

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-36782-0 - Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth-Century France: State Power
and Provincial Aristocracy in Languedoc

William Beik

Excerpt

[More information](#)

PART ONE

Introduction

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-36782-0 - Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth-Century France: State Power and Provincial Aristocracy in Languedoc

William Beik

Excerpt

[More information](#)

I

Absolutism and class

This is a study of the exercise of power in one French province under absolutism. Two questions need answering. The first concerns Louis XIV's dramatic success in ruling France more effectively than his immediate predecessors. In the days when historians regarded the Fronde as a frivolous detour in the inexorable progress of royal power, it was possible to see the Sun King's effectiveness as simply an act of will – a crackdown or 'restoration of order'. But now that there is general agreement on the depth and seriousness of the social discontent which filled the period 1610 to 1661 with noble revolts, popular insurrections, and sporadic civil wars, it is much harder to see how the situation could have been righted by the initial actions of a twenty-three-year-old monarch.

All the textbooks report that Louis XIV subjugated the aristocracy by luring them to Versailles and tantalizing them with status shorn of power, while transferring their authority to bureaucratic agents. But could such deep-seated dissatisfaction really have turned so rapidly to placid indifference? And what about all the aristocrats out in the provinces? It almost seems as if a cast of turbulent frondeurs was swept from the stage around 1661 and replaced with a company of obsequious courtiers, yet the courtiers and the frondeurs were the same individuals.¹ If the sequel to the story is that after 1715 the aristocrats once again refused to be dominated and set about reviving claims for power and status similar to those which they had been making before 1661, the matter becomes doubly perplexing. Given the longer history of aristocratic rebellion before and aristocratic reaction after, the Louisquatorzian phase of order and obedience needs explanation.

The second question concerns the relationship between state and society or, more precisely, the meaning of absolutism as a stage in the evolution of French society from feudalism to capitalism. The absolute monarchy is usually placed at an advanced point on the road leading from a decentralized 'feudal' monarchy to a 'modern' state. Absolute monarchs are seen as

¹ This paradox has been pointed out by Theodore K. Rabb, *The Struggle for Stability in Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1975), pp. 64–5, who notes that the prince de Condé, 'still treasonous during the Fronde, ended his days rowing ladies on the lake at Versailles'.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-36782-0 - Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth-Century France: State Power and Provincial Aristocracy in Languedoc

William Beik

Excerpt

[More information](#)

Introduction

progressive figures whose organizing, unifying, and levelling impulses developed a state which was above traditional vested interests and which acted as stalking horse for a future bourgeois order. In this scenario France and England are treated as directly comparable, and their respective governments are viewed as interesting variations on the common theme of the rise of the Western industrial nation-state. We have the English developing constitutional forms more precociously while the French invent a more powerful central state and lag a bit in economic development. Both are nevertheless seen as undergoing the same changes in more or less the same way, making French absolutism a stage in a wider European process of modernization.

This orthodoxy continues to be repeated despite the findings of a generation of social historians that French society was structurally very different from English society in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. In France a mass of peasants continued to subsist on small plots subjected to onerous taxes which transferred their surplus product to an elite with claims based on privilege. Neither they nor their landlords had much incentive to consolidate plots or modernize farming techniques through capital investment. The nobility held its own or revived instead of withering away; its privileged situation was confirmed, not abandoned. Merchants and manufacturers remained low in esteem and weak in political influence. All these circumstances contrast dramatically with those in England.

But if French absolutism presided over such a different social environment just at the moment of its greatest triumphs, might we not expect that its nature would be related to the needs of that society and not to a standard of progress which was better represented elsewhere? This hypothesis is confirmed by the fragility of English absolutism relative to French and by the outbreak of the English Revolution in 1640, so long before the French Revolution of 1789. How then did the nature of Louis XIII and Louis XIV's government relate to the nature of their societies? A vast polemic has long revolved around the 'bourgeois', 'feudal', 'aristocratic', 'transitional', 'arbitrating', 'exploiting', 'levelling' monarchy which has important implications for all interpretations of the rise of modernity in Europe but which has never been thoroughly examined.

These central questions can best be answered by dissecting the workings of a single region in order to capture the interplay of interests, attitudes, and jurisdictions which cannot be discovered in the history of one institution and which is too complex to tackle on the level of the entire system. This is one such study: an exploration of political action in one unit of the system, Languedoc. The aim is to understand absolutism better by finding out why it worked first so badly and then so well in the seventeenth century and what its relationship was to the changing social situation in the provinces.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-36782-0 - Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth-Century France: State Power and Provincial Aristocracy in Languedoc

William Beik

Excerpt

[More information](#)*Absolutism and class*

Such an analysis can never be value-neutral. The salient lines of power and interest are not self-evident in the multitude of issues, conflicts, and actions which left their mark in the documents of the era, and a principle of selection must be adopted. Questions have to be posed which, in turn, derive from ideological assumptions needing careful examination. Studies of seventeenth-century France are full of conscious or unconscious points of view, although this fact is not sufficiently discussed or acknowledged. I must therefore begin with a critical look at these implications, as a way of clarifying how we are to proceed and what assumptions will be used as the foundations of this study.

It is a curious historiographical phenomenon that the two questions of the institutional effectiveness and of the social underpinnings of absolutism have been treated by three separate schools in virtual isolation from each other. The first question has generally been discussed by political and institutional historians who approached the state as a beneficial, more or less autonomous, organism. This venerable tradition has been greatly modified by the invasion of influences from social history, but it retains its original pedigree in that its proponents still focus on statebuilding as something outside of, and distinct from, society. Meanwhile Marxist historians who should have been the leading advocates of a sophisticated class analysis capable of shedding light on the second question concerning social underpinnings have, until recently, relegated the early modern state, and in particular French seventeenth-century society, to a dim corner of their historical tableau. Yet their class analysis offers sophisticated ways of relating power to society and raises the sorts of questions which a study like this must answer. A third – and probably dominant – school which might be called the ‘social history tradition’ has arisen in reaction to the first two. It dismisses political history as superficial, but also implicitly rejects or deemphasizes the Marxist focus on class relations as the key to a more fundamental evolution of society. At their most theoretical level social historians, like the famous ‘Annalistes’ in France, single out long-term movements of measurable factors like prices, population, wages, or land distribution patterns as the basic indicators of historical change. On a less schematic plane others trace the history of social phenomena like the family, disease, literacy, or charity as historical forces with their own intrinsic interest. In either case the result is a deepened understanding of social context without relating it back to politics.

All three of these schools contribute important insights; yet each could use the ideas of the others to better advantage. In order to see the issues clearly, we must disassemble and then reconstruct their elements, stressing points of parallel or complementary content. First we must look at the analytical foundations of the analysis of seventeenth-century society; then we must examine the developments in institutional history which relate to

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-36782-0 - Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth-Century France: State Power and Provincial Aristocracy in Languedoc

William Beik

Excerpt

[More information](#)*Introduction*

the evolution of society, and finally the developments in social or Marxist history which relate to the state.

ANALYTICAL FOUNDATIONS: CLASSES AND ORDERS

Any examination of seventeenth-century society comes square up against the great debate over early modern social stratification. Are we dealing with a society of traditional interest groups vying over status and position, or do we have a society of socio-economic classes struggling to maintain their control over resources and production processes – in short, was it a ‘society of orders’ or a ‘society of classes’? This issue may appear rather tired after a generation of polemical debate, and the jaded reader may well wonder ‘why not both orders and classes, or neither’? But the matter is crucial because it determines the kinds of questions to be asked and the kinds of results that will be obtained. It is also important because the most eminent scholar of French absolutism, Roland Mousnier, has dramatized the issue to the point where it threatens to distort the whole study of French social relations and leave important questions unanswered.²

The concept of a ‘society of orders’ (or of ‘estates’), which Mousnier has developed for seventeenth-century France in his long evolution away from a ‘class’ approach to social history, is a variant on a kind of sociological analysis which is appearing with increasing frequency as an assumed frame of reference in historical works.³ The argument goes something like this:

² Mousnier’s work is voluminous. A good starting point might be the essays in Roland Mousnier, *La Plume, la faucille et le marteau* (Paris, 1970) or his grand synthesis, *Les Institutions de la France sous la monarchie absolue*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1974–80), the first volume of which has been translated as *The Institutions of France under the Absolute Monarchy 1598–1789: Society and State* by Brian Pearce (Chicago, 1979). His theoretical essay on stratification is *Les Hiérarchies sociales de 1450 à nos jours* (Paris, 1969), which is translated as *Social Hierarchies, 1450 to the Present* by Peter Evans (New York, 1973). A perceptive study of Mousnier’s views is Ettore Rotelli, ‘La Structure sociale dans l’itinéraire historiographique de Roland Mousnier’, *Revue d’histoire économique et sociale*, 51 (1973), 145–82.

³ On Mousnier’s change of position, see the note in Roland Mousnier, *Les XVI^e et XVII^e siècles*, 4th edn (Paris, 1965), p. 159. For sociological expressions of this approach see Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. tr. A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York, 1964); Talcott Parsons, ‘An Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification’, *American Journal of Sociology*, 40 (1939–40), 841–62; and T. B. Bottomore, *Classes in Modern Society* (New York, 1970), pp. 3–35. A textbook version of the same doctrine which looks almost like a caricature is Kurt B. Mayer and Walter Buckley, *Class and Society*, 3rd edn (New York, 1970), pp. 18–41. The sources of Mousnier’s concepts in American sociology are discussed in Armand Ariazza, ‘Mousnier and Barber: the Theoretical Underpinning of the “Society of Orders” in Early Modern Europe’, *Past and Present*, 89 (1980), 39–57. A useful survey of theories of stratification is James Littlejohn, *Social Stratification* (London, 1972). Examples of historical applications are Jerome Blum, *The End of the Old Order in Rural Europe* (Princeton, 1978), pp. 3–7; and Franklin L. Ford, ‘The Revolutionary–Napoleonic Era: How Much of a Watershed?’, *American Historical Review*, 69 (1963–4), 24–8. Important historical discussion of these issues by some of the principals examined here appears in *L’Histoire sociale, sources et méthodes: colloque de l’École Normale Supérieure de*

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-36782-0 - Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth-Century France: State Power and Provincial Aristocracy in Languedoc

William Beik

Excerpt

[More information](#)*Absolutism and class*

in a society of orders social groups are arranged hierarchically in a descending scale of status and privilege. The organizing principle is the social esteem accorded to the mystical or real function which each group performs and which has no necessary connection to the group's economic role. Orders (or estates) are subdivided into 'strata' or 'corps' or 'états', also arranged according to social esteem, each of which is a group with a legal identity and a sense of common purpose. This system is commonly presented as fundamentally different from a 'society of classes' in which individuals are legally equal, formal privileges do not exist, and social classification follows one's function in the economy. In a society of classes wealth is the central factor determining social position, for although status is influenced by occupation, education, lifestyle, and patterns of consumption, all of these derive directly from wealth or ownership of sources of wealth.

This contrast of 'orders' and 'classes' is seductive for early modernists because it speaks to an aspect of historical reality with which we are especially familiar. Privilege and status were inordinately important in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France, and many conflicts followed corporate lines. At the same time society was obviously not governed by the laws of the marketplace in the manner of later capitalist societies, and it is only by the most extreme stretching of categories that one can transpose nineteenth-century 'classes' or 'class struggles' into an early modern setting. Consequently when early modernists speak of the 'society of orders' they are opting for distinctiveness. What they really mean is that in their pre-modern world classes did not exist and class analysis cannot be applied.

However understandable this usage may be, it is unfortunate. It confuses the issue of whether modern categories can be transposed back to the seventeenth century (obviously not) with the issue of whether there were classes of any kind in the seventeenth century (clearly so). By 'classes' I mean groups whose social and economic interests are necessarily antagonistic to one another because of their differing relationships to resources, power, and the fruits of labor. Class analysis implies the existence of fundamental conflicts in society, ruling out the possibility of absolute social solidarity or uniform social outlook. It means that different segments of the population produced and consumed in vastly different ways and that their thoughts and actions were correspondingly different. Seventeenth-century classes took different forms and played different roles from those of today, and there is room for debate over how to interpret them. It is undeniable,

Saint-Cloud, Mai 1965 (Paris, 1967), pp. 9–33, 97–114; Roland Mousnier, ed., *Problèmes de stratification sociale: actes du colloque international (1966)* (Paris, 1968); and Daniel Roche and C. E. Labrousse, eds., *Ordres et classes: colloque d'histoire sociale; Saint-Cloud 24–25 mai 1967* (Paris, 1973).

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-36782-0 - Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth-Century France: State Power and Provincial Aristocracy in Languedoc

William Beik

Excerpt

[More information](#)*Introduction*

however, that groups with profoundly unequal and mutually antagonistic relationships to production existed in early modern France.

A system built upon the principle of social esteem cannot cope properly with these class relationships; first, because it plots its definition from a single vantage point at the top of society; second, because focusing on solidarity groups arranged according to a single principle of stratification makes it difficult to analyze the interdependence and interaction among groups; third, because this approach sidesteps the essential issue of how and why a particular kind of society came to have a particular kind of social stratification. Orders and estates did exist as an important part of the seventeenth-century French experience, but they did not determine the structure of society itself, which is what the term 'society of orders' usually implies.

It is essential to bring out the implications of Mousnier's philosophical position, since too often the importance of his scholarly contribution has caused his less scholarly assumptions to be accepted uncritically. Mousnier is implicitly an apologist for seventeenth-century society who accepts the justifications for its social structure and institutions put forth by the very persons who dominated it. His theory of orders is an attempt to sidestep the issue of conflicts deriving from unequal social relations by providing alternative categories. Thus in a study which purports to demonstrate empirically the existence of the society of orders by delving into Parisian notarial archives, he uses a large sample of marriage contracts and property settlements representing a cross-section of the population to derive nine 'social strata'.⁴ Each of these consists of certain social types who are found to have associated with each other extensively to the exclusion of other social types. These strata do not coincide with degrees of wealth or occupational categories (which do not, of course, necessarily reflect 'classes' anyway), but rather represent shades of social esteem. The individuals in the top echelons were, among others, 'men performing military, judicial, or police activities resulting in the power of command, who acted in the service of the king and thereby personified the common good, that is to say, the state'.⁵ This double assumption – that these individuals were on top because of their service and that the state personified the common good – is staggering. To claim that such people owed their position to 'the principle of the superiority of service to the king' is to take a mere rationalization as a cause. Persons like gentlemen of the king's bedchamber, minor country nobles, bourgeois of Paris, or various superfluous venal officers who are listed in this stratum were clearly not on top because society esteemed their

⁴ Roland Mousnier, *Recherches sur la stratification sociale à Paris aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles: l'échantillon de 1634, 1635, 1636* (Paris, 1976).

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-36782-0 - Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth-Century France: State Power and Provincial Aristocracy in Languedoc

William Beik

Excerpt

[More information](#)*Absolutism and class*

service to the king so highly. Nor is it possible to maintain, as Mousnier does, that they 'had no relationship with activities producing material goods'.⁶

This example is not unusual. Mousnier believes that institutions are created to promote ideals: 'an institution is first of all a guiding idea, the idea of a set goal of public welfare', and that 'all social stratification is dependent on a group of value judgments which constitutes the fundamental principle of society'.⁷ But the guiding principles of a society reflect the biases and interests of an intellectual elite which formulated them and not those of society as a whole. Indeed, the very assumption of the existence of a single set of values for a whole society presumes a fundamental social solidarity which is belied by vast amounts of historical evidence.

These assumptions underlie a central interpretation of seventeenth-century conflict. For Mousnier the turbulence before and during the Fronde was a manifestation of the rebellions of orders and communities against the centralizing, modernizing policies of the crown. In other words, organized solidarity groups of heterogeneous class composition such as provinces, corps of officers, towns, and villages provided the impetus for rebellion, and classes or class conflicts were not an issue.⁸ Since we will be studying the relations of a province with the crown, we will have occasion to test the validity of this assumption.

As my remarks have already suggested, this study is based on different hypotheses: that societies are organized around the production and distribution of the essentials and luxuries of life; that these activities result in classes with antagonistic relations to each other; that consequently social conflicts are more fundamental than social solidarity in explaining the functioning of a given society. The central premise of this book is that the absolutist state can best be understood by looking at the class interests it served and the social functions it performed – in short, by developing some sort of class analysis in the Marxist tradition. This approach requires a thorough examination of the elements of provincial political society capable of revealing points of conflict and points of common interest.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 126, 127, 25–30.

⁷ Mousnier, *Institutions*, vol. 1, p. 5; *Hierarchies*, p. 8. Mousnier's position is deliberate and is clearly set forth twice virtually word for word in *Plume*, pp. 7–11; and *Institutions*, vol. 1, pp. 5–8.

⁸ These views were originally developed in the critique of Porchnev's work, first in Roland Mousnier, 'Recherches sur les soulèvements populaires en France avant la Fronde', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 4 (1958), 81–113; then in the same author's *Fureurs paysannes: les paysans dans les révoltes du XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1967), pp. 13–62, translated as *Peasant Uprisings in Seventeenth-Century France, Russia, and China* by Brian Pearce (New York, 1970). Another overview is Roland Mousnier, 'The Fronde', in Robert Forster and Jack P. Greene, eds., *Preconditions of Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Baltimore, 1970), pp. 131–59.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-36782-0 - Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth-Century France: State Power and Provincial Aristocracy in Languedoc

William Beik

Excerpt

[More information](#)*Introduction*

INSTITUTIONS IN SOCIETY

The reasons for the dramatic effectiveness of Louis XIV have traditionally been treated by the ‘institutional school’ in the context of the rise of the modern state. For professorial functionaries of the Second Empire and the Third Republic like Chéruel, Depping, or Lavissee, the state was the central bearer of progress, and its gradual articulation out of the irrational confusion of royal whim and feudal reaction was an end in itself.⁹ In this context the reasons for Louis XIV’s success were self-evident, and thus the question of how he really ruled was hardly posed at all. Rebellions like the Fronde had been irresponsible or (for constitutionalists) premature. The monarchy might not yet be ready, as Ernest Lavissee put it, to undertake the ‘novel project’ proposed by Colbert which was ‘to *organize for labor, enrich oneself by labor, dominate the world by the power of these riches*’, but it could certainly continue the ‘ancient project which was to establish stronger authority and total, prompt obédience, and to *complete the state which was still so imperfect*’. Louis XIV’s secret was simply ‘the reduction to obedience’ of those who had been unruly by means of a ‘struggle against all sorts of autonomy’.¹⁰ Lavissee describes one ‘subjugation’ after another without ever asking why the powerful subjects of a vast kingdom allowed their power to be so rudely expropriated or what they might have gained in return.

More recent institutional historians have modified this traditional view. Consciousness of the uneven development of institutions, the slowness and incompleteness of the evolution of effective royal power, and especially the resistance of the rest of society to what the monarchy was trying to do has led to a nuanced, less triumphant version of the story, as we can see from Pierre Goubert’s more cautious summary:

In the sixteenth century the kingdom seemed to have very little homogeneous about it, with morsels and shreds maintaining semi-independence; or – to go even further – it was a monarchy which ‘rested’, as Roger Doucet forcefully put it, ‘on a collection of contracts concluded with the groups which constituted the nation: provinces, towns, economic groupings, ecclesiastical establishments, classes of society’. In the following centuries this monarchy, which remained juridically contractual, had worked to empty its contracts of most of their substance. To do this, it was necessary to reduce four forces which frequently had reciprocal links

⁹ For example, P. A. Chéruel, *Histoire de l’administration monarchique en France depuis l’avènement de Philippe-Auguste jusqu’à la mort de Louis XIV*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1855); Ernest Lavissee, *Histoire de France depuis les origines jusqu’à la Révolution*, 9 vols. (Paris, 1903–11); or the monumental compilations like Georges, vicomte d’Avenel, *Lettres, instructions diplomatiques et papiers d’état du Cardinal de Richelieu*, 8 vols. (1853–77); and G. B. Depping, *Correspondance administrative sous le règne de Louis XIV*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1850–55).

¹⁰ Lavissee, *Histoire*, vol. VII, part 1, p. 267 and titles to book 4, chapter 1, section 2. My italics.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-36782-0 - Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth-Century France: State Power and Provincial Aristocracy in Languedoc

William Beik

Excerpt

[More information](#)*Absolutism and class*

among themselves: the ambition of the great noble lineages, the profound autonomism of the great peripheral provinces (even the near ones), the repeated and annoying frondes of the great corps and companies of royal officers, including the parlementaires (who relapsed, however, in the eighteenth century, especially after 1750), and the violent rebellions of a more or less popular character which broke out especially in the half century 1620–75, to reemerge inopportunately at the end of the Old Regime.¹¹

Whereas the original ‘institutional’ account showed a state steadily increasing its power by promoting its sources of strength (towns, trade, bourgeoisie) and undermining ancient rivals whose day had passed (nobility, international church, autonomous provinces), the new ‘institutional’ account here provides *two* worthy antagonists, the state and society, and a long struggle between them, even in the seventeenth century.¹²

New research has further underlined the difficulties of effective local rule even in the state’s most ancient tasks of rendering justice and collecting taxes. Studies of communities show how distant the state was for the vast majority of people, most of whom literally never saw a royal agent.¹³ Kings and ministers received one-sided information, and their edicts were likely to be evaded.¹⁴ A vast literature on popular rebellions has underlined the massive resistance which filled the annals of every province. Enforcement agents were run out of town, tax collectors ambushed, rival authorities murdered. Sharon Kettering portrays street confrontations between factions of Aix parlementaires which look more like Renaissance clan battles than assemblages of royal judges.¹⁵

Problems like these only emphasize the need to understand Louis XIV’s success, for despite some historians’ skepticism about even that monarch’s ability to impose his will, there seems little doubt that he did much better than his predecessors.¹⁶ Take the popular revolts. In two massive regional

¹¹ Pierre Goubert, *L’Ancien régime*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1969–73), vol. II, pp. 12–13.

¹² Early versions of this reevaluation appear in the works of Georges Pagès, Roger Doucet, Gaston Zeller, and Edmond Esmonin. Mousnier’s own work follows in their footsteps, crowned by his general synthesis, *Les XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, 4th edn (Paris, 1965) which conceives of seventeenth-century absolutism as an attempt to resolve a series of crises. A more recent collection of revisionist institutional essays is Ragnhild Hatton, ed., *Louis XIV and Absolutism* (London, 1976).

¹³ Yves Castan, *Honnêteté et relations sociales en Languedoc (1715–1780)* (Paris, 1974), pp. 467–73.

¹⁴ Eugene L. Asher, *The Resistance to the Maritime Classes: Survival of Feudalism in the France of Colbert* (Berkeley, 1960).

¹⁵ Sharon Kettering, *Judicial Politics and Urban Revolt in Seventeenth-Century France: the Parlement of Aix, 1629–1659* (Princeton, 1978). Mousnier, *Fureurs*; Boris Porchnev, *Les Soulèvements populaires en France de 1623 à 1648* (Paris, 1963); Madeleine Foisil, *La Révolte des Nu-Pieds et les révoltes normandes de 1639* (Paris, 1970); Yves-Marie Bercé, *Histoire des Croquants: étude des soulèvements populaires au XVIIe siècle dans le sud-ouest de la France*, 2 vols. (Geneva, 1974); René Pillorget, *Les Mouvements insurrectionnels de Provence entre 1596 et 1715* (Paris, 1975); Sal Alexander Westrich, *The Ormée of Bordeaux: a Revolution during the Fronde* (Baltimore, 1972); Yvon Garlan and Claude Nières, *Les Révoltes bretonnes de 1675: papier timbré et bonnets rouges* (Paris, 1975), and a vast literature.

¹⁶ On the doubting side, Roger Mettam, *Government and Society in Louis XIV’s France* (London, 1977).