301.

⁴³ The text of both edicts is given by Franklin, *Dictionnaire*, pp. 780–92. On the edicts of 1776 see Steven Kaplan, *La Fin des corporations* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), pp. 77–137, and for the Jews, p. 14; Steven L. Kaplan, 'Social Classification and Representation in the Corporate World of Eighteenth-Century France: Turgot's Carnival', in *Work in France*, ed. Steven L. Kaplan and Cynthia Koepp (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), pp. 176–228. On the continued exclusion of Jews, Kaplan, *La Fin des corporations*, p. 114, and Émile Coornaert, *Les Corporations en France avant 1789* (Paris: Gallimard, 1941), pp. 193–4.

⁴⁴ 'Mémoires de J.C.P. Lenoir', p. 480.

⁴⁵ Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, 5: 240; Reinhard, *Nouvelle Histoire de Paris*, p. 205.

flashpoints for violence, public rituals and major events in the liturgical calendar, the Paris population appeared to be unbothered.

Even Church institutions were now admitting Protestants on an equal basis with Catholics. According to one source, by the late 1760s Huguenots were being well received at the general hospital, the Hôtel-Dieu, although some pressure was still being applied for them to convert. By the 1780s still more barriers had fallen. The Lutheran *ébéniste* Michaelis taught apprentices at the Trinité hospital for orphaned boys and as a result was admitted to the guild in 1787 without having to pay an entrance fee. Huguenots were even being treated at the hospice at Saint-Sulpice, run by perhaps the most conservative Catholic parish in the city.⁴⁶

Even some of the Catholic clergy, therefore, were becoming less hostile to Huguenots. At the parish level, according to Louis-Sébastien Mercier, in the early 1780s the clergy 'are less inclined to persecution than ever before, rarely seeking *lettres de cachet* against Protestants and their daughters, speaking of tolerance ... satisfied if exterior religious practice is not breached, they allow contrary opinions to be expressed'.⁴⁷ Mercier is not always reliable, but in this case he appears to be right. There did nevertheless remain some issues on which the clergy would not compromise. In 1777 the curés of the Quinze-Vingts hospital and of Saint-Sauveur refused to marry a couple who were children of Protestants: the Parlement of Paris ordered that the marriage be celebrated, against the wishes of the *procureur général* Joly de Fleury.⁴⁸ Yet it is likely that by this date most of the clergy had ceased demanding certificates of confession and that they too were turning a blind eye and conducting marriages for people they suspected to be Protestants.

Catholic collective memory: the Huguenots as innocent victims

In everyday life and relationships, therefore, the Paris Huguenots were progressively accepted by most elements within the Catholic population, and by the 1780s they were being treated in almost the same way as anyone else in the city. Nevertheless, many Parisians may have never consciously met a Protestant. Given that for much of the eighteenth century the authorities tried to hide their presence, and the Huguenots had no interest in making themselves known, for some people the issue

⁴⁶ Douen, *La Révocation*, 1: 203, n. 2. Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens*, p. 100; Garrisson, 'Les Infirmeries protestantes', 86; Read, 'Les Sépultures des protestants', 375. ANY15289, 17 May 1781.

⁴⁷ Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, 4: 244–5.

⁴⁸ JF 491, fols. 110–21.

of how to relate to those of a different religion probably did not arise until the public debates of the 1760s or even of 1789–90. In the absence of personal contact, their knowledge of Calvinism and their images of Huguenots were primarily shaped by their family and educational background, by the religious culture that surrounded them and by a collective memory of mutual hostility and conflict. The Camisard revolt that began in Languedoc in 1702 reinforced the lesson given by history books and other publications that blamed the Huguenots for the civil wars of the sixteenth century. For many administrators and policy-makers, and no doubt many others, until the middle years of the eighteenth century Calvinism was synonymous with sedition.⁴⁹

By 1789, however, as I mentioned in the [Introduction](#) to this book, Camille Desmoulins was able to evoke the 1572 massacre of Protestants in order to mobilise the people of Paris. The Court, he claimed, was planning a ‘Saint Bartholomew’s Day massacre of patriots’. This reflected an interpretation of the original massacre as a terrible plot against innocent people, and the fact that it could be used in this way, without explanation, indicates that this view had become part of a widely shared public understanding. Soon after that, in August 1789, Marie-Joseph Chénier’s play *Charles IX*, which was wildly popular in Paris, was generally interpreted as a reference to current events. The play depicted, quite unhistorically, the Cardinal de Lorraine blessing the swords of the murderers of 1572, and was taken as a condemnation of the conservative party at Court and of the leaders of the Church. Other references to St Bartholomew’s Day were made repeatedly by revolutionary leaders, particularly Mirabeau, who reminded the deputies of the National Assembly, discussing the question of religious freedom on 23 August, that the following day was the anniversary of the massacre. He raised it again in opposing Dom Gerle’s motion to make Catholicism the state religion of France, successfully arguing for separation of Church and state on the grounds that the massacre showed the bloody consequences of mixing the two.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ David Bien, ‘Religious Persecution in the French Enlightenment’, *Church History*, 30 (1961), 325–33 (325–8). On the history books, Henri Dubief, ‘L’Historiographie de la Saint-Barthélemy’, in *Actes du colloque ‘L’amiral de Coligny et son temps’* (Paris, 24–28 octobre 1972) (Paris: Société de l’histoire du protestantisme français, 1974), pp. 351–65 (pp. 353–4); René Pintard and Hubert Carrier, ‘Ressouvenirs de la Saint-Barthélemy au XVIIe siècle’, *Revue d’histoire littéraire de la France*, 73, no. 5 (1973), 819–28; O. R. Taylor, ‘Voltaire et la Saint-Barthélemy’, *Revue d’histoire littéraire de la France*, 73 (1973), 829–38 (830–4). See also Philip Benedict, ‘Divided Memories? Historical Calendars, Commemorative Processions and the Recollection of the Wars of Religion during the Ancien Régime’, *French History*, 22 (2008): 381–405.

⁵⁰ Jacques Poujol, ‘Le Changement d’image des protestants pendant la Révolution’, *BSHPF*, 135 (1989), 500–43 (500, 525).

This dramatic shift in interpretations of the massacre, and by implication of the religious wars, took place across the eighteenth century and offers another way of observing changing attitudes towards French Protestants.

One of the very first published accounts to revise older views was the detailed history written by the Jesuit Gabriel Daniel, of which the relevant section appeared in 1713. It condemned the massacre and the Catholic hatred of Protestants, and even the role of the King, but it seems to have had little initial impact. Its fourth edition, in 1755–60, attracted much more attention, perhaps an indication that its approach to history and its presentation of events was by then more acceptable. Voltaire's poem *La Henriade*, originally published in 1723, was another early work that condemned the bloodshed and presented some of the sixteenth-century Huguenots positively, though his main message was that the whole event was a product of religious fanaticism. Another landmark was the abbé Prévost's *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité* (1729), which also used the massacre as a way of condemning religious war in general, making little distinction between the victims and the perpetrators. This became a literary commonplace.⁵¹ In 1744, Baculard d'Arnaud's play *Coligny* was much harsher on the Catholics: although in his preface the author's historical sketch blames the queen, Catherine de Médecis, for deliberately plotting the elimination of the Huguenots, the key villain of the play is the parish priest of Saint-Côme, whereas the Protestant leader Coligny is portrayed as a man of honour and integrity.⁵² This work went through many editions. A couple of years later, in 1747, Bossuet's history of the events was finally published, although it had been written around 1671. It too condemned the violence and held the King and the Catholic political leaders responsible, and given Bossuet's status as a bishop and Church leader, may have helped to legitimise accounts produced by writers with weaker Catholic credentials.⁵³

The 1750s saw many more references to the massacre, now linked directly to the current fate of the Huguenots. The first major public debate

⁵¹ Édith Flamarion, 'Les Guerres de religion vues par un jésuite de la fin du règne de Louis XIV: *L'Histoire de France* de Daniel', in *La Mémoire des guerres de religion. Enjeux historiques, enjeux politiques*, ed. Jacques Berchtold and Marie-Madeleine Fragonard, (Geneva: Droz, 2009), pp. 279–306. Gargett, *Voltaire and Protestantism*, p. 17; Taylor, 'Voltaire et la Saint-Barthélemy', pp. 835–6. Abbé Antoine François Prévost, *Mémoires et aventures d'un homme de qualité qui s'est retiré du monde*, 2 vols. (Paris: Veuve Delaulne, 1729).

⁵² François-Thomas-Marie de Baculard d'Arnaud, *Coligny, ou la Saint-Barthelemy* (London and Paris, 1789).

⁵³ Pintard and Carrier, 'La Saint-Barthélemy', pp. 824–5. See also David Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France. Inventing Nationalism, 1680–1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), pp. 30–2.

about their legal status was sparked by the Finance Minister, Jean-Baptiste Machault, who had written a letter of recommendation for a Huguenot refugee wishing to return to France, in which he expressed a desire for others to do the same. Widely circulated, it was strongly attacked by two French bishops, whose open letter to Machault in turn sparked a series of pamphlets dealing with the rights of French Protestants and particularly with the question of whether Catholic priests should consent to marry them. It revealed educated Catholic opinion to be divided, with conservative Catholic writers on one side and figures like the ex-Jesuit Gabriel-François Coyer, the abbé Pluquet, the abbé-*philosophe* Morellet and some leading Jansenists on the other. Current politics and history came together in the person of the abbé François Novy de Caveirac, who wrote a blistering attack on the idea of recognising Protestant marriages and published, in the same volume, a justification of Louis XIV's religious policy and a historical study of the St Bartholomew's Day massacre. Although he condemned the bloodshed and drew attention to the duplicity of Charles IX, he was widely accused of justifying religious violence. Among Catholics shocked by his tract were the authors of the Jansenist periodical *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, which was widely read in Paris. In 1759, they condemned Caveirac for promoting religious fanaticism, which, they suggested, led directly to 'the horrors of Saint Bartholomew's Day'.⁵⁴

Throughout the 1760s, the massacre was almost universally presented, whether by Voltaire or by Catholic writers, as a terrible crime and a product of fanaticism (variously that of the mob or of the clergy), and as a precursor to the persecution of the Huguenots that was still going on in the 1750s.⁵⁵ Then in 1771, the Maupeou-led assault on the Parlements gave references to St Bartholomew's Day renewed vigour by linking the massacre to royal or ministerial despotism, a significance they were to retain in 1789. This was the thrust, for example, of Louis-Sébastien Mercier's two plays, *Jean Hennuyer* (1772) and *La Destruction de la Ligue* (1784).⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, pp. 87–101; Graham Gargett, 'Caveirac, Protestants and the Presence of Voltairian Discourse in Late Eighteenth-Century France', *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 10 (2008), 123–32. Gargett corrects the version of Caveirac's name that is usually given: 'Jean Novi' (123, n. 3). Charles H. O'Brien, 'New Light on the Mouton-Natoire Case (1768): Freedom of Conscience and the Role of the Jansenists', *Journal of Church and State*, 27 (1985), 65–82 (78–9).

⁵⁵ O'Brien, 'New Light on the Mouton-Natoire Case', pp. 78–9. For another example see Jacques-André Naigeon, *Le Militaire philosophe* (London [Amsterdam], 1768), p. 175.

⁵⁶ Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, pp. 174–5. See also *Les Efforts de la liberté et du patriotisme contre le despotisme, du Sr. de Maupeou chancelier de France*, Anon. 5 vols. (London, 1772–3), 3: 13. Bell, *Cult of the Nation*, pp. 30–2.

By the early 1760s, the image of French Protestants as blameless people suffering for their personal religious beliefs was sufficiently widespread to be mobilised, quite deliberately, by Voltaire. It suited his purpose in attacking Catholic intolerance, and Jean Calas, executed in Toulouse on 10 March 1762 for allegedly murdering his own son, was the perfect example. Calas was a law-abiding bourgeois and, in Voltaire's account, a 'good father and family man' (*bon père de famille*), quite the opposite of the fanatical and violent Protestant that the more extreme Catholic writers, like Caveirac, depicted. In his other work of the 1760s, Voltaire deliberately eschewed the attacks on Calvinist fanaticism that had marked some of his earlier writing.⁵⁷ This perhaps suggests a sense on his part that the attitudes of influential Catholics – the principal targets of his campaign – were still broadly negative, but his success in overturning the conviction of Calas points to the readiness of readers to sympathise with the innocent, persecuted individual Huguenot. Many educated Catholics supported his campaign.⁵⁸

For some Parisians, the Calas affair may have been the first time they consciously reflected on the situation of the Huguenots, although many might have been led to think about the issue of religious freedom by the work of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. His novel of 1761, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, was so popular in Paris that when it first appeared some booksellers ripped the volumes apart and rented the individual sections to different readers. The author was deluged with letters from his readers, and for some of them the novel's heroine, Julie, became a role model. The French censors removed Rousseau's arguments in favour of religious toleration, but readers knew that Julie was a Calvinist and were obviously not disturbed by this.⁵⁹ If they thought about it at all, they presumably felt that religious difference was irrelevant in matters of morality and true feeling. If so, that was in itself revolutionary.

Rousseau followed *La Nouvelle Héloïse* with *Du Contrat social* (1762), in which he condemned religious intolerance while arguing that religion was necessary to society. 'Each man can ... have whatever opinions he wishes, without the sovereign having any business controlling them ... as long as they are good Citizens.' All the evidence is that *The Social Contract* was less

⁵⁷ Bien, 'Religious Persecution', 330–2; Gargett, *Voltaire and Protestantism*, pp. 285–301.

⁵⁸ Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, pp. 211–28; Palmer, *Catholics and Unbelievers*, pp. 16–7. For details of the Calas affair, Bien, *Calas Affair*, and Garrisson, *L'Affaire Calas*.

⁵⁹ Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, p. 150; Robert Darnton, 'Readers Respond to Rousseau: The Fabrication of Romantic Sensitivity', in Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (London: Allen Lane, 1984), pp. 215–56 (pp. 242–9).

widely read, but Rousseau's other major work of 1762, the educational treatise *Émile*, was another best-seller. Here he took a harder line against atheism but still portrayed religious freedom as the ideal situation.⁶⁰ Such views enraged Louis-Antoine de Caraccioli, who observed how influential they were: 'People who claim to be pious, even people who have dedicated their lives to God, read and praise works like *Émile* and the *Social Contract*', he complained in 1766.⁶¹ Of course, reading and even praising Rousseau's works did not necessarily mean accepting all his views, but it does suggest that these Catholics had no violent objection to them.

Rousseau did not refer directly to the situation of French Protestants – indeed, he was not very sympathetic – and we have no evidence that people made a direct connection between his characters and the situation of the Huguenots. Given the moment his key works appeared, though, it is likely that some did. The 1760s and 1770s saw almost continuous debates that can have left few educated Parisians unaware of the discrimination against French Protestants. In 1766 Voltaire launched another public campaign on behalf of Pierre-Paul Sirven, who was convicted of the murder of his daughter following her conversion to Catholicism. The case was taken to the Royal Council by three prominent Paris barristers and ended with Sirven's exoneration in 1771.⁶² The year after the Sirven affair began, renewed public debate on toleration was provoked by the Sorbonne's condemnation of a novel by Jean-François Marmontel, *Bélisaire*, in 1767. Marmontel's book recounted a discussion between the virtuous Roman general of that name and the Emperor Justinian, in which they rehearsed exactly the arguments made for and against rights for Protestants in the France of the 1760s. Having pointed to the evil effects of forced conversion and argued that the state has no role in dictating individual conscience, Bélisaire clinched the argument with the point that state intervention in religious disputes promotes social disharmony.

⁶⁰ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Du Contract social, ou Principes du droit politique* (Amsterdam: Marc-Michel Rey, 1762), pp. 243, 245. On Rousseau's views, see the excellent essays in Ourida Mostefai and John T. Scott (eds.), *Rousseau and 'l'Infâme'. Religion, Toleration, and Fanaticism in the Age of Enlightenment* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2009), especially Raymond Trousson, 'Tolérance et fanatisme chez Voltaire et Rousseau' (pp. 23–64) and John Hope Mason, 'At the Limits of Toleration: Rousseau and Atheism' (pp. 239–56).

⁶¹ Louis-Antoine de Caraccioli, *La Religion de l'honnête homme* (Paris, 1766), quoted in Froeschlé-Chopard, 'Religion', p. 237. See also Plonger, 'Recherches sur l'"Aufklärung" catholique', who says 'no Catholic' would accept Rousseau's views!

⁶² Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, pp. 151–60, 224–7. Strayer, *Huguenots and Camisards*, pp. 441–83.

In the 1770s, the chorus of Catholic support for the civil rights of Huguenots grew more insistent. Louis XVI's accession to the throne prompted French Protestants to lobby for legal reform. They were supported by key government ministers, including Turgot, who had earlier published a pamphlet supporting civil toleration. The Assembly of the Clergy in Paris in 1775 focused further attention on the issue, accompanied by more pamphlets for and against, the most influential ones on both sides written by Catholic clerics. In 1778, the magistrates of the Parlement of Paris, concerned about the number of law cases around the kingdom that were arising from unrecognised Protestant marriages, asked the King to consider granting civil status to the Huguenots and allowing them to marry before a magistrate.⁶³

By the mid 1780s there was a broad Catholic alliance in favour of civil toleration. Even Louis-Antoine de Caraccioli, who twenty years before had attacked Rousseau so sharply, now argued strongly for allowing Protestants not only freedom of conscience but the right to practise their religion in private. He attacked as 'fanatics' those hard-line Catholics who continued to oppose civil rights for Protestants, and the Jansenist magistrate Pierre-Auguste Robert de Saint-Vincent built on this same notion when in 1787 he blamed the Jesuits for the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.⁶⁴ Many people pointed out that in France the anti-Protestant laws were not being applied, and that it was ridiculous to retain them. There was now, furthermore, an absolutist model for legislative change, since in 1781 Josef II of Austria had introduced a policy of toleration for non-Catholics throughout his realm. Yet the response of the French government was very slow. In 1782 a decree of Louis XVI had forbidden priests to distinguish, in the registers of baptisms and marriages, between Catholics and Protestants, but this made the contradictions of official policy even more apparent.⁶⁵ The efforts of Malesherbes, the baron de Breteuil and their allies at Court to reverse the Revocation, directed at persuading the King rather than at public opinion, have been well documented. But they had powerful conservative opponents, both in the Church and in the government, notably the Minister of Justice, Miromesnil.⁶⁶

⁶³ Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, pp. 231–56.

⁶⁴ Louis-Antoine de Caraccioli, *Jésus-Christ, par sa tolérance, modèle des Législateurs* (Paris: Cuchet, 1785), p. 196. Merrick, *Desacralization*, p. 155.

⁶⁵ Monique Cuillieron, *Les Assemblées du clergé de France et la société ecclésiastique sous le règne de Louis XVI: 1775–1788* (Paris: Fac 2000, 2003), p. 103.

⁶⁶ Grosclaude, 'Comment Malesherbes élabore sa doctrine'. Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, pp. 265–74. Jean Egret, *The French Prerevolution, 1787–1788*, trans. Wesley D.

In February 1787 the Parlement of Paris formally asked Louis XVI to grant civil status to France's Protestants, and at the Assembly of Notables, in May of the same year, both the duc de La Rochefoucauld and the marquis de La Fayette spoke strongly in favour of civil rights for Protestants. Thanks to support from the Bishop of Langres, a motion to this effect was included in the recommendations made to the King.⁶⁷ A change of government, which saw Miromesnil replaced and a majority of supporters of civil toleration entering the cabinet, enabled the drawing up of the so-called 'Edict of Toleration'. Its passage was facilitated by the Prussian invasion of the Netherlands in September and the defeat of the Calvinist Patriots whom France had supported: the government seems to have felt some responsibility to grant them political asylum but that this was difficult when their religion was banned. At the same time, a high-profile legal case over the legitimacy of the marquise d'Anglure, daughter of a Catholic and a Protestant whose marriage was technically illegal, gave the question of Huguenot civil rights a renewed public profile.⁶⁸

The Edict, when it finally appeared, was extremely limited in scope. It extended legal civil rights to 'non-Catholics' – the right to own property, to work and become members of guilds. It made provision for marriages, baptisms and deaths outside the Catholic Church. But it reaffirmed the monopoly of the Catholic Church on public worship, and the government accepted an amendment proposed by the Parlement of Paris that excluded non-Catholics from public office and from the teaching profession.⁶⁹

The manoeuvres that eventually persuaded the King that this Edict was necessary went on behind closed doors, although we can be fairly sure that anyone interested in politics – and that was a growing proportion of the population, including even some less-educated people – would have been aware of the debates and would have formed a view. The Protestant issue was beginning to preoccupy people ('commence à occuper les esprits'), wrote the abbé Clément du Tremblai in 1775.⁷⁰ Conservative

Camp (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1977. First published Paris, 1962), pp. 77–8. McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 651–4.

⁶⁷ Cuillieron, *Les Assemblées du clergé*, pp. 105, 233–8.

⁶⁸ Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, pp. 275–92. Egret, *French Prerevolution*, pp. 79–83. McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 654–5.

⁶⁹ Egret, *French Prerevolution*, pp. 79–82. McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 656–7.

⁷⁰ Quoted in Charles H. O'Brien, 'Jansenists and Civil Toleration', p. 183. On popular awareness of politics and information networks in Paris, David Garrioch, *The Making of Revolutionary Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 163–83; Dale K. Van Kley, *The Damiens Affair and the Unraveling of the Ancien Régime, 1750–1770* (Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 226–65. Robert Darnton, 'An Early Information Society: News and the Media in Eighteenth-Century Paris', *American Historical Review*,

Catholics remained hostile. Those with Jansenist sympathies were probably more favourably disposed to recognising the Huguenots, given the opinions already expressed by key Jansenist writers. Support for Voltaire's campaigns was also strong in Paris, and in 1778 we get a hint that this extended beyond the educated elite. A letter from Madame du Deffand recounts that during the *philosophe's* visit to Paris in that year, 'he is followed in the streets by the people, who call him "the Calas man"'.⁷¹ In 1782, Mercier's portrayal of the city's Protestants in his best-selling *Tableau de Paris*, so often an accurate reflection of middle-class opinion, seemed calculated to appeal both to supporters of the Enlightenment and to moderate Catholics: 'They in no manner insult mainstream religion, nor those who profess it; they are peaceful, hard-working, and silently await a change that moral and political enlightenment must infallibly bring to pass.'⁷² There was undoubtedly, among many Parisians, a sense that – as the abbé de Véri had recognised in 1775 – '[I]t is impossible that in the long term the tolerance that already exists in practice will not be established by law.'⁷³

The 1787 Edict does not seem to have aroused much active opposition in Paris, except from a handful of conservative Catholics led by two noblewomen, the *maréchale* de Noailles and the *marquise* de Silléry (formerly Madame de Genlis). The two women were immediately mocked in song, yet there was certainly some disquiet when news of the Edict reached the city. The conservative Jansenist bookseller Hardy saw it as 'the funeral notice [*billet d'enterrement*] of the Catholic Religion in France', and claimed that this view was shared by reasonable persons: he could not see, he wrote in his diary, why so many people were enthusiastic about it, and he condemned 'the spirit of universal tolerance' that he believed it embodied.⁷⁴ The Swiss Protestant Jacques Mallet du Pan reported similar divisions, adding that the Edict had revived 'all the old fears and stupidities', and by January he was writing that most Parisians were against the Edict.⁷⁵ This was confirmed by the lawyer Adrien-Joseph Colson,

105 (2000), 1–35. Arlette Farge, *Subversive Words: Public Opinion in Eighteenth-Century France* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994).

⁷¹ Gargett, *Voltaire and Protestantism*, p. 14, n. 8.

⁷² Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, 3: 89.

⁷³ Joseph-Alphonse de Véri, *Journal de l'abbé de Véri*, 2 vols., ed. Jehan de Witte (Paris: Tallandier, 1928–30), 1: 384.

⁷⁴ Louis Petit de Bachaumont, Mathieu François Pidanzat de Mairobert, Mouffle d'Angerville, *Mémoires secrets pour servir à l'histoire de la république des lettres en France depuis MDCCLXII jusqu'à nos jours*, 36 vols. (London: J. Adamson, 1777–89), 36: 336–7 (31 December 1787). Siméon-Prospér Hardy, 'Mes Loisirs', BN MS fr. 6686, fols. 360–1 (29 January 1788).

⁷⁵ Pierre-André Sayous (ed.), *Mémoires et correspondance de Mallet du Pan*, 2 vols. (Paris: Amyot, Cherbuliez, 1851), 1: 136–7.

who in March 1788 told his provincial correspondent that the Parlement of Paris had finally registered the Edict, 'which has been so long awaited by part of the public, and feared by a larger part still'. Colson himself, a firm Catholic who was nevertheless to support the Revolution even in 1793, certainly had personal reservations about the 1787 Edict, fearing it would only lead the Protestants to demand more. As late as December 1788, perhaps moved by reports of increased Huguenot militancy, he favoured continuing to exclude them from public office. But his letters also suggested a reason for Parisian hostility to the Edict that may have had little to do with religion: many people in the city, he wrote, feared that greater rights for Protestants would lead to a flood of immigrants from Geneva.⁷⁶ This came hard on the heels of the influx of Dutch refugees from the Prussian invasion of the Netherlands. Nevertheless, such examples show that as late as 1788 there was no unanimity even about the limited freedoms that had been granted.

1789 and the Revolution

Despite the reservations of some elements of the population, by 1789, if the *cahiers* of the Third Estate can be taken as representative of broad middle-class male opinion in the city, many Catholics were happy with the civil rights recently granted to French Protestants. Few wanted to extend them, and feared that full religious freedom would undermine the state Church. The general *cahier* referred to 'the natural, civil, and religious liberty of every man', and asserted that 'the Christian religion commands civil toleration. Each citizen must enjoy freedom for his individual conscience.' It added, however, that 'public order suffers only one dominant religion', and that 'the Catholic religion is the dominant religion in France'.⁷⁷ The small number of surviving *cahiers* of the Paris districts reveal a greater diversity of opinion, although unlike the general *cahier*, none of them asks for the Catholic religion to be considered the dominant one. Most said nothing about religious toleration. The main exception was the Théatins district in the Faubourg Saint-Germain,

⁷⁶ Letters to Roch Lemaigre, 2 March and 2 December 1788. On Colson see Timothy Tackett, 'Paths to Revolution: The Old Regime Correspondence of Five Future Revolutionaries', *French Historical Studies*, 32 (2009), 531–54 (534–8). I am grateful to Tim Tackett for extracts from Colson's unpublished correspondence, held in the Archives départementales de l'Indre. On the wider situation, Timothy Tackett, *Religion, Revolution, and Regional Culture in Eighteenth-Century France. The Ecclesiastical Oath of 1791* (Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 205–9. The *Mémoires secrets*, 36: 216 (23 November 1787), report that opponents of toleration were predicting dire consequences from the return of the refugee Huguenots.

⁷⁷ Chassin, *Les Élections et les cahiers*, 3: 335, 51.

although the number of voters was small. 'Toleration is one of the most essential virtues in the organisation of society ... All religions will be permitted', they hoped, 'in the most polite Nation in the world. They will all enjoy freedom of worship, and [religion] will not be a reason to exclude anyone from the privileges that Roman Catholics enjoy.' The Théatins district also requested that priests be allowed to marry and that divorce be legalised. No others went nearly that far. The Saint-Louis-la-Culture district requested, more ambiguously, 'that individual, civil, and religious liberty be guaranteed', and the Filles-Saint-Thomas district agreed that 'every man should enjoy freedom of conscience'.⁷⁸

The *cahiers* of the twenty noble electoral districts of Paris were a little more conservative. Only three made reference to religious toleration, two of them requesting the maintenance of the Catholic religion as the dominant one, and the third asking the Estates General to examine the status of non-Catholics. Nevertheless, the general *cahier* of the nobles asked the Estates General to revise and perfect the Edict of 1787, and to return confiscated Protestant property. It even suggested that the Estates 'take into consideration the fate of the Jews'.⁷⁹

There was also a difference between the general *cahier* of the Paris clergy and the local parish *cahiers*. The general *cahier*, no doubt strongly influenced by the upper clergy, insisted on the need to defend the Catholic Church and insisted that it be the only one allowed to conduct public worship. It also asked for the revision of the Edict of 1787, presumably in a conservative direction. By contrast, the few surviving *cahiers* of the parish clergy had surprisingly little to say on the subject. That of Saint-Paul, while requesting that Catholic worship be the only public one, suggested that 'non-Catholics' be recognised but that they should be excluded from all administrative and judicial offices and not be eligible for election to the Estates General.⁸⁰

There were thus quite wide differences of opinion among the educated classes of the city. Surprisingly, only a small proportion of the clergy apparently wanted the anti-Protestant laws reinforced. The majority of those who drew up the *cahiers* were either satisfied with the Edict of 1787 or not very interested, and most of the nobles were apparently happy to go along with those seeking further reform. The Third Estate were more divided. Only a minority were prepared to argue for full freedom of religion, and the compromise position, in the general *cahier*, was to support freedom of conscience but not allow the Protestants to open their own churches.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* ⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 2: 257–90; 3: 326.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 2: 51–4, 257–90, 306.

The sentiments of the rest of the Paris population are much harder to fathom. As already noted, there are hints that at least some of ‘the people’, as the elites called them, now saw the Huguenots as innocent victims of persecution: that is clearly how Camille Desmoulins’s listeners, in the Palais Royal on 12 July 1789, interpreted his reference to the St Bartholomew’s Day massacre. This may be evidence of sympathy among the more politically active elements of the population, but not necessarily of full acceptance of Huguenots. However, the fact that two prominent and openly Protestant bankers – Louis-Daniel Tassin and Jean-Frédéric Perregaux – were elected by the Paris districts in April 1789 suggests that the predominantly bourgeois voters did not see Huguenots as unworthy to hold office, and nor did they fear hostility from the restive populace. There were no riots like those against Jean-Baptiste Réveillon and Dominique Henriot, following their reported comments that people could live on lower wages. Réveillon was subsequently to claim, in his published self-justification, that he looked after the Protestants in his manufactory, hardly something he would say if he thought it would prejudice people against him.⁸¹

In the new climate, one of the few outspoken opponents of complete religious freedom, ironically, was the Jansenist *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, which had long supported civil rights for the Huguenots: ‘It is not intolerant, unjust, or persecuting to require private practice of what cannot be done publicly without dire consequences’ (26 June 1790). In October of the same year, the paper also opposed new rights being given to Jews. Allowing error to be publicised, it argued, would allow its spread.⁸² But it seems these views were not widely shared in Paris. There was no popular protest in May 1791, when the new Reformed church opened in a former Catholic one. On the contrary, in October when a service was held to mark the acceptance of the 1791 Constitution, a crowd of curious onlookers attended. The church was closed briefly during the Terror, but there was less hostility against the Protestants and their preachers than against the Catholic clergy who refused to accept the revolutionary church.⁸³

A number of Paris Protestants were active in municipal affairs and seem to have been fully accepted both by their fellow administrators and by the other people they dealt with. Louis-Daniel Tassin belonged to the provisional municipality in 1789 and became one of the sixteen

⁸¹ JF 1103, fols. 135–40.

⁸² Monique Cottret, ‘Les Figures du juif dans la presse janséniste au début de la Révolution’, in *Port-Royal et le peuple d’Israël*, pp. 275–88 (p. 278).

⁸³ Lods, *L’Église réformée de Paris*, pp. 15–6, 21–9; Poland, *French Protestantism*, pp. 193–202.

administrators of the city in 1790. In the same year, the *négociant* Pierre-Louis-Guillaume Houssemaine was elected as one of the forty-eight municipal officers. Some Huguenots were also prominent in the National Guard. Another of the Tassin family, Gabriel, commanded the Filles-Saint-Thomas battalion, and the former wine-seller Pierre Doucet built a military career following his National Guard service, eventually becoming a general during the Empire.⁸⁴ In the Réunion Section, a man named Féline, almost certainly Louis-Jacob, son of the prominent banker, served as lieutenant of artillery in the National Guard. He was influential enough to persuade the artillerymen of the Section to march to the Convention to oppose the creation of a revolutionary army on 11 June 1793, an action which led to him being denounced as a moderate. A more modest figure was Claude-Jacques Leblond, a wine-seller in the Jardin des Plantes Section, who was a captain in his local National Guard in 1792.⁸⁵ Yet an officer in the National Guard, whatever his rank, required the confidence of the men under his command and up to a point that of the population being policed. The same was true of another position held by at least one Protestant, that of assessor assisting the Justice of the Peace, since the assessors were supposed to advise the Justice in his role of conciliation. In 1790, the General Assembly of the Jardin des Plantes Section chose the Protestant wine-seller Jean-François Almain as one of six assessors, the only one who was not a former lawyer.⁸⁶

There were certainly Protestants who were denounced during the Revolution. The banker Girardot de Marigny was arrested in Brumaire of the Year II as ‘one of those rich men who do not deign to fraternise with republicans’, and the jeweller Georges Frédéric Bapst was similarly accused of frequenting moderates and aristocrats, his wealth an aggravating factor.⁸⁷ But in neither case was their religion mentioned. In revolutionary politics in Paris, being Protestant was simply irrelevant.

As this chapter and the preceding one have shown, across the eighteenth century many Parisians had moved from a grudging acceptance of Huguenots to a more positive image of them, both individually and

⁸⁴ Garrison, ‘Genèse de l’Église réformée’, 45; Paul Robiquet, *Le Personnel municipal de Paris pendant la Révolution. Période constitutionnelle* (Paris: Jouaust, Noblet, Quantin, 1890), pp. 37, 386, 433, 51, 539, 85.

⁸⁵ Richard Cobb, *The People’s Armies*, trans. Marianne Elliott (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1987. First published 1961–3), p. 27. MC XX 755, 5 June 1792.

⁸⁶ Haim Burstin, ‘Une Révolution à l’oeuvre: le faubourg Saint-Marcel (1789–1794)’, unpublished thesis, Paris I, 1999, pp. 153n., 296n.

⁸⁷ Albert Soboul, *Les Sans-culottes parisiens en l’an II* (Paris: Clavreuil, 1958), pp. 410, 7.

collectively. Already by the early 1700s, Catholics felt less threatened by their presence. Attempts at conversion became less common, and while many devout Parisians would have liked to see the Protestants return to the Catholic fold, they were increasingly reticent about using coercion. There was no single turning point when relations between Protestants and Catholics changed, and a variety of attitudes always coexisted. Some Catholics remained hostile to Protestantism but were prepared to live peacefully alongside individual Huguenots. Of course, peaceful coexistence could mean different things, from barely concealed hostility to open acceptance of religious difference. Sympathy could take the form of active engagement or be purely intellectual. Attitudes were further complicated by the obligations of family, work and neighbourhood, which could counter or override religious antipathy, although not necessarily in every circumstance. Some Parisians remained resolutely opposed to any public recognition of French Protestants, while others – an increasing number – did not greatly care what religion their neighbours observed. Nevertheless, clear long-term shifts in behaviour can be observed. Wealthy Huguenots began to be integrated more fully into elite sociability in the 1760s and 1770s. The evidence of marriage contracts and weddings reveals some friendly relationships throughout the century, particularly between some Jansenists and their Protestant neighbours, while the limited evidence of the Swedish chapel registers points to a new willingness on the part of some Catholics to attend a Protestant religious service. By the 1780s, *de facto* civil toleration had existed in Paris for some decades and a minority of educated people, and perhaps others too, had come to see freedom of religion as a positive virtue, characteristic of civilised societies. In 1789, revolutionary enthusiasm swept a majority to accept full religious freedom.

Protestant attitudes had also changed. The Protestant leaders had become more open since 1725, when a consistory established by the Dutch chaplain Marc Guitton excommunicated a jeweller for having his child baptised in a Catholic church.⁸⁸ If in the mid 1760s some of them criticised Court de Gébelin for having too many Catholic friends, a decade later members of the Protestant elites had become full participants in Paris freemasonry and in salon culture. By the second half of the century, greater ecumenism is demonstrated by the willingness of many pious Huguenots to work closely with the Paris Lutherans. The change even among the clergy is suggested by the marriage in the Dutch chapel, in 1786, between Jérôme Fortet and Madeleine Quéting. The register notes, with no other comment, that Fortet was a Catholic.

⁸⁸ Arsenal MS 10884, fols. 309–12.

Even more astonishing was the marriage in 1792 of Suzanne-Françoise Tavernier with Jean-Pierre Charpentier. He was a Catholic, while Tavernier was descended on her father's side from the lace-manufacturers of Villiers-le-Bel, on her mother's from a dynasty of Aubusson tapestry merchants. One could hardly find, in eighteenth-century Paris, more staunchly Huguenot stock. The marriage was conducted by a priest in the Catholic parish of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, then blessed by the pastor in the new Reformed church. This points to full mutual acceptance by the two clergymen, with at least tacit acceptance by the leading lay members of both churches, and presumably the full consent of the two families involved.⁸⁹ A new world seemed to be dawning, when French men and women of all religious persuasions would live peaceably side by side and work together to regenerate their fatherland.

⁸⁹ Boisson, *Les Protestants du Berry*, p. 658. SHPF MS 411B, fol. 14, 21 March 1792.

8 Changing beliefs and religious cultures

Why should Catholic attitudes to Protestants have changed so markedly in Paris across the eighteenth century? There is no simple answer. The process was a long-term and progressive one, and it did not affect all groups in the population at the same time. Nor did it have a single cause. Rather, a number of factors came together, some local and some more general: after all, growing acceptance of religious difference was not confined to Paris, although it came earlier there than in some other places.

The traditional explanation is that the writing of the *philosophes* was the major factor in bringing religious toleration to France. However, the chronology traced in [Chapter 7](#) suggests that the Enlightenment, as an intellectual movement, had little role in the initial shift towards more tolerant attitudes. The decline in overt conflict, physical or verbal, and the removal of anti-Protestant clauses from the guild statutes, had begun well before the key works of the *philosophes* appeared, and reflected changing views among elements of the Paris population who in the first half of the century were unlikely to have much direct acquaintance with the work of intellectuals. The limited evidence of marriage contracts also points to an earlier change, this time among more educated groups of the Catholic population. Subsequently, of course, the reinterpretation of French history in which Voltaire was a key player, together with the *philosophes*' more concerted attacks on religious intolerance in the 1750s and 1760s, may have had some role in changing the attitudes of educated people, perhaps helping to account for a new openness to Protestants in the lodges and in other forms of elite sociability. On the other hand, there were Catholic writers of considerable stature and popularity who were reinterpreting the religious wars and the St Bartholomew's Day massacre in a similar way. Leading Jansenists had long had doubts about the wisdom and efficacy of persecution, and were among the first to take a public position in favour of civil toleration. In the 1750s and after they were prepared to make use of language and arguments that they shared with the *philosophes*, and it is quite likely that if any books and pamphlets

had an influence on Catholic audiences, it was religious ones. Only with the Calas affair and the leading role played by Voltaire and his allies is there clear evidence that they were having a major impact. Yet even in the 1770s and 1780s, Catholic writers were playing just as great a part in the alliance supporting greater rights for the Huguenots. And the fact that most of the Paris *cahiers* stopped well short of the position taken by the *philosophes* also points to the limits of their influence.

We therefore need to look elsewhere for a full explanation of changing Catholic attitudes to Protestants and to religious toleration. This chapter suggests that the principal factor was the major shifts taking place in Catholic religious cultures and sensibilities. By ‘religious cultures’ I mean the whole bundle of religious beliefs, customs and practices that a given group adopted.¹ The term ‘religious sensibilities’ refers to the emotional aspects of religious culture, which might provoke negative or positive reactions without necessarily having a specific theological or doctrinal basis. Both terms are appropriately used in the plural, because there were significant variations from place to place and for different groups in the population.

Paradoxically, some of the key changes that eventually led towards religious toleration were products of the Catholic Reformation, which in its origins was partly an anti-Protestant movement. Jansenism was particularly important, both in its theology and in creating a situation where debates about religious dissent, the authority of the Church and the role of the state led French Catholics to rethink their position. Only later, and in conjunction with new religious attitudes, did the Enlightenment – understood primarily as a cultural rather than an intellectual movement – play a major role. As David Bien observed in his study of Toulouse, toleration was not the victory of the Enlightenment over Catholicism, since for most Catholics the two were entirely compatible, and indeed went together.² By the late eighteenth century, civil toleration was widely viewed as a Catholic virtue.

Catholic reform and Jansenism

One of the most important drivers of new attitudes towards religious difference was the growing emphasis that the Catholic Reformation, the reform movement spearheaded by the Council of Trent, placed on

¹ Philippe Büttgen, ‘Qu’est-ce qu’un culture confessionnelle? Essai d’historiographie (1998–2008)’, in *Religion ou confession*, ed. Büttgen and Duhamelle, 415–37; Kaspar von Greyerz, *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800* (Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 4–5.

² Bien, *Calas Affair*, p. 173.

personal faith.³ It was not enough, for these reformers, simply to adhere to the outward forms of religious observance: the Christian's internal state was crucial for salvation, and the sacraments were only efficacious if the believer were genuinely repentant. There was growing emphasis, in the later seventeenth and across the eighteenth century, on individual self-examination and private prayer as a preparation for the sacraments. Sermons and pious books placed increasing emphasis on personal conscience. Even within confraternities, the archetypal form of collective Catholic religiosity, new statutes drafted in the eighteenth century often prescribed more individual devotions, prayers to be said at home, regular confession.⁴ Silence in church was encouraged, to facilitate individual reflection and prayer, and many parishes attempted to remove distractions, restricting collections during services and limiting the number of masses said concurrently in different parts of the church.⁵ In 1751 the Jansenist-influenced parish of Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas published a book of offices containing blank pages to encourage lay people to write down their own pious reflections.⁶

A precondition for true repentance was a good understanding of the basic tenets of Catholic faith. Many parishes therefore created free schools, and some organised special lectures for young people.⁷ By the

³ There is a huge literature on the Catholic Reformation. Important overviews are Châtellier, *The Europe of the Devout*; Jean Delumeau, *Le Catholicisme entre Luther et Voltaire* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1971); Greyerz, *Religion and Culture*; Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal, 1540–1770* (Cambridge University Press, 1998); W. R. Ward, *Christianity under the Ancien Régime, 1648–1789* (Cambridge University Press, 1999). On France, Elisabeth Labrousse and Robert Sauzet, 'La Lente Mise en Place de la réforme tridentine (1598–1661)', in *Du christianisme flamboyant à l'aube des Lumières (XIV^e–XVIII^e siècle)*, ed. François Lebrun (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1988), pp. 417–43, vol. II of *Histoire de la France religieuse*, ed. Le Goff and Rémond.

⁴ Marie-Hélène Froeschlé-Chopard, 'La Dévotion au Sacré-Coeur. Confréries et livres de piété', *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, 217 (2000): 531–46; Froeschlé-Chopard, 'Religion', pp. 235–6; McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment*, pp. 299–302; Daniel Roche, 'La Mémoire de la mort: les arts de mourir dans la Librairie et la lecture en France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles', in *Les Républicains des lettres. Gens de culture et lumières au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1988), pp. 103–50 (p. 140). Marie-Hélène Froeschlé-Chopard, *Dieu pour tous et Dieu pour soi* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2006). Gaël Rideau, *De la religion de tous à la religion de chacun. Croire et pratiquer à Orléans au XVIII^e siècle* (Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2009), p. 237. See also Gaël Rideau, 'Vers une privatisation de la religion des laïcs au XVIII^e siècle: le cas d'Orléans', in *La Religion vécue*, ed. Laurence Croq and David Garrioch (Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2012), pp. 221–41.

⁵ Jean-Pierre Gutton, *Bruits et sons dans notre histoire* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2000), pp. 50–60; Marie-José Michel, *Jansénisme et Paris, 1640–1730* (Paris: Klincksieck, 2000), pp. 283–4, 91.

⁶ The copy of this book in the BNF belonged to a Madame Heduin, who lived in the rue Saint-Jacques. BNF 8-Z Le Senne-7959 (1), *Livre d'église à l'usage de la paroisse de St Jacques du Haut-Pas* (Paris, 1751).

⁷ Garrioch, *Parisian Bourgeoisie*, pp. 45–6; Lyon-Caen, 'Labrüe au paradis', pp. 123–5.

1690s, Jansenist scholars had translated thirty-two books of the Bible, even though translations were banned by Rome. In the early eighteenth century, according to Joachim Nemeitz, 'in all of Paris there is scarcely a House, where one does not find one [a Bible], at least the New Testament; especially as all the Sacred books are available in the book-shops, translated from the Vulgate by Le Maitre de Sacy'.⁸ The evidence of inventories bears out his observation, since the Sacy Bible was one of the books most commonly owned by educated Parisians.⁹ Jansenist authors also translated the breviary and produced numerous commentaries designed to help lay people understand the sacred texts. The insistence on the congregation understanding what was going on during the mass also led to the Paris Missal being translated into French in 1701, and across the eighteenth century many parishes, guilds and confraternities published the particular offices that they used, with parallel texts in Latin and French.¹⁰ In relatively cheap, small-format editions, these little books were accessible to a wide range of people.

The Jansenist emphasis on lay understanding led to changes, in some parishes, in the way ceremonies were conducted. Few priests went as far as the curé of Asnières, who arranged Gospel readings in French and even conducted masses in the vernacular, requiring the congregation to respond aloud. He had lay people, including women, do some of the readings. But in other Jansenist-dominated parishes particular care was taken to say the words of the mass loudly and clearly, and police spies reported that 'the Gospels are read entirely in French before being explained to the people', a practice that the Jansenist newspaper, the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, endorsed enthusiastically.¹¹ At Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, by

⁸ Michel, *Jansénisme et Paris*, pp. 191–2. *La Sainte Bible en latin et en français, avec l'explication du sens littéral et du sens spirituel*, 32 vols. (Paris: G. Desprez, 1686–1747). Nemeitz, *Séjour de Paris*, p. 466. See also McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 200–1.

⁹ Michel Marion, *Les Bibliothèques privées à Paris au milieu du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1978), p. 159.

¹⁰ Jeanne Ferté, *La Vie religieuse dans les campagnes parisiennes (1622–1695)* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1962), p. 279. For example, *L'Office de Saint Louis Roy de France et confesseur. A l'usage de Messieurs les Marchands merciers, grossiers, & joailliers de la ville de Paris* (Paris: Veuve Chardon, 1711); *Les Offices du Très-Saint Sacrement de l'autel et adorable nom de Jésus, avec la messe de l'Exaltation de la Ste Croix pour les confrères et soeurs de la confrérie royale du Très-Saint Sacrement et du Très-Saint Nom de Jésus, première érigée en l'église paroissiale de Saint-Sauveur à Paris* (Paris: Veuve G. Adam, 1716); *Recueil des offices et prières destinées à l'usage de la congrégation des hommes établie dans l'église paroissiale de St-Sulpice* (Paris, 1723); *Propre de l'Église royale et paroissiale de S. Paul* (Paris: Bullot, 1732); *Livre d'église à l'usage de la paroisse de St Jacques du Haut-Pas*.

¹¹ Cottret, *Jansénismes et Lumières*, pp. 250–3; Ferté, *La Vie religieuse*, p. 284; McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 42; Marie-José Michel, 'Clergé et pastorale jansénistes à Paris (1669–1730)', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 27 (1979), 177–97 (196); Michel, *Jansénisme et Paris*, p. 315.

1745 the congregation joined in singing the psalms once the choir had given them the cue.¹²

All over Paris, lay people played an ever-larger role in the parishes. They donated money for the new charity schools, a particularly popular cause among Jansenists because they offered the poor direct access to Scripture. They funded hospital beds for the poor and established 'charity companies' that actively assisted the clergy. Laymen played a greater role in running parish finances, and they came to feel that the Church in some sense belonged to them.¹³ This, together with a widespread Jansenist conviction that they were God's Elect, had unforeseen consequences. Louis XIV and some of the leading French bishops were hostile to the Jansenists, and purged first the episcopate, then in the 1730s and 1740s the ordinary clergy. Lay people then took up the cudgels and displayed what Church leaders called a 'spirit of independence and revolt', persuaded that they understood the true spirit of Catholicism. Jansenist catechisms, after all, emphasised that the Church comprised 'all believers, the Holy People ... with Christ as their Head'.¹⁴ The true Church, they now argued, was to be found among the people, and obedience to a clerical hierarchy was not binding. In the 1750s a series of scandals occurred when a number of lay men and women were denied the last rites because they refused to recant their Jansenist beliefs. They were, in a sense, taking the teaching of the Catholic Reformation to its logical extreme: if the faithful understood the basis of their faith, had examined their conscience and established a personal relationship with God, then they could make their own decisions.¹⁵ Since the Paris clergy were themselves bitterly divided in the early decades of the eighteenth century, the orthodox and the Jansenists each accusing the other of doctrinal deviance, lay people were challenged to make up their own minds.

The persecution experienced by the Jansenists led many of them to reject Augustine's argument that the state should use its power to enforce the true religion. Ironically, they came to agree with the Protestant pastor Pierre Bayle, who at the end of the seventeenth century had suggested that the line in Luke's Gospel 'compel them to enter' should not

¹² McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 40.

¹³ Cottret, *Jansénismes et Lumières*, pp. 253–63; David Garrioch, 'Parish Politics, Jansenism and the Paris Middle Classes in the Eighteenth Century', *French History*, 8 (1994), 403–19; Michel, *Jansénisme et Paris*, pp. 273–4, 85.

¹⁴ McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 15.

¹⁵ Garrioch, *Parisian Bourgeoisie*, pp. 44–6; Jacques Grès-Gayer, 'L'Idée d'Église selon les jansénistes et les protestants', in *Port-Royal et les protestants*, ed. Belin et al., pp. 35–56; B. Robert Kreiser, *Miracles, Convulsions, and Ecclesiastical Politics in Early Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Princeton University Press, 1978), esp. pp. 42–69; Daniel Roche, *La France des Lumières* (Paris: Fayard, 1993), p. 333. Lyon-Caen, *La Boîte à Perrette*, pp. 283–302.

be interpreted as justifying the use of force against heretics.¹⁶ Persecution reinforced the Jansenist emphasis on the overwhelming importance of individual conscience, through which they believed God communicated directly with each human being. Facing excommunication if they did not renounce their central beliefs, Jansenists insisted that conscience was paramount and quite a number died without the sacraments.¹⁷

Many now came to believe that this freedom of conscience should be extended to French Protestants, however misguided their beliefs. Precisely because of their austere approach to religion, and despite their antipathy towards Protestantism, some Jansenists had opposed forced conversion even in the 1690s and expressed concern about the profanation of the sacraments by Protestants who were forced to take them. Forced conversion could not produce true belief – which in Jansenist thought was a gift from God – and they saw the use of force as contrary to the teachings of Christ.¹⁸

In the new intellectual context of the mid eighteenth century, these views were buttressed by other considerations. In 1758 an influential tract by the abbé Jacques Tailhié and the Paris lawyer Gabriel-Nicolas Maulrot, both well-known Jansenist sympathisers, presented a powerful case for civil toleration that blended theological and pragmatic arguments with what we would term Enlightenment ones. They drew on a version of natural law to suggest that social peace depends on accepting differences between citizens, and they included religious belief among the basic rights of individuals. All societies, they added, had some kind of religion that captured a fraction of the truth, even if only Christianity knew God's full revelation, and therefore even inferior religions might lead people in the right direction. They also used arguments drawn directly from Enlightenment writers to critique abuses of royal power, suggesting among other things that heretics in France should enjoy the same tolerance that Christians demanded of rulers in other parts of the world. These points were combined with more traditional Jansenist arguments about the importance of God's grace in bringing people to the true religion and the impossibility of saving souls by forcing them to conform. In making these various points the authors of the tract cited Montesquieu, Hobbes, Pufendorf and Bayle.¹⁹

¹⁶ Annie Flandreau, 'La Tolérance civile des protestants vue par les *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* (1749–1790)', in *Port-Royal et les protestants*, ed. Belin *et al.*, pp. 439–59 (pp. 450–1); O'Brien, 'Jansenists on Civil Toleration', pp. 72–8.

¹⁷ Cottret, *Jansénismes et Lumières*, pp. 183–4. On the refusals of sacraments, Merrick, *Desacralization*, pp. 78–96; Van Kley, *Damiens Affair*, pp. 104–58; Lyon-Caen, *La Boîte à Perrette*, pp. 423–44.

¹⁸ McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 581; O'Brien, 'Jansenists on Civil Toleration', p. 72.

¹⁹ O'Brien, 'Jansenists on Civil Toleration', pp. 79–93.

Jansenists continued to play an important role in the debates over Protestant marriage. Already in the late 1760s the lawyer Adrien Le Paige, adviser to the prince de Conti and one of the most influential Jansenists of his generation, privately expressed his view that the persecution of the Huguenots had been excessive and unjust. His opinions may have influenced other Jansenist writers who entered the campaign for civil rights for Protestants in the mid 1770s. One was the Oratorian priest Louis Guidi, who argued in a much-discussed pamphlet that doctrinal differences between the churches were small and that persecution was the main impediment to the Huguenots 'returning' to the true Church.²⁰ These views were endorsed by the Jansenist paper, the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, which later cautiously welcomed Josef II's laws of 1781 granting religious toleration throughout the Austrian Empire. By the late 1780s, leading Jansenists seem to have been unanimous in supporting civil rights for France's Protestants. They stopped referring to them as 'heretics', instead using terms like 'straying brothers'. Their goal remained one of conversion, but this was to be achieved by example and persuasion. There was no question, nevertheless, of allowing the Reformed Church equality with the true Church: Protestants should enjoy the right to their own beliefs only in private.²¹ In 1765 the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* attacked the 'confusion of cults' that would arise if Protestants, Hindus, Muslims and Jews were all allowed to open places of worship, and this remained the Jansenist position up to the Revolution.²²

How far this thinking influenced the bulk of the Paris population is hard to say, but we do know that the persecution of the Jansenists had a big impact on Paris Catholics. Many were impressed by the piety and charity of Jansenist priests and by the miracles they appeared to work, in particular those of François de Pâris, whose tomb attracted large crowds.²³ Some, and probably many, were incensed by the refusals of the sacraments to those who were dying. Robert-François Damiens, a very ordinary man who committed an extraordinary crime when he knifed Louis XV in 1757, insisted under interrogation that 'one ought not refuse the sacraments to people who live well, and who pray to God

²⁰ O'Brien, 'Jansenists and Civil Toleration in France', pp. 185–9.

²¹ Cottret, *Jansénismes et Lumières*, pp. 195–200; Flandreau, 'La Tolérance civile', p. 453; O'Brien, 'The Jansenist Campaign for Toleration', p. 526.

²² Norman Ravitch, *The Catholic Church and the French Nation, 1589–1989* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 50.

²³ Kreiser, *Miracles*, pp. 70–180. See also Catherine-Laurence Maire, *Les Convulsionnaires de Saint-Médard. Miracles, convulsions et prophéties à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Gallimard/Julliard, 1985). Lyon-Caen, *La Boîte à Perrette*, pp. 101–18.

every day from morning till night'.²⁴ He was referring to the Jansenists, but would he and the many other people in Paris who shared this sentiment have extended it to Protestants? Some educated people clearly did: already in 1731 the Jansenist magistrate Saint-Martin, who was a churchwarden in the parish of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont, pointed out, in a discussion in the Parlement, the injustice of Protestants being forced to take the sacraments while Jansenists were denied them, an observation repeated in a more ironical vein in a pamphlet of 1779.²⁵ The parallels were made even more apparent by opponents of the Jansenists who likened them to Protestants. For Cardinal Fleury himself, the origins of the convulsions that were taking place at François de Pâris's tomb 'are to be found among the [Huguenot] fanatics of the Cévennes – there used to be a formal school for training them at Geneva. There are only too many links between Jansenists and Protestants.'²⁶ This view was not confined to the clergy. In 1729 a Paris cobbler, bitterly opposed to the Jansenists, interrupted a priest's lecture, crying 'for the last two years they teach only heresy from the pulpit in Saint-Benoît, let us leave this Babylon, it is full of heretics, they teach only heresies here'.²⁷ It has been suggested that Saint-Simon's condemnation of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in his memoirs written around 1747, marked a shift in his attitude directly provoked by the persecution of the Jansenists. He did not look more kindly on either Jansenism or Protestantism, but now rejected persecution as a tool for eliminating either.²⁸ By the second half of the eighteenth century, therefore, a significant number of devout Catholics in Paris had come to favour freedom of conscience for dissidents.

But another aspect of the Catholic Reformation led, unintentionally, in the same direction: a growing emphasis, in Church teaching, on morality as opposed to theological orthodoxy. This arose partly from the

²⁴ Van Kley, *Damiens Affair*, p. 45; for Damiens's typicality and its limits, pp. 13–51, 226–34.

²⁵ *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, 15 May 1731, p. 98. On Saint-Martin, Gaël Richard, 'La Bibliothèque janséniste d'un parlementaire: Armand de Saint-Martin (1659–1732)', *Chroniques de Port-Royal*, 53 (2004), 335–41. O'Brien, 'Jansenists and Civil Toleration in France', pp. 191–2.

²⁶ Dale K. Van Kley, 'Introduction', in *Religion and Politics in Enlightenment Europe*, ed. Van Kley and Bradley, p. 26. Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution*, pp. 61–3, 162–3.

²⁷ *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, 26 March 1729, pp. 2–3. For another example of Jansenists being called 'heretics', *Lettres du commissaire Dubuisson au marquis de Caumont, 1735–1741*, ed. Albert Rouxel (Paris: Arnould, [1882]), p. 75 (21 May 1735).

²⁸ Robert Favre, 'Critiques chrétiennes des croisades et de l'intolérance', *Dix-huitième siècle*, 34 (2002), 131–6 (131–2); Hélène Himelfarb, 'Saint-Simon face aux protestants: contradictions et arrière-pensées d'un "bon François"', in *Historiographie de la Réforme*, ed. Philippe Joutard (Paris, Neuchâtel and Montreal: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1977), pp. 127–47.

reformers' attention to the Christian's internal state. It was not enough to go to mass on Sunday and to conform in a mechanical way. It was vital to live a good life, to be a moral person. Once again, the Jansenists were in the forefront, espousing an austere personal morality. They condemned the vanity and corruption of the world, some quite fearlessly: one Jansenist priest was forced to flee the country after excluding the Regent's mistress from mass because of her immoral behaviour. Few priests would have taken that risk, but they did attempt to inculcate in their flock a set of moral principles that no Calvinist could object to.²⁹

But this emphasis on morality was by no means confined to Jansenists. The Oratorian priest Gaspard Terrasson, himself a leading Jansenist, nevertheless lamented that 'instead of discourses to explain the mysteries, preachers seem to abandon the righteous and their instruction, and occupy themselves only with retrieving and converting sinners'.³⁰ The *philosophe* Jean-François Marmontel made the same point from a different angle: 'In a Christian congregation the unbelievers are so few that it is not worth while attacking them. It is best ... to concentrate on the consequences dogma has for morality.' Morality was, he continued, the proper focus of sermons: '[I]t is about forming, not Christians, but good Christians ... to inspire men to kindness, tolerance [*indulgence*], love of one's neighbour, active charity, temperance, equity, honesty and love of peace.'³¹ Denunciations of Jansenist sermons in the 1730s and 1740s further encouraged preachers to avoid contentious doctrinal issues. Then by the 1750s, it was the Jesuits who were under surveillance. Priests who wanted to keep their positions found it safest to discuss theological questions only in very general terms and to focus on morality and Christian charity, which everyone could agree on, and to attack atheists and libertines.³²

This, once again, had unintended consequences. If morality and conscience were so important, then what was the fate of good people who happened to have grown up in a different religious tradition? The Jesuits had long argued that virtuous pagans might be saved, and certain of them reiterated this argument in the mid eighteenth century.³³ Some people

²⁹ Lyon-Caen, *La Boîte à Perrette*, pp. 329–40.

³⁰ Antoine Bernard, *Le Sermon au XVIIIe siècle. Étude historique et critique sur la prédication en France, de 1715 à 1789* (Paris: Albert Fontemoing, 1901), p. 63. Bernard does not give the date, but it was before 1749.

³¹ Jean-François Marmontel, 'Chaire, éloquence de la' (1755), in *Œuvres complètes de Marmontel*, 7 vols. (Paris: Belin, 1819–20), 4: 216–17, quoted in McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 70.

³² Bernard, *Le Sermon au XVIIIe siècle*, pp. 54, 123, 8–32, 522; McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 68–9.

³³ McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment*, p. 141; Northeast, *Parisian Jesuits*, pp. 156–62.

who thought about Protestants reasoned that if they were good people, behaving like true Christians, then they might be saved even if they were outside the Church. One of the great Jesuit preachers of Louis XIV's reign, Bourdaloue, 'believed good men among them [the Protestants] might be saved', according to an English clergyman who met him in 1683.³⁴ As eighteenth-century Parisians came to embrace a God of love, merciful rather than punishing, they found it abhorrent to consign to hell all the people who were born into other religious traditions and did not have the benefit of Catholic teaching. Such reflections were assisted by the proliferation of travel literature in the eighteenth century, often with positive portraits of non-Christian religions, and encouraged by growing awareness of the Chinese and of 'savages' in America and in the Pacific who had never had the benefit of Christian teaching.³⁵ Were they all damned? And what of the Ancients, for whom the eighteenth century had enormous respect? Were they condemned because they lived before Christ? We know that both the glazier Jacques-Louis Ménétra and the engraver's daughter Manon Phlipon worried about these issues.³⁶

Rousseau's *Émile* could have been their inspiration, yet so might Catholic writers like the popular author Bergier, a canon of Notre-Dame cathedral, who pointed out that since there was no definitive ruling by the Church, it was possible that good people might be saved even without the benefit of Christian teaching. Such works promoted, deliberately or not, a certain cultural relativism, which, if it was unlikely to induce readers to abandon Christianity, did encourage a view that other religions might possess part of the truth.³⁷ Such notions were attacked by both Calvinist and Catholic hardliners as 'indifferentism', seeing all religions as equivalent, although in reality very few people went that far. But by the 1770s some influential writers, like the Jansenist Louis Guidi, were prepared to concede that Protestants worshipped the same God as Catholics, even if they did so in a mistaken manner. François Para de Phanjas, in a work significantly entitled *Les Principes de la saine philosophie conciliés avec ceux de la religion* (Principles of Sound Philosophy Reconciled with Those of Religion), went so far as to allow into heaven not only virtuous pagans

³⁴ Lough, *France Observed*, p. 210.

³⁵ This was the message of Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes* (1721), letter XLVI, and later of Mme de Graffigny's novel *Lettres d'une Péruvienne* [1747].

³⁶ Jacques-Louis Ménétra, *Journal of My Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), p. 130; Claude Perroud (ed.), *Mémoires de Madame Roland*, 2 vols. (Paris: Plon, 1905), 1: 91.

³⁷ McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment*, pp. 141, 295–9; Dorinda Outram, *The Enlightenment*, 2nd edn (Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 118–19. For earlier debates around this idea see Alan Charles Kors, *Atheism in France, 1650–1729*, vol. I, *The Orthodox Sources of Disbelief* (Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 135–77.

and unbaptised children, but even heretics whose ignorance kept them from recognising the true Church.³⁸

Enlightened Catholicism

In these reflections we can see the appearance of what may be called ‘enlightened Catholicism’ (*catholicisme éclairé*). This was something wider, both in its social reach and in its cultural dimension, than the ‘Catholic Enlightenment’, a term used by many historians to describe intellectual and theological attempts to use the tools and concepts of the *philosophes* to defend religion. In France, the Catholic Enlightenment of the early 1700s appears to have petered out because of the bitterness of the divide between the radical philosophical movement and a ‘Counter-Enlightenment’ encouraged by a conservative Church leadership.³⁹ However, many – perhaps most – ordinary Paris Catholics did not see Enlightenment and religion as incompatible.

Enlightened Catholicism shared a number of features with both Catholic reformers and the *philosophes*. Foremost among them was a critique of what they called ‘superstition’, condemned in a famous treatise by the abbé Thiers in 1679.⁴⁰ The existence of containers of the Virgin’s

³⁸ O’Brien, ‘Jansenists and Civil Toleration in France’, pp. 187–8. François Para de Phanjas, *Les Principes de la saine philosophie conciliés avec ceux de la religion*, 2 vols. (Paris: Jombert, 1774), cited in McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment*, p. 141.

³⁹ Jeffrey D. Burson, ‘The Catholic Enlightenment in France from the *Fin de Siècle* Crisis of Consciousness to the Revolution, 1750–1789’, in *A Companion to the Catholic Enlightenment in Europe*, ed. Ulrich L. Lehner and Michael Printy (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 63–125; Ulrich L. Lehner, ‘The Many Faces of the Catholic Enlightenment’, in *Companion to the Catholic Enlightenment*, ed. Lehner and Printy, pp. 1–61 (p. 2); Mario Rosa, ‘Roman Catholicism’, in *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*, ed. Alan Charles Kors, 4 vols. (Oxford University Press, 2003), 3: 468–72 (p. 471). See also Jeffrey D. Burson, *The Rise and Fall of Theological Enlightenment. Jean-Martin de Prades and Ideological Polarization in Eighteenth-Century France* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2010). For the case that a Catholic Enlightenment did exist in France, Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment*, pp. 263–82. For other studies of the Catholic Enlightenment in Europe, see Plongeron, ‘Recherches sur l’“Aufklärung” catholique’; *Religion and Politics in Enlightenment Europe*, ed. Van Kley and Bradley. On the Counter-Enlightenment, see particularly McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment*, and Masseau, *Les Ennemis des philosophes*. On the wider European picture, Aston, *Christianity and Revolutionary Europe*, pp. 93–133. For revisions of the generally accepted view see Froeschlé-Chopard, ‘Religion’; Helena Rosenblatt, ‘The Christian Enlightenment’, in *Enlightenment, Reawakening and Revolution*, ed. Brown and Tackett, pp. 289–91.

⁴⁰ Jean-Baptiste Thiers, *Traité des superstitions selon l’Écriture sainte* (Paris: A. Dezallier, 1679). Bernard Dompnier (ed.), *La Superstition à l’âge des Lumières* (Paris: Champion, 1998). Thierry Wanegffelen, ‘Acculturation ecclésiastique et “religion populaire”’. Hommage à l’auteur du concept de “profanisation”, in *Mélanges à la mémoire de Michel Péronnet*, vol. I, *Clergé, identité et fidélité catholiques*, ed. Joël Fouilleron and Henri Michel (Montpellier: Presses universitaires de la Méditerranée, 2007), pp. 259–76.

milk, of several heads of John the Baptist, of at least three robes claimed to be the one worn by Christ and of two Holy Shrouds aroused scepticism among Catholics who prided themselves on their rationality, even before Voltaire's best-known attacks on religious superstition. 'The Romanists themselves', wrote John Breval in 1738, 'acknowledge their Faith to be grown extreme cool with regard to Relicks in general.'⁴¹ Even the clergy, while defending the veneration of relics, tended to play down their role in salvation and in everyday practice. The same applied to miracles: most Catholics believed that miracles happened, but increasingly they were sceptical until proof was produced, and even many of the 'middling sort' were scathing about popular credulity. In 1752, when a statue in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine was reported to have turned around, and large crowds came to pray beneath it, it was not a *philosophe* but an ironmonger living on the corner who scoffed, saying that it was the heads of the witnesses that had turned.⁴² Belief in both divine and demonic intervention in human affairs was declining, particularly in the cities.

For enlightened Catholics, the natural laws that Newton and his successors were progressively uncovering became further proof of God's existence. This was the central thrust of the abbé Pluche's best-selling eight-volume *Spectacle de la nature* of 1732–50. While the Catholic Church was slow to embrace Newton officially, by 1750 most educated French people accepted a broadly Newtonian view of the world.⁴³ They also agreed with widely read Catholic writers like the abbé Houtteville in the 1720s and the abbés Bergier and Gérard in the 1760s and 1770s that human reason, a gift bestowed by God, was a legitimate way of reaching truth and that it supported the central doctrines of Catholicism. 'One cannot be truly reasonable without being a Christian', asserted the nobleman Louis-Antoine de Caraccioli in 1763, and the popular novelist and playwright Baculard d'Arnaud agreed: 'A Christian is a man who is more reasonable than others. Reason and true religion can never be separated.'⁴⁴ Catholic apologists like Caraccioli used the techniques and

⁴¹ John Breval, *Remarks on Several Parts of Europe* (1738), quoted in McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 130.

⁴² Garrioch, *Making of Revolutionary Paris*, pp. 184–6; McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 208–20. On this and what follows see Froeschlé-Chopard, 'Religion'.

⁴³ Palmer, *Catholics and Unbelievers*, pp. 11, 106–7; Rosenblatt, 'Christian Enlightenment', pp. 290–1. J. B. Shank, *The Newton Wars and the Beginning of the French Enlightenment* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

⁴⁴ Rosenblatt, 'Christian Enlightenment', pp. 290–1. Claude-François-Alexandre Houtteville, *La Vérité de la religion chrétienne prouvée par les faits* (1722), cited by Sylviane Albertan-Coppola, 'Apologetics', in *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*, ed. Kors, 1: 58–63 (60–3; Caraccioli quotation, 62) and 'Houtteville', in *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*, ed. Kors, 2: 222–3. Alain Cabantous, 'Bergier', in *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*, ed. Kors, 1: 139–40. Burson, 'The Catholic Enlightenment in France', p. 109. On the

the language of the *philosophes* in order to combat their influence and increasingly moved into territory that the *philosophes* had attempted to make their own, insisting not only on the reasonableness of Christianity but on its utility.⁴⁵

All this was part of a broad shift in the belief system of many French Catholics in the eighteenth century. The new, 'enlightened' view of the world, more confident and more human-centred, with its strong belief in progress and advancing civilisation, was reflected in a reduced emphasis, both in religious teaching and as far as we can tell in people's everyday awareness, on hell and on purgatory. By 1787 a preacher could complain that 'even the Christian, while he still believes in hell, only believes in it a little'. People focused overwhelmingly, he added, on religion's 'consoling truths' and believed in a God of mercy rather than one who punished sinners.⁴⁶ References to 'Providence' and to the 'Supreme Being' proliferated, even in pious didactic works. The 'natural religion' endorsed by many of the *philosophes* was very appealing to French Catholics because they saw it as the essence of Christian morality, not because they were losing their faith. For them, it did not replace divine revelation but complemented it.⁴⁷

The embodiment of this enlightened Catholicism, for some educated people, was Julie, the heroine of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's best-selling novel *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, who became a role model for many late eighteenth-century women. She admitted candidly that she was a firm believer in divine Providence. 'The God I serve is a benevolent God, a father: what touches me is his kindness; it obliterates, in my eyes, all his other attributes.' She steered a middle way between the proud contempt for others that characterised those she termed 'the professionally devout', people 'devoid of humanity', and the equally intolerant scepticism of the *philosophes*. 'Who conforms best to virtue, the philosopher with his grand principles or the Christian in his simplicity?' At the same time she rejected mysticism and embraced enlightened values: 'I loved virtue since my childhood, and I developed

importance of these writers in Orleans see Rideau, *De la religion de tous à la religion de chacun*, p. 292. Baculard d'Arnaud, *Coligny*, p. iv.

⁴⁵ Cottret, *Jansénismes et Lumières*; Gargett, 'Caveirac'; Martine Jacques, 'L.-A. Caraccioli et son oeuvre: la mesure d'une avancée de la pensée chrétienne vers les Lumières', *Dix-huitième siècle*, 34 (2002), 289–302. For further examples see the other essays in the special number of *Dix-huitième siècle*, 34 (2002).

⁴⁶ Quoted in Georges Minois, *Histoire des enfers* (Paris: Fayard, 1991), p. 299. See also Delumeau, *Rassurer et protéger*, pp. 509–22.

⁴⁷ Froeschlé-Chopard, 'Religion'. Martin, *Une Religion des livres*, p. 113. Palmer, *Catholics and Unbelievers*, pp. 39–41.

my reason at all times.’⁴⁸ The compatibility of these sentiments with educated Catholic values was no doubt one of the reasons for the novel’s popularity.

A real-life example of the way that ‘enlightened Catholicism’, combined with Jansenism, influenced educated Paris Catholics is provided by Marie-Catherine-Renée Darcel, whom we have already met as someone with a wide circle of Protestant friends. Born in Rouen in 1737, she moved to Paris after her marriage to Sarrasin de Maraise in 1767. She was unusual in being a gifted accountant, running the accounts of Oberkampf’s enormously successful manufactory, but in her religious views, which are apparent both from her library and from her correspondence, she appears to have been fairly typical of her milieu. A pious Catholic, she referred repeatedly to the workings of ‘that divine Providence that the Universe proclaims’ and that ‘is also apparent in all the events of our lives’. ‘If we are attentive’, she added, ‘we can see its hand on a host of occasions ... since everything is part of its plan and it seeks the happiness of its masterpiece of creation.’⁴⁹ The inventory of her library, drawn up after her death in 1822, lists 115 religious books – 21 per cent of the total – including many of the key Jansenist writings of the seventeenth century. At the same time, Darcel was a full participant in the culture of the late Enlightenment. She owned a copy of the *Encyclopédie* and works by Diderot, Montesquieu, Raynal and even Helvétius. Like many of her contemporaries she was an anglophile and possessed, among other books, Richardson’s *Clarissa* and the works of Alexander Pope. She was keenly interested in science and medicine, and took very seriously the recommendations of doctors on child-rearing. Like many educated Parisians of her generation, she was strongly in favour of breast-feeding. She was a keen follower of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, particularly influenced by his educational book *Émile*. And she tried to arrange good marriages for her children, while insisting in good Enlightenment fashion that they had ‘a right to love’.⁵⁰

This combination of Jansenist-influenced piety and enlightened culture seems to have been very common among the Parisian bourgeoisie. It typified not only the very rich like Darcel and her husband, but many more modest manufacturers, merchants and even artisans. The brewer André Acloque, a churchwarden in his parish and a defender of the monarchy during the Revolution, wrote a personal *cahier* in 1789 asking for, among

⁴⁸ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *La Nouvelle Héloïse, ou Lettres de deux amans, habitans d’une petite ville au pied des Alpes* (London [Paris], 1760), Part VI, letter VIII. On the impact of *La Nouvelle Héloïse* see particularly Darnton, ‘Readers Respond to Rousseau’, pp. 242–9.

⁴⁹ Chassagne (ed.), *Une femme d’affaires*, p. 116 (23 June 1783).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

other reforms, freedom of the press, the abolition of slavery and of barriers to trade and the transfer of the revenues of rich abbeys to the poor.⁵¹ The contents of private libraries sometimes point to the same combination of attitudes. The vast collection of Jean-Jacques Dortous de Mairan, a member of the Académie française, suggests that he was what Daniel Roche terms a ‘philosophe chrétien’. Far removed along the social spectrum, the master mason François Bertrand was a leader of the confraternity of the Blessed Virgin at Saint-Germain-l’Auxerrois, but owned the complete works of Voltaire. Even hardcore Jansenists, theoretically opposed to everything ‘philosophical’, in reality had a far more nuanced relationship to the Enlightenment.⁵² Paris freemasons, meanwhile, who are often considered the embodiment of enlightened values, embraced specifically Catholic practices, observing the feast day of St John the Baptist and for much of the century insisting on members attending mass. Many women and men in Paris participated fully in ‘the Enlightenment as a way of life’, while maintaining strong personal religious beliefs.⁵³ None of this was as surprising at the time as it might seem to us, nourished as we have been on a history that imagines the French Enlightenment as intrinsically anti-religious. Some of its writers were, and a religious Counter-Enlightenment certainly also existed, but neither camp was monolithic, and many pious Catholics combined elements of both.⁵⁴

We know that a wider public was also touched by this combination of enlightenment and Jansenism. As Philippe Martin has pointed out, by the 1770s the majority of the French population comprised people who were neither intellectuals nor entirely uneducated, and who ‘developed an enlightened approach to religion’.⁵⁵ Jacques-Louis Ménétra, whose autobiography covers the last four decades of the century, read Rousseau and

⁵¹ Chassin, *Les Élections et les cahiers*, 2: 480–2. Garrioch, *Parisian Bourgeoisie*, pp. 141–2.

⁵² Roche, *Les Républicains des lettres*, p. 77. MC LXXVI 508, 15 April 1788. Lyon-Caen, *La Boîte à Perrette*, pp. 330–41.

⁵³ Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire, ‘Lumières maçonniques et christianisme’, *Dix-huitième siècle*, 34 (2002), 27–40; Delumeau, *Le Catholicisme*, pp. 312–13; David Garrioch, ‘From Religious to Secular Sociability: Confraternities and Freemasonry in Eighteenth-Century Paris’, in *Sociability and its Discontents: Civil Society, Social Capital, and their Alternatives in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Nick Terpstra, Mark Jurdjevic and Nicholas Eckstein (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), pp. 313–26; Margaret C. Jacob, *Living the Enlightenment. Freemasonry and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991). The phrase ‘The Enlightenment as a Way of Life’ comes from Norman Hampson, *The Enlightenment* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), p. 128.

⁵⁴ A point made strongly by Didier Masseau, ‘La Position des apologistes conciliateurs’, *Dix-huitième siècle*, 34 (2002), 121–30.

⁵⁵ Philippe Martin, ‘1770–1780: Une vie religieuse renouvelée?’, in *Lumières, Religions et Laïcité*, ed. Louis Châtellier, Claude Langlois and Jean-Paul Willaime (Paris: Riveneuve, 2009), pp. 72–97 (p. 74). See also, in the same volume, Timothy Tackett, ‘Réflexions sur les origines de la Constitution Civile du Clergé’, pp. 199–210 (p. 201).

eventually abandoned conventional religious practice for a form of deism, but like Darcel he was, as Daniel Roche has shown, strongly influenced by Jansenism.⁵⁶ Ménétra was a most unusual character, but his example shows that quite humble people did have access to sources of enlightened thought and might move towards a kind of religious humanism. Literacy rates in Paris were high, and by the 1770s and 1780s novels had become popular across a wide range of social groups. Many of these novels contained enlightened ideas, though whether their readers adopted these, and in what form, is not certain. The defenders of orthodoxy, at any rate, were worried about their impact: the ‘lessons of the *nouvelle philosophie*’, claimed the Assembly of the Clergy in 1785, were to be found ‘even in the workshops of the artisan’.⁵⁷ They were quite possibly right.

Yet religious practice in Paris remained strong. Wage-earners, if they had any books at all, owned devotional works, and the publishing of pious books remained healthy until the Revolution. Catholic death rites remained of enormous importance for the ordinary people of Paris.⁵⁸ The Jubilee of 1776, as Friedrich Melchior Grimm observed, ‘was celebrated in Paris with a devotion and a consistency that would surprise in times less corrupt than ours’.⁵⁹ In the early 1780s Louis-Sébastien Mercier commented that the common people and the ‘petits bourgeois’ went regularly to mass, and noted the enthusiasm with which Corpus Christi was celebrated: ‘Who could believe, that the city enclosed a single unbeliever within its walls.’⁶⁰ In July 1789, Parisians packed the churches for the funerals of those killed at the Bastille and again for the blessing of the flags of the National Guard a month later.⁶¹ Corpus Christi continued to attract large crowds until 1791, and even in 1793, in the

⁵⁶ Daniel Roche, ‘Jacques-Louis Ménétra, une manière de vivre au XVIII^e siècle’, in Ménétra, *Journal de ma vie*, ed. Roche, pp. 405–24.

⁵⁷ McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment*, p. 21. On reading in Paris see Roche, *People of Paris*, pp. 197–233, and more generally, Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, pp. 69–91.

⁵⁸ Martin, *Une Religion des livres*; Roche, *People of Paris*, pp. 215–6; Suire, *Sainteté et Lumières*, pp. 33–5; Jean de Viguerie, *Le Catholicisme des Français*, p. 284. Joseph Clarke, *Commemorating the Dead in Revolutionary France. Revolution and Remembrance, 1789–1799* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 45–8.

⁵⁹ Friedrich Melchior Grimm, *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et critique par Grimm et de Diderot, Raynal, Meister*, 16 vols. (Paris, 1877–82), 2: 244–45 (April 1776). His observation was confirmed by Siméon-Prospér Hardy: BN MS fr. 6682, fols. 106 (15 August 1775), 195 (24 March 1776).

⁶⁰ Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, 4: 160; 3: 79.

⁶¹ Clarke, *Commemorating the Dead*, pp. 1–2, 52–64. BNF Nouvelles acquisitions françaises [n a fr.] MS 2680, fols. 174–6. BNF Lb40 1640, *Fête funèbre célébrée par les District et Commune de Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet, le 8 Août 1789, en l’honneur des braves Citoyens qui sont morts pour la défense de la liberté* [Paris: 1789].

ultra-revolutionary Faubourg Saint-Marcel and in the plebeian quarters of the city centre, the streets were adorned with tapestries despite orders to the contrary by the revolutionary committees. People continued to fall to their knees when the sacraments passed through the streets, often now escorted by a detachment of the National Guard, on their way to the sick and dying. The devotion was greatest, according to one police report, among those ‘of the lowest class, who are called Sans-culottes’.⁶² All the signs are that while enlightened thinking, in some form, was reaching an ever-growing number of Parisians and moving some to reject orthodox Christian belief, it was having little impact on most people’s attachment to religion.

Significant changes in behaviour were taking place, of course, yet many of them are as readily explained by changes in social norms or in belief as by the hypothesis of ‘dechristianisation’. The omission from wills of religious formulae and of requests for specific kinds of burials may point to changes in belief, but is equally compatible with a different idea of what should go into a will.⁶³ Rising illegitimacy rates and growing use of family limitation certainly indicate that many people in Paris were rejecting Church teaching in sexual matters. The decline in bequests to religious institutions and in the numbers of priests and nuns points to the declining place of the Church in eighteenth-century French society and to changing choices of career and marriage options.⁶⁴ Yet we should not automatically conclude that people were rejecting all of the Church’s doctrines, far less turning away from religious belief altogether. The same applies to anticlericalism, often cited as evidence of a rejection of religion, yet as Joseph Clarke has noted, incidents of anticlericalism were most often provoked by dissatisfaction with the way the clergy behaved, not by rejection of religion. The son of a Paris furniture-maker, Charles Alexis Alexandre, recalled in his memoirs that ‘[W]e mocked ... the clergy, whom we did

⁶² Quotation in Reinhard, *Nouvelle Histoire de Paris*, p. 301 – no source is given. On Corpus Christi, Burstin, ‘Une Révolution à l’oeuvre’, p. 254; Clarke, *Commemorating the Dead*, pp. 46–7, 54, 85; Timothy Tackett, *When the King Took Flight* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), pp. 102–18. On people kneeling, John Quincy Adams, *The Diary of John Quincy Adams*, 2 vols., ed. David Grayson Allen, Marc Friedlaender, Robert J. Taylor and Celeste Walker (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 1: 227 (February 1785).

⁶³ Dominique Dinet, ‘La Ferveur religieuse dans la France du XVIIIe siècle’, in *Au coeur religieux de l’époque moderne. Études d’histoire* (Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 2011), pp. 373–409 (p. 374), originally published in *Revue d’histoire de l’Église de France*, 79 (1993), 275–99. Rideau, ‘Pour une relecture globale du testament’.

⁶⁴ On these developments, Vovelle, *Piété baroque*; Timothy Tackett, ‘L’Histoire sociale du clergé diocésain de la France du XVIIIe siècle’, *Revue d’histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 27 (1979), 198–234; Julia, ‘Des indicateurs de longue durée’, pp. 183–90, 192. Delumeau, *Le Catholicisme*, pp. 326–40.

not confuse with religion.⁶⁵ Historians, like Catholic apologists at the time, have too readily conflated changes in behaviour with a decline in belief.⁶⁶

Certainly, in some parts of eighteenth-century France fewer people were attending mass regularly or even taking communion at Easter and Christmas.⁶⁷ Although the evidence for Paris is anecdotal, the numbers of practising Catholics probably declined far more significantly there, since the hold of the Church over the faithful was seriously eroded by population growth and geographical mobility. This, together with changing attitudes towards religious piety, meant that people now had a choice. Whereas in the seventeenth century, failure to participate regularly in religious worship would lead to social ostracism, by the mid eighteenth century people in Paris did not risk being publicly reprimanded by the clergy, threatened by the secular authorities or regarded as deviants by their neighbours. Some of those who abandoned religious practice were no doubt unbelievers, while others may have continued to believe in God and in life after death, as Ménétra did, or even in the necessity of certain religious acts in order to gain salvation, without seeing everyday piety as a prerequisite. Of course, the freedom to abandon church-going and to express irreligious sentiments made a deliberate rejection of belief more conceivable, especially when there were well-known examples among the intellectual and social elites. Despite all this, religious practice and Catholic belief clearly remained strong in Paris, and many people saw both as entirely compatible with an enlightened world view.⁶⁸

Enlightened Catholicism led towards greater acceptance of religious difference in a number of ways. Certain strands of religious thought

⁶⁵ Clarke, *Commemorating the Dead*, pp. 45–8. Bibliothèque Thiers, MS Masson 211, fol. 60.

⁶⁶ For similar critiques of ‘dechristianisation’ see Nigel Aston, *Religion and Revolution in France, 1780–1804* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2000), pp. 55–6; Bell, *Cult of the Nation*, p. 37; Chartier, *Cultural Origins*, pp. 92–110; Claude Langlois, ‘Déchristianisation, sécularisation et vitalité religieuse. Débats de sociologues et pratiques d’historiens’, in *Säkularisierung, Dechristianisierung, Rechristianisierung in neuzeitlichen Europa: Bilanz und Perspektiven der Forschung*, ed. H. Lehmann (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), pp. 154–73; François Laplanche, ‘Sécularisation, déchristianisation, laïcisation en France’, in *Säkularisierung, Dechristianisierung, Rechristianisierung*, ed. Lehmann, pp. 179–81. Marc Venard, ‘Conclusion’, in *Histoire du christianisme*, vol. IX, *L’Âge de raison (1629–1750)* (Paris: Desclée, 1997), pp. 1139–42.

⁶⁷ See, for example, Dominique Dinet, ‘Une Déchristianisation provinciale au XVIIIe siècle: le diocèse d’Auxerre’, in *Au coeur religieux*, pp. 349–71 (p. 355), originally published in *Histoire, Économie et Société* (1991), 467–89.

⁶⁸ I discuss this further in ‘Cultures et idéologies religieuses à Paris au XVIIIe siècle’, in *Les Histoires de Paris. De l’âge classique à la modernité (XVIIe–XVIIIe siècles)*, 2 vols., ed. Thierry Belleguic and Laurent Turcot (Paris: Hermann, 2012), 1:115–28.

coincided with, and perhaps even gave rise to, those running through the Enlightenment. As we have seen, some Catholics influenced either by the Jesuits or by Jansenism argued that other religions might contain important truths.⁶⁹ Growing numbers of Catholics conceded that it was possible to be saved outside the Church. Utilitarian arguments for religion, increasingly used by defenders of orthodox Catholicism in the second half of the eighteenth century, could lead people to think, with Montesquieu, ‘that it is less the truth or the falsity of a dogma that makes it useful or pernicious ... than the use or the abuse made of it’.⁷⁰ Eighteenth-century humanitarianism led in the same direction. Educated Europeans believed in civilisation and in progress, which meant leaving behind the barbarous punishments and brutish customs of the unenlightened past. These now included, for many devout Catholics, the persecution of people with different religious beliefs, and that predisposed them to support Voltaire’s campaigns to rehabilitate Calas and later Sirven. They were adepts of what a leading proponent of reform, Simon-Nicolas-Henri Linguet, in 1771 termed ‘purified’ Catholicism (*le catholicisme épuré*), endorsing the government policy of turning a blind eye to the Protestant presence and protecting their rights as citizens.⁷¹ Such people, their views reinforced by religious writers like the abbé Gourcy, the abbé Rose and Jean Bardou, saw true Catholicism as a progressive force, defending religious toleration and promoting civic virtue.⁷² An example is Élisabeth d’Aliez, the wife of a president of the Parlement of Toulouse and a woman in close contact with Paris circles. She advised her son, studying in the capital, to be tolerant in religious matters, since ‘the one who looks for a strayed lamb does not bring it back by the whip; he carries it on his back, caresses it, and tries to attach it to himself by his benevolence’.⁷³ She was a practising Catholic but an admiring reader of Voltaire, Rousseau and Helvétius. In Paris, the abbé Véri, another admirer of Voltaire, was

⁶⁹ For the ambiguous but powerful influence of the Jesuits in the Catholic Enlightenment, Burson, ‘The Catholic Enlightenment in France’, pp. 76, 90–91. For the Jansenist influence on Diderot and Rousseau, Cottret, *Jansénismes et Lumières*, pp. 76–81, 88–91.

⁷⁰ Montesquieu, *De l’Esprit des lois* (1748), Book XXIV, chapters 10, 19.

⁷¹ *Mémoire à consulter, et Consultation sur la validité d’un mariage contracté en France suivant les usages des protestants*, [12 November 1771] (Paris: L. Cellot, 1771), quoted in Daniel Baruch, *Simon Nicolas Henri Linguet, ou l’Irrécupérable* (Paris: François Bourin, 1991), p. 127.

⁷² Bien, *Calas Affair*, p. 178. [François-Antoine-Étienne de Gourcy], *Essai sur le bonheur* (Vienna, 1778); Jean-Baptiste Rose, *La Morale évangélique, comparée à celle des différentes sectes de religion* (Besançon: Moutard, 1772); Jean Bardou, *L’Esprit des apologistes de la religion chrétienne*, 3 vols. (Bouillon: Jean Brasseur, 1776), cited in Burson, ‘The Catholic Enlightenment in France’, p. 112.

⁷³ Louis Battifol, ‘Une Présidente de province au dix-huitième siècle’, *La revue hebdomadaire*, 17th year (March 1908), 211–13; Bien, *Calas Affair*, pp. 170–1.

nevertheless shocked by the *philosophe's* praise for Louis XIV, given that monarch's persecution of the Huguenots.⁷⁴

Even people who were staunch defenders of the Church came, in the second half of the eighteenth century, to support civil toleration for France's Protestants. Already in the late 1750s, Élie-Catherine Fréron, in the *Année littéraire*, a periodical sometimes seen as representative of the Counter-Enlightenment, thought priests should consent to marry Protestants without a religious ceremony. He agreed with the abbé Yvon, author of a book on freedom of conscience, that while the Church should not tolerate error, religious persecution was incompatible with civil society and 'makes Christianity appear odious'.⁷⁵ Fréron and Yvon were precocious in taking this view, but were soon joined by other leading Catholics. In 1767 the King's own preacher, the abbé Le Couturier, was condemning the Crusades on the same grounds, and ten years later the leading barrister and royal censor Armand-Gaston Camus recommended for publication a pamphlet by the abbé Gacon de Louancy which advocated civil toleration, commenting that 'reason, or rather enlightened religion, could not but approve it'. Camus did not support full religious freedom, fearing that it would undermine the Catholic Church, but – strongly influenced by Jansenism as well as by enlightened thought – he argued that royal authority should not be concerned with individual conscience unless public order was at risk.⁷⁶

A common enemy

There was a further way in which Catholic religious cultures were being redefined, particularly after 1750. In the seventeenth century, they had been strongly and sometimes deliberately constructed in opposition to Protestantism.⁷⁷ For example, the cult of St Denis, a key Paris saint,

⁷⁴ Daniel Mornet, *Les Origines intellectuelles de la Révolution française*, p. 403.

⁷⁵ Review of [Claude Yvon], *La Liberté de conscience resserrée dans les bornes légitimes* (1754), *Année littéraire*, 7 (1756), 313–30 (quotation 317). On Fréron's views, Jean Balcou, 'L'Année littéraire entre christianisme et Lumières (1754–1763)', *Dix-huitième siècle*, 34 (2002), 99–106 (105).

⁷⁶ Wallace Kirsop, 'Armand-Gaston Camus, censeur royal, et les statut des protestants à la fin de l'Ancien Régime', in *Le Livre du monde et le monde des livres. Mélanges en l'honneur de François Moureau* (Paris: PUPS, 2012), pp. 455–65. On Camus, Michael P. Fitzsimmons, *The Parisian Order of Barristers and the French Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), pp. 29–31, and Bell, *Lawyers and Citizens*, pp. 170, 93. On Le Couturier, Favre, 'Critiques chrétiennes des croisades', p. 134.

⁷⁷ There is a large literature on this process, which many historians have called 'confessionalisation'. Peter Hersche has argued that the relatively austere nature of French Catholicism was a result of the Protestant presence: *Musse und Verschwendung. Europäische Gesellschaft und Kultur im Barockzeitalter* (Freiburg: Herder, 2006), cited in Joachim

had been encouraged by some religious orders as part of the campaign against the Huguenots, as had the confraternities of the Name of Jesus and of the Blessed Sacrament.⁷⁸ Still in 1725, when Anne Lafosse was miraculously cured during a religious procession in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, the Archbishop pronounced it a miracle intended 'to confound the libertines and the Protestants, both enemies of the Real Presence'.⁷⁹ Some orthodox Catholics, as we have seen, continued in the 1730s to see the fight against Jansenism as a defence against Protestant influence.

But in the second half of the eighteenth century, growing numbers of Catholics were becoming persuaded that, as Louis Guidi concluded in 1775, the problem in France was not Protestantism but unbelief.⁸⁰ Attacks by churchmen on 'libertines' and 'atheists' were a recurrent theme throughout the century – as we saw earlier, they were a safe topic for a sermon – but they took on new meaning as deism and anticlericalism began to be expressed more publicly.⁸¹ Whereas seventeenth-century unbelievers mostly kept their beliefs to themselves, in late eighteenth-century Paris many well-known people expressed their scepticism publicly. The government minister Turgot did not attend mass, and there were public scandals when prominent people like the prince de Conti, the *salonnière* Madame du Deffand and the permanent secretary of the Académie française, Charles Duclos, refused the last rites.⁸² Atheistic books circulated widely, even when banned.⁸³

Whaley, 'Religion', in *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Peter H. Wilson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), pp. 176–91 (p. 183).

⁷⁸ Jean-Marie Le Gall, 'Culte de saint Denis et identité parisienne aux XVIe–XVIIe siècles', in *Les Chrétiens dans la ville*, ed. Jacques-Olivier Boudon and Françoise Thelamon (Mont-Saint-Aignan: Presses des universités de Rouen et du Havre, 2006), pp. 143–65; Denis Richet, 'Aspects socio-culturels des conflits religieux à Paris dans la seconde moitié du XVIe siècle', *Annales: ESC*, 32 (1977), 764–89 (40–1). *Articles accordez et jurez entre les confreres de la confrérie du Saint Nom de Jésus, ordonnée en l'église messieurs Saint Gervais et Saint Prothais de la Ville de Paris et autres églises de ladite ville. Pour la manutention de la religion catholique, apostolique et romaine, sous l'autorité du roy, des princes et magistrats catholiques* (Paris: Guillaume Bichon, 1590). *Histoire des indulgences, et des Jubilez, avec des instructions pour en expliquer le Dogme, et Où il est encore traité de l'origine des Confréries* (Paris: Charles Robustel, 1702), p. 185.

⁷⁹ Kreiser, *Miracles*, pp. 74–5. The lawyer Barbier made the same point: *Journal*, 1: 219. The miracle was also claimed to show divine support for the Jansenist curé and for the Archbishop, who was in dispute with Rome: Chaunu *et al.*, *Le Basculement religieux de Paris*, pp. 183–4.

⁸⁰ O'Brien, 'Jansenists and Civil Toleration in France', p. 188.

⁸¹ Kors, *Orthodox Sources of Disbelief*. Alan Charles Kors, 'Atheism', in *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*, ed. Kors, 1: 94–7.

⁸² McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 103; McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment*, p. 262.

⁸³ Darnton, *Forbidden Best-sellers*, pp. 60–71.

The way the *philosophes* exaggerated their own influence was a further contributing factor. Jean Le Rond d'Alembert's self-aggrandising claim that they had been primarily responsible for driving the Jesuits from France is a good example. Another is the opposition between piety and philosophy implicit in the question that Grimm appended to his observation, quoted earlier, that the 1776 Jubilee was celebrated with a surprising 'devotion and consistency': 'Does this religious effervescence', he asked, 'prove that philosophy has made less progress than we thought?'⁸⁴ At the same time, every educated Parisian knew of Voltaire's attacks on the Church, as no doubt did many uneducated people, particularly since the Church demonised him in return: there were pious books that recounted his miserable death, eating his own excrement. Regardless of the actual numbers of atheists, the frequency of attacks on them added to the impression that they were everywhere. 'Unbelievers are becoming every day more numerous', asserted the abbé Trublet in the *Mercure* in 1759.⁸⁵ Certainly this was what many people believed, among them the papal nuncio, who in 1766 wrote of the 'libertinage, deism and irreligion' of Paris, even while recognising that piety was also very widespread.⁸⁶

The common wisdom that irreligion was rampant encouraged the sentiment that pious individuals of any faith, particularly a Christian one, were better than those with none. Voltaire's arch-enemy, Élie-Catherine Fréron, wrote approvingly in 1769 of 'authors who wish to see fraternity reigning among all the inhabitants of the earth, whatever region they inhabit, whatever religion they possess, and particularly among subjects of the same realm and worshippers of the same God'.⁸⁷ Advocates of civil toleration appealed to these fears: continued persecution of the Huguenots, wrote Chrétien Guillaume de Lamoignon de Malesherbes in 1785, 'would result not in Catholic belief but in indifference for religion and scandalous contempt for oaths and for the sacraments'.⁸⁸ Malesherbes sympathised with the *philosophes*, but on this particular point their bitter foe, the devoutly Catholic Louis-Antoine de Caraccioli, agreed with him: if the Huguenots were allowed to practise their religion, 'there would be no risk of them becoming deists, even atheists, the almost certain

⁸⁴ Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, *Sur la destruction des Jésuites en France* (1766), in *Oeuvres complètes de d'Alembert*, 5 vols. (Geneva: Slatkine, 1967), vol. II, esp. p. 64. Grimm, *Correspondance littéraire*, 2: 244–5 (April 1776).

⁸⁵ Quoted in Alain Niderst, 'Modernisme et catholicisme de l'abbé Trublet', *Dix-huitième siècle*, 34 (2002), 303–13 (309).

⁸⁶ McMahan, *Enemies of the Enlightenment*, pp. 18–53; McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 96.

⁸⁷ *Année littéraire*, 4 (1769), 98.

⁸⁸ Grosclaude, 'Comment Malesherbes élabore sa doctrine', p. 163.

alternative for persons to whom all religious practice is forbidden'.⁸⁹ To combat the philosophical foe, many defenders of the faith were prepared to set aside earlier enmities. This did not efface theological differences, and real hardliners were unlikely to embrace the Huguenots, but for enlightened Catholics the concern about atheism reinforced increasingly widespread positive stereotypes of pious Protestants.

We should not assume, either, that those who opposed the *philosophes* would automatically take a stand against religious toleration. Jansenists were as hostile to the *philosophes* as any Catholic apologists, yet they were precocious supporters of civil toleration, again primarily on religious grounds. Louis-Antoine de Caraccioli was vituperative about the 'small-mindedness' of the *philosophes* and attacked 'proud reason' as a way of approaching truth, yet he supported toleration for the Huguenots on religious grounds. In his book of 1785, *Jésus-Christ, par sa tolérance, modèle des Législateurs*, even the title indicated that he saw it as consistent with the actions of Jesus himself. But he also argued, as Jansenists long had, that force was incapable of producing true conversions and that only God could lead people to the light (not coincidentally, he used the word *lumières*). This did not mean he was in favour of complete religious freedom: far from it, he warned against permitting any other religion to enter into competition with the Catholic Church, and he strongly opposed complete freedom of expression: error should not, he argued with explicit reference to the *philosophes*, be allowed a public airing.

The majority of the Paris population remained Catholic, despite falling church attendance and the greater acceptability of religious scepticism and indifference. And for these people, changes in religious cultures and sensibilities – not only in beliefs, but in the whole range of practices, attitudes and feelings associated with religion – were the most important factor in encouraging positive attitudes towards religious toleration and hence in reducing conflict between Catholics and Protestants in Paris. The changes were long-term ones, arising particularly from attempts to reform French Catholicism, but they were also fostered by a social and political context that encouraged the laity to develop their own religious views. The strength of Jansenism in Paris gave the Catholic Reformation a particular flavour there, and the persecution of Jansenist clergy and laity led both supporters and the uncommitted to ask hard questions about the authority of the Church and the role of the state in enforcing religious doctrine.

⁸⁹ De Caraccioli, *Jésus-Christ, par sa tolérance*, p. 203.

The evidence suggests that the writing of the *philosophes* played a much smaller part in changing attitudes towards religious toleration than has been generally suggested. Many of the important ideas on the subject that the major *philosophes* expressed were to be found, often earlier, in Catholic writing, some of it widely disseminated and far more likely to be found in the modest library of the average educated Parisian. As noted earlier, the chronology of Catholic attitudes and behaviour towards Protestants in Paris suggests that the *philosophes*' key writings came after the changes had begun. Their contribution was to accelerate and perhaps for some readers to legitimise religious toleration. They contributed more secular arguments, and certainly promoted a revised view of history, placing the new thinking into a story of growing civilisation that was central to what Dan Edelstein has recently described as 'the defining narrative and concept of the Enlightenment'.⁹⁰ That was in itself important. So too was the perception, encouraged by some of the *philosophes* and by their hard-line opponents, that Christianity was under siege. This encouraged, in some circles, the ecumenical view that a virtuous Christian of any sort was far better than an atheist.

At the same time, the Enlightenment understood as a cultural movement – as a set of practices, attitudes and sensibilities – was enormously important. In the second half of the eighteenth century, being 'enlightened' did not for most Paris Catholics mean rejecting or even questioning religion, because they saw the essence of Christianity as rational belief, tolerance, virtue and humanitarianism, and the rejection of superstition, barbarism, immorality and religious violence. Many Catholics, especially educated ones, were growing more sceptical about some of the very aspects of their religion to which Protestants had long been most hostile: relics, the cult of the saints and the miracles associated with them. Those new religious ideas, attitudes and sentiments, furthermore, were to be found not only in works of religious devotion and in some that we associate with the Enlightenment, but also in many other kinds of writing: popular novels, travel accounts and works of natural history that combined newer ways of understanding the world with conventional expressions of piety, and that were attracting an ever-larger readership. Nor did the new concepts and approaches come only from books. Sermons, obituaries, speeches in freemasons' lodges, and no doubt songs and discussions in shops and in the street, were just as much part of the dissemination of a more tolerant, enlightened Catholicism. All were part of a common movement of thought and sensibility, however divergent

⁹⁰ Dan Edelstein, *The Enlightenment. A Genealogy* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2010), p. 22.

the authors' opinions and conclusions may have been on other matters. It was this enlightened Catholicism that led so many people to support Voltaire's campaigns on behalf of Calas and Sirven.

Nevertheless, it would be misleading to suggest that all Paris Catholics thought this way. In fact, the combination of *philosophe* and enlightened Catholic pressure provoked a backlash of publications defending the official Church policy of intolerance: about twenty a year came out in the 1760s and 1770s, twice as many as in the preceding decades, reinforcing the impression of polarisation.⁹¹ There was certainly no single Catholic culture in eighteenth-century Paris, and that is hardly surprising. Religious attitudes and behaviour were passed on, in the first instance, within families and networks. This has been amply demonstrated in the case of Jansenism, which had concentrations of adherents in certain parishes and in particular social and occupational groups: it was particularly strong among the well-off merchants who ran many of the Paris parishes, but also among lawyers and notaries.⁹²

At any one time, there was a wide spectrum of Catholic opinion, and any generalisations are subject to numerous exceptions. Although most Jansenist supporters favoured civil toleration by the 1770s, some had adopted this position very early, while others took much longer; and some never did.⁹³ 'Enlightened' Catholics were likely to endorse greater rights for Protestants, either on religious grounds or because it was consistent with their humanitarian world view, or both.⁹⁴ Yet they too were a very varied group, ranging from deeply pious people to those who simply followed social convention; some had a highly intellectual faith, while others no doubt thought little about their own beliefs.

All, however, were living in a large and rapidly changing city, and this too was influencing both inter-confessional relations and the way that people thought about religious difference. As we shall see, it was a key factor in building support for a new official policy of toleration, even perhaps full religious freedom.

⁹¹ Froeschlé-Chopard, 'Religion', p. 237; McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment*, p. 21.

⁹² Bell, *Lawyers and Citizens*; Garrioch, *Parisian Bourgeoisie*; Garrioch, 'Parish Politics'; Lyon-Caen, *La Boîte à Perrette*; Marraud, *De la Ville à l'État*; Roche, 'Jacques-Louis Ménétra', pp. 407–8.

⁹³ Lyon-Caen, *La Boîte à Perrette*, pp. 325–41.

⁹⁴ Aston, *Religion and Revolution*, pp. 59–60.

9 A non-confessional public domain

Until 1787, all French subjects were in theory Catholic. As the century went on, however, for a variety of reasons this legal fiction was increasingly contested. Profound changes in Catholic religious cultures made a policy of civil toleration acceptable to growing numbers of people. But another development, taking place at the same time, was removing psychological, practical and to some extent legal barriers to greater religious freedom. The public domain – by which I mean the abstract and physical spaces, the practices, and the institutions shared by many different elements of the population – was becoming both more secular and increasingly non-confessional. Nowhere was this more marked than in Paris, and it had far-reaching implications for the meaning of citizenship and for what was coming to be imagined as a national community.

By the late eighteenth century, Paris had become one of the most secular cities in Europe. That does not mean that its inhabitants were irreligious, or even indifferent to religion, but rather that large parts of the life of the city were now felt to lie outside the religious domain. Secularisation, properly speaking, refers to the removal of something from the sacred sphere to the worldly one. It is often used, by extension, to mean laicisation: the transfer of property or functions from the Church to lay people and institutions, particularly to the state. But I am using it in the first sense, to refer to a process by which many aspects of Paris society became more secular and less sacred.¹ Secularisation was driven by major changes taking place in the city, some of them religious and some to do with government policy and urban growth. It is often imagined as a linear development, characteristic of modernity, but it was much more complicated than that. In the seventeenth century, as the Catholic Reformation proceeded, we can in many ways see a strengthening of the

¹ For a discussion of terminology see David Garrioch, 'La Sécularisation précoce de Paris au dix-huitième siècle', *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 12 (2005), 35–75 (37–40); Claude Langlois, 'Problématique de la déchristianisation', in *Du roi Très Chrétien à la laïcité républicaine*, ed. Joutard, pp. 179–81.

Catholic character of the public domain in Paris. Any public Protestant presence was eliminated, and urban space was, as we shall see, saturated by Catholic symbols. This remained largely true in the eighteenth century, yet at the same time, major social, economic and religious changes were producing a reconceptualisation of the boundaries of the religious sphere. Belief and even religious practice were increasingly seen as individual and family matters, rather than issues of public concern. That in turn facilitated religious toleration, both because it reduced the danger of Protestants profaning what Catholics held to be sacred, and because it made religious difference far less important and noticeable in politics, in public life and indeed in certain aspects of everyday life.

A Catholic public domain

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries the public space and life of Paris was profoundly Catholic. Under the terms of the Edict of Nantes of 1598, only Catholic institutions were permitted there, and there were growing numbers of them. At least forty-eight new female religious houses were created in the first half of the century alone, a movement driven by what Barbara Diefendorf terms a 'penetrating desire for expiation of both personal and collective guilt'.² By the eighteenth century, alongside some 50 parish churches there were 130 convents and monasteries, 11 seminaries, the numerous colleges of the University and a number of independent chapels. Around thirty parish graveyards, in addition to the large cemeteries of the Innocents and Clamart, were also sacred sites, visited regularly by many Catholics.³ The eighteen hospitals too were Catholic, and while the main one, the Hôtel-Dieu, generally accepted sick and dying Protestants as patients, the staff seem to have put a lot of pressure on them to convert. Its register of abjurations includes nearly 200 names between 1698 and 1713.⁴

Catholic institutions were not only numerous, but dominated the city. They occupied prominent locations on the major roads and squares, the churches towered over the surrounding houses and the sound of their bells penetrated the sleep of the inhabitants and measured the working

² Barbara Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity: Pious Women and the Catholic Reformation in Paris* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 7.

³ Bernard, *Emerging City*, p. 190; Jean de la Caille, *Dictionnaire de la Ville et des fauxbourgs de Paris* (Paris, 1714), under 'Chapelles'; Bernard Plongeron, 'Le Temps des Lumières et des révolutions', in *Le Diocèse de Paris. Des origines à la Révolution*, ed. Bernard Plongeron (Paris: Beauchesne, 1987), p. 366. Ranum, *Paris in the Age of Absolutism*, pp. 181–91.

⁴ Musée de l'Assistance publique, no. 573 (Archives de l'Assistance publique, fonds Hôtel-Dieu, liasse no. 1422).

day. Most people relied on the bells to mark the time, and they also, of course, summoned people to religious services and gave the signal for private prayers. They marked the calendar, ringing differently on feast days. After the Revolution, Louis-Sébastien Mercier described nostalgically the tunes that the Carthusian monastery had once played, audible from many parts of the city and varying according to the liturgical season.⁵ From Good Friday until Easter Sunday, the silence of the church bells was perhaps more intrusive than their tolling. At other times the bells, ‘the voice of God’, served a protective role. They were widely believed to avert storms and even plague, and to protect the community against evil.⁶

So too were the regular processions that invaded the public spaces of the city with their bells, banners and incense. The key annual celebration, which stopped the entire city, was at Corpus Christi, when the streets were cleaned and small stages adorned with flowers were built where the Blessed Sacrament would halt. All the inhabitants were commanded to hang tapestries from the houses, and the police decorated the Protestant embassies so that no dissent would be apparent.⁷ The processions were musical, joyous and rowdy. They were the key occasions on which miracles took place, their public character essential to attest the faith of the sick and the authenticity of the cure.⁸ They were also employed to beseech divine mercy in case of famine, disease or bad weather, particularly the relics of St Genevieve, and when they were taken in procession the church organ blared, the bells were rung, trumpets and drums sounded and the crowds cheered. In combating the forces of evil, noise as well as visual splendour was essential, and it too saturated the space of the city.⁹

The Catholic presence in urban public space was also visible in the form of crucifixes and statues, both of saints and especially of the Virgin. More informally, the innumerable house names and shop signs bearing saints’ names and other religious references proclaimed the dominant religious culture. So did various popular rituals, such as the annual and

⁵ Louis-Sébastien Mercier, *Le Nouveau Paris*, ed. Jean-Claude Bonnet (Paris: Mercure de France, 1994 [1798]), p. 1308. See David Garrioch, ‘Sounds of the City. The Soundscape of European Towns, Seventeenth to Nineteenth Century’, *Urban History*, 30 (2003), 5–25 (10–13).

⁶ Alain Cabantous, *Entre fêtes et clochers. Profane et sacré dans l’Europe moderne, XVIIe–XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 2002), pp. 94–7; Gutton, *Bruits et sons*, pp. 28–40.

⁷ ANY13728, Lieutenant-Général Albert to commissaires, 10 June 1775.

⁸ Delumeau, *Rassurer et protéger*, pp. 173–5.

⁹ Garrioch, ‘Sounds of the City’; Gutton, *Bruits et sons*, pp. 28–44, 61–84; Steven L. Kaplan, ‘Religion, Subsistence, and Social Control: The Uses of Saint Genevieve’, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 13 (1979–80), 142–68.

turbulent incineration of a straw figure representing ‘the Swiss of the rue aux Ours’, a soldier who in the fifteenth century had attacked a statue of the Virgin.

Official public celebrations in Paris were of course strongly Catholic. The key royal ceremony was the *Te deum*, used primarily to celebrate military victories but occasionally for royal births. Across the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries it was celebrated with increasing frequency, peaking in the 1740s. A *Te deum* was celebrated in the Catholic churches in the presence of the civil officials, and was closely associated with other public prayers, notably the *Quarante Heures*, which were used to seek divine support for the King in his military campaigns and in case of illness.¹⁰

A more low-key celebration of the monarchy was the feast of St Louis, whose cult was used by the Bourbon kings to reinforce their legitimacy. This was a dimension of the mutually beneficial state–Church compact, of which another manifestation was the proclamation from the pulpit, during the religious service, of royal decrees. The monarchy was not only Christian but publicly Catholic, a point reinforced in the elaborate coronation service at Reims, which included an oath to eliminate heresy from the realm. The ritual practice of the king touching and curing those afflicted with scrofula drew on Catholic traditions of saints performing miracles.¹¹

Civic ritual in Paris was similarly Catholic. The trade guilds, and indeed most of the many corporate bodies in the city, elected their officials on the eve of the feast of their patron saint: for the police commissaires it was on the eve of St Martin’s Day. At city elections, held on the feast of St Roch, carefully selected voters were required to promise, on their knees and with one hand on the crucifix, to choose the most worthy men.¹² The key secular authorities – the municipality and the courts – participated in religious processions, incarnating the alliance between Church and state at the local level. Thus the magistrates of the various courts marched immediately behind the reliquary of St Genevieve when it was taken in procession to ask God to provide good weather for the harvest.¹³

Above all, the social identity of the majority of the Paris population was inseparable from its religious one. In the late sixteenth century, as

¹⁰ Michèle Fogel, *Les Cérémonies de l’information dans la France du XVIe au milieu du XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1989), pp. 154–285.

¹¹ Merrick, *Desacralization*, pp. 16–8.

¹² AN K996, no. 9. Charles Desmaze, *Le Châtelet de Paris* (Paris: Didier, 1863), pp. 194–6.

¹³ Kaplan, ‘Religion, Subsistence, and Social Control’, 152.

Robert Descimon has shown, being Catholic was part of what it meant to be a 'bourgeois' of Paris: '[T]he community was inseparably religious and political and one was an inhabitant simultaneously of a parish and of a quarter.'¹⁴ Across the seventeenth century, this confessional character extended to the guilds, which were idealised as a spiritual as well as a secular community. There was often little distinction made between the confraternity and the 'corporation': in the late sixteenth century the drapers requested that 'in order that they may assemble to discuss the affairs of the said Community, they shall be permitted to establish a Confraternity in the Chapel of Saint Nicolas'.¹⁵ The officials elected to run the guilds were generally responsible for both the secular affairs of the trade and the confraternity, while in 1685 the pork butchers offered the silver ornaments of their confraternity as surety for the debts of the guild.¹⁶ Regular religious services helped to consolidate this Catholic corporate identity, and after the mid seventeenth century the admission of non-Catholics was an anomaly.

In a legal sense too, Catholic values structured the public domain. The law of early modern France not only severely punished blasphemy, but redefined it to include denying or insulting not only God but the Virgin, the saints or the Blessed Sacrament, and across the seventeenth century blasphemers were whipped in the public squares and even hanged in the place de Grève. Blasphemy extended to attacks on the consecrated host, on cemeteries or on crucifixes: in short, on any manifestation of Catholic piety.¹⁷

But for Protestants, the most devastating consequence of the Catholic monopoly of the public domain was the association of French identity with the dominant religion. This had long been affirmed by Catholic writers, but it was entrenched by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the legislation that followed. Defenders of intolerance had long insisted that Calvinism was a republican doctrine, and in response, much Protestant breath and ink was expended on demonstrating that members of the Reformed Church were loyal French subjects.¹⁸ Yet doubts remained.

¹⁴ Robert Descimon, 'Milice bourgeoise et identité citadine à Paris au temps de la Ligue', *Annales: ESC*, 48 (1993), 885–906 (esp. 886, 899).

¹⁵ AN AD XI 17, dossier A, piece 1, *Statuts et réglemens pour les marchands drapiers ... du mois de février 1573* (Paris: Charles Osmont, 1743).

¹⁶ AN V7 425, charcutiers.

¹⁷ Élisabeth Belmas, 'La Montée des blasphèmes à l'âge moderne, du Moyen Âge au XVIIe siècle', in *Injures et blasphèmes*, ed. Jean Delumeau (Paris: Imago, 1989), pp. 13–33; Françoise Hildesheimer, 'La Répression du blasphème au XVIIIe siècle', in *Injures et blasphèmes*, ed. Delumeau, pp. 63–81 (pp. 63–7, 75).

¹⁸ Merrick, *Desacralization*, pp. 143–7. Antoine Court, *Le Patriote français et impartial, ou Réponse à la lettre de M. l'Evêque d'Agen à M. le Contrôleur général contre la tolérance des huguenots*, nouvelle édition (Villefranche: F. Chrétien, 1753. First published 1751). Antoine Court, *Lettre d'un patriote sur la tolérance civile des protestans de France: et sur les*

Montesquieu felt that ‘the Catholic religion better suits a monarchy and that the Protestant religion is better adapted to a republic’, while Voltaire, in his *Siècle de Louis XIV* of 1751, portrayed the Huguenots as naturally seditious and opposed to monarchy.¹⁹ This residual distrust was one of the key barriers to Huguenots winning full civil rights.

Secularisation

Europeans of the early modern period did not, on the whole, distinguish sharply between the realms of the sacred and the profane, and a vital part of the change in the religious cultures of French Catholics was the creation of a far greater separation.²⁰ Before the eighteenth century, for example, many people did not see it as disrespectful to dance in the cemetery, to throw holy water over newly-weds, to laugh loudly or walk around during church services, to sit on the altar or to hang washing from the market cross when it was not being used for devotional purposes. There were of course limits: the consecrated host and sacred relics could not be thrown to the ground, and statues of the Virgin were always to be treated with respect. The conjunction of the supernatural and the natural worlds meant that such objects and certain places – trees and springs – had real supernatural power. Divine and demonic interventions in the world were regular occurrences and were felt to explain much of what happened.²¹

But following the Reformation, which challenged the Catholic notion of the sacred and tried to distinguish between religion and magic, the official churches began to draw an ever-sharper line between the sacred and the profane. Much of the activity of reforming bishops and clerics across the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, often seconded by the secular authorities, aimed to wean the faithful away from beliefs that were now branded as superstitious. Accompanying this campaign were attempts to inculcate new attitudes towards the sacred. Blasphemy became a serious offence.²² Dancing, feasting and drinking in the cemetery or on feast days were now seen as sinful, and the Church condemned theatre and even banned actors from religious burial.²³ At Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas and

avantages qui en résulteroient pour le royaume (n.p., 1756). Loyalty was also a favourite theme of Protestant sermons: McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 597.

¹⁹ Montesquieu, *L'Esprit des Loix*, Book XXIV, chapter 5. Voltaire, *Le Siècle de Louis XIV* (1752), chapter XXXVI, ‘Du Calvinisme au temps de Louis XIV’.

²⁰ Cabantous, *Entre fêtes et clochers*, chapters 3–5.

²¹ McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 189–220.

²² Belmas, ‘La Montée des blasphèmes’; Alain Cabantous, *Histoire du blasphème en Occident* (Paris, 1998); Hildesheimer, ‘La Répression du blasphème’.

²³ McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 202–8, 312–17. For more details on theatre see John McManners, *Abbés and Actresses: The Church and the Theatrical Profession in Eighteenth-Century France* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).

later at Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet, officials were appointed to impose silence on those in the church, to keep beggars outside and to ensure that people were dressed decently.²⁴ The Jansenists in particular, spear-heading Catholic reform in Paris in the late seventeenth century, insisted on the greatest respect for the sacraments, avoided using the host as a symbol and rarely displayed it on the altar. Some argued that communion should be taken infrequently, so people would not treat it lightly but would approach it with a proper reverence.²⁵

The sharper distinction that religious reformers wished to make between the sacred and the profane was a prerequisite for secularisation, since for a practice, institution or event to be removed from the sacred sphere to the worldly one, the two must be clearly differentiated. Thus secularisation was accompanied by sacralisation, since some spaces, activities and times – cemeteries, the interior of churches, processions, the period of Lent – were to be protected from influences now classed as ‘profane’. Concern about the profanation of holy days by dancing, gambling and other sinful practices led to an attempt to ‘resacralise’ Sundays and key holy days, while less significant moments in the Church calendar were secularised. By 1789, between half and two-thirds of the feast days that had been celebrated in 1650 had been either abolished or moved to the nearest Sunday, reducing both the prominence of religious events in the calendar and the proliferation of ceremonies and processions that accompanied them.²⁶ Concern about superstition, and a mistrust of practices that were outside clerical control, also underpinned the removal of some of the crosses and statues that stood in the public squares. The bonfires in the place de Grève to celebrate the feast of St John the Baptist were suppressed in 1768, because they were ‘disorderly’. Similar motives underlay the disappearance of the Rogations processions, centred on the dragon of Saint-Marcel, around 1730.²⁷

These Counter-Reformation concerns were one of the factors that made Paris a far more secular place in the late eighteenth century than it had been a century earlier. Certainly, to a modern observer transported back in time, even on the eve of the Revolution, Paris would seem a strongly Catholic city. Yet the density of sacred spaces had been reduced

²⁴ Viguerie, *Le Catholicisme des Français*, p. 66.

²⁵ McManners, *Church and Society*, 2: 41.

²⁶ Wanegffelen, ‘Acculturation ecclésiastique’, p. 269. Noah Shusterman, *Religion and the Politics of Time. Holidays in France from Louis XIV through Napoleon* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2010), p. 7. Cabantous, *Entre fêtes et clochers*, pp. 92–4.

²⁷ Delumeau, *Rassurer et protéger*, p. 169. Shusterman, *Religion and the Politics of Time*, pp. 55–6.

by the suppression of a number of churches and, in the 1770s, by the removal of the parish graveyards. In the early 1780s the putrid Innocents cemetery that occupied a large site adjoining the Halles was transformed into a market, improving air quality throughout the quarter.²⁸ The presence of processions in the streets fell sharply, along with the number of feast days, and the annual number of general processions, involving all the parishes of the city, was progressively reduced, first to thirty, then to twenty-three and finally to around a dozen by the late 1770s. A collapse in the number of confraternities, from over 500 in the mid eighteenth century to just over 100 by the late 1780s, brought with it a further decline in such events, since many of them had organised processions and religious services at least once a month.²⁹ All of this added up to a marked secularisation of the public space and of the calendar of the city.

The growing sense that it was wrong to mix the sacred and the profane affected many areas of public life.³⁰ The clergy campaigned to remove readings of royal edicts and other announcements from the sermon, and in 1695 they were victorious when these were moved to the end of religious services. In 1777 the city authorities, at the urging of 'the notables of the capital', agreed to abandon the oath on the crucifix that voters were required to swear at municipal elections, on the grounds that it was 'a religious act containing a reference to one of our greatest [religious] mysteries, which it would seem impossible to combine, without profanation, with simple ceremonies'.³¹ In both of these instances, the intention was to protect the sacred, but the outcome was a further secularisation.

A similar process took place in the guilds, which in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had been understood as religious as well as economic and social institutions. After 1691, the government progressively created a new distinction between their commercial and religious functions by separating out the accounts of their confraternities and forbidding expenditure of guild monies on religious services. Commencing in the mid 1720s, royal officials went back through the accounts, ostensibly in order to weed out 'maladministration' and to reduce debts, in the process discounting expenditure on the trade confraternity, which the

²⁸ Madeleine Foisil, 'Les Attitudes devant la mort au XVIIIe siècle: sépultures et suppressions de sépultures dans le cimetière parisien des Saints-Innocents', *Revue historique*, 510 (1974), 303–30.

²⁹ Annik Pardailhé-Galabrun, 'Les Déplacements des Parisiens dans la ville aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles. Un essai de problématique', *Histoire, économie et société*, 2 (1983), 205–53 (208). *Processional parisien* (Paris, 1778); Delumeau, *Rassurer et protéger*, p. 91; Merrick, *Desacralization*, p. 44; Viguerie, *Le Catholicisme des Français*, p. 69. Numbers of confraternities are from my own ongoing research.

³⁰ Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution*, p. 164.

³¹ Cabantous, *Entre fêtes et clochers*, p. 104. AN K996, no. 28 (1777).

guild officers or their heirs were ordered to reimburse.³² The result was, as Mathieu Marraud points out in the case of the grocers, that ‘the guild less and less took the form of a confraternity, based on the equal access of members to privilege, with a shared mythology and ritual practices, adopting instead the form of a company (as it now called itself): that is, a site of rights, status, prerogatives and patrimony understood as and defended as a judicial jurisdiction with policing powers’.³³ After 1776 most of the trade confraternities disappeared entirely, and the guilds became entirely secular bodies. All of these changes meant that the religious and Catholic component of Parisian identity, quite central in the seventeenth century, was steadily eroded across the eighteenth.

A similar trend was taking place in another area of the public domain: the law. In 1766 the chevalier de La Barre was the last person condemned to death for blasphemy (and sacrilege) by the Parlement of Paris, and his condemnation was already an anachronism. This reflected changing attitudes both among the authorities and within the population, since plaintiffs no longer included blasphemy among the accusations they brought to the courts.³⁴ Of course, Protestantism condemned blasphemy, just as the Catholic Church did, but for Protestants it included only disrespect towards God and the Trinity, not the Virgin and the saints or crucifixes and statues. The Catholic law had been used against Paris Calvinists, so the declining prosecution of blasphemy represented both a secularisation of the law and a removal of its confessional character.

I have stressed the religious background to these changes, but other aspects of the process had social and economic roots. What Jacques Le Goff called ‘merchant time’, and the beginnings of what Edward Thompson labelled ‘industrial time’, were supplanting the religious timetable of the city, as time came to be measured more and more in economic terms.³⁵ Reformers attacked the proliferation of holy days because of the lost productivity they represented, and also attacked the ‘idle’ monks and nuns who prayed but did not contribute to the national economy. An

³² Étienne-Olivier Pary, *Guide des corps des marchands et des communautés des arts et métiers tant de la ville et fauxbourgs de Paris, que du royaume* (Paris, 1766). AN AD XI 10, fol. 208, edict concerning public writers, 1749; AN V7 421B, starchmakers, registres du conseil d’État, 23 August 1749. The verifications of accounts are all in the V7 series in the Archives nationales.

³³ Mathieu Marraud, ‘Permanences et déplacements corporatifs dans la ville. Le corps de l’épicerie parisienne aux XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles’, *Histoire et mesure*, 25 (2010), 3–45 (17).

³⁴ Cabantous, *Histoire du blasphème*, pp. 134–52; Hildesheimer, ‘La Répression du blasphème’, pp. 70–80.

³⁵ Jacques Le Goff, ‘Temps de l’Église et temps du marchand’, *Annales: ESC*, 15 (1960), 417–33. E. P. Thompson, ‘Time, Work Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism’, *Past and Present*, 38 (1967), 56–97.

economic logic was far more evident in public policy, emphasising the importance of manufacturing and of economic growth at the expense of older values. Even the parish churches were being administered on a stricter profit-and-loss basis!³⁶

As the eighteenth century went on, Paris developed an increasingly commercial and consumerist culture. The work of Daniel Roche on material culture has alerted us to the rising expenditure on clothing among servants, better-off wage-earners and the middle classes, a very significant proportion of the city's population. There are hints of similar changes in furnishings and tableware, and we know that watches became common among the working population of the city in the course of the century. Although, as Cissie Fairchilds has shown, religious objects initially multiplied as part of this growing consumer culture, they subsequently declined, replaced by all kinds of trinkets with no sacred significance. At the same time, advertising was invading public space, in the form of more commercial shop signs, wrapping paper, trade cards and notices in the expanding secular press.³⁷

Urban growth itself also had a secularising impact. It became impossible, in eighteenth-century Paris, for the clergy to continue either the services or the surveillance they had earlier undertaken. By 1789, Paris had approximately one parish priest for every 750 people: Milan, by contrast, had one for every eighty-five inhabitants. The ratios were even worse in the rapidly growing outer parts of the French capital, where there was not room for the entire population in the churches. Some of the functions formerly fulfilled by religious institutions were increasingly being assumed by secular organisms. A laicisation of education was taking place as numerous private schools were established, and in the mid 1760s many colleges of the University replaced clergy with lay teachers.³⁸ A similar laicisation of the hospital system began with the founding of

³⁶ [Clicquot de Blervache], *Le Réformateur*, nouvelle édition, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Arkstée & Merkus, 1762), 1: 63; 2: 9, 14. Michel, *Jansénisme et Paris*, pp. 277–82; Rideau, *De la religion de tous à la religion de chacun*, chapter 1, esp. pp. 55–9.

³⁷ Roche, *Culture of Clothing*, pp. 93–117; Daniel Roche, *A History of Everyday Things: The Birth of Consumption in France, 1600–1800* (Cambridge University Press, 2000. First published Paris, 1997); Christopher Todd, 'French Advertising in the Eighteenth Century', *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 266 (1989), 513–47. See also Cissie Fairchilds, 'Marketing the Counter-Reformation. Religious Objects and Consumerism in Early Modern France', in *Visions and Revisions of Eighteenth-Century France*, ed. Christine Adams, Jack R. Censer and Lisa Jane Graham (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1997), pp. 31–55; Fairchilds, 'Populuxe Goods'.

³⁸ Dominique Julia, 'Les Professeurs, l'Église et l'état après l'expulsion des Jésuites, 1762–1789', *Historical Reflections/Réflexions historiques*, 7 (1980), 459–81. R. R. Palmer, *The Improvement of Humanity* (Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 61; Plongeron, 'Le Temps des Lumières', p. 354.

non-religious institutions by Madame Necker and her husband in 1778 and by the financier Beaujon in 1784, while the municipality was primarily responsible for another new hospital at Saint-Merri. These establishments siphoned off donations that had once gone to the church-run establishments. But even those were removed from clerical control in 1781, and new rules for the Hôtel-Dieu, issued in 1787, gave doctors greater authority over the nuns and partly replaced the sisters, who were primarily concerned for the souls of the sick, with lay people who would tend exclusively to their bodies. Poor relief too was increasingly secular, and by the 1780s the Société philanthropique had become as important in providing assistance to the poor as the parishes. Indeed, Christian ‘charity’ was increasingly criticised as something done for one’s own benefit rather than for others, unlike ‘bienfaisance’ (philanthropy), which entailed a positive relationship between citizens. If this was another form of secularisation, it was consistent with the central ideals of a non-confessional Christianity and was acceptable both to self-styled philosophers and to the different varieties of Catholics.³⁹

All these changes created an urban environment that was less strongly Catholic and less hostile to Protestants. So too did shifts in certain key forms of sociability. I have already mentioned the declining number of confraternities, particularly after 1760, which coincides with the growth of more secular forms of educated sociability such as freemasonry, literary groups and other kinds of societies. We should not exaggerate the secular character of the French freemasons: 101 of the 183 Paris lodges of the Grand Lodge of France founded between 1760 and 1773 bore the names of saints, and the statutes required occasional attendance at mass. Nevertheless, this obligation was gradually removed, and the lodges were, like the other new forms of sociability, increasingly secular. As we have seen, both the earlier and the later ones in some cases accepted Protestants, so the police perception that ‘they seem to incline towards accepting all religions’, one of the motives for banning them in 1737, was not entirely inaccurate – though they did continue to exclude Jews.⁴⁰

³⁹ Catherine Duprat, *Pour l’amour de l’humanité. Le temps des philanthropes: la philanthropie parisienne des Lumières à la monarchie de Juillet* (Paris: Éditions du CTHS, 1993), p. 90; Garrioch, *Making of Revolutionary Paris*, pp. 234–5; Louis S. Greenbaum, ‘Jean-Sylvain Bailly, the Baron de Breteuil and the “Four New Hospitals” of Paris’, *Clio Medica*, 8 (1973), 261–84 (263); Louis S. Greenbaum, ‘Nurses and Doctors in Conflict: Piety and Medicine in the Paris Hôtel-Dieu on the Eve of the French Revolution’, *Clio Medica*, 13 (1979), 247–67; Marisa Linton, *The Politics of Virtue in Enlightenment France* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 110–12.

⁴⁰ Garrioch, ‘From Religious to Secular Sociability’, pp. 318–19; Garrioch, ‘La Sécularisation précoce’, pp. 44–5, 57. BN MS fr. 11356, fol. 333v, Assemblée de police,

All of these factors contributed to making the public space of Paris into more neutral territory, in which non-Catholics could move with greater freedom. This development was hastened by the growing diversity of the city's population. Of course, Paris had always attracted people from all over Europe, and sometimes beyond: students, merchants, soldiers and clerics. But the eighteenth century witnessed the dramatic rise of leisure travel, and this too had an impact on the public culture of the city. The largest single group of 'tourists' (the word, referring to those on the Grand Tour, appears in this very period) were the British, who represented a third of all foreign visitors identified in the police records: perhaps 400 per year in the 1740s, around 1,500 per year in the 1770s.⁴¹ They often stayed for weeks or months, and were highly visible because of their dress, manners and often their poor French. The English found Catholic culture fascinating, as we can see from numerous descriptions of ceremonies and costumes in their accounts of their travels. In response, growing numbers of guide books listed the churches as sites to be visited.⁴² Paris Catholics, therefore, were confronted with the highly visible presence of Protestants in their sacred places. These were often people of relatively high status, sometimes wealthy nobles with excellent connections with the Paris elites. However intrusive and unwelcome they might have been, they had to be tolerated. Their presence, furthermore, was of direct and obvious economic benefit to the lackeys, coachmen and guides they employed, to the shops they visited and the hotels they stayed in, to the laundrywomen and the tailors who did work for them and the innkeepers who served them.⁴³

Nor were tourists the only people in eighteenth-century Paris who were noticeably different in their religious beliefs. The city drew immigrants from everywhere. The Swiss French may have seemed less foreign than people from certain parts of France, but German and Dutch workers, possibly several thousand strong by the late eighteenth century, were readily identifiable and often prominent in their trades. Even more conspicuous were the black residents of Paris, officially 527 of them in 1777, perhaps 3,000–4,000 according to more informal estimates.⁴⁴ Growing ethnic

1 August 1737. Beaurepaire, 'Lumières maçonniques et christianisme', pp. 30–1 for the exclusion of Jews.

⁴¹ Dubost, 'Les Étrangers à Paris', pp. 236–49.

⁴² Gilles Chabaud, 'Les Guides de Paris: une littérature d'accueil?', in *La Ville promise*, ed. Roche, pp. 77–108 (p. 83).

⁴³ Daniel Roche, 'Dépenses, consommations et sociabilités', in *La Ville promise*, ed. Roche, pp. 325–52.

⁴⁴ Driancourt-Girod, *L'Insolite Histoire des luthériens de Paris*, pp. 169–95; Dubost, 'Les Étrangers à Paris', pp. 238–51; Erick Noël, *Être noir en France au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Taillandier, 2006), pp. 95–6, 270.

diversity challenged Parisians to think about other cultures and religions and relativised their own experience. No one could assume, any longer, that everyone in the city belonged to the 'universal' Roman Church.

Public identities

In tandem with the secularisation of institutions, of public space and of the calendar, all of which made the city a less Catholic environment, went a shift in the public identities of Parisians. By 'public identities', I mean the face they presented to those with whom they had contact in a professional or impersonal way – though of course one cannot entirely separate public and private. For many Parisians, especially males, the primary way they presented themselves to the outside world was occupational, and as the guilds became more secular, artisan and merchant identities lost their Catholic component. Bonds between guild members no longer had a spiritual dimension, and by the late eighteenth century no occupational group referred to themselves in the way the fishermen had in 1729, as 'the community of Saint-Nicolas', using the name of their confraternity and patron saint.⁴⁵

A similar shift took place among other groups. Colin Kaiser showed that in the late sixteenth century the judges of the Parlement and other upper courts adopted the ideal of the 'perfect Catholic magistrate', a model of virtuous behaviour that enabled men from non-noble backgrounds to justify their eminent position and to judge cases involving high-ranking aristocrats. This enabled them, as key servants of the state, to execute royal decrees without fear or favour. It led to a tighter appointment process for key magistrates, whose morality and religious practice became key criteria for selection. This new public identity subsequently served as a model for other professions, especially in the law.⁴⁶ The same qualities continued to be stressed by jurists in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. For the Jansenist Henri-François Daguesseau, 'the perfect magistrate lives only for the republic ... the public good', but this moral stance was based on unshakeable piety and fear of God. Daguesseau designed a course of study to prepare men for the office of magistrate, the basis of which was Scripture, the writings of St Augustine,

⁴⁵ AN Z1E 219–20.

⁴⁶ Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community*, pp. 145–6; Colin Kaiser, 'Les Cours souveraines au XVIe siècle: morale et Contre-Réforme', *Annales: ESC*, 37 (1982), 15–31. Elsewhere, Catholics succeeded in preventing Protestant magistrates wearing ceremonial robes, thus affirming the publicly Catholic status of the profession: Denise Turrel, 'Comment peut-on être à la fois protestant et officier?', in *Identiés, appartenances, revendications identitaires*, ed. Belissa *et al.*, pp. 43–53.

of Pierre Nicole and of Blaise Pascal. He believed that only a knowledge of these key texts, and of the history of human folly, could instil the virtue that a public official required.⁴⁷

By the eighteenth century, however, the Catholic element of this model no longer received the same emphasis. Admittedly, a baptismal certificate was required for most offices in the gift of the Crown.⁴⁸ But the qualities stressed were now, as in Louis XVI's appointment of a new judge in 1789, 'talent, zeal and devotion to our Service and the public welfare'. Referees sometimes mentioned that a candidate for the magistracy 'practises the Roman, Apostolic and Catholic religion', but not all did, and the key emphasis was on 'good conduct and morals', on probity, industry, devotion to the King and to the public good, love of justice: in short, 'the virtues of the citizen', as a judge of the Cour des Aides summed it up in his reference for Augustin Testard du Lys. Many referees stressed the services given by former members of the appointee's family, pointing to them as embodiments of the same qualities of 'zeal and devotion', 'virtue and probity'.⁴⁹ They placed no overt emphasis on Catholic belief. They may have assumed it, but in the second half of the eighteenth century it was no longer a defining feature of the public identity of magistrates or other key office-holders.

Parallel to this was a weakening of the confessional component in urban notability. For non-nobles in Paris, the status of both individuals and families was linked to possession of office in municipal government, the guilds and the parishes. The highest honour was election as one of the four *échevins*, who ostensibly ran the municipality, or as a judge in the commercial court (*judge consul*). Still prestigious were the offices of *quartinnier*, *dixainier* or *cinquantinnier*, which had once bestowed an important role in local administration. At a lesser level, men proudly proclaimed their status as officials in one of the trade guilds, as a churchwarden or poor-relief officer in their parish or as an administrator of a religious confraternity. Here too there was a hierarchy, led by the most prestigious guilds, the Six Corps, by the largest and richest parishes and with the Blessed Sacrament confraternities leading the others. All of these positions in theory required good Catholic credentials.⁵⁰ But as we have seen,

⁴⁷ Richard Mowery Andrews, *Law, Magistracy and Crime in Old Regime Paris, 1735–1789. The System of Criminal Justice* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 265–8.

⁴⁸ Favre-Lejeune, *Les Secrétaires du roi*, 1: 41. AN Y1868, receptions of judges of the Châtelet courts, 1762–75. AN K993–7, elections of city councillors, 1756–88.

⁴⁹ Andrews, *Law, Magistracy and Crime*, pp. 256–63.

⁵⁰ Laurence Croq, 'Essai pour la construction de la notabilité comme paradigme socio-politique', in *La Notabilité urbaine Xe–XVIIIe siècles*, ed. Jean-Marie, pp. 23–38; Croq and Lyon-Caen, 'La Notabilité parisienne'; Garrioch, *Parisian Bourgeoisie*, pp. 98–102.

within the guilds there was less and less emphasis on being Catholic, and while this remained essential for all these other positions, the status attached to many of them gradually declined. Becoming an *échevin* was a route to ennoblement and remained prestigious, as did the position of judge in the consular court, but the local municipal offices were now purely honorific and it proved difficult to fill them. The fact that the Huguenot Pierre Migeon was able to purchase a place as *dixainier* indicates the decline of the Catholic requirement.⁵¹ The criteria for ‘notability’ were now, in general, those set out by the Lieutenant-General of Police in 1776, when there was a short-lived attempt to revive local assemblies to advise the city administrators: ‘persons who by maturity in age, the solidity of their business, and the integrity of their reputation, will confer honour on the position’.⁵² These were criteria that some non-Catholics could meet, as the three Protestant bankers did in 1744 when the authorities attempted to revive local assemblies to assist with a new tax.⁵³ Catholicism had thus become less and less intrinsic to the public identity of male bourgeois Parisians, and the appointment of numerous Protestants to various offices, in the final decades of the Old Regime, shows that confessional difference was no longer an issue.

The most everyday and mundane form of public identity was personal names. A first name was often the first thing that a stranger learned about someone, and from which they could infer something about a person’s origin and religion. As we saw earlier, since the sixteenth century many Huguenots had signalled their commitment to the primitive Church and their rejection of the cult of the saints by giving their children distinctive biblical names. The Catholic Church responded by insisting that only the names of recognised saints could be used. Even though neither practice was ever universal, it was a way in which religious affiliation was signalled publicly. But here too we can see a decline in confessional distinctiveness in the late seventeenth and across the eighteenth century. Before 1685, Old Testament names were given to around one in six Protestant children in Paris (16.4%), but as persecution grew this dropped to 7.9% of girls and 6.9% of boys in the eighteenth century. At the same time, conversions meant that there were now Catholics bearing these same names. It was far more difficult to tell, from someone’s name, what their religious affiliations were.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Garrioch, *Making of Revolutionary Paris*, pp. 128–32.

⁵² AN Y13728, Albert to commissaire Gillet, 30 April 1776.

⁵³ Although only one of them was in the end included in the meetings, the Lutheran banker Jean-Philippe Kornmann: Croq and Lyon-Caen, ‘La Notabilité parisienne’.

⁵⁴ This and what follows is taken from David Garrioch, ‘Suzanne, David, Judith and Isaac’, 44–6. The same was true in Lyons: Krumenacker, *Des protestants au Siècle des Lumières*, p. 207.

A parallel departure from traditional naming practices was occurring among Paris Catholics. In the seventeenth century, most of them obeyed the Church injunction to give children the names of recognised saints, and hence an intercessor on the Day of Judgment. But across the eighteenth century the use of saints' names declined, if the place Royale area is typical. Analysis of the census taken there in 1791 gives a total of 1,543 female and 958 male names for 1,626 Paris-born individuals whose date of birth can be calculated. Of those born in the early part of the century, around 5 per cent had a name that did not correspond to a recognised spiritual intercessor – that is, to a saint or the Virgin Mary. These 'irregular' names included the occasional Old Testament name (since the census does not indicate religion, they may have been Protestants), a few royal names (René, Blanche), but primarily classical ones like César, Auguste, Hector or Julie. By the 1780s, around 11 per cent of the given names in the place Royale sample were 'irregular' ones, now including more literary names, including Julie, Sophie and Émile, probably after Rousseau's characters. There were also names that were apparently invented but that had a literary or classical feel, such as Césarine or Alexandrine.

But this underestimates the extent of the change, because a significant number of other names had ambiguous religious connotations. Quite a number were those of obscure saints, such as Luce, Camille, Rose, Juvénal and Eugène, which may have come from somewhere outside Paris where these saints were honoured, but which were more likely chosen for other reasons entirely. Luce could have been taken from *lux*, the Latin word for 'light'. Rose and Rosalie may have referred to the flower (like the new name Jacinthe). Formerly rare names like Félicité and Angélique were those of obscure saints, while Prosper had Jansenist connotations, but like the new name Fortuné all three referred to desirable qualities. Other saints, such as Valentin, Achille, Théodore and Alexandre, bore classical names. Then there were versions of well-known saints' names that were feminised or turned into a diminutive, despite attempts by the Church to forbid this practice: Pierrette, Léonore, Jacqueline, Josephe, Bernardine, Laurette and Claudine, and female names such as Marie, Céline and Févrine that were given to boys. The religious significance of all these names was at the very least diluted. Indeed, their adoption seems to reflect a desire to distinguish children and their families from the mass of the Pierres and Maries, and the choice of literary, classical and royal names also suggests social snobbery. That in itself represented a kind of secularisation, in that the goal of naming was worldly rather than designed to achieve salvation by providing a saintly intercessor. If we add the ambiguous names to all these other forms, they represented just under a quarter (23 per cent) of names given to children born in the 1770s.

At the same moment, these same literary, classical and symbolic kinds of names, like Éléodore, Damaris, Clermonde, Flore or Pulchérie, were being adopted by growing numbers of Paris Huguenots. They were also overwhelmingly adopting the custom of giving multiple names, a practice condemned by some pastors as a sin of pride because it imitated the nobility.⁵⁵ One in six of the Protestants in my seventeenth-century sample had more than one baptismal name, one in two in the first half of the eighteenth century and four-fifths by the second half of the century. Fashion was taking hold in naming practices, just as in clothing.⁵⁶ By the late eighteenth century it was therefore, except in extreme cases, impossible to distinguish Protestants from Catholics on the basis of their given names. A public marker of familial and religious identity had disappeared. This probably did not, overall, reflect a decline in religious belief, nor did it indicate that Paris Huguenots were less aware of being different. But it did make them less visible and less culturally distinct. Changes in naming practices were removing one of the everyday triggers for prejudice and confessionally based emotional responses.

All this was part of a wider privatisation of religion. As we have seen, Catholic writers placed increasing emphasis on self-examination, private religious practice and on a more personal relationship with God. In public, meanwhile, Catholics were beginning to abandon the collective demonstrations of belief that were so common in the seventeenth century, such as the confraternities with their regular processions. Well before the mid eighteenth century, conventionally elaborate expressions of piety were being omitted from wills, which we must recall were semi-public documents that were presented not only to families but to the civil court in the Châtelet, since there was a tax on bequests.⁵⁷ Death too became more private, the death-bed a place for family members and not outsiders. The bodies of the dead were no longer displayed outside the doors of the houses where they had lived.⁵⁸ The idea of religion as a private matter is reflected in the advice given by the Jesuit Claude Buffier in his *Traité de la société civile* of 1726: in polite conversation, one should avoid the subject of religion, because of the disagreements that were likely to arise.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Wilson, *Means of Naming*, p. 220.

⁵⁶ Roche, *Culture of Clothing*, pp. 4–63.

⁵⁷ Pierre Chaunu, *La Mort à Paris. XVIe, XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: Fayard, 1978). A key source for Paris wills is the ‘publications’ of the Châtelet courts, AN Y86–494A.

⁵⁸ Chaunu, *La Mort à Paris*; McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment*, pp. 462–5.

⁵⁹ Buffier cited in Daniel Gordon, *Citizens without Sovereignty. Equality and Sociability in French Thought, 1670–1789* (Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 79–80.

Correspondingly, the term 'dévôt' came to be used to condemn those who demonstrated their religious beliefs in an excessively ostentatious way.⁶⁰ Admittedly, it had political connotations, being associated with the ultra-Catholic Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement of the seventeenth century, then with the ultramontane, pro-Jesuit, anti-philosophical Catholic faction at Court during Louis XV's reign.⁶¹ Yet people's choice of the term to describe their opponents is revealing. While all these developments have been interpreted as evidence of a decline in religious belief, they actually reflect a change in acceptable forms of public behaviour. Most religious ceremonies remained public, of course, but matters of belief and conscience were increasingly felt to belong in the private realm, and this had a direct impact on thinking about religious difference. As a visitor to the city in 1751 reported, 'Men of letters and of quality are mostly persuaded, as in other places, that one can have one's own private beliefs in religious matters, without leaving the communion in which one is born.'⁶²

If this view affected public identities at the local level, it also operated, with far-reaching consequences, at the widest level of all, that of the kingdom. Louis XIV's anti-Protestant laws had defined French subjects as Catholic, but as a number of historians have shown, a new and very different conception of citizenship was appearing in the middle of the eighteenth century.⁶³ Increasingly, the basis of rights was deemed to be 'virtue': this was implicit in Voltaire's defence of Calas as a good bourgeois and family man, and therefore deserving of justice. Its implications for government policy on religion were made clear even earlier, in 1756, by the enlightened Catholic Fréron: he argued that a prince should decide which religions should be tolerated by considering their morality. 'That a man should be a good citizen, that is all one can ask of him.'⁶⁴ By the 1770s, the linking of virtue with citizenship was almost universal. For Jean-François Sobry, '[H]e who loves his *patrie* takes pleasure in

⁶⁰ ANY11705, 3 February 1775. See also the bookseller Hardy's use of the term: BN MS fr. 6683, fol. 57, 14 October 1778.

⁶¹ McMahon, *Enemies of the Enlightenment*, p. 22; Dale K. Van Kley, *The Jansenists and the Expulsion of the Jesuits from France, 1757–1765*. Yale Historical Publications, Miscellany 107 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1975), p. 86, n. 65; Van Kley, *Religious Origins of the French Revolution*, p. 40.

⁶² Voss, 'Paris im Sommer 1751', 207. See also Suire, *Sainteté et Lumières*, p. 21.

⁶³ Peter Sahlins, *Unnaturally French. Foreign Citizens in the Old Regime and After* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 2004), pp. 215–24; Charlotte Wells, *Law and Citizenship in Early Modern France* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), pp. 113–40.

⁶⁴ On Voltaire's defence of Calas, Bien, 'Religious Persecution', p. 332. Fréron, *Année littéraire*, 7 (1756), 328.

being a good father, good son, good husband, good master, good servant, good friend, good counsellor, in a word, a good citizen.’⁶⁵ The rights of a citizen, then, were due to all virtuous men, and this virtue was defined in non-confessional terms. If, as Montesquieu had suggested, ‘good morals lead to love of the fatherland’, and if this was the essence of political virtue, then religious beliefs were irrelevant.⁶⁶ Sobry did not mention religious belief at all, much less Catholicism. Nor did the deliberately secular Société philanthropique, founded in Paris in 1780 and supported by a wide cross-section of high society, which proclaimed philanthropy to be the ‘first duty of the citizen’.⁶⁷ The Jansenist Guidi drew the obvious implication: ‘in order to be French it is not necessary to be Catholic.’⁶⁸

To be sure, such redefinitions of citizenship did not go unchallenged. In 1788 the Assembly of the Clergy, the peak body of the French Catholic Church, protesting against the so-called Edict of Toleration, told Louis XVI that the Catholic faith was the basis of ‘the French constitution’, and that he could not ‘grant the rights of citizenship in his domains to heretics’.⁶⁹ The following year Claude Fauchet defended civil toleration yet insisted that only Catholics could enjoy full citizenship. But most Catholics, raised on sermons and pious literature that stressed morality, had little difficulty seeing Christian virtue as the basis for citizenship. And in some areas this was already being applied, well before the edict of 1787 granted the Huguenots limited civil rights. Protestants – unlike Jews – were readily being accepted for naturalisation in France by the middle years of the century.⁷⁰

The implications for the Paris Huguenots of the secularisation of the city and of the ‘deconfessionalisation’ of the public domain were far-reaching. On a day-to-day level, it became far easier to enter the guilds and to get access to positions that were in theory reserved for Catholics. The number of occasions when Protestants might betray their religious affiliation in public, because they failed to kneel, to cross themselves or to utter the appropriate prayers, was reduced. Catholics were, as we have seen, less likely to respond in a hostile manner, but fewer such

⁶⁵ Quoted in Bell, *Cult of the Nation*, p. 45. On the political uses of ‘virtue’ in this period, Linton, *Politics of Virtue*, pp. 171–200.

⁶⁶ Montesquieu, *L’Esprit des lois*, Book V, [chapter 2](#).

⁶⁷ Duprat, *Le Temps des philanthropes*, p. xxxi. See also David Garrioch, ‘Making a Better World. Enlightenment and Philanthropy’, in *The Enlightenment World*, ed. Martin Fitzpatrick, Peter Jones and Christa Knellwolf (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 486–501.

⁶⁸ Louis Guidi, *Suite du dialogue sur le mariage des protestants*, 1776, quoted in Merrick, *Desacralization*, p. 153.

⁶⁹ Claude Fauchet, *De la religion nationale* (Paris: Bailly, 1789), p. 181. Assembly of the Clergy quoted in Merrick, *Desacralization*, p. 153.

⁷⁰ Wells, *Law and Citizenship*, p. 126

encounters meant fewer irritations on both sides. A shared, enlightened public culture and – with the decline of religious confraternities – shared forms of sociability and more secular conceptions of notability made it possible for Protestants to participate more fully in the public life of the city and to earn the respect of their neighbours and of those who did not know them personally. By 1789, the view that religious belief was a private matter, not something that had to be demonstrated publicly or that was a precondition for participation in public life, opened the way for Protestants to be embraced as equal citizens. The new nation may have taken on a sacred aura, but it was a non-confessional one.

10 Conclusion: the coming of religious freedom

This book has tried to answer two interconnected questions. How was the small but significant Huguenot population of Paris able to survive, and indeed to grow and prosper across the eighteenth century, despite harsh anti-Protestant laws and the strongly Catholic environment in which it lived? The second key question was why Catholic attitudes changed so dramatically, moving from fairly uniform hostility to broad and sometimes positive acceptance? By the end of the eighteenth century a large proportion of the Catholic population of Paris, perhaps a majority, supported freedom of conscience, and a small number were willing to go further and embrace full religious freedom. These were the preconditions for the peaceful reopening of a French Protestant church in 1789 and for acceptance of the revolutionary proclamation of religious liberty.

I have suggested three key reasons why the Huguenots were able to maintain their religion, despite living in a highly policed Catholic city, close to the centres of power. The first was their own resistance. While it is important to recognise that many converted or conformed to Catholic practice, no doubt because religious principle was less important for them than love of family, economic stability or freedom from fear, many others refused to become Catholics. This involved varying degrees of risk. Even in Paris, the anti-Protestant laws and their partial, sporadic and brutal enforcement effectively kept most of the Huguenots underground and afraid. There was the ever-present possibility of a return to repression. In these circumstances, the nature of the Reformed faith itself was the key to successful survival. Its emphasis on individual and familial devotion, combined with the lesser importance accorded to ritual, meant that the destruction of Protestant institutions in Paris did not make religious observance impossible. It was disastrous for the poor, who no longer received support, and for some occupational groups whose livelihood was destroyed, notably professionals and office-holders, but merchants, artisans and unskilled workers were better able to cope. Most made compromises, particularly where the baptism of children was concerned, and

some went further, pretending to be Catholics but continuing Protestant worship at home and bringing up their children in that faith. While such compromises were condemned by Calvinist hardliners, they enabled the Huguenots to maintain traditions and a sense of separateness, aided by endogamous marriages, tight-knit social networks and possibly an awareness of the Huguenot diaspora.

The other key form of resistance was emigration, and it had enormous consequences not only for those who departed, but for the Huguenots who stayed behind. The government was taken by surprise by the preparedness of thousands of quite humble people to leave the land of their birth, with all the risks to life and livelihood that this entailed. Attempts to staunch the flow were unsuccessful, and the authorities well knew that the policy of forced conversion had failed, so there were many more disgruntled Protestants in the city who might also leave. Whatever the real consequences for the economy, emigration from Paris had a huge impact on official policy because the government saw the city as vital to the prosperity of manufacturing and to national wealth. It was primarily these two forms of resistance, taken together, that led the authorities to make the extraordinary decision to turn a blind eye to the Huguenots in the city, as long as they kept a low profile. As an official, though undeclared policy, it was unique in France and it happened remarkably early, well before Louis XIV's death, and with his approval.

The second key reason why the persecution failed was the nature of the city. Despite the extensive powers of the police, they could not really control Paris. It was too big, its population too mobile, and neither the clergy nor the police could even identify all the Protestants, much less ensure that they took the Catholic sacraments. Nor, given the nature of absolutism, could they admit publicly that the resistance was so strong, since even punishing it, beyond a few examples, was an admission of failure. The police, in any case, had other, larger fish to fry. As ideas about policing shifted, and with it public and government expectations, issues of urban violence, crime, public health measures and ensuring food supply to a large and rapidly growing city took precedence over pursuing peaceable Protestants.¹

Paris was also diplomatically sensitive. While the protests of the Protestant ambassadors had little impact on Louis XIV himself, the police and other officials responded to their intervention. The embassy chapels were even more important, providing assistance and moral support, while later the Dutch chapel, in particular, enabled the Paris

¹ On policing in Paris during this period, Piasenza, *Polizia e città*.

Huguenots to rebuild their networks and to recreate a city-wide Reformed community.

But there was a third important factor that undermined the anti-Protestant laws from the outset, and that was the tepid support given by many Paris Catholics. For all the hype about the efficiency of the Paris police, most of their work depended heavily on the citizenry informing the authorities of breaches of the law, denouncing criminals and even arresting them. Had the authorities had the enthusiastic co-operation of the Catholic population, life would have become impossible for the Huguenots. But a great many people in Paris did not see why respected men and women, law-abiding neighbours, should be punished for their religious beliefs, however misguided these might be. Local and workplace loyalties, the interests of the community, often outweighed confessional differences and official hostility, producing what Willem Frijhoff has called 'the ecumenicity of everyday life'.² And without the active assistance of ordinary Catholics, low-key Huguenot resistance well exceeded the repressive capacity of an early modern government.

At the same time, key servants of the government were actually unwilling fully to enforce the law. Successive police chiefs and other officials temporised, made excuses and even before the change in government policy turned a blind eye to the Protestant presence. They were abetted by some guild leaders and even by members of the clergy. Their motives varied. Sometimes it was a matter of expediency, for example realising that the desecration of the bodies of 'relapsed' Huguenots revolted many Catholics. But more often, officers of the Crown were not convinced that persecution was the best policy. Some of the police felt that pious Protestants were better people than many of the unsavoury characters – nominal Catholics – whom they dealt with on a daily basis. Many officials believed that true conversion could come only from God. Here the Jansenist influence was already important. It was also apparent in the widely shared fear that the sacraments would be profaned if people were forced to take them while not believing in their efficacy. This ran counter to all the teachings of the Catholic Reformation on personal preparation for communion and the deep respect due to the Eucharist.

The unwillingness of the police to enforce the anti-Protestant laws and the subsequent policy of turning a blind eye not only made it easier for the Huguenots to survive, but sent a clear message to the Catholic population. It is likely that the decline in denunciations in early eighteenth-century Paris was a direct result of lack of police interest, even

² Willem Frijhoff, 'Popular Religion', in *Enlightenment, Reawakening and Revolution*, ed. Brown and Tackett, pp.185–207 (quotation p. 198).

at moments – such as in 1724 – when new anti-Protestant legislation was being enacted. The clergy, who persisted longest in pursuing the Huguenots living in their parishes, realised that the police were not listening. Hence we see them changing their tactics, insisting on aspects of family behaviour and morality that they knew to be of concern to the secular authorities, rather than simply the fact that former Protestants were not going to mass.

If all of these factors explain how the Paris Huguenots survived and in many cases prospered, they also raise the second key issue I have been concerned with: the remarkable change in Catholic attitudes. Already at the end of the seventeenth century, hostility between Huguenots and Catholics was far less acute than at the time of the religious wars, and less pronounced than historians have suggested. The norm was peaceful, if wary, coexistence, though elements within the Catholic majority could become violent when underlying prejudices were exacerbated by reports of a Huguenot transgression, by political events elsewhere in France or in Europe or by the intolerant actions of the French government.

Ironically, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and particularly the government's fiction that all French subjects were now Catholics, removed some of the key triggers of conflict. The destruction of the temple at Charenton and the banning of public worship by Protestants meant that key targets for Catholic hostility were gone. The Huguenots were less visible as a group. Individually too, they were cowed, and though there were occasional outbursts of anger, they were in no position to be aggressive. This undoubtedly reduced tensions and contributed to the disappearance of verbal and physical violence.

Examining the lived experience of the Paris Huguenots, and their actions – which reflect their sense of what was possible – enables us to refine the chronology of changing attitudes. Peaceful coexistence was certainly the norm in the early years of the eighteenth century, although Catholics were not prepared to tolerate any disrespect for their holy symbols or for the King, and they remained concerned about the souls of Protestant children, innocents who did not deserve to be damned through no fault of their own. Their general attitude, in the early decades of the century, seems to have been that if Huguenots were good neighbours, clients and workmates, then they would treat them in the same way as anyone else; that it was a shame they remained obstinate in their religious beliefs and would not be admitted to paradise, but that was their problem. There were close relationships, of friendship or patronage, between some Protestants and some Catholics, a striking number of them Jansenists. But by the middle years of the century, and with growing frequency thereafter, older prejudices were being questioned. More

and more Catholics – and the majority of the city’s population remained practising Catholics – were prepared to accept that good people of any faith might be saved. Growing numbers of people felt that religious differences, at least between Christians, were irrelevant in most aspects of everyday life. French Protestants once again became full participants in the urban economy and were admitted to most of the guilds. By the 1760s and 1770s they were being welcomed in a wider range of voluntary contexts, in masonic lodges and less formal areas of sociability, forming networks that went beyond obligatory contact in the neighbourhood or the workplace. They began to be accepted as leaders and notables in their quarters and allowed to assume certain public offices, both in the city and in the central government. The city’s history of religious conflict had come to be understood in an entirely new way, with the Huguenots increasingly cast as innocent victims rather than as perpetrators of violent attacks on Catholics or on the Church. They were no longer the ‘Other’ against whom Paris Catholics defined themselves, but a harmless group who most Parisians came to believe should benefit from the same basic rights as other French subjects. These changes were attitudinal, not simply a question of beliefs: they reflect a decline in the intestinal reactions of Catholics to a religion that was formerly so hostile to their own.

There is little evidence at any point in the century of widespread intermarriage between Catholics and Protestants, perhaps the final test of mutual acceptance, although the loss of the parish records makes it impossible to be certain. In any case, clerical opposition would have made subterfuges necessary. It also seems clear that even in early 1789, many Paris Catholics were concerned, to varying degrees, that full religious freedom would undermine the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, by then a very substantial proportion of the Paris population, including many very influential people, were in favour of civil toleration, both in practice and in theory, and a smaller but still significant number supported full equality.

These are general patterns, and there were always variations between individuals and between different groups within the Catholic population. Some trades, in particular the most prestigious ones, continued to exclude Protestants rigidly, although we cannot know to what extent this was a religious issue and to what extent it was a legally enforceable way of restricting numbers, like the periodic exclusion of people from the provinces. It might, indeed, have been both. Protestants were also kept out of printing, midwifery and official medicine, areas closely regulated by the state. Other patterns are harder to explain: it is not clear why the linen drapers should have been more hostile than the seamstresses. On the other hand, Huguenots were always present in certain occupations: goldsmithing, the

wine industry, clockmaking and some of the furniture trades. There is anecdotal evidence of geographical variations, too, of greater hostility to Huguenots in some quarters of the city: around the Halles, where many of the market women were religiously and socially conservative, as we know from their devotion to St Genevieve in 1789 and their reactions to radical republican women in 1793. The small numbers of Protestants living on the Montagne Sainte-Geneviève and in the Faubourg Saint-Marcel might be simply a product of the occupations favoured by the Huguenots, but it may reflect the very heavy implantation of University colleges, convents and other religious institutions in that area, and perhaps antagonism from a heavily plebeian population.

The bigger question is of course why these very important changes in Catholic attitudes took place. The decline of hostility at the local level, very early in the eighteenth century, parallels that of inter-personal violence in other parts of Europe. This has sometimes been explained as part of a 'civilising' or 'disciplining' process, in which the churches or the state, or both, conditioned people to find less violent solutions to conflict. This might include transferring the use of violence to the secular or religious authorities.³ Another approach is that taken by Benjamin Kaplan, who suggests that peaceful coexistence was very widespread in early modern Europe, and that what we need to explain is breaches of it. But where extreme violence has occurred and become endemic, as during the French wars of religion, something was needed to break the cycle. Kaplan suggests that prosperity, the growth of civil society, individualism and the Enlightenment (broadly conceived) were the key factors bringing this about.⁴

In the case of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Paris, another important driver of change was religious acculturation, led initially by the clergy. The Catholic Reformation sought to modify an older cosmology, and in Paris it was Jansenists who spearheaded liturgical changes, reducing the emphasis on the cult of saints and of the Virgin. It was they who placed the greatest emphasis on lay understanding of the key items of faith, on reading Scripture and above all on the importance of examining one's conscience. The subsequent persecution of the Jansenists also

³ There is a huge literature on this, most of it concerned with interpersonal violence. But see the thoughtful essay by Gerd Schwerhoff, 'Social Control of Violence, Violence as Social Control: The Case of Early Modern Germany', in *Social Control in Europe, 1500–1800*, ed. Herman Roodenburg and Pieter Spierenburg (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2004), pp. 220–46. The other essays in this volume are important in relation to other aspects of this change. See also Michel Nassiet, *La Violence, une histoire sociale. France, XVIe–XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: Champ Vallon, 2011), especially chapter 11.

⁴ Kaplan, *Divided by Faith*, p. 348.

had an enormous influence in Paris, driving their supporters to stress the primacy of conscience and the illegitimacy of using force to compel orthodoxy, an argument they later extended to Protestants. The persecution also led many uncommitted observers to question the way the Church was run, and even to express contempt for the practices of the clergy whom, as Charles-Alexis Alexandre put it, 'we did not confuse with religion'.⁵ Religion was true belief, untarnished by petty politics and self-interest. It was the essence of Christianity and was to be found in the individual's personal relationship with God.

All this was part of a long-term transformation of religious belief, a shift towards a more secular, more humanist and more personal piety, one that was perhaps driven, as Jean Delumeau has argued, by the decline of fear: fear of hell in the hereafter and of hunger and disease in the here-and-now as economic conditions improved, as on balance they did in Paris across the eighteenth century.⁶ These religious changes were inseparable, of course, from the development of scientific notions of natural laws, which changed the role of God in the way the universe functioned. They were also related to a growing confidence in human ability to understand and to control the natural world, and to the assault on what was increasingly termed 'superstition', a campaign initiated by reforming clerics and later fostered by leading figures of the Enlightenment.

The Catholic Reformation also contributed strongly to a division between the sacred and the profane that redefined the religious sphere and removed much of the public life of the city outside it. In part, the separation of sacred and profane corresponded to a new distinction between public and private. Religion was increasingly confined to the private, interior domains of personal conscience, the household and to the churches themselves. While most people continued to see the hand of God in everyday events, growing numbers of Parisians no longer felt the public space of the city to be sacred, and the presence of Protestants was therefore less threatening. The abolition of many feast days, primarily motivated by concern about their profanation, reduced the number of places and times when religious confrontations might occur. And the preference for more private expressions of religious belief undermined some of the key forms of religious sociability, processions and confraternities, which were replaced by more secular and less public societies and lodges.

Of even more fundamental importance was the secularisation of public identities. This happened both at the individual level, as we can see

⁵ Bibliothèque Thiers, MSS Masson 211, fol. 60.

⁶ Delumeau, *Rassurer et protéger*, pp. 540–68.

through changes in the choices and social meanings of baptismal names, and, more importantly still, at the collective level. The guilds were forcibly secularised by the state, losing their confraternities and the religious elements of their identity. At the same time, models of the perfect public official and of the urban notable were redefined, and so too was the nature of citizenship: all of these were now based on forms of civic virtue that were largely stripped of their religious components. Those people – and there were many of them, even among unbelievers – who continued to see religion as an indispensable factor in maintaining social cohesion, more often emphasised universal Christian values than specifically Catholic ones. Again, these changes were not all-encompassing and did not happen uniformly across the entire population, but they were very widespread. By the late eighteenth century, therefore, it was far easier to live alongside people of different faiths without this creating any difficulty in daily interaction. Even in the absence of direct contact – and many Parisians probably remained only vaguely aware of the Huguenots in their midst – it became far easier to imagine those people as fellow citizens.

None of this can be separated from the demographic, social and economic changes taking place in Paris. The city continued to grow during the eighteenth century, and it experienced high levels of social and geographical mobility. This made it impossible for the religious and secular authorities to enforce religious practice as they could in smaller centres. In addition, levels of literacy and of education were high, and the population was very diverse, all of which favoured the spread of new ideas and values. It was a dynamic environment, highly commercial, prizing innovation. Fashion – a social imperative that emphasised continuous change – influenced many areas of life, from clothing and hairstyles to baptismal names. While encouraging and accelerating secularisation, none of these factors necessarily undermined religious belief: the example of London, an equally dynamic city, where, if the evidence of numbers of services and the observations of foreign visitors can be relied on, Sundays were relatively policed and religious practice remained very strong, cautions us against a facile association of this kind.⁷ In Paris too, all the evidence suggests that religious practice remained the norm, but choice in religious matters – as in other things – was unprecedented by the late eighteenth

⁷ Louis-Sébastien Mercier, *Parallèle de Paris et de Londres*, ed. Claude Bruneteau and Bernard Cottret (Paris: Didier-Erudition, 1982), p. 104. Viviane Barrie-Curien, *Clergé et pastorale en Angleterre au XVIIIe siècle. Le diocèse de Londres* (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 1992), pp. 305–6, 310, 313. Viviane Barrie, 'Recherches sur la vie religieuse en Angleterre au XVIIIe siècle', *Revue historique*, 266 (1981): 339–79 (349–53).

century. It had even become possible to give up religious practice and to express unbelief in a semi-public way.

My emphasis on the social history of toleration and on the religious roots of the attitudinal changes taking place in Paris raises the question of the role of the Enlightenment, which an older history portrayed as the key driver in the 'rise of toleration' in eighteenth-century Europe. If the Enlightenment is conceived of narrowly, as an intellectual movement or a particular cluster of ideas, then its direct role in changing the attitudes of the majority of Parisians came late and was almost certainly confined to legitimising and further encouraging a process that was already under way. Of course, ideas of religious toleration had been circulating in Europe for a long time. There is no doubt that John Locke and Pierre Bayle, in particular, laid the intellectual foundations for the acceptance of other religious groups, but for a long time their ideas were rejected by most Catholics, and they had broad appeal only in a context of wider education, growing humanitarianism and declining religious conflict. Bayle was more important in Paris than was Locke, to judge by the presence of his works in libraries, and there is no denying his influence in intellectual circles, even if reactions to his ideas in the first half of the eighteenth century were most often hostile. In terms of immediate impact on a wider reading public, Montesquieu (admittedly influenced by Locke) was probably of greater importance, particularly *The Spirit of the Laws* of 1748, which helped to undermine some of the arguments in favour of intolerance.⁸ In religious matters, the direct influence of Diderot, of the *Encyclopédie* and of certain other key writers of the radical Enlightenment was probably far more limited, although as Martin Fitzpatrick has pointed out, they did assist in changing views of the relationship between state and citizens and in modifying 'the self-perception of religions'.⁹ Rousseau's novels were much more influential, though in offering role models more than closely reasoned arguments, and in any case his views on toleration were somewhat ambiguous. Few of the major *philosophes* came out publicly in support of French Protestants, seeing them as religious fanatics who were potentially as much a threat to society as Catholic 'superstition'.¹⁰

Voltaire's campaign in support of Jean Calas in the early 1760s, however, was hugely important, persuading many educated people that reform of

⁸ Marion, *Les Bibliothèques privées*, p. 160; Perez Zagorin, *How the Idea of Religious Toleration Came to the West* (Princeton University Press, 2003), p. 295.

⁹ Martin Fitzpatrick, 'Toleration and the Enlightenment Movement', in *Toleration in Enlightenment Europe*, ed. Grell and Porter, pp. 23–68 (quotation p. 29).

¹⁰ Claude Lauriol, 'Philosophes et protestants', *Études théologiques et religieuses*, 69 (1994): 13–27.

the anti-Protestant laws was overdue. Yet its context was also vital, since it coincided with a public debate about the treatment of Protestants that was already taking place. If Voltaire's intervention did help to bring about a change in public opinion in the 1760s, it was because significant numbers of educated French people already accepted that persecuting people for their religious beliefs was wrong. Furthermore, as John Renwick has pointed out, by the 1760s de facto toleration existed in most parts of France.¹¹ We have seen that it was in place in Paris very early, and that the attitudes of Parisians were already changing before Montesquieu, Rousseau or Voltaire produced their key works on the subject. The initial pressure for a change of policy came, not surprisingly, from the Huguenots themselves, but subsequently, and more unexpectedly, from Catholics who argued on both pragmatic and religious grounds. Jansenist writers were arguing for freedom of conscience for Protestants well before Voltaire did, and although they did not have the same high profile in Europe, they probably reached a wider public in Paris. It is no coincidence that the glazier Jacques-Louis Ménétra drew his religious scepticism from dissatisfaction with the Catholic clergy, in the context of heated debates over Jansenism and mutual accusations of heresy, and only later found justification for them in his reading. Manon Phlipon, somewhat later, traced her initial doubts to reading the Bible, before going on to find them legitimised by other books. For most Catholics, the *philosophes* were too anti-religious and too radical: by the 1770s and 1780s, many people were prepared to endorse civil toleration and freedom of conscience, but before the French Revolution only a minority accepted the arguments in favour of full religious toleration.

The Enlightenment as an intellectual movement, therefore, largely accelerated a process that was already under way. On the other hand, if we understand the Enlightenment as a broader cultural development, then its wide influence on attitudes towards religious toleration was of fundamental importance. While this is an artificial distinction, it is useful here because widespread attitudinal change is a cultural phenomenon more than an intellectual one, except perhaps for a very tiny minority of intellectuals. It is also because the cultural dimension of the Enlightenment was entirely compatible with belief in religious revelation. I have pointed to the importance of 'enlightened Catholicism' in Paris, where many practising Catholics saw no conflict between their attachment to the Virgin or the Blessed Sacrament, on the one hand, and an interest in the work

¹¹ Renwick, 'Toleration'. David Bien demonstrated that even in Toulouse, where the Calas affair took place, hostility to Protestants was already muted by the second half of the eighteenth century: Bien, *Calas Affair*.

of Newton and other scientists or a belief in the reasonableness and the utility of religion, on the other. They 'lived' the Enlightenment, enjoying novels and travel literature that made some of them think about the fate of non-Christians, though the range of people they encountered in Paris might well have had the same effect. The indications are that growing numbers even of working people consumed this kind of literature, alongside pious books that remained very popular. Much of this new culture was secular, which in the eighteenth century made it easy to combine with continued religious practice, because they operated in increasingly separate spheres of life. Yet it also had an impact on religious belief. It made miracles seem more exceptional, because they contravened natural laws. It transformed God into a less interventionist and far less judgmental deity, more like a benign tutor fostering human knowledge and independence. And it encouraged an optimism that banished thoughts of hell and purgatory from everyday life. For many people, Enlightenment and religion pointed in the same direction, towards a more humane and civilised society.

This said, there was no single 'enlightened culture' in Paris, just as there was no single Catholic culture. Both involved a broad spectrum of values and attitudes, which people combined in different ways. Even the most strident defenders of intolerance used some of the language and epistemology we associate with the Enlightenment. At the same time, many of the key arguments made in favour of civil toleration were religious ones. My study reinforces the argument advanced by a number of recent writers that the French Enlightenment, in this wider sense, was not anti-religious.

It might perhaps seem, from the account given in these pages, that the coming of de facto toleration and of religious freedom, driven by deep-seated social, ideological and cultural pressures, was inevitable. It was not. While very powerful pressures were leading in that direction, things might have gone differently. Had Louis XV's son survived and come to the throne in place of Louis XVI, royal religious policy would certainly have been different. Without a government that was both repressive and ineffective in suppressing dissent, there would not have been such debate. Had there been no Bull *Unigenitus* and no persecution of Jansenists to trigger bitter divisions within the Gallican Church, questions about freedom of conscience would not have taken the form they did, and the French Catholic Church would have been in a much stronger position. In that case, not only Catholicism but the French Enlightenment might have followed a different course.

Indeed, one of the conclusions to emerge from my study is the heavy responsibility of governments and of public figures of all kinds. While

I have certainly emphasised the way that cultural and religious factors shaped long-term change, in a given context the actions and rhetoric of leaders and opinion-makers could either intensify or calm tensions.¹² In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Paris, the clergy could foster hatred and violence of Protestants, or they could encourage coexistence and gentle persuasion as a way of bringing the stray sheep back into the fold. The role of the state was even more significant. The growing corpus of anti-Protestant laws and persecution during Louis XIV's reign authorised intolerance and discrimination on a day-to-day level, particularly in employment and in measures against Protestant schools and religious gatherings. It signalled to Catholic stalwarts that a campaign against the 'schismatics' would be rewarded, and was a key factor in ending the uneasy but broadly peaceful coexistence of the middle years of the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century, enforcement of the anti-Protestant laws, however sporadic, had the effect – as David Bien pointed out in his study of the Calas affair – of reinforcing negative Catholic assumptions about Huguenots as dangerous dissidents.¹³ A fascinating but unresolvable hypothetical question is whether religious freedom for the Huguenots would have come sooner had Louis XIV not survived, or had he or his successor pursued a different religious policy. Certainly, the subsequent official policy of turning a blind eye to the Huguenot presence had the effect of dampening conflict and discouraging denunciations and made religious difference all but irrelevant in public life. Later in the eighteenth century, the role of public figures like Voltaire, Marmontel, Turgot and Malesherbes was important in shifting government policy and hastened a movement towards greater rights for Protestants that was beginning to gather pace in public opinion.

Another way to think about the role of contingent factors is to ask whether religious freedom would have come to Paris, and to France, without the French Revolution. All other things being equal, the answer is undoubtedly yes. The Edict of 1787 had raised Protestant expectations and stimulated public debate, and the fact that the sky did not immediately fall would probably eventually have helped to persuade a majority of Parisians that allowing non-Catholics to practise their religion publicly was not going to destroy the monarchy or the Church. But this would not have happened in 1789, and perhaps not for many years after that, given the reservations held by the King, by certain key administrators and indeed by many ordinary Catholics in the city. The euphoric year

¹² A point made by Bien, *Calas Affair*, esp. pp. 138–9, 147.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

of 1789 made possible many things that only twelve months earlier had seemed unlikely or impossible.

In the longer term, though, one might argue that the impact of the French Revolution was more mixed. Certainly, it brought religious freedom to France. Yet the conflicts between the Revolution and the Church set Catholicism on a far more authoritarian and militantly conservative course than it had followed in the eighteenth century. The Revolution sparked renewed hostility between Catholics and Protestants, both in some parts of France in the 1790s and throughout the country for much of the nineteenth century, as conservative Catholics reinterpreted it as a Protestant–masonic plot.¹⁴ The road towards religious toleration, this time in the modern sense of mutual respect between different religious groups, has been full of twists and turns.

¹⁴ Michèle Sacquin, *Entre Bossuet et Maurras. L'antiprotestantisme en France de 1814 à 1870* (Paris: École des Chartes, 1998).

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Index

- Abbeville, 82, 135, 195
abjurations, 27, 29, 32, 55, 57, 82, 124, 176, 185, 243, *see also* conversion
absolutism, 5, 53, 73, 181, 245, 263, 264
academies, 25, 27, 69, 190, 231
Acloque, André, 230
Agar, Jacques d', 27
Aguesseau, Henri-François d', 49, 50, 52, 54, 254
Alary, Pierre, 153
Alembert, Jean Le Rond d', 191, 238
Alexandre, Charles-Alexis, 233, 268
Almain family, 133, 134, 214
Alsace, 8, 78, 195
America, 137
Amsterdam, 28, 136, 137
Anglican chapel, 6, 56, 57, 77, 78, 81, 183, 200
Anglicans, 23, 82
Anglure, marquise d', 209
anticlericalism, 233, 237
apprentices, 55, 121, 127, 158, 164, 167, 173, 177
Archbishop of Paris, 31, 56, 162, 183, 237
Ardesoif family, 136
Argenson, Marc-René d', 37, 47–52
Argenson, René-Louis de Voyer d', 64
army, Protestants in, 27
Arthaud family, 131
Asselin family, 135
atheism, 11, 21, 22, 207, 225, 234, 237, 238, 239, 240, 270
Aubusson, 104, 131, 140, 141, 151, 198, 216
Audry, Louise, 178
Austria, *see* Habsburg Monarchy

Babault family, 111, 173, 180
Babot (Protestant wineshop-keeper), 127
Bacot family, 192
Baculard d'Arnaud, François-Thomas-Marie de, 204, 228

Baer, Friedrich Carl, 145, 195
bankers, 7, 43, 67, 72, 80, 82, 83, 93, 104, 123, 128, 137, 141, 144, 148, 175, 213, 256
Bapst, Georges-Frédéric, 214
baptism, 36, 94, 110–11, 159, 174
baptismal names, 118–21, 256–8, 269
Bardou, Jean, 235
Baril, Pierre, 35
Barillet, René, 151
Baron, Guillaume, 197
Bart, Louise, 59
Bary, Jacob-Pierre de, 148
Bauer, Christophe-Jean, 192
Bayle, Pierre, 12, 161, 221, 222, 270
Beaucorps, Perine, 164
Beaumarchais, Pierre-Auguste Caron de, 81
Beaumer, Madame de, 200
Bécasson, François, 122
Bechet family, 135, 140
Belin, Louise, 142
Bellettes, Anne, 167
Bellier, Pierre, 147
Berchère family, 131
Bergier, Nicolas-Sylvestre, 226, 228
Berlin, 138
Berthe family, 108, 109, 136, 137, 139, 183
Bible, 43, 114, 115, 117, 118, 128, 167, 220, 221, 254, 267, 271
Bignon, Jean-Paul, 189
Bitaubé, Paul-Jérémie, 153
Bivelat, Angélique, 170
blasphemy, 246, 247, 250
Boischevalier, Joseph-Hyacinthe Hullin de, 197
Bombelles, marquis de, 195
books, 38, 115, 139, 165, 194, 217, 220, 230, 232, 237, 240, 270, 271, 272
Bosc, Paul, 40, 77, 80, 147, 190
Bossuet, Jacques-Bénigne, 161, 204
Bouffé, Gabriel, 123

- Bourdaloue, Louis, 189, 226
 Bousqueyrol, Pierre, 151, 198, 199
 Breteuil, baron de, 208
 Brochant family, 177
 Bruslefer, Louis, 112
 Buffier, Claude, 258
 Burguère, Jacques, 68
 burials, 34, 41, 49, 51, 53, 65–7, 73, 77, 81, 109, 111, 148, 149, 157, 170–2, 173, 180, 181, *see also* funerals
 Burrisch, Henri, 67, 196
- cahiers* of 1789, 11, 211–12, 218
 Calas affair, 8, 13, 70, 117, 206, 210, 218, 235, 241, 259, 270, 273
 Calvin, John, 2, 3, 113
 Calvinism, 2–4, 23, 43, 50, 111, 114, 115, 116, 118, 120, 127, 144, 170, 179, 246, 250
 Camisards, 8, 203
 Camus, Armand-Gaston, 236
 Caraccioli, Domenico, 191
 Caraccioli, Louis-Antoine de, 207, 208, 228, 238, 239
 Caron family, 131
 Catholic clergy, 20, 26, 35, 55, 58, 72, 74, 103, 109, 111, 112, 169, 170–2, 179, 181–6, 202, 251, 265, 273
 Catholic Enlightenment, 18, 227, *see also* enlightened Catholicism
 Catholic Reformation, 18, 218, 221, 224, 239, 264, 267, 268
 Catillon family, 36, 41
 Caveirac, François Novy de, 205, 206
 cemetery, Protestant, 66, 67, 78, 149, 196
 Cévennes, 8, 46, 118, 224
 Chabert family, 67, 83, 141
 Chair family, 121, 141
 Charas, Moyse, 27
 Charenton, 9, 24, 25, 31, 39, 77, 124, 125, 128, 156, 157, 265
 Chastelain, Étienne, 64, 128
 Châtelet courts, 196
 Chénier, Marie-Joseph, 203
 children, removals of, 26, 31, 34, 36, 47, 59, 70, 127, 182
 Choudens (banker), 152
 citizenship, 242, 246, 252, 259, 260, 269, 270
 Cluzel, Pierre-Antoine, 153, 200
 coexistence, religious, 16, 108–9, 161, 164–6, 175, 186, 215, 265, 267, 269, 273
 Collas, Marie-Anne, 128
 Collet family, 131
 Colson, Adrien-Joseph, 210
 communion, 35, 114, 147, 151, 248
 Condé, prince de, 161, 163, 199
 confession, certificates, 55, 112, 202
 confraternities, 16, 18, 219, 220, 237, 249, 250, 252, 255, 258, 261, 268
 Conrart, Valentin, 163
 conscience, freedom of, 10, 11, 12, 19, 64, 208, 211, 224, 236, 239, 271
 consistory, 4, 31, 43, 147, 153, 154, 200, 215
 consumerism, 251, 269
 Conti, prince de, 199, 223, 237
 conversion, 29, 31, 40, 42, 61, 76, 79, 80, 81, 124, 127, 171, 172, 173, 179, 180, 182, 184, 239, 243, 262
 forced, 5, 29, 52, 72, 162, 207, 222, 263
 Corsange family, 134
 Cottreau (charged with sedition), 48
 Cottin family, 69, 93, 110, 131, 135
 Couillette d'Hauterive family, 195
 Coulin family, 47
 Coulloudon family, 131, 141
 Counter-Enlightenment, 227, 231, 236
 Courcelle family, 59, 113
 Court, Antoine, 69, 147
 Court de Gébelin, Antoine, 7, 69, 71, 138, 190, 193, 215
 courts, law, 27, 28, 49, 111
 Coyer, Gabriel-François, 205
 Créquerelle, Marie-Marguerite, 60
 Creuzé, Jean, 129
 Crommelin family, 135, 137, 167
 curés, 49, 56, 58, 60, 103, 112, 182–5, 202
- Daligre, Charlotte-Marguerite, 199
 Damiens, Robert-François, 223
 Daniel, Gabriel, 204
 Danish chapel, 39, 78, 143, 145
 Darambure, Marie, 47
 Darcel, Marie-Catherine-Renée, 194, 230
 Dargent family, 1, 130, 131, 145, 180, 192
 dechristianisation, 16, 233
 Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, 12, *see also* Revolution of 1789
 Deffand, Madame du, 210, 237
 deism, 232, 237, 238
 Delacombe, Marie, 39
 Delacroix, Théodore, 197
 Delaloë, Élisabeth, 60, 108
 Delamare, Nicolas, 49
 Delorme, Jean-Philippe, 71
 Denmark, 28

- denunciation, 26, 35, 155, 165, 167, 168, 169, 172, 173, 174, 180, 182–3, 186, 188, 264, 273
- Desbuis family, 33
- Deschazeaux family, 131, 151, 198
- Dhier, Charles, 129
- Diderot, Denis, 191, 230, 270
- Docagne, Jacques-René-Benjamin, 93
- doctors, 27, 38, 69, 151, 200, 252
- Doriot, Jean-Martin, 195
- Dortous de Mairan, Jean-Jacques, 231
- Doublet, Antoine, 129
- Doucet family, 1, 147, 153, 197, 214
- dragonnades*, 5, 29, 31
- Duclos, Charles, 237
- Dufour family, 137, 138
- Dufresne, Marie, 32
- Duguay family, 121, 142
- Dugué family, 131
- Dupuis, Louis, 148
- Duquesne, Abraham, 27
- Dutch chapel, 6, 11, 39, 56, 57, 58, 62, 63, 66, 70, 71, 77, 79, 81, 82, 113, 143, 144, 146–53, 154, 172, 180, 195, 198, 215, 263
- Dutch infirmary, 78, 83, 104, 143, 150, 198
- Dutch Protestants, 83, 89, 183
- Dutch Republic, 12, 23, 139, *see also* Low Countries; Netherlands, the
- East India Company, 64, 82, 93, 175
- Edict of 1787, 5, 10, 11, 46, 71, 209, 210–11, 212, 260, 273
- Edict of February 1776, 201
- Edict of Fontainebleau, *see* Edict of Nantes: Revocation
- Edict of Nantes, 5, 9, 25, 158, 166, 243
Revocation, 5, 9, 12, 16, 24, 29–33, 39, 72, 145, 161, 163, 166–7, 189, 208, 224, 246, 262, 265
- emigration, 7, 26, 28–9, 32–3, 40, 42, 50–1, 63, 77, 83, 123, 127, 137, 263
- Emminck, Jean-Guillaume, 152
- Empaytaz, Pierre-Frédéric, 83, 153
- endogamy, 130–2
- England, 13, 28, 107, 123, 124, 136, 139
- English Revolution, 25, 156
- enlightened Catholicism, 227–32, 239–41, 271
- Enlightenment, 7, 12, 13–14, 15, 17, 20, 21, 191, 193, 210, 217, 218, 222, 227, 230, 231, 235, 240, 267, 268, 270, 271, 272
- Estave family, 60, 122, 134, 194
- Estrang family, 197
- Fabre family, 83, 153, 192
- Falaise, Marie-Anne, 122
- Falaiseau family, 38, 128
- families, mixed, 179–81
- family
honour, 60, 172
and religion, 39, 43, 80, 113–16, 118–25, 127
- Fareinne, Catherine, 59
- fashion, 258, 269, *see also* consumerism
- Faubourg Saint-Antoine, 28, 38, 62, 66, 77, 82, 85, 90, 91, 98, 103, 105, 109, 112, 129, 147, 148, 152, 156, 164–5, 187, 196, 228, 237
- Faubourg Saint-Germain, 98, 103, 157, 163, 174, 187, 196, 211
- Faubourg Saint-Honoré, 98, 104
- Faubourg Saint-Marcel, 103, 132, 157, 233
- Fauchet, Claude, 260
- Favre family, 79
- feast days, 25, 114, 156, 173, 231, 244, 247, 248, 250
- Féline family, 133, 137, 152, 153, 214
- Fenou, Jacques, 108, 174
- Feray family, 135
- Ferme générale, 27, 64, 69, 80
- fermes*, 64
- Fevot, Gédéon, 174
- Feydeau de Marville, Claude-Henri, 62
- Fleury, André-Hercule de, 58, 224
- Foissin family, 41, 50, 109, 123, 129, 135, 140, 141, 178, 180, 197
- Foubert family, 130
- Foucart, Marie-Madeleine, 142, 143
- Foullé family, 126, 130, 131, 177
- Frankfurt, 43
- freemasonry, 63, 137, 192–3, 215, 217, 240, 252, 274
- Fréron, Élie-Catherine, 14, 236, 238, 259
- friendship, 178–9, 190, 194
- Fromaget family, 80, 93, 110, 135, 137
- Fronde, 25, 30, 51, 73
- funerals, 3, 14, 19, 25, 67, 70, 149, 201
- Gacon de Louancy, abbé, 236
- Gadeau, Marie, 71
- Galland, Antoine, 189
- galleys, 8, 30, 34, 45, 163, 168
- Gambs, Christian Carl, 146
- Gandereau, Jacques, 142
- Gastebois family, 59, 60, 80, 93
- Gaudron family, 127
- gender differences, 32, 43, 88, 124, 128
- Geneva, 7, 42, 59, 82, 83, 107, 137, 138, 139, 141, 224

- Genlis, Madame de, 210
 Genoud family, 148
 Gérard, Philippe-Louis, 8, 228
 German Protestants, 78, 83, 91, 104, 122, 142, 148, 167
 German states, 6, 8, 18, 124
 Gervaise, Louis, 124
 Gilbert, Louis, 129
 Gillet, David, 41
 Girardot family, 33, 36, 37, 45, 49, 61, 65, 93, 117, 122, 128, 131, 133, 135, 136, 138, 140, 141, 150, 185, 190, 197, 214
 Gleizes, Jean-Jacques, 198
 Godet (clockmaker), 183
 godparents, 181, 195
 Gohard, Anne-Suzanne, 139
 Gourcy, François-Antoine-Etienne de, 235
 Grimm, Frédéric Melchior, 191, 238
 Guerin, Jean-Pierre, 142
 Guerne family, 131
 Guiardel, Jeanne, 143
 Guidi, Louis, 223, 226, 237, 260
 Guignard family, 32
 Guiguer family, 83, 141
 guilds, 9, 28, 46, 49, 50, 81, 90–6, 103, 124, 157–60, 163, 169, 176–8, 186, 201, 220, 246, 249–50, 254, 255, 260, 264, 266, *see also* trades
 Six Corps, 94, 159
 Guillemain family, 128, 146
 Guillerault family, 1, 141
 Guimet family, 62, 131, 198
 Guitton, Marc, 83, 147, 215
- Habert family, 113, 134
 Habsburg Monarchy, 13, 18
 Hamon, Pierre, 128
 Hannechart family, 129
 Hardy, Marie, 109, 114, 180
 Hardy, Siméon-Prosper, 210
 Harlay, Achille de, 47
 hell, 3, 171, 173, 226, 229, 268, 272
 Helvétius, Claude-Adrien, 230, 235
 Henry, Geneviève, 59
 Hérault, René, 170
 Hobbes, Thomas, 222
 Hogguers, Jean-Jacques, 193
 Holland, *see* Dutch Republic; Low Countries; Netherlands, the
 Hollard, Jean, 56, 108, 187
 Horry family, 115
 hospitals, 251, *see also* Hôtel-Dieu
 Hôtel-Dieu, 202, 243, 252
 Houssemaine family, 57, 61, 94, 131, 133, 153, 177, 214
- Houtteville, Claude-François-Alexandre, 228
 Houzel family, 62, 68, 94, 128, 133, 135, 141, 142
 Huet, Pierre-Daniel, 189
 Huguenot
 beliefs, 2–4, 44, 106–18, 167, 184
 as insult, 157, 165, 188
 numbers, 4, 6, 20, 31, 40, 56, 75, 76–9, 81
 resistance, 8, 32, 34, 36, 38, 43, 53, 262
 humanitarianism, 235, 240, 241
- Île de la Cité, 98, 104, 126
 imprisonment, 29, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 42, 46, 48, 50, 55–61, 63, 84
 international networks, 32, 93, 136–40, 175
 Italy, 18
- Jacob, Michel, 68
 Jacobé de Naurois family, 59
 Jacot family, 82, 122, 129, 143, 148, 149, 152
 Jallasson family, 131
 Jallot family, 123, 131, 135, 150
 Jansenism, 11, 17, 19, 52, 73, 110, 116, 117, 177, 183, 186, 197–8, 205, 208, 210, 217, 218, 219–22, 224, 230, 231, 235, 236, 237, 239, 241, 248, 257, 264, 265, 267, 271, 272
 Jaucourt, chevalier de, 7
 Jesuits, 189, 208, 225, 235
 Jews, 10, 12, 22, 55, 72, 120, 201, 212, 213, 252, 260
 Jobart, Gaspard, 148
 Joly de Fleury, Guillaume-François-Louis, 71, 202
 Jordan, Charles-Étienne, 138, 188, 189
 Josef II, 208
 Joubert family, 116, 131
 Julien, Jean-Louis, 193
- La Barre, chevalier de, 250
 La Broue, Frédéric-Guillaume, 147
 La Fayette, marquis de, 209
 La Harpe, Jean-François, 191
 La Reynie, Nicolas, 30, 34, 46, 47, 50, 53, 73
 La Rochefoucauld, François-Alexandre Frédéric, 209
 La Rochelle, 119, 123
 La Vrillière, Louis Phélypeaux de, 162
 Labhard, Jean-Henri, 82, 141, 148
 Labroue, Frédéric-Guillaume, 149
 Laideguive, Pierre-Louis, 197

- Lambert, abbé, 109
 Lambert, Pierre-Charles, 192
 Languedoc, 58
 Lanson family, 147, 197
 Larrivée, Germaine, 150, 190
 laws, anti-Protestant, *see* religious: laws
 lawyers, 27, 198, 223, 241, *see also* office-holders
 Le Maitre de Sacy, Louis-Isaac, 220
 Le Paige, Adrien, 199, 223
 Le Sueur, Louise, 35
 Le Tellier, Michel, 162
 Leblond family, 141, 142, 214
 LeClerc, Salomon, 133
 Lecointe de Marcillac, Jean-Louis, 200
 LeCoultré family, 146
 Leguay family, 134
 Lejay, Suzanne, 122
 Lemaistre family, 1, 80, 115, 127, 130, 133, 135, 152
 Lémery, Nicolas, 27
 Lenitz, Christian, 142, 143
 Lenoir, Jean-Charles-Pierre, 19, 67
 Lent, 201
 LePlastrier, Simon, 138
 LePlastrier, Thomas, 179
 Lestache, Jean-Baptiste, 93
 Lieutenant-General of Police, 30, 31, 55, 71, 73, 162
 Linguet, Simon-Nicolas-Henri, 235
 literacy, 269
 Locke, John, 12, 270
 London, 269
 Longuet, Marie-Charlotte, 142
 Lorimier family, 197
 Lorin family, 131
 Louis XIV, 5, 6, 10, 24, 26, 27, 30, 39, 73, 93, 117, 159, 166, 221, 236, 259, 263, 273
 Louis XV, 58, 223, 259, 272
 Louis XVI, 208, 209, 255, 260, 272
 Low Countries, 6, 139, *see also* Dutch Republic; Netherlands, the
 Lutherans, 2, 8, 23, 39, 67, 68, 75, 78, 82, 91, 142–4, 146, 173, 174, 194, 195, 202, 215
 Machault d'Arnouville, Louis-Charles de, 57, 65
 Machault, Jean-Baptiste, 205
 Malesherbes, Chrétien-Guillaume de Lamoignon de, 208, 238, 273
 Mallet du Pan, Jacques, 210
 Mallet family, 83, 138, 148, 194
 Marcet, Jacob, 138
 Marchand, Prosper, 179
 Marchand, Suzanne, 109, 111
 Maréchal, Pierre-Jean, 148
 Marguerite, Mathieu, 125
 Marguillier, Jeanne, 129
 Mariette family, 130, 135
 Marmontel, Jean-François, 191, 207, 225, 273
 Marolles, Louis de, 163
 marriage, 36, 54, 70, 71, 72, 111–13, 119–20, 130–4, 140–4, 202
 between religious groups, 26, 59, 108, 146, 182, 266
 witnesses, 194–200
 Marron, Paul-Henri, 146, 153
 Marteilhe, Jean, 45
 Massé family, 93, 118, 136
 Massieu family, 135
 material culture, *see* paintings; portraits; religious: objects
 Maultrot, Gabriel-Nicolas, 222
 Maupeou, René-Nicolas-Charles-Augustin de, 205
 Maurepas, Jean-Frédéric Phélypeaux de, 62, 184
 meetings, clandestine, 35, 37, 38, 47, 53, 114, 167, 173, 174, 188
 Melot family, 134
 Ménétra, Jacques-Louis, 13, 14, 226, 231, 232, 234, 241, 271, 276
 Mercier, Louise, 38
 Mercier, Louis-Sébastien, 10, 205, 210
 Merigault, Catherine Honorine, 195
 Méry, Jean-Pierre, 113
 Meure, Madeleine, 174
 Migeon family, 68, 94, 103, 108, 115, 121, 122, 130, 131, 152, 167, 175, 176, 256
 Mignot, Marie-Madeleine, 129
 migration to Paris, 6, 40, 53, 77, 82–90, 122, 134–6, 149, 253
 Minot family, 153
 Mirabeau, comte de, 11, 203
 miracles, 223, 228, 237, 240, 244
 Miromesnil, Armand-Thomas Hue de, 208
 Mitoire family, 131
 Modena de Saint-Wast, David, 68
 Molimier family, 93, 131, 176, 197
 Mongendre, François, 129
 Montesquieu, Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de, 222, 230, 235, 247, 260, 270
 Montz family, 93, 141
 Monvoisin family, 122, 178, 196
 morality, 229, 259, 260
 in Catholic teaching, 224–6

- Moreau, Étienne, 66
 Moreau, Noel, 196
 Morel, François, 198
 Morellet, André, 191, 205
 municipality of Paris, 245, 249, 252, 255
 Musée de Paris, 193
 Muslims, 55
- names, baptismal, 118–21, 256–8, 269
 nation, idea of, 261
 Nau family, 177, 198
 Necker family, 7, 69, 133, 138, 141, 146,
 191, 194, 252
 neighbourhood, 39, 129, 155, 164–5,
 169–74, 175, 264
 Netherlands, the, 190, 209, 211,
see also Dutch Republic; Low
 Countries
 New Catholic convent, 37, 41, 47, 55,
 57, 58, 59, 60, 84, 108, 122, 139,
 180, 181
 Newton, Isaac, 228, 272
 Noailles, Louis-Antoine de, 52
 Noailles, maréchale de, 210
 nobles, 27, 43, 109, 189, 190, 199, 212
 Nollet, Jean-Antoine, 190
 Normandy, 135
 notability and religion, 68, 255, 256
 novels, 206, 229, 230, 232, 240, 270, 272
- Oberkampf, Christophe-Philippe, 143,
 194, 195, 230
 Odry, Louise, 42
 office-holders, 27, 31, 43, 63, 64, 68, 80,
 195, 255
 Ollivier, Thomas, 138
 Orleans, 18, 56, 69, 128, 135, 153, 162,
 163, 200, 219, 229, 286
 Orléans, Louis-Philippe d', 200
 Orléans, Philippe d', 56, 57, 225
 Ourry family, 1, 107, 133, 134, 141, 142
- Paindorge, Jean-Clair, 143
 paintings, 117
 Panseron family, 121, 142
 Paris, Étienne, 132
 Pâris, François de, 223
 parishes, 96–8, 220–1
 Madeleine-de-la-Ville-l'Évêque, 98
 Saint-André-des-Arts, 96, 109
 Saint-Barthélemy, 96, 104, 111
 Saint-Benoît, 96
 Saint-Côme, 119
 Saint-Étienne-du-Mont, 96
 Saint-Eustache, 96, 98, 187
 Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, 96, 198, 220
 Saint-Gervais, 96
 Saint-Hippolyte, 96
 Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie, 41
 Saint-Jean-en-Grève, 96
 Saint-Laurent, 96, 112
 Saint-Martin-du-Cloître, 96
 Saint-Médard, 96
 Saint-Merri, 113
 Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs, 96, 112
 Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet, 96
 Saint-Paul, 113
 Saint-Roch, 98
 Saint-Séverin, 96
 Saint-Sulpice, 96, 113, 202
 Saint-Symphorien, 184
 Sainte-Marguerite, 96, 182
 Parlement of Paris, 28, 31, 71, 160, 162,
 175, 199, 202, 208, 209, 211, 224,
 250, 254
 pastors, 4, 27, 30, 38, 39, 40, 43, 56, 63,
 72, 77, 114, 125, 147, 154, 189,
 215–16, 258
 patriarchy, 52, 127
 patronage, 198–200
 Paul, François, 200
 Pellorce, Simon, 104
 Penet, Isaac, 82, 148, 152
 Périllau, Charles, 138
 Perimony, Élisabeth-Marguerite, 153
 Perregaux, Jean-Frédéric, 137, 213
 Perrinet family, 40, 64, 80, 121, 130, 131,
 134, 136, 140, 150
 Perrot family, 41
 persecution, 24–44, 64, 69, 70, 119, 167,
 223, 273
 Péteineau family, 113, 142, 143, 194
 Petit, Marguerite Thérèse, 59
philosophes, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 22, 217,
 225, 227, 229, 238, 239, 240, 270,
 271, 284
 Phlipon, Manon, 194, 226, 271
 Picart, Bernard, 22
 Pictet, Ami, 138, 152
 Plu family, 180, 197
 Pluche, Antoine, 228
 Pluquet, François-André-Adrien, 205
 police of Paris, 10, 30, 46–53, 65–8, 74,
 126, 155, 160, 164–5, 166, 170,
 263, 264
 Pompadour, Madame de, 175
 Pontchartrain, Louis Phélypeaux de, 36,
 50, 52
 poor relief, 31, 150, 252
 portraits, 117–18

- Possel, Adrienne, 182
 Potin family, 139
 Poupardin family, 41, 175, 180
 Poupard family, 93, 135, 140
 predestination, 2
 Prévost, Antoine-François, 204
 processions, 4, 19, 25, 106, 108, 109, 114, 156, 187, 237, 244, 245, 249, 268
procureur du roi, 49, 66
 provinces, persecution in, 31, 64, 67, 69, 70
 psalms, 3, 19, 114, 115, 129, 167
 Pufendorf, Samuel von, 222
 Pzirembel, Godefroy, 142

 Quéting family, 113, 215

 Rabache de Fréville, Charles, 81, 184, 185, 277
 Racine, Jean, 161
 Ragner family, 54, 172
 Ragueneau family, 192
 Raimbault family, 1
 Raynal, Guillaume-Thomas, 191, 230
 Réaumur, Antoine Ferchault de, 190
 Reformed Church, 2–4, 14, 26, 71, 78, 125
 after 1789, 1, 200, 213, 216
 elders, 4, 5, 31
 Regnier family, 131
 religious
 books, *see* books
 cultures, 21, 218, 236, 239, 247
 indifference, 17, 80, 196, 238, 239
 laws, 5, 25–8, 36, 54, 55, 58, 84, 168, 200, 208, 246, 259, 262, 265, 273
 objects, 2, 106, 108, 116, 247, 251
 practice, levels of, 232, 269
 sensibilities, 14, 16, 106, 218, 239, 266
 republicanism, 5, 117, 246
 Réveillon, Jean-Baptiste, 11, 213
 Revolution of 1789, 1, 12, 21, 22, 72, 82, 203, 211–14, 232, 273
 Rodier, François, 142
 Rodon (naval officer), 111
 Roger, Edme, 35
 Roland family, 184
 Rose, Jean-Baptiste, 235
 Rosemont, Jacques de, 37, 115
 Rougemont family, 193
 Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 7, 206, 226, 229, 230, 231, 235, 257, 270
 Roy family, 54, 172, 182

 sacraments, 3, 107, 109, 111, 124, 171, 183, 219, 222
 fear of profanation of, 52, 264
 last rites, 62, 237
 refusals of, 222, 223
 Sageran Vanlaan, Pierre, 148, 152
 St Bartholomew's Day massacre, 4, 11, 156, 203, 205, 213, 217
 St Denis, cult of, 236
 Saint-Florentin, Louis Phélypeaux de, 63, 71
 Saint-Germain-des-Prés, 56, 98, 103, 105, 129, 176, 184
 Saint-Martin, 224
 Saint-Quentin, 135
 Saint-Sacrement, Compagnie du, 259
 Saint-Simon, duc de, 224
 Saint-Vincent, Pierre-Auguste-Robert de, 208
 saints, cult of, 3, 116, 119, 144, 174, 240, 244, 245, 256, 267
 salons, 190, 191
 Sancerre, 41, 92, 121, 122, 134, 140, 143
 Sarasin, Jean-Antoine, 148, 152
 Sarrasin de Maraise, Alexandre, 194
 Sartine, Gabriel de, 66
 Savouré family, 197
 Scandinavia, 8
 Scheiffele, Leon, 142
 schools, 26, 107, 164–5, 182, 221, 251
 Protestant, 28
 science, 268, 272
 secularisation, 21, 242, 247–52, 254, 257, 260, 268, 269, 272
 Sedan, 135
 Sellon, Jean-François, 141
 sermons, 3, 109, 113, 115, 154, 174
 Catholic, 225
 servants, 28, 34, 95, 105, 122, 127, 136
 Sévigné, Madame de, 9, 161
 Silvy, Louis, 83
 Simard, Louise, 59
 Sirven, Pierre-Paul, 8, 13, 70, 207, 235, 241
 Société philanthropique, 252, 260
 Solliet, Pierre, 84
 Stample family, 131, 132, 135
 state, role of, 239, 269, 272
 state–Church compact, 245
 Suard, Jean-Baptiste, 191
 superstition, 110, 227, 240, 247, 248, 268, 270
 Swedish chapel, 6, 39, 71, 78, 83, 113, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 173, 194, 196

- Swedish–Danish infirmary, 145
 Swiss Guards, 191
 Swiss Protestants, 7, 69, 78, 83, 84, 89, 91,
 93, 104, 122, 142, 146, 148, 149–50,
 174, 184, 191, 195
 Switzerland, 6, 139
 synods, 4, 69, 190
- Tailhié, Jacques, 222
 Tassin family, 140, 152, 192, 213, 214
 Tavernier family, 94, 107, 135, 141,
 142, 216
Te deum, 245
 Terral, Guillaume, 128
 Terrasson, Gaspard, 225
 Thellusson family, 83, 133, 138, 139,
 141, 193
 Thieux, Michel, 83, 150
 Thiroux de Crosne, Louis, 72
 Thomas, Jean, 53
 Tissot, André, 7
 toleration
 attitudes to, 2, 10, 12, 14, 190, 200, 202,
 210, 211–13, 218, 239, 266, 270–2
 de facto, 9, 11, 19, 20, 58, 61–2, 69,
 169, 264, 271
 debates on, 19, 206–11, 222–3, 273
 definition, 10, 12, 54
 Toulouse, 81
 tourists, 253
 Tourton family, 83, 137, 141, 191
 trades and occupations
 apothecaries, 28, 159
 booksellers, 28, 160
 carriage-builders, 91, 94
 clockmakers, 33, 91, 94, 104, 147,
 163, 178
 drapers, 28, 94, 159, 177, 246
 flax-sellers, 160
 furniture, 91, 94, 103, 104, 131, 178
 furriers, 28, 159
 gold and silver cloth, 160, 201
 goldsmiths, 28, 32, 91, 104, 159,
 176, 178
 grain merchants, 33
 grocers, 28, 159, 250
 hatters, 160
 jewellery, 91, 94, 104, 131, 178
 lace-makers, 104, 135
 linen drapers, 159, 178
 linen-makers, 28
 merciers, 28, 94, 177
 metal polishers, 201
 midwives, 28, 36, 95, 159, 171, 184
 pork butchers, 201, 246
 printers, 28, 159
 ribbon-makers, 163
 seamstresses, 178
 shoemakers, 92, 104
 silk-weavers, 28, 159
 surgeons, 28, 159
 tailors, 91, 104
 tapestry-makers, 104, 131
 textile, 95, 105, 137
 tinsmiths, 160
 used clothes, 160, 201
 wine-sellers, 33, 49, 92, 130, 141, 146,
 178, 197
 wood merchants, 33, 104, 131, 147
 Trent, Council of, 118
 Tronchin family, 7, 69, 83, 200
 Trublet, abbé, 238
 Turgot edicts, 1776, *see* *Edict of
 February 1776*
 Turgot, Anne-Robert-Jacques, 208,
 237, 273
- University of Paris, 163, 267
- Valette, Guillaume-François, 192
 Valframbert family, 133, 153
 Valmalette, Pierre, 81
 Van Hoorn, Pierre-Nicolas, 83
 Vanderhult family, 129, 137
 Vanrobais family, 82, 135, 177, 195
 Vaulois, 139, 169
 Véri, Joseph-Alphonse, 235
 Vernet family, 141
 Villiers-le-Bel, 89, 94, 135, 141, 142, 216
 Vimielle (banker), 152
 violence, 4, 9, 29, 73, 74, 156–7, 188,
 265, 267
 virtue, 226–7, 229, 254, 259, 260
 Voltaire, 8, 13, 14, 20, 69, 195, 204, 205,
 206, 207, 210, 217, 228, 231, 235,
 238, 241, 247, 259, 270, 273
 Voullaire family, 152
- Walster, Jean-Conrad, 142
 war, 39, 47, 64, 70, 145
 Ware, Humphrey, 84
 Wein, Jean-Charles, 142
 wills, 16, 17, 79, 116, 118,
 150, 233
- Yvon, Claude, 236
- Zéba family, 84, 147, 172