

Marie Durand (1711–1776), French Protestant Prisoner and Letter Writer: A Recovery of Her Thought

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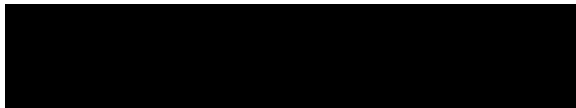
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Abstract

This thesis recovers the thought of Marie Durand (1711–1776), a French Protestant prisoner and letter writer, from an examination of her life, community, and written words. Durand was imprisoned for her faith in the Tour de Constance for thirty-eight years under the prohibitions of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685). From prison, she sent letters to correspondents in France, Geneva, and Amsterdam. Forty-eight of these letters survive, amounting to some 25,300 words. The study begins by examining the memorialisation of Durand over the past 250 years. She is a celebrated figure in French history, often linked to the well-known “RESISTER” graffito inscribed in the Tour de Constance, who has been co-opted for various causes: whether as a martyr of Protestant Christianity, whether as a champion of “Enlightenment freedom of conscience,” or whether as a conflation of these causes. Typically, little regard is paid to Durand’s own heritage and writings. The thesis begins to redress this problem by re-examining her history set within her own complex Protestant heritage. It then examines the individuals, entities, and socioreligious structures which comprise her epistolary network. Next, from a close reading of her letters set within her biography and socioreligious context, I am able to show exactly what Durand understood by freedom of conscience (as distinct from “Enlightenment” versions attributed to her). Finally, I present for the first time an analysis of Durand’s practical theology on matters of suffering, charity, and civil authority. From this study, which contributes to a growing interest in the writings of early modern women, Marie Durand emerges not as a silent and pliable symbol but as a resolute and eloquent thinker who has made a distinct contribution to early modern Protestant thought.

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Above all, in the words of the apostle:

Χάριν ἔχω τῷ ἐνδυναμώσαντί με χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν.

Dedication

For Mabel Jean, my late grandmother, whose intelligence, strength, and grace
I heard echoed time and again in Marie Durand.

And for my granddaughter Mabel-Jean, *ma petite Miette*. May you come to echo the
same qualities in whatever joys and trials may lie ahead.

Abbreviations

ARW	Archief van de réunion wallonne en de commission wallonne. Leiden University archives containing the former Bibliothèque wallonne de Leyde.
BDAG	Danker, Frederick W., and Walter Bauer. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
BDM	<i>La Sainte Bible par David Martin</i> . (Amsterdam, 1707).
BPF	Bibliothèque de la société de l'histoire du protestantisme Français.
<i>Bulletin</i>	<i>Bulletin de la société de l'histoire du protestantisme français</i> (1852–2015).
Confessio	Confessio Fidei Gallicana (French Confession of Faith) 1559, adopted by the Synod of La Rochelle, 1571.
DCLF	Alain Rey and Danièle Morvan (eds.), <i>Le Dictionnaire culturel en langue française</i> . 4 vols. (Paris, 2005).
<i>Discipline</i>	<i>La Discipline ecclésiastique des églises réformées de France avec les observations des synodes nationaux [...]</i> . (1666; repr., Amsterdam, 1710).
ESV	<i>The Holy Bible, English Standard Version</i> . (Crossway, 2001).
FP	Haag & Haag, <i>La France protestante</i> . 10 vols. (2nd ed., Paris, 1877–81).
<i>Institution</i>	John Calvin, <i>Institution de la religion chrestienne</i> . (1560; repr., Paris: Meyrueis, 1859).
Littre	Émile Littré, <i>Dictionnaire de la langue française</i> (1863–73; repr., Chicago, 1994).

Translation Notes

Except where specifically credited, all translations are my own. Original languages are quoted in the body of the text and I supply translations of quotations of ten words or less immediately in brackets, and of longer quotations in the footnotes. I have not supplied translations that are practically indistinguishable from the original. In pre-nineteenth-century quotations archaic letters are exchanged with modern equivalents, for example the long *f* with a round *s*. The archaic *y* is however maintained, for example *celuy*. Original spelling and accents, however irregular, are otherwise retained. For consistency of format I have conformed French punctuation, spacing, and quotation marks to modern English conventions. Individual words and phrases in foreign languages are italicised, unless they are names of places, entities, organisations, edicts and other formal statements, or words that have come into common English use. My translation of Marie Durand's letters is given as an appendix, which allows quotations and references from her writings to be read in context.

Table of Marie Durand's Extant Letters

	Year	Date	Addressee	Destination	Source of autograph
<i>From the Tour de Constance</i>					
1**	1734	Jan 11	Unknown benefactors	Unknown	Archives Schloesing
2*	1738	Aug 22	Unknown benefactor	Unknown	Archives du Gard
3*	1740	Feb 23	Unknown benefactor	Unknown	Papiers Court 17. Vol. 2. Folio. 90.
4	1740	May 21	Justine Peschaire	Vallon	Musée du Vivarais
5	1746	Feb 27	The widow Guiraudet	Alais	Archives famille Dejean
6	1751	Jun 22	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
7	1752	Apr 27	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
8*	1752	Sep 17	Paulmy d'Argenson	Versailles	Photocopy in Musée du Désert.
9	1752	Dec 15	Walloon Church	Amsterdam	ARW folio 1199-1200
10	1753	Nov 6	Walloon Church	Amsterdam	ARW folio 1199-1200
11	1753	Dec 9	Étienne Chiron	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
12	1753	Dec 21	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
13	1754	Mar 6	Unknown benefactors	Amsterdam (?)	BPF Ms. 341
14	1754	Oct 23	Walloon Church	Amsterdam	ARW folio 1199-1200
15	1754	Dec 19	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
16	1755	Mar 3	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
17	1755	Jun 12	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
18	1755	Oct 9	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
19	1755	Nov 25	Anne Durand	Geneva	Musée du Vivarais
20	1756	Feb 9	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
21	1756	May 17	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
22	1756	Jun 27	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
23	1756	Aug 5	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
24	1757	Feb 2	Walloon Church	Amsterdam	ARW folio 1199-1200
25	1757	Apr 26	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
26	1757	Aug 22	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
27	1757	Nov 10	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
28	1758	Jul 13	Anne Durand	Geneva	BPF Ms. 358
29	1759	Mar 29	Savine de Coulet	Versailles	Musée du Vivarais
30	1759	Mar 29	Marie Leszczyńska (?)	Versailles	Musée du Vivarais
31	1759	Dec	Walloon Church	Amsterdam	ARW folio 1199-1200
32	1760	Feb 4	Paul Rabaut	Nîmes	BPF Ms. 341
33	1760	Dec 3	Benefactresses	Amsterdam	ARW folio 1199-1200
34	1761	Dec 21	Walloon Church	Amsterdam	ARW folio 1199-1200
35	1762	Apr 15	Paul Rabaut	Nîmes	BPF Ms. 341
36	1762	Aug 21	Paul Rabaut	Nîmes	BPF Ms. 341 (missing from folio)
37	1763		The merchant Bonnet	Valence	BPF Ms. 358
38	1764	Aug 26	Paul Rabaut	Nîmes	BPF Ms. 341
39	1766	Jun 16	Jean Gal-Pomaret	Ganges	Archives famille Du Cailar
40	1767	Feb 12	Walloon Church	Amsterdam	ARW folio 1199-1200
41	1767	Jun 22	Elders	Lédignan	Musée du Désert
42	1767	Nov 30	Walloon Church	Amsterdam	ARW folio 1199-1200
<i>From Bouchet de Pranles</i>					
43	1772	Aug 7	Walloon Church	Amsterdam	ARW folio 1199-1200
44	1772	Aug 7	Walloon Church	Amsterdam	ARW folio 1199-1200
45	1773	Jul 25	Walloon Church	Amsterdam	Leiden University, ARW folio 1199-1200
46	1773	Dec 26	Paul Rabaut	Nîmes	BPF Ms. 341
47	1774	Jul 26	Walloon Church	Amsterdam	ARW folio 1199-1200
48	1775	Oct 15	Walloon Church	Amsterdam	ARW folio 1199-1200

Notes: Letter 1** is neither in Durand's hand nor signed by her; it derives from the Tour de Constance.

Letters 2* and 3* are signed by Durand but are not in her hand. Letter 8* is evidently dictated by Durand.

Introduction

This thesis aims to recover the thought of Marie Durand (1711–1776), the eighteenth-century French Protestant prisoner of conscience. Durand was born into a rural Huguenot family in the Vivarais (Ardèche).¹ In 1730, aged nineteen, she was arrested for her family’s participation in Protestant worship, outlawed by Louis XIV in his 1685 Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.² They shaved her head and imprisoned her without trial in the Tour de Constance, a medieval fortress on the Mediterranean coast. Durand could almost certainly have found freedom by abjuring and submitting to Catholicism. This she refused to do for thirty-eight years. Public opinion eventually turned against the suppression of Protestants and the Tour de Constance was closed in 1768. Durand, aged fifty-seven, was finally liberated. She died in her home eight years later.

Since her death, interpretations of Marie Durand and her imprisonment have generally focussed on a single capitalised word, “RESISTER”, inscribed in the stone floor of her prison.³ Though never proven, the graffito has long been popularly attributed to Durand, and from the early nineteenth century she has been consistently portrayed as a “heroine of conscience” who resisted state and religious tyranny.

As a figure of resistance, Marie Durand has been memorialised in dozens of ways in France. She has been commemorated civically with ten street names, two school names, a retirement home in Bordeaux, a nursing home in Alsace, a building at the Université Paul-

¹ The terms *French Protestant* and *Huguenot* are interchanged throughout the thesis.

² In the thesis, the socio-theological term *Protestant* denotes the branch of Christendom arising from the sixteenth-century Reformation which embraces a range of theological, epistemological, ecclesiastical, denominational, national, and cultural sub-movements, linked by a self-conscious disjunction from Roman Catholicism.

³ The contested lettering and meaning of the graffito is discussed in Chapter 5 and is rendered from hereon as the lowercase *résister*.

Valéry Montpellier III, and a 1968 postage stamp. She is the subject of numerous books, plays, speeches, and songs from the last two centuries. She is the focus of two 1980s television productions, and a 2011 Radio France documentary. She features also in several nineteenth- and twentieth-century paintings and drawings by recognised artists. Three museums devote displays to her, and she has been referred to in numerous scholarly French and francophone-Dutch books and articles over the last 140 years. Durand was even held up as a symbol of national resistance during the German occupation of France.⁴ Beyond France, Durand has been memorialised in an Italian historical novel, two children's books in English, two Swiss-German plays, and in the name of a German school.

Memorialisations of Marie Durand may be grouped into three broad categories. Reformed and Evangelical Christian entities look to Durand as a heroine of her faith.⁵ Secular memorialists look to Durand as an “Enlightenment heroine” of freedom of conscience. A third strand of memorialists remember Durand in the same manner with which Voltaire depicted, in his *Traité sur la tolérance* (1763), the Protestant merchant Jean Calas, who was wrongly convicted and executed for murdering his son in 1762: proximately as a victim of anti-Protestant laws and bigotry, but ultimately as a victim of general religious fanaticism and religio-political intolerance in general.

In fact, Marie Durand wrote letters both during and after her imprisonment, forty-eight of which have survived to this day as originals or facsimiles. The letters date from 1734 to 1775 and amount to some 25,300 words. An intelligent and educated daughter of a government clerk, she wrote in mostly excellent French. Durand penned her letters for three reasons: to thank benefactors who had supplied urgent aid to the prisoners of the Tour de

⁴ Jacques Poujol, “Documents et pistes de recherche sur les protestants de zone occupée pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale,” *Bulletin* 139 (1993): 448n16.

⁵ I define and distinguish *Evangelical* and *Reformed* in Chapter 1.

Constance and to secure their ongoing support; to extend motherly love and guidance to her orphaned niece in Geneva; and to petition church and state leaders to advocate for the prisoners' freedom. Durand's letters are the principal window into her life, personality, thought, and state of mind.

Only a minority of memorialists have situated Durand within her own French Reformed community, the cultural, linguistic, political, and religious roots of which extend back to the sixteenth-century French Reform movement, and beyond. Moreover, with few exceptions, memorialists have overlooked or ignored Durand's epistolary correspondence and have failed to give serious recognition and study to her surviving letters. Durand's own words and thoughts are widely neglected, leaving her to be remembered by most as a silent figurehead of causes – including the cause of Enlightenment freedom of conscience – that she may or may not herself have recognised. A reassessment of the life and thought of Marie Durand is needed to recover her as the writer that she was: a representative of her prison community who procured life-giving aid from Protestant benefactors; a participant in an international epistolary network which urged church and political leaders to intercede for Protestant prisoners; an aunt who extended loving support and guidance to her orphaned niece; and a thinker who engaged with the phenomenon of freedom of conscience, and the practical-theological doctrines of suffering, charity, and civil governance.

Plan of the Thesis

The thesis reassesses the life and thought of Marie Durand across five chapters. Chapter 1 surveys the memorialisation of Durand. It shows how she has been remembered variously as a heroine of the Protestant Christian faith (sometimes as an evangelical Christian, sometimes as a specifically French Reformed Christian), as a heroine of freedom of conscience in a non-

religious sense, and as a Protestant victim for the cause of secular tolerance in the manner of Voltaire's championing of Jean Calas. Using a conceptual framework drawn from memory theories established by Halbwachs, Assmann, Nora, Winter, and Kattago, I describe how Durand could come to be remembered in such diverse and sometimes contradictory ways, and in ways that Durand herself would almost certainly not have recognised. The survey shows how Durand is most often remembered as a voiceless figurehead for her memorialists' own causes, that little attention has been paid to examining and understanding her life in the context of her own Reformed heritage and community, and that even less recognition has been given to her letters and her own words and thoughts.

Chapter 2 examines Marie Durand's heritage and life as the essential foundation from which to interpret her written thought. Beginning with an overview of the sixteenth-century French Reformed movement, which in large measure owes its theological foundation and praxis (religious and organisational practice) to the writings of John Calvin, I proceed to describe the four epochal events that radically shaped the lives and mindset of Durand's eighteenth-century Huguenot community: the 1572 Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre, the 1598 Edict of Nantes, the 1685 Edict of Fontainebleau (the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes), and the 1702–4 Camisard Rebellion. The self-identity, thought, outlook, and praxis of Durand's community was deeply shaped by this history. They saw themselves as survivors, the inheritors of a legacy for which many of their forebears had suffered and died, and for the perpetuation of which they themselves were willing to suffer. I then describe the life of Durand herself in three parts: her life before imprisonment (1711–30), her life in the Tour de Constance (1730–68), and her life following her release (1768–76). Durand was the sole survivor of a family which all perished in one way or another through religious persecution. Her life and heritage does not link her – as secular and Voltairean memorialisers have done – to what came to be considered “Enlightenment thought”, which the analyses of

Darnton, Curran, Collins, and Garrioch show only gradually came to the attention of the wider French public from the middle of the eighteenth century and which does not appear at all to have penetrated Durand's prison walls. Although the French Protestant church at the turn of the eighteenth century was by no means monolithically wedded to the Reformation theology of the sixteenth century, Marie Durand was born and raised in a conservative Reformed socioreligious milieu, and it was primarily this that shaped her thought and response to state oppression.

Chapter 3 examines Marie Durand's epistolary network. Beginning with a description of letter writing and distribution in mid-eighteenth-century France, with a focus on Paul Bamford's examination of correspondence within the French penal system, I explain the challenges that Durand faced as a letter writer, some of which she refers to explicitly.⁶ The individuals, entities, and communities with which Durand corresponded are then introduced. Durand's epistolary network paralleled a network of Protestant European notables directed by Antoine Court from Lausanne, the so-called *réseau Protestant d'entraide* (Protestant mutual-aid network) – “the Réseau” for short. Using Pauline Duley-Haour's synthesis of the characteristics of the Réseau I undertake a comparative analysis of the two networks, from which I draw attention to the distinctives of Durand's network.⁷ While Court's high-level network directed aid to France “top down” from outside of France, Durand participated instead in a primarily grassroots network which attempted to direct aid “bottom up” from within France. The analysis adds to our overall understanding of how aid for suffering Protestants in France was solicited and directed in the eighteenth century.

⁶ Paul W. Bamford, *Fighting Ships and Prisons: The Mediterranean Galleys of France in the Age of Louis XIV* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1973).

⁷ Pauline Duley-Haour, “Désert et refuge: sociohistoire d'une internationale huguenote. Un réseau européen de soutien aux ‘Églises sous la croix’ (1715-1752),” *Études théologiques et religieuses* 91, no. 4 (2015): 615-18.

Chapter 3 shows, furthermore, that although Durand's epistolary network shared points of contact with the philosophes it did not share their basic metaphysical ideas or aims, but was instead ostensibly committed to the cause of Protestantism. This analysis is nuanced by the fact that at least three of Durand's Protestant addressees – all Huguenot leaders – corresponded with Voltaire personally and openly sympathised with the aims of the philosophes. Chapters 2 and 3 together provide the necessary historical background for my subsequent analysis of Durand's letters.

Karen Green laments that the study of the epistolary networks of early modern women fails to move beyond the "sociological and anthropological approach" to analyse "the women's own arguments and ideas."⁸ Similarly, Susan Broomhall argues that unless we decide to "see and hear women from the past" they will be lost to future generations.⁹ Chapters 4 and 5 engage with Durand's own thought from a close reading of her extant letters.

Chapter 4 examines what Durand says about freedom of conscience, both explicitly and implicitly. I begin by establishing a framework by which to interpret her references to freedom of conscience, by explaining how the idea was variously construed by the Protestant Reformers, the philosophes, and Pierre Bayle, who forms something of a conceptual bridge between Reformers and philosophes. Though Baubérot and Bost, Domingo, Jacobs, Smith, Ryan, Zuber, and Witte identify Reformation roots in Enlightenment thought, searching analyses over the past century by Berlin, Arendt, Macintyre, and Taylor identify nonetheless a fundamental divide between the theocentrism of Christian thought and the anthropocentrism of Enlightenment thought. From this anthropocentric-theocentric

⁸ Karen Green, "Carol Pal. Republic of Women: Rethinking the Republic of Letters in the Seventeenth Century," *The American Historical Review* 119, no. 3 (2014): 970.

⁹ Susan Broomhall et al., *Early Modern Women in the Low Countries: Feminizing Sources and Interpretations of the Past* (Farnham, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2011), 197.

framework Durand’s “vocabulary of freedom” is examined: the words and phrases that she uses to describe freedom, their frequency, and their meaning in context. Commenting on Durand’s letters to pastors and the court of Louis XV, Céline Borello writes that “elle y parle de liberté de conscience et de liberté tout simplement.”¹⁰ Although this is true on the face of it, it overlooks a possibly misleading equivocation, that Durand did not mean what her philosophe contemporaries meant by freedom of conscience. Durand’s letters themselves reveal that the co-opting of her story and the *résister* slogan for freedom of conscience, as such freedom was construed by the Enlightenment, is indeed equivocal and anachronistic. Her principled decision to remain in prison was instead determined by her refusal to abjure her tradition’s Reformed Protestant beliefs and the salvation which was seen as indissolubly tied to those beliefs.

Having established Durand’s Reformed theocentrism from her understanding of freedom of conscience, Chapter 5 continues a close reading of Durand’s letters to examine her engagement with the practical-theological doctrines of suffering (passiology), charity, and civil-governance. Following analytical frameworks suggested by Bertrand, Parmentier, Donzé, and Cameron, I compare what Durand says about these doctrines with her own tradition – especially with the Bible, the works of Calvin, Marot’s poetic translations of the Psalms, the *Confessio Gallicana* (1559), and other standard works of French Reformed thought. The analysis shows that Durand makes a distinct and sophisticated contribution to eighteenth-century French theological thought, not as an ivory-tower theoretician, but as an eloquent interpreter of her tradition who practiced her convictions under duress. Although Durand has frequently been lauded as a brave Huguenot, this is the first time that her writings themselves have been assessed for her contribution to Christian theology. My first English

¹⁰ “She speaks therein of freedom of conscience and simply of freedom.” Marie Durand and Céline Borello (ed.), *Résister: Lettres de la Tour de Constance* (Maisons-Laffitte: Éditions Ampelos, 2018), iv.

translation of Durand's letters is appended to the thesis to enable references to her letters to be read in context, and as a source for future anglophone study of Durand. Though the production of a critical text and scholarly commentary of Durand's letters is desirable, it lay outside the scope of this thesis.

The Significance of Researching Marie Durand

Twenty-first century French-historical scholarship urges greater recognition of the writings of early modern women. Silver and Swiderski, for example, in *Femmes en toutes lettres: Les épistolières du XVIII^e siècle*, aimed to recover for female letter writers “leur juste place dans la littérature épistolaire du siècle des Lumières”.¹¹ William Beik, though maintaining that “Women were profoundly unequal to men” in early modern France, nevertheless cites numerous examples of “formidable women” of all stations who, utilising their education, intelligence, and personality, exercised natural leadership and asserted their rights.¹² Adelina Modesti writes similarly that “during the early modern period religious devotion and spiritual philanthropy were key gendered activities through which women with a social and religious conscience could express their authority and identity.”¹³ Marie Durand was a leader, spokeswoman, and advocate who wrote respectfully but firmly to such leaders as Louis XV's Minister of War the Marquis de Paulmy d'Argenson (1722–1787), and Paul Rabaut (1718–1794), putative head of the latter-eighteenth-century French Protestant church. By urging them to fulfil their positional responsibilities on the prisoners' behalf she proved to be just the

¹¹ “Their rightful place in the epistolary literature of the Age of Enlightenment.” Marie-France Silver and Marie-Laure Girou Swiderski, “Introduction,” in *Femmes en toutes lettres: Les épistolières du XVIII^e siècle*, ed. Marie-France Silver and Marie-Laure Girou Swiderski (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2000), 1.

¹² William Beik, *A Social and Cultural History of Early Modern France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 119-23, 195-98.

¹³ Adelina Modesti, *Women's Patronage and Gendered Cultural Networks in Early Modern Europe: Vittoria della Rovere, Grand Duchess of Tuscany*, ed. Kelley Di Dio, *Visual Culture in Early Modernity*, (London: Routledge, 2020), 242.

kind of authoritative and formidable woman that Beik and Modesti describe. Deborah Simonton and Margaret Hunt describe how eighteenth-century European women outside of the poor and working classes, excluded from the machine of government – the franchise, legislative assemblies, and executive ministries – contributed to their societies nonetheless through the salons, the arts, political influence, and above all by letter writing.¹⁴ But they make no mention of the letter writing of female prisoners, a scholarly space that the thesis addresses. Amanda Eurich suggests that “The rich and complex history of women in Huguenot communities is still an open field of research [...]. Buried in public and private archives are the letters [...] and other undiscovered or forgotten texts that still speak to their critical contributions to Reformed tradition and the Huguenot communities in which they lived.”¹⁵ The frequent neglect of Marie Durand’s letters makes them de facto just the kinds of hidden texts that Eurich describes, and the thesis aims to recover her true and full contribution to her society and tradition. Philippe Joutard describes the importance of counterbalancing the “travail de mémoire”, the memorialisation of past figures and events in favour of a cause, with the “travail de histoire”, which recovers that which memorialisation forgets or obscures.¹⁶ This study shows that Durand is frequently the object of more-or-less partisan memorialisation, and works to recover the historical Durand from her life and writings.

A study of Durand’s life and writings will also address the space between the philosophical and social contributions to the cause of freedom of conscience in the eighteenth century. Jeffrey Collins’s review of twenty-first century studies on the history of religious

¹⁴ Deborah Simonton, *Women in Culture and Society in Modern Europe: Gender, Skill and Identity from 1700* (London: Routledge, 2011), 85-114; Margaret R. Hunt, *Women in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Harlow, UK: Longman, 2010), 265, 299-302, 319-23.

¹⁵ “Women in the Huguenot Community,” in *A Companion to the Huguenots*, ed. Raymond A. Mentzer and Bertrand Van Ruymbeke (Boston: Brill, 2016), 149.

¹⁶ Philippe Joutard, “Antoine Court et le Désert: la force de l’Histoire,” *Bulletin* 157 (2011): 78.

tolerance describes the philosophical approach which examines the development of ideas over time, and the historical approach which examines cultural, political, and religious events – including instances of persecution – which contribute to tolerance. An emphasis on the former tends to caricature the development of tolerance as an intellectual accomplishment; an emphasis on the latter threatens to misunderstand its development.¹⁷ Both approaches are needed. Memorialisations of Durand tend to stress her social and exemplary contribution to freedom of conscience as something which existed in parallel with the conceptual contribution of the philosophes. But Durand was not a silent figurehead – she had something to say about freedom of conscience and construed it in a particular way. In Durand we see both exemplary and conceptual contributions to freedom: her practice exemplifies her writings, and her writings explicate her practice.

Researching Durand's life and letters must also enhance our understanding of eighteenth-century French Protestant society. Through Durand we can better understand the impact of the Revocation on the lives of regional Protestant families, the conditions and experience of female prisoners, the care that Protestant refugee communities extended to those who remained in France, the place of letters in the international Huguenot community, and the effects on that community of foreign wars and policies set within the "Versailles bubble".

My translation and references to Durand's letters are drawn from Étienne Gamonnet's *Lettres de Marie Durand* (Sète: Nouvelles Presses du Languedoc, 1986; reprinted 1998, 2011).

Though questions of authorship are discussed in detail in Chapter 3, I note at this point that forty-four of the letters published by Gamonnet are undisputedly by Durand and four have

¹⁷ Jeffrey R. Collins, "Redeeming the Enlightenment: New Histories of Religious Toleration," *The Journal of Modern History* 81, no. 3 (2009): 630-31.

uncertain authorship. I note this uncertainty with asterisks. The three letters marked with one asterisk are not written in Durand's hand. Letters 2* and 3* were however signed by her, and Letter 8* manifests so much of Durand's vocabulary, grammar, style, and typical expressions as to indicate that it was almost certainly dictated by her. Letter 1** is marked with two asterisks to indicate that it was neither signed nor penned by Durand, and that there is simply not enough text to determine whether or not she dictated it. Letter 1** at the very least derived from Durand's prison community in the Tour de Constance.¹⁸ Durand makes numerous references in her surviving correspondence to letters that have since been lost. On four occasions (Letters 6, 32, 35, 38), for fear of incrimination, she requests her letter to be burned. Given thirty-eight years of imprisonment, the forty-eight extant letters may represent only a fraction of her correspondence. Liz Stanley describes the essentially "fragmentary and dispersed nature of letter writing and receiving", meaning that a complete *epistolarium*, the totality of a person's written correspondence, can only rarely be practically accessed. An overview of a writer's surviving letters, a "provisional attempt to comprehend an entirety that never actually existed in the form of 'a whole'", is all that can be attempted.¹⁹ Durand's extant corpus is nonetheless large enough to build a coherent picture of her life in prison, the extent of her awareness of local, national, and international events, her physical condition, her personality, and – most importantly for this thesis – her thought. Eric Nelson writes that "further scholarship is still needed into the many and varied contributions of Huguenot women to society and culture."²⁰ This is the ultimate aim of my thesis, to demonstrate that Marie Durand has made a contribution to her society not merely as a pliant and voiceless

¹⁸ Gamonnet footnotes two anonymous letters, addressed "À la Reine" and "Au Roi," found in the same dossier as Letters 29 and 30, which purport to be written from the Tour de Constance but were certainly not written by Durand and are not discussed in the thesis. *Lettres de Marie Durand (1711-1776), prisonnière de la tour de Constance de 1730 à 1768* (Sète: Nouvelles Presses du Languedoc, 1986), 196-97n112.

¹⁹ Liz Stanley, "The Epistolarium: On Theorizing Letters and Correspondences," *Auto/Biography* 12, no. 3 (2004): 204-5.

²⁰ "A Companion to the Huguenots, ed. Raymond A. Mentzer and Bertrand Van Ruymbeke," *The English Historical Review* 133, no. 561 (2018): 438.

figurehead of resistance against political and religious intolerance, but as the vocal author of a modest written corpus of historical and theological significance.

1. The Memorialisation of Marie Durand

Marie Durand has been commemorated dozens of times, in various ways, and for numerous divergent causes over the past two hundred years. On the face of it, certain memorialisations seem surprisingly remote from the eighteenth-century regional Huguenot herself. In 1941, for example, French Protestant pastor Freddy Durrleman associated the *résister* graffito in the Tour de Constance – which he held was engraved by Durand herself – with the cause of the French Resistance.²¹ In 1994, Étienne Gamonnet, who edited Durand’s letters, likened her to Sophocles’ *Antigone*, the Ancient Greek heroine who chose death rather than submission to the unnatural laws of a tyrannical king.²² And in her 2016 book, *Marie Durand: Non à l’intolérance religieuse*, actress Ysabelle Lacamp portrayed Durand as resisting social intolerance in twenty-first century social-justice terms.²³

In this chapter I survey and analyse the diverse commemoration of Durand over the past two centuries. Her memorials represent a variety of media (popular books and pamphlets, scholarly monographs and papers, songs, drawings, paintings, a postage stamp, street and school names, radio and television documentaries, museum displays), from seven countries (France, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Italy, England, and the United States), and in five languages (French, Languedocien, German, Italian, and English). I show that although the memorialisations are complex they tend nonetheless to one of three general causes: Protestant Christianity, Enlightenment freedom and tolerance, and a conflation of the Protestant and Enlightenment causes in the same manner by which Voltaire memorialised the Protestant Jean Calas, whose wrongful execution in 1762 was attributed by the philosophe to

²¹ Poujol, “Documents et pistes,” 448n16; Patrick Cabanel, *Histoire des protestants en France: XVI^e-XXI^e siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 2012), 1097, 1104.

²² Étienne Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand et les siens: au Bouschet de Pranles: un siècle de résistance protestante pacifique en Vivarais* (Montpellier: Presses du Languedoc, 1994), 123-24.

²³ Ysabelle Lacamp, *Marie Durand, Non à l’intolérance religieuse* (Arles: Actes Sud junior, 2016).

religio-political fanaticism. I conclude that among the plethora of diverse memorialisations not all have undertaken to locate Durand within her own social, political, and religious heritage, and very few indeed have engaged with Durand's own thought from her forty-eight surviving letters. These are the shortcomings that I address in subsequent chapters.

A Survey of Memory Studies

Before discussing the memorialisation of Marie Durand I shall briefly summarise some of the important developments in memory studies over the past century. These provide general principles which help to explain and analyse the diverse and even contradictory remembrances of a historical figure like Durand.

Memory theorists recognise that when communities look to and “remember” the past in order to learn lessons for the present, contemporary concerns may distort and caricature their view of former times.²⁴ Real persons and events may be reshaped, reimagined, and obscured by ethical and political considerations – the interests of the *polis*, the city or community.²⁵ For some, the politicisation of the past is desirable. Nietzsche, for example, contended that “History is necessary above all to the man of action and power who fights a great fight and needs examples, teachers and comforters; [and who] cannot find them among his contemporaries.”²⁶ Others, seeing how the memory of the past has been a force for both good and evil, have sought to explain the processes and motives of memorialisation.

In *La Mémoire collective* (1950), French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs explained that memories are not held and transmitted by individuals alone, but also by families, faith

²⁴ Tony Judt and Timothy Snyder, *Thinking the Twentieth Century* (New York: Penguin, 2012), 277; Siobhan Kattago, “Written in Stone: Monuments and Representation,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Memory Studies*, ed. Siobhan Kattago (Farnham: Taylor & Francis, 2016), 200.

²⁵ Astrid Erll and Sara B. Young, *Memory in Culture* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 3-4.

²⁶ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Use and Abuse of History*, trans. Adrian Collins (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2020), 12. Nietzsche's philosophy of history is introduced by Peter N. Miller, *History and Its Objects: Antiquarianism and Material Culture since 1500* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017), 3-7.

communities, professional and political associations, and nations.²⁷ Halbwachs's theory of *collective memory* does not intend to posit the existence of some kind of communal *ontos* or consciousness abstracted from individual consciousnesses. It explains, rather, that an individual's memory is derived from, informed, framed, stimulated, and regulated by the community. This also means, reciprocally, that the individual shapes the testimonies of the collective by the insertion of their own memories.²⁸ For Halbwachs, collective memory is so pervasive that a truly independent thought is as viable as an object "suspendu dans le vide" (suspended in the void).²⁹ Collective memory is important because the meaning which the community ascribes to history shapes that community's behaviour.³⁰

Halbwachs's collective memory supposes a sharp distinction between history and memory. Memory and its meaning is so closely tied to the collective that objective historical knowledge – the detached fixed record of the facts – may only be obtained outside of that collective memory.³¹ This overlooks that historians themselves are members of a community with their own heritage of collective memories. In the 1990s, the German Egyptologist Jan Assmann aimed to reconnect history and memory by proposing an alternate theory of *cultural memory*: the remembrance of "fateful events of the past" through "cultural formation (texts, rites, monuments) and institutional communication (recitation, practice, observance)."³² Assmann was inspired by Walter Benjamin's *On the Concept of History* (1940), in which the German philosopher famously (if pessimistically) likens history to an angel flying backwards

²⁷Maurice Halbwachs, *La Mémoire collective*, ed. Lorraine Audy and Jean-Marie Tremblay (Chicoutimi: Paul-Émile-Boulet, 1950), 90. Assmann cites the German cultural theorist Aby Warburg as an independent proponent of the same concept. Jan Assmann and John Czaplicka, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," *New German Critique* 65 (1995): 125.

²⁸ Halbwachs, *La Mémoire collective*, 12; Alexandre Dessingué, "From Collectivity to Collectiveness: Reflections (with Halbwachs and Bakhtin) on the Concept of Collective Memory," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Memory Studies*, ed. Siobhan Kattago (Farnham: Taylor & Francis, 2016), 114.

²⁹ Halbwachs, *La Mémoire collective*, 17, 24.

³⁰ Jean-Christophe Marcel and Laurent Mucchielli, "Maurice Halbwachs's *mémoire collective*," in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook*, ed. Astrid Erll et al. (Boston: De Gruyter, 2008), 143; Anne Whitehead, *Memory* (London: Routledge, 2009), 129-30.

³¹ Halbwachs, *La Mémoire collective*, 45, 48.

³² Assmann and Czaplicka, "Collective Memory," 129.

from, and gazing back towards, an ever-growing accumulation of disaster.³³ Unlike Halbwachs's historian, standing aloof from memory, Benjamin's angel remembers – it is ever connected to and personally concerned with history.³⁴ By no means does this imply a fixed remembrance and interpretation of the past. On the contrary, cultural memory responds to the present context, “sometimes by appropriation, sometimes by criticism, sometimes by preservation or by transformation.”³⁵ A group's response to historical knowledge, whether radical or reactionary, will in either case shape its practices and identity.

Like Assmann, French historian Pierre Nora also built on the work of Halbwachs. He did not however follow Assmann's critique of Halbwachs's bifurcation of history and memory but took a different direction.³⁶ Amidst the incipient sociological and political pluralism of late twentieth-century France, Nora reacted against what he called “une histoire nationale unitaire, téléologique, spontanément habitée par une intention auto-célébratrice et commémorative d'elle-même”.³⁷ He identified *lieux* (places, sites, realms) which reflect the fading remnants of human memory.³⁸ Marc Roudebush helpfully paraphrases Nora's definition of *Les Lieux de mémoire*, the title of the multivolume work (1984–1992) which Nora edited: “There are [...] sites of memory, because there are no longer *milieux de mémoire*, real environments of memory.”³⁹ Rather than writing history according to

³³ Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations, Edited and with an Introduction by Hannah Arendt*, trans. Hannah Arendt (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968), 257-58.

³⁴ Benjamin's “hopes for humankind lay in memory's revitalising power to rescue ideas that had aspired but failed to be reified.” Patrick H. Hutton, “History as an Art of Memory Revisited,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Memory Studies*, ed. Siobhan Kattago (Farnham: Taylor & Francis, 2016), 47.

³⁵ Assmann and Czaplicka, “Collective Memory,” 130.

³⁶ Pierre Nora, “Entre mémoire et histoire: la problématique des lieux,” in *La République*, ed. Pierre Nora, *Les Lieux de mémoire* sous la direction de Pierre Nora (Paris: Gallimard, 1984), xix.

³⁷ “A unitary and teleological national history, spontaneously habituated by self-celebrating intention and self-commemoration”. Pierre Nora, “Les Lieux de mémoire, ou comment ils m'ont échappé,” *L'Histoire* 331, no. 5 (2008): 34.

³⁸ Nora, “Entre mémoire et histoire,” xvii.

³⁹ Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire (translated by Marc Roudebush),” *Representations*, no. 26 (1989): 7; Kattago shows how Nora's *lieux* were presaged by Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne* (1925–29), a catalogue of historical emblems connected to the present by their communication of “a kind of energy, or what he called ‘pathos formula.’” Kattago, “Introduction: Memory Studies and its Companions,” 20.

timelines, Nora examines the political, religious, and geographical divisions that shape French culture, as well as certain traditions, *haut lieux* (great places), unifying symbols, slogans, festivals, commemorations, dictionaries, museums, monuments, and persons.⁴⁰ It is in such a place “où se cristallise et se réfugie la mémoire [...]. La raison d’être fondamentale d’un lieu de mémoire est d’arrêter le temps, de bloquer le travail de l’oubli, de fixer un état des choses, d’immortaliser la mort, de matérialiser l’immatériel.”⁴¹ These *lieux* are vital for the historian because collective memory and even cultural memory must fade.⁴²

Collective memory suggests that although the memorialisation of Marie Durand derives proximately from individuals, it derives ultimately from communities and intends, tacitly or explicitly, to forge community identity and behaviour. Assmann shows, however, that memorialisation is not necessarily naïve and one-dimensional. Memorialists may critique and move in a different direction to that which is memorialised. Those, for example, who are uninterested in Durand’s religious associations might laud her for other reasons, for her willingness to “suffer for her convictions”, whatever those convictions might be. Nora’s *lieux* remind us that Durand’s history is communicated not merely by a chronology interspersed with excerpts from the primary sources – from letters, government documents, and eye-witness accounts – as important as these sources are. There are *lieux*, her home and her prison for example, “where memory crystallises and takes shelter.” Thus French Protestants have turned Durand’s home into a museum, the site of an annual religious festival, and a place of pilgrimage. Representations of the Tour de Constance also feature heavily in the memorialisation of Durand as the symbol of her suffering. I will show, furthermore, that

⁴⁰ Nora, “Entre mémoire et histoire,” vii. Tamm comments, similarly, that “Culture is essentially semiotic and semiotics evolves in a cultural environment.” Marek Tamm, “Semiotic Theory of Cultural Memory: In the Company of Juri Lotman,” in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Memory Studies*, ed. Siobhan Kattago (Farnham: Taylor & Francis, 2016), 149.

⁴¹ “Where memory crystallises and takes shelter [...]. The fundamental purpose of a memory site is to arrest time, to block the work of forgetting, to fix the shape of things, to immortalise the dead, to materialise the immaterial.” Nora, “Entre mémoire et histoire,” xxxv.

⁴² Nora, “Entre mémoire et histoire,” xviii.

Durand herself has become a *lieu de mémoire*.

Another important paradigm for my analysis concerns the memorialisation of trauma. In 2000, using the Holocaust as his primary case in point, Paul Ricœur criticised Nora's approach for its prioritisation of history over memory in a way that might obscure traumatic memory.⁴³ Certainly, since World War Two memorials devoted to the suffering of non-combatants have become increasingly prominent.⁴⁴ Jay Winter, a specialist in twentieth-century memorials of war and genocide, ties this to the growth of history "from below", history increasingly derived from audio- and video-recorded witnesses. The "witness" has emerged as a central figure, "a person whose story comes from within evil, from within injustice, from within extreme situations" to represent those who perished.⁴⁵ Memorials became less focussed on heroic victory and sacrifice, and more focussed on "those who were crushed by the forces of history [...], the history of survivors and those who did not survive."⁴⁶ Siobhan Kattago notes how the memorialisation of trauma centres on human rights causes.⁴⁷ Similarly, Baer and Sznajder suggest that remembering "negative foundational moments" is now seen to be integral to community healing for past traumas.⁴⁸

Trauma strengthens memory and its power of transmission, an important consideration as I examine the memorialisation of Marie Durand's decades of suffering. Winter and Marianne Hirsch thus describe a phenomenon of transgenerational "post-memory", the recapitulation of trauma among the descendants of the afflicted.⁴⁹ Though the

⁴³ Patrick H. Hutton, "Pierre Nora's *Les Lieux de mémoire* thirty years after," in *Routledge International Handbook of Memory Studies*, ed. Anna Lisa Tota and Trever Hagen (Abingdon, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2015), 36.

⁴⁴ Peter Eisenman's 2005 *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* in Berlin is a notable example.

⁴⁵ Jay M. Winter, "Interview with Professor Jay Winter," *Tarih* 1, no. 1 (2009): 29.

⁴⁶ Winter, "Interview," 31-32.

⁴⁷ Kattago, "Memory Studies," 22-23.

⁴⁸ Alejandro Baer and Natan Sznajder, "Antigone in León: The drama of trauma politics," in *Routledge International Handbook of Memory Studies*, ed. Anna Lisa Tota and Trever Hagen (Abingdon, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2015), 182.

⁴⁹ Winter, "Interview," 31, 35; Marianne Hirsch, "Connective Arts of Postmemory," *Analecta Política* 9, no. 16 (2019): 172-75.

use of the word “memory” to describe the experience of the descendants of trauma survivors has been critiqued by van Alphen, Weissman, and Hungerford as confusing and as potentially detracting from survivors’ experiences, the memorialisation of Marie Durand shows how her suffering has been assimilated and mourned by generations of French Protestants since the eighteenth century.⁵⁰ We note here Nora’s critique of this phenomenon, of what he calls the “*politisation générale de l’histoire*”, which he associates with the surge, from the 1990s, of claims for reparations for historic injustices.⁵¹ Though Nora does not deny the important interplay between memorialisation and trauma that has arisen since the 1940s, he reminds us how this may be used, rightly or wrongly, as a potent political tool. The shift of focus toward the victim-witness of violence – and especially toward women and children – may explain in part the continued interest in Durand into the twenty-first century. The ease with which traumas of the past may be politicised alerts us to how Durand and her story might be used, and perhaps misused, for causes from which she was separated by time, place, culture, and education.

Recent theorists critique the highly localised formulations of Halbwachs, Assmann, and Nora to stress the potential fluidity of memory across transcultural, transgenerational, and transmedial boundaries. Bond, Craps, and Vermeulen’s insight that “the intersection of disparate commemorative discourses might offer an opportunity to forge empathic communities of remembrance across national, cultural, or ethnic boundaries” helps to explain how Durand’s story could be utilised by entities that have no stated interest in her religious commitment (such as Durrleman), or are critical of religious fanaticism (such as those whom I term the Voltairean memorialisers.)⁵² I will show that though Durand’s story has been used

⁵⁰ Lucy Bond, Stef Craps, and Pieter Vermeulen, “Memory on the Move,” in *Memory Unbound: Tracing the Dynamics of Memory Studies*, ed. Lucy Bond, Stef Craps, and Pieter Vermeulen (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017), 9-10.

⁵¹ Pierre Nora, “L’Histoire au péril de la politique,” *Eurozine* November 24, 2011: 1. Emphasis original.

⁵² Bond, Craps, and Vermeulen, “Memory on the Move,” 6.

to demonise Catholicism (Musée du Désert) and the ancien régime (Bastide), it has also been used to draw a diverse community together around shared principles of courage and toleration (Decaris's 1968 national postage stamp; the Marie-Durand-Schule in Bad Karlshafen, Germany).

Although in the following I categorise memorialisations of Marie Durand as either “Protestant”, “secular”, or “Voltairean”, this should not be taken to mean that each memorialisation belongs hermetically to its assigned category, but rather that it more-or-less tends to that category. Almost all of the memorialisations bleed to some extent across my categorial lines. I aim instead to show the main lines along which the diverse memorialisations of Durand over the past two centuries tend, and the significance and possible shortcomings attached to these tendencies.

The Protestant Memorialisation of Durand

Marie Durand has frequently been memorialised as a Christian who remained faithful to her Protestant beliefs and who lived them out under prolonged duress. Within this category we may identify those who link Durand to her specifically French Reformed heritage, and those who class Durand less specifically as a prayerful Bible-reading evangelical Christian with little reference to her Reformed roots. (I use the contested broad-brush adjective “evangelical”, from εὐαγγέλιον (*euangelion*) – “good news,” “gospel” – to describe Protestant Christians who are theologically conservative, committed to Scripture as “God’s truth,” and focussed on the “transformative power” of the works and teachings of Jesus.⁵³) I begin by surveying the biographers, authors, playwrights, and composers who tend to portray Durand in this broadly evangelical fashion.

⁵³ Helen Morris and Helen Cameron (eds.), *Evangelicals Engaging in Practical Theology: Theology that Impacts Church and World* (Milton, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2022), 3-5.

In 1859, Louis Bridel (1813–1866), a Swiss evangelical pastor, preacher, and author, devoted a chapter of his history of Paul Rabaut and the eighteenth-century French Protestant church to the female prisoners in the Tour de Constance. Most of the chapter concerns Durand, whom he describes as “l’organe, l’interprète, le secrétaire de la triste colonie” (the spokeswoman, intermediary, and secretary of the sad colony).⁵⁴ Bridel quotes three of Durand’s letters to Rabaut (Letters 32, 35, 46), amounting to two pages, enough to portray her as a pious, courageous, and suffering evangelical. No reference is made to Durand’s Reformed heritage. (The 1861 English translation of Bridel’s work is notable for containing the first English translation of any part of Durand’s letters.⁵⁵)

In 1925, the Swiss Comité cantonal vaudois des Écoles du dimanche, a Protestant organisation producing material for Sunday school teachers, presented Durand as a Christian who remained faithful through decades of imprisonment, and who sought to inspire other Christians to similar faithfulness by inscribing *résister* in her prison cell:

Pendant sa captivité, elle grava avec un instrument de fer, dans la pierre du sol, ce seul mot: “Résister”. Elle passa quarante ans dans cette prison. On raconte que sa plus grande consolation, en gravant ce mot, fut l’espoir que d’autres personnes, venant après elle, se trouveraient en le lisant fortifiées dans leur foi.⁵⁶

There is no evidence that Durand inscribed the *résister* graffito, let alone that she hoped that others would be encouraged by it. The vignette nonetheless portrays Durand, without any reference to her French Reformed heritage, as an example of Christian faith who intended to inspire others to share her faith. Similarly, Swiss Protestant historian Otto Erich Strasser in

⁵⁴ Louis Bridel, *Trois séances sur Paul Rabaut et les protestants français au XVIII^e siècle* (Lausanne, 1859), 111.

⁵⁵ Louis Bridel, *The Pastor of the Desert and his Martyr Colleagues: Sketches of Paul Rabaut and the French Protestants of the Eighteenth Century*, trans. E.T.P. (London, 1861), 105-7.

⁵⁶ “During her captivity she inscribed with an iron tool, into the stone floor, this single word: ‘Resist’. She spent forty years in that prison. We remember that her greatest consolation in engraving that word was the hope that other people, coming after her, would find themselves strengthened in their faith by reading it.” *Nouvelles Glanures: Récits authentiques destinés à illustrer l’enseignement biblique*, (Lausanne: Comité cantonal vaudois des Écoles du dimanche, Agence Religieuse, 1925), Chapter IV.

his 1942 play *Marie Durand, die Gefangene der Tour de Constance*, English Protestant author Constance Savery in her 1953 historical novel *Scarlet Plume*, and Swiss Protestant author and translator Emil Ernst Ronner in his 1960 historical novel *Marie Durand: das Leben einer Hugenottin*, all portray Durand as an evangelical Christian who prays, reads the Bible to her fellow prisoners, and who refuses to give up her faith, without foregrounding her French Reformed heritage.⁵⁷

Certain evangelical memorialisations of Durand verge on the sentimental and hagiographic. This kind of portrayal appears as early as 1772, in a letter from Paul Rabaut to the Walloon Church in Amsterdam, which sent material aid to Durand during and after her imprisonment. Rabaut describes her as “cette pieuse et zélée demoiselle, qui, pendant sa longue captivité, non seulement a montré une fidélité à toute épreuve, mais encore a consolé, exhorté, encouragé ses compagnes à demeurer fermes dans la foi.”⁵⁸ In his 1933 publication of Marie Durand’s last will and testament, J. W. Marmelstein (1882–1956), a Dutch Protestant scholar who produced a comparative study of Latin and French versions of Calvin’s *Institutes*, describes Durand’s suffering as “la lutte pour sa foi” (the fight for her faith), and the woman herself as a “grande et sainte femme” (great and holy woman) and “fidèle servante” of the Lord.⁵⁹ Anne Danclos, a descendant of a prisoner of the Tour de Constance, portrays Durand similarly in her 2003 historical novel *Marie Durand et les prisonnières d’Aigues-Mortes*. Danclos’s work is well-researched and contains numerous historical references and excerpts from Durand’s letters. She portrays Durand and six other

⁵⁷Otto Erich Strasser, *Marie Durand, die Gefangene der Tour de Constance: Ein Bild der Glaubensstreue aus der Leidenschaft der Hugenotten* (Zurich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1942); Constance Savery, *Scarlet Plume* (London: Victory Press, 1953); *Marie Durand: das Leben einer Hugenottin* (Basel: Verlag F. Reinhardt, 1960). Précis of the German texts were made for the author by Stefanie Mapley in May 2020.

⁵⁸“That pious and zealous lady who, during her long captivity, not only demonstrated an indestructible faith, but who also consoled, exhorted, and encouraged her companions to remain firm in the faith.” Paul Rabaut, *Paul Rabaut, ses lettres à divers (1744-1794): Avec préface, notes et pièces justificatives*, ed. Charles Dardier, 2 vols. (Paris, 1891), 2:143.

⁵⁹J. W. Marmelstein, “Les Dernières pages d’un livre de douleur: une obligation et le testament de Marie Durand,” *Bulletin* 82, no. 1 (1933): 58-59.

Huguenot prisoners arriving at the Tour de Constance, their heads shaved and covered with scarves, avowing: “C’est pour la gloire de Dieu que nous souffrons” (It is for God’s glory that we suffer).⁶⁰ Durand is thus established as a persecuted Protestant bravely suffering for her faith. Two visitors to the Tour de Constance hear the prisoners praying and singing a psalm together and notice that Durand has “un visage gracieux et digne [...] avec de beaux yeux noirs” (a graceful and dignified demeanour [...] with fine black eyes).⁶¹ From the Reformation, psalm singing in France and Scotland was closely linked to Reformed religious expression.⁶² Overall, however, Danclos gives little reference to Durand’s Reformed heritage and portrays her as a pious and even physically attractive evangelical heroine. The Italian-American translator and Protestant author Simonetta Carr likewise portrays Durand as a pious and attractive evangelical. Her sixty-four page picture book, *Marie Durand* (2015), published by Reformation Heritage Books, is one of a series of seventeen “Christian biographies for young readers.”⁶³ Carr contributes biographies of a number of early modern female Christian scholars and sufferers, including Renée of France (1510–1575), Lady Jane Grey (1537–1554), and Julia Gonzaga (1513–1566). She describes Durand’s letter writing, suffering, inspiring resistance to abjuration, and leadership among the other prisoners. She also includes a slightly condensed translation of one of Durand’s letters to her niece Anne (Letter 25).⁶⁴ In a postscript Carr memorialises Durand as a Christian who “simply continued to do what God called her to do every day, keeping her eyes on the future ‘triumph of glory,’ loving those around her, and thanking God for what she described as ‘the honour of wearing His uniform for His just cause.’”⁶⁵ The artwork by Matt Abraxas portrays Durand (whom he modelled on

⁶⁰ Anne Danclos, *Marie Durand et les prisonnières d’Aigues-Mortes: nouvelle édition augmentée* (1993; repr., Paris: Lanore, 2003), 16-17.

⁶¹ Danclos, *Marie Durand*, 103, 107.

⁶² Daniel Trocmé-Latter describes the origin of this phenomenon in “The Psalms as a Mark of Protestantism: The Introduction of Liturgical Psalm-singing in Geneva,” *Plainsong & Medieval Music* 20, no. 2 (2011).

⁶³ Simonetta Carr, *Marie Durand* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2015), 2.

⁶⁴ Carr, *Marie Durand*, 61-63.

⁶⁵ Carr, *Marie Durand*, 53.

his wife) as warm, serious, well-clothed, and attractive.⁶⁶ In fact the only contemporary descriptions of Durand's appearance are found in her own letters where she candidly describes the deterioration of the prisoners' bodies and clothes after years of malnutrition and sickness.⁶⁷

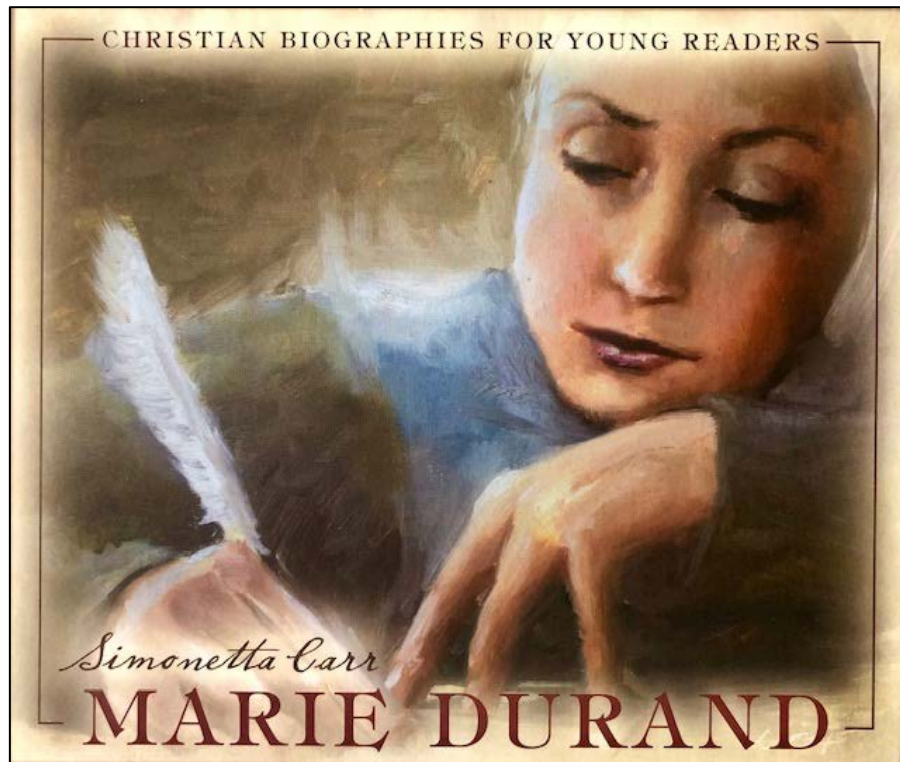


Figure 1. Matt Abraxas, *Marie Durand Writing a Letter*, 2015.
Oil on linen canvas, 16 x 20 in. From Simonetta Carr, *Marie Durand*
(Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2015).

In his song, *Au Fin fond du Vivarais* (2000), French pastor and composer Jean-Jacques Delorme also portrays Marie and her brother Pierre as heroes who resisted abjuration for the sake of their generally Protestant faith. The final two verses focus on Marie:

Enfermée dans une tour,
Marie Durand, par amour,

⁶⁶ Matt Abraxas, personal communication, March 21, 2022.

⁶⁷ E.g., Letter 36. I describe Durand's references to the prisoners' health problems in Chapter 2.

Renonce à la liberté
 En refusant d'abjurer:
 Treize mille huit cents journées
 A prier et résister.

Au fin fond du Vivarais,
 Lorsque Marie chantonnait
 A l'ombre des châtaigniers,
 Nul ne pouvait deviner
 Qu'elle saura protester
 Pour l'amour du Dieu vivant.⁶⁸

Delorme explains his motivation for writing the song:

Ils ont souffert à cause de leur foi. Ce qui est remarquable, c'est que leur foi et la Parole de Dieu leur ont donné la force de "résister", de tenir bon. Il leur aurait suffi de renoncer à leur foi "protestante" pour pouvoir vivre libres. Mais ils ont choisi ce qui était pour eux la "véritable foi". [...] Je tenais à leur rendre hommage. Du même coup, c'est un hommage à tous ces témoins de la foi qui ont "résisté".⁶⁹

Although Delorme locates Durand geographically among the chestnut groves of the Vivarais, he does not portray her as representing French Protestants specifically, but all who have suffered and resisted as "witnesses" of what was "for them the 'true faith.'"

Certain other memorialists also portray Durand as a devoted Protestant Christian but

⁶⁸ "Locked in a tower,/ Marie Durand, by love,/ Renounces freedom/ And refuses to abjure:/ Thirteen thousand eight hundred days/ Of prayer and resistance. Deep in the Vivarais,/ When Marie sang/ Under the shade of the chestnut trees,/ No one could guess/ That she would protest/ For love of the living God." Reproduced with the composer's permission, May 28, 2020.

⁶⁹ "They suffered because of their faith. What is remarkable is that their faith and the Word of God gave them the strength to 'resist,' to hold fast. In order to live freely it would have been enough for them to renounce their 'Protestant' faith. But they chose what was for them the 'true faith.' [...] I wanted to pay homage to them. At the same time, it is a homage to all those witnesses of the faith who have 'resisted.'" Jean-Jacques Delorme, personal communication, June 3, 2020.

link her more specifically to her heritage of conservative French Reformed orthodoxy by connecting her to specifically Huguenot ideals, symbols, practices, and history.

In 1863, the Protestant pastor and historian Abraham Borrel (1795–1865) published a forty-eight page pamphlet, *Pierre et Marie Durand, ou le frère et la sœur; l'un martyr de l'église du Désert, et l'autre prisonnière à la Tour de Constance*. Borrel has been ranked alongside Adolphe Monod (1802–1856) as one of the “greatest exponents” of mid-nineteenth-century French Reformed orthodoxy (as opposed to French liberal Protestantism) and also wrote biographies of such important post-Revocation French Reformed leaders as Claude Brousson, Antoine Court, and Paul Rabaut.⁷⁰ Borrel’s biography of the Durands was published as a fundraiser for the Union chrétienne de jeunes gens (YMCA) in Nîmes, and was intended as “une lecture instructive et émouvante” (an instructive and moving read) for young Christians, “Les personnes éclairées et pieuses [...] qui préfèrent travailler en commun à l’ornement de leur esprit et à la sanctification de leur cœur, que de se livrer aux vanités et aux plaisirs du monde.”⁷¹ Borrel thus portrays the Durand siblings being raised in the “pures croyances évangéliques” (pure Protestant beliefs) of a church that was committed to its sixteenth-century Reformed heritage.⁷² He describes the Tour de Constance as a monument to the “pieuses prisonnières huguenotes” who suffered for the crime of belonging to the “famille réformée.”⁷³ Borrell thus memorialises Pierre and Marie Durand as exemplary French Reformed martyrs. Borrel refers to Marie as a letter writer and quotes from three of her five letters to Paul Rabaut (Letters 32, 35, 38).

In 1884 the French Protestant pastor Daniel Benoît (1844–1916) published the first

⁷⁰ John B. Roney, “Religion and Identity in Modern France: The Modernization of the Protestant Community in Languedoc, 1815–1848. By James C. Deming,” *Church History* 69, no. 4 (2000): 95.

⁷¹ “Enlightened and pious persons [...] who prefer to work together to adorn their minds and sanctify their hearts, than to give themselves to the vanities and pleasures of the world.” Abraham Borrel, *Pierre et Marie Durand, ou le frère et la sœur; l'un martyr de l'église du Désert, et l'autre prisonnière à la Tour de Constance* (Nîmes, 1863), 4.

⁷² Borrel, *Pierre et Marie Durand*, 6-7, 13. The adjective *évangélique* in this context is a synonym for “French Protestant”. *DCLF* 2:746.

⁷³ Borrel, *Pierre et Marie Durand*, 46.

biography ostensibly devoted to Marie, *Marie Durand, Prisonnière à la Tour de Constance de 1730 à 1768*. In the first of his seven chapters, “L’enfance”, Benoît locates Durand within her specifically French Protestant heritage with thumbnail descriptions of the Edict of Nantes, its Revocation, and the Camisard Rebellion. Interestingly, for a biography of Marie Durand, Benoît devotes the entire second chapter, “Les emprisonnements (1728–1730)” to the pastoral work, capture, trial, and execution of Marie’s brother Pierre. Benoît portrays both brother and sister as exemplary Christians, as martyrs who remained faithful in the face of prolonged suffering and death.⁷⁴ Benoît also shows how Durand’s literacy made her a natural spokesperson for her fellow prisoners, and how over time she became more and more their “conseillère et leur animatrice” (advisor and leader).⁷⁵ He explains that “La foi de l’héroïne a survécu malgré tant de souffrances. Jusqu’au bout, Marie Durand est restée fidèle.”⁷⁶

Although André Fabre, as I will show below, connects Durand in his 1934 revision of Benoît’s work to the cause of the Enlightenment, Benoît does not link Durand to any cause beyond her own Huguenot heritage.

Frédéric Mayor also holds up Marie as an exemplary Huguenot in his *La Famille Durand du Bouschet de Pranles* (1984), a sixty-four-page introduction to the lives of Pierre and Marie Durand. Mayor was a pastor in the Église réformée de France from 1945 to 1975 and in 1988 was listed as conservator of the Musée du Vivarais Protestant.⁷⁷ His book includes colour photographs of the Durand house, the Tour de Constance, letters, inscriptions, and reproductions of Jeanne Lombard’s paintings. Mayor fully describes and commends the Durands’ Huguenot faith, and their contribution to the cause of freedom of conscience:

⁷⁴ Daniel Benoît, *Marie Durand, Prisonnière à la Tour de Constance (1730-1768): Son temps, sa famille, ses compagnes de captivité, revu et corrigé par André Fabre* (First published 1884; ed. André Fabre 1935; repr., Nîmes: Edipro, 2008), 69, 159.

⁷⁵ Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 81.

⁷⁶ “The faith of the heroine survived despite so much suffering. Until the end, Marie Durand remained faithful.” Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 159.

⁷⁷ Magali Lacousse, Virginie Godar, and Christine Nougaret, *Répertoire numérique détaillé du fonds de l’Église Réformée de France (E.R.F.) 107 AS 1-262 (1791-1997)* (Église réformée de France Centre Historique des Archives nationales, 2005), 59; “Back Matter,” *Bulletin* 134 (1988): 616.

Pour elle, la liberté de manifester sa foi, de prier Dieu selon les lumières de la conscience est une dignité qui fait de l'homme un enfant de Dieu. Cette condition est infiniment plus importante et glorieuse que celle d'appartenir à une institution humaine et terrestre.⁷⁸

Thus Mayor explains that for Durand the value of freedom of conscience resides in the fact that it permits a person to worship and serve God, and it is for this reason that the Durands ought to be remembered and emulated: "L'un et l'autre ont été les témoins d'une vérité éternelle. Ils nous ont transmis un héritage qu'il nous faut recevoir, faire valoir et transmettre à notre tour."⁷⁹ Mayor devotes three pages to Durand's letters, describing her addressees, her ability, and her style. He sums up the purpose of her letters to her various addressees but gives just thirteen lines to discussing their substance. He observes that Durand's letters are imbued with a profound knowledge of Scripture and that her understanding of God's fidelity to his people explains her steadfastness in the faith through suffering.⁸⁰

Two paintings and a drawing also emphasise, either implicitly or explicitly, Durand's specifically French Protestant heritage. Michel Maximilien Leenhardt's large-scale work, *Prisonnières huguenotes à la tour de Constance, Aigues-Mortes* (1892), depicts thirteen Huguenot women, one holding a baby, on the upper terrace of their prison. They appear clean, well-clothed, and adequately fed, yet afflicted by suffering, grief, and ennui. Leenhardt modelled Marie Durand, pointing to heaven, upon his wife Marie Castan.⁸¹

⁷⁸ "For her, the freedom to manifest her faith, to pray to God according to the light of conscience, bears a dignity which makes of a human being a child of God. This condition is infinitely more important and glorious than that of belonging to a merely human and earthly institution." Frédéric Mayor, *La Famille Durand, du Bouschet de Pranles* (Lyon: Réveil, 1984), 44-45.

⁷⁹ "They were both witnesses of an eternal truth. They passed onto us a heritage that we must receive, value, and ourselves pass on." Mayor, *Famille Durand*, 64.

⁸⁰ Mayor, *Famille Durand*, 50-53.

⁸¹ Isabelle Laborie, "L'Œuvre, reflet d'un milieu: Michel-Maximilien Leenhardt, dit Max Leenhardt (1853-1941)," (PhD diss., Université Toulouse-II-le Mirail, 2019), 244.



Figure 2. Maximilien Leenhardt, *Prisonnières huguenotes à la Tour de Constance*, 1892.
Oil on canvas, 252 x 410 cm. Musée Fabre, Montpellier.

Leenhardt (1853–1941) was born into a wealthy Huguenot family who were proud of their persecuted descendants and who held strongly to their Calvinist social and theological heritage.⁸² He studied at the *École des Beaux-Arts* in both Montpellier and Paris and, inspired by the historical works of his wife's grandfather Jules Michelet, painted at least five canvasses between 1883 and 1937 portraying eighteenth-century Protestant worship, exile, and persecution, and the Huguenots as heroes and martyrs for the French Reformed faith: *Les Martyrs de la Réforme* (1883), *Prisonnières* (1892), *Le Prêche au Désert ou Les héros de la liberté de conscience* (1898), *La Fuite des protestants à la révocation de l'Édit de Nantes* (1931), and *Les Émigrants huguenots en danger s'embarquant pour la Hollande* (1937).⁸³

Jeanne Lombard (1865–1945) takes a similar approach in her 1907 *Prisonnières*

⁸² Laborie, "Leenhardt," 18-19, 62-66.

⁸³ Laborie, "Leenhardt," 115, 350.

huguenotes à la tour de Constance. The daughter of a French Protestant pastor, Lombard trained in drawing and painting in Neuchâtel. Nicole Quellet-Soguel describes how she “ressent le besoin d’exprimer par la peinture son profond attachement à ses racines réformées et sa compassion pour ses ancêtres persécutés”, how she became well known for her paintings of eighteenth-century Huguenot suffering, and how she worked to ameliorate the lives of female prisoners in her own community.⁸⁴ *Prisonnières huguenotes* is manifestly intended to evoke sympathy for the plight of her religious forebears.



Figure 3. Jeanne Lombard, *Prisonnières huguenotes à la tour de Constance*, 1907. Oil on canvas, 132 x 195 cm. G067, Collection du musée du Désert, Míalet-France.

The picture is set in the upper level of the Tour de Constance; the sun shines through a *meurtrière* (arrow slit). Lombard shows a pathetic scene: two prisoners have their heads in their hands, one lies back on a bed looking unwell, and one is comforting another. The

⁸⁴ “Felt the need to express by painting her profound attachment to her Reformed roots and her compassion for her persecuted ancestors.” Nicole Quellet-Soguel, “Jeanne Lombard artiste (1865-1945),” in *Biographies neuchâteloises*, ed. Michel Schlup (Hauterive: Attinger, 2005), 191-96.

woman in the centre, presumably Durand, stands erect, her eyes gazing heavenward. Lombard has painted two women seated on the circular rim which bears the *résister* inscription but has positioned the feature much closer to the *meurtrière* than where it actually is. By composing the scene in this way, with the engraved rim close to Durand, and with prisoners sitting on its edge, she appears to link the suffering of these women to the Huguenot cause.

Paul Goy also memorialised Durand specifically as a Huguenot in his 1932 *Portrait imaginé*.

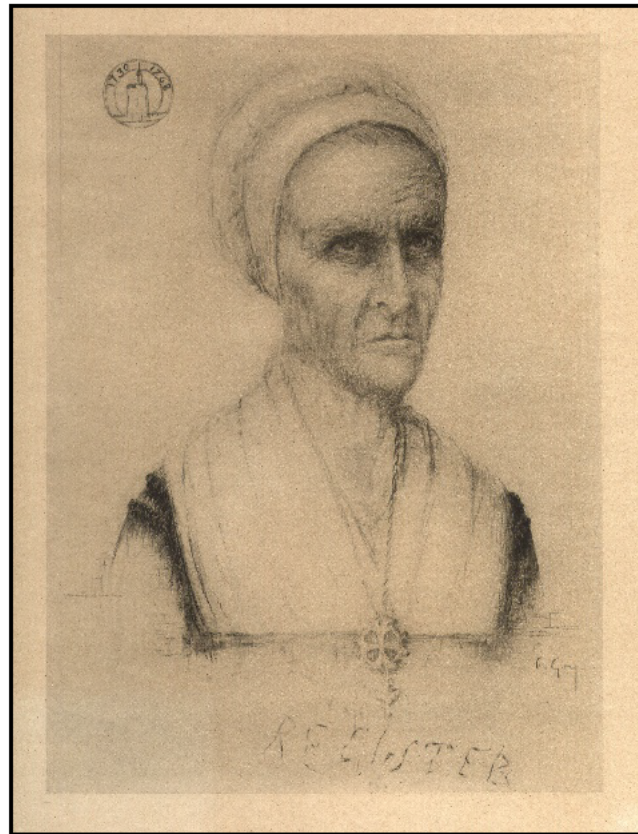


Figure 4. Paul Goy, Marie Durand, *Portrait imaginé*, 1932. Pencil drawing, P054 Collection du musée du Désert à Mialet-France.

Goy (1883–1964) was a medical doctor who worked in Pertuis, just north of Aix-en-Provence. In his later years he wrote literary history, poetry, and drama.⁸⁵ The seal in the top-

⁸⁵ “Paul Goy,” *La cultura i la ciència són armes per la pau*, Reial Acadèmia de Medicina de Catalunya, accessed June 11, 2022, <http://ramc.cat/biblioteca/medicina-doccitania/biografies-mediques/paul-goy>.

left corner bears the dates of Durand's incarceration and a representation of the Tour de Constance. Below Durand is a facsimile of the *résister* inscription. Durand wears a Huguenot Cross. Although the Cross first appeared in Nîmes in the 1680s it only became an established symbol among the descendants of Huguenot refugees in the late nineteenth century.⁸⁶ Goy makes use of this probably anachronistic symbol to specifically identify Durand as a member of the French Reformed community. Goy's picture is remarkable for the way he depicts Durand as old and careworn. This is consistent with Durand's own occasional descriptions of her deteriorating health and appearance, and indeed with how we might expect an older person to look after decades of harsh imprisonment. Goy perhaps implies that Durand had endured protracted suffering for the sake of her Huguenot beliefs.

There are three museum displays devoted to Durand, all of which present her specifically as a French Protestant. The Musée du Vivarais is situated in the Durands' home in Le Bouchet (also Bouschet, Bouchet de Pranles), which was acquired by the Société de l'Histoire du protestantisme français in December 1931.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Bertrand Van Ruymbeke and Randy J. Sparks, *Memory and Identity: The Huguenots in France and the Atlantic Diaspora* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2003), 16.

⁸⁷ "Acquisition de la maison de Marie Durand," *Bulletin* 80, no. 4 (1931): 523-25.



Figure 5. Musée du Vivarais, the eighteenth-century home of the Durand family. The commemorative plaque (described below) can be seen centre left. Photo by the author, November 6, 2018.

The Église Protestante Unie de Pranles holds periodic services in the *bergerie* (sheepfold) and an annual summer conference promoting French Protestantism. A plaque on an external wall of the Durands' house was unveiled before a large gathering on August 10, 1924.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ An estimated three to five thousand people attended the event, including some twenty pastors. R. C. de Richmond, "Au Pasteur P. Durand et à sa sœur," *Bulletin* 73, no. 3 (1924): 222.



Figure 6. Commemorative plaque on the exterior of the Musée du Vivarais.
Photo by the author, November 6, 2018.⁸⁹

Pierre’s public execution in 1732 meant that the focus of interest and admiration was, historically, more upon himself than Marie, and so Marie is listed after Pierre and as “his sister.” The museum displays scores of French Reformed memorabilia including Huguenot crosses, Bibles, psalters, devotional books, seals, letters, and pictures of Huguenots worshipping in hidden ravines. The display of a pair of shackles draws attention to the persecution of Huguenots. The museum displays four autographs of Marie Durand’s letters (Letters 4, 19, 29, 30). This specifically Huguenot memorabilia, and the fact that the museum regularly hosts Protestant church services, puts the Durand family’s Protestant faith and worship in the foreground, and presents them specifically as heroes of the Huguenot cause.

Likewise the Musée du Désert in Mialet, inaugurated in 1911 in the former home of

⁸⁹ “To the memory of the Pastor Pierre Durand, condemned to death and executed at Montpellier, 1700–1732. And of his sister Marie Durand, prisoner for 38 years at the Tour de Constance, 1715–1776 to 1778. ‘If my Saviour wants me to sign his Holy Gospel with my blood, his will be done.’ Pierre Durand. ‘Resist!’ Marie Durand.” I show in Chapter 2 that Durand was born in 1711 and died in 1776 and argue in Chapter 5 that “REGISTEZ” is a misspelling.

the Camisard leader Roland Laporte (1675–1704). Filled with Huguenot memorabilia, the museum overtly focuses on the Protestant cause and is the focal point for a large annual French Reformed conference. Patrick Cabanel, possibly borrowing the terminology of historian Pierre Nora’s *lieux de mémoire*, suggests that these highly ritualised annual gatherings have become in themselves a second memorial, a “*mémoire des lieux de mémoire*” (memory of the places of memory).⁹⁰ The museum displays one autograph letter by Marie Durand (Letter 41) and her baptism certificate. It also displays three series of plaques listing the name of every known Huguenot pastor who was executed, every Huguenot male condemned to the galleys, and every Huguenot woman incarcerated in a prison or convent.⁹¹ In this way Marie Durand is named and presented as suffering – one among many – specifically for the Huguenot cause.

⁹⁰ Patrick Cabanel, “Impensable pèlerinage protestant? L’assemblée annuelle du Musée du Désert,” *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 56, no. 155 (2011): 153.

⁹¹ Marianne Carbonnier-Burkard explains that such lists have their precedent in three classic Huguenot histories: Beza’s *Histoire ecclésiastique des Eglises réformées* (1580); Crespin’s *Histoire des martyrs* (1619); and Élie Benoist’s *Histoire l’édit de Nantes* (1693–1695). “Le Musée du Désert: un centenaire,” *Bulletin* 157 (2011): 535.



Figure 7. *À la mémoire des prisonnières du désert: Prisonnières de la tour de Constance.* Musée de Désert. The plaques list all known Huguenot women incarcerated at Aigues-Mortes from 1687 until its closure in 1768. Photo by the author, November 7, 2018.

Similarly, on the wall of the upper room of the Tour de Constance, where Durand and the other female prisoners were incarcerated, is the following notice:

LA TOUR DE CONSTANCE
DANS L'HISTOIRE PROTESTANTE
 OCTOBRE 1685 REVOCATION DE L'EDIT DE NANTES
 DE 1692 A 1785 LA TOUR DEVIENT PRISON POUR
 HUGUENOTS, PUIS PRISON POUR FEMMES
LES OBSTINES DE LA FOI EVANGELIQUE⁹²

A list of prisoners, originally recorded by Marie Durand, is displayed to the right of

⁹² “The Tour de Constance/ in Protestant history/ October 1685 Revocation of the Edict of Nantes/ from 1692 to 1785 the tower became a prison for/ Huguenots, then a prison for women/ tenaciously committed to the evangelical [French Protestant] faith”. Capitalisation, emphasis, and font colours original.

this notice. This, with the reference to the Edict of Nantes, specifically locates the prisoners within their French Reformed heritage.

Marie Durand has thus been memorialised via the collective memory of faith communities as a pious Christian leader who suffered either for the cause of evangelical Christianity in general, or more specifically for the cause of her French Protestant heritage. Physical descriptions and pictures of Durand present her as dignified and even, with the exception of Goy, attractive. Depictions of Durand's character, behaviour, and leadership are entirely positive and sometimes hagiographic. They are simultaneously a product of the cultural memory of French Reformed and evangelical communities and a means of preserving, strengthening, and shaping that cultural memory. Of these memorialists only Borrel, Bridel, Benoît, Danclos, Carr, and the *École Marie Durand* refer to Durand's letter writing. Of these, Carr presents one letter, and Bridel and Benoît quote paragraphs from three letters. Durand's evangelical, progressive Protestant, and French Reformed memorialists give little or no attention to her own thoughts, prayers, descriptions, sentiments, ideas, and commitments.

The Secular Memorialisation of Durand

In 2009, French Protestant scholar Yves Krumenacker critiqued the religious memorialisation of Durand in *Marie Durand, une héroïne protestante?* He discusses "l'importance de la figure des martyrs dans cette conjoncture des débuts de la III^e République," that is, after the disaster of the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71) and a public reaction against Protestantism with its perceived German origins.⁹³ This coincided with what orthodox French Protestants saw as a moral and theological collapse within their church, something which Durand's

⁹³ "The importance of the symbol of the martyrs at the start of the Third Republic." Yves Krumenacker, "Marie Durand, une héroïne protestante?," *Clio*, no. 30 (2009): 87-88.

biographer Daniel Benoît laments in his preface to an 1889 reedition of Jean Crespin's *Livre de martyrs* – a sixteenth-century martyrology closely identified with the Huguenot cause.⁹⁴

Krumenacker also explains how the *Réveil* (Revival) of evangelical Christianity in Wales from 1904 inspired new evangelistic efforts in France and Switzerland.⁹⁵ These phenomena – the public's poor view of Protestantism, a Protestant crisis of identity, and a surge in evangelism – created a need for exemplary Protestant martyrs. Marie Durand was a natural candidate. Hence the mid-twentieth-century portrayals, such as those of the Comité cantonal vaudois, Strasser, and Ronner, of Durand as a brave and saintly Evangelical. Krumenacker himself critiques this portrayal. “Si Marie est martyre elle-même, c’est pour un seul crime, celui d’avoir été la sœur de Pierre. Elle n’a pas plus de mérite que lui, peut-être même moins que ceux qui se sont levés pour maintenir la liberté de conscience.”⁹⁶ Krumenacker finds that Marie Durand at best exemplifies, more by how she has been remembered than by her actual history, non-violent resistance.⁹⁷ He urges restraint in her memorialisation, especially by those who portray her as a religious heroine to be emulated.

A number of civil memorialisations do indeed commend Durand without reference to her religious beliefs. There are at least ten streets in France bearing Marie Durand's name, situated in Aigues-Mortes, Béziers, Montpellier, Mauguio, Saint-Julien-en-Saint-Alban, Saint-Péray, La Calmette, Vauvert, Crolles, and Angers – all south of the Loire.⁹⁸ Vered

⁹⁴ Daniel Benoît, “Preface,” in *Jean Crespin: Histoire des martyrs: persecutez et mis à mort pour la vérité de l’évangile, depuis le temps des apôtres jusques à présent (1619). Édition nouvelle, précédée d’une introduction par Daniel Benoît; et accompagnée de notes.* (Toulouse: Société des livres religieux, 1885), xxiii; Élisabeth Labrousse, “Une Foi, une loi, un roi?” *La Révocation de l’édit de Nantes* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1985), 77-81. Labrousse suggests that pre-Revocation Huguenots differed from the general populace more in doctrine than in moral practice.

⁹⁵ Krumenacker, “Marie Durand,” 90. The Welsh religious revival and its publicization in France is described in Edward J. Gitre, “The 1904–05 Welsh Revival: Modernization, Technologies, and Techniques of the Self,” *Church History* 73, no. 4 (2004): 794, 819.

⁹⁶ “If Marie is herself a martyr, it is for a single crime, that of having been the sister of Pierre. She has no more merit than him, perhaps even less than those who rose up to uphold liberty of conscience.” Krumenacker, “Marie Durand,” 88.

⁹⁷ Krumenacker, “Marie Durand,” 95.

⁹⁸ By way of comparison, there are five streets named after Pierre Durand, and no schools.

Vinitzky-Seroussi describes such street names as “non-intrusive commemoration, as one can basically go through life without paying too much attention to the presence of that past.”⁹⁹ Maoz Azaryahu, however, in his study of Parisian street names, explains that toponyms embed certain approved political symbols into civic space, which “introduce an authorised version of history into ordinary settings of everyday life.”¹⁰⁰ According to these analyses, these toponyms unobtrusively signal that Durand is an important person in France’s political history without necessarily saying why she was important. The absence of any explicit religious association does not conflict with the state’s “authorised” version of history.

On August 31, 1968, the French postal service issued a stamp, designed by the engraver Albert Decaris (1901–1988), with the legend, “2^e centenaire de la liberation des prisonnières huguenotes de la Tour de Constance Aigues-Mortes.”



Figure 8. Albert Decaris, *2^e Centenaire de la libération des prisonnières huguenotes de la Tour de Constance*. Aigues-Mortes, 1968. 26 x 40 mm. Postes Républiques Françaises.

⁹⁹ Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, “Banal Commemoration,” in *Routledge International Handbook of Memory Studies*, ed. Anna Lisa Tota and Trever Hagen (Abingdon, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2015), 87.

¹⁰⁰ Maoz Azaryahu, “The Power of Commemorative Street Names,” *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 14, no. 3 (1996): 312-13.

Decaris's stylised representation of eleven Huguenot women leaving the Tour de Constance depicts them as well-clothed, vigorous, and standing tall. Above the tower is an olive branch over a broken chain with the date 1768: the symbol of peace over the symbol of liberation above the year of the last prisoners' release. On the corresponding *carte maximum* (first day cover) Decaris shows five young women dressed in white leaving the Tower: one enjoying her freedom with arms open wide, one holding her hands in prayer, one raising her arms in joy or praise, and two in happy embrace. Given that Durand is the only prisoner released from the Tour de Constance in 1768 who went on to have any public recognition, it is safe to presume that she is represented by the sixth much larger figure, her demeanour calm and serious. The official description of the stamp describes the imprisonment of Protestants who contravened royal edicts for "motif de conscience" and Decaris's depiction of the end of one of the most "graves injustices de l'histoire".¹⁰¹



Figure 9. Albert Decaris, *carte maximum*, *Libération des prisonnières huguenotes. Tour de Constance à Aigues-Mortes*, 1968. Postes Républiques Françaises.

¹⁰¹ "Deuxième centenaire de la libération des prisonnières huguenotes de la tour de Constance, Aigues-Mortes," *Ministère des Postes et Télécommunications* 20 (1968).

In their study of French postage stamps released between 1988 and 1991 to commemorate the French Revolution, Hoek and Scott describe the state-approved ideological purpose of such stamps. “Le timbre propose un memento, un souvenir, une icône d’un événement, d’un anniversaire, ou d’un aspect important du patrimoine national.”¹⁰² By celebrating the anniversary of the freedom of Durand and the other prisoners, the 1968 stamp valorises freedom of religion and conscience, identifies France as a nation of such freedoms, and serves to draw the nation together around those freedoms. By portraying the prisoners as young and fair, thoughtful and even joyful, it depicts the cause of freedom as an attractive one. Unlike Leenhardt and Lombard, Decaris pictures the release rather than the incarceration of the prisoners. His representation perhaps intends, like one of Baer and Sznajder’s “foundational moments”, to ameliorate rather than perpetuate past traumas. Historian Phillipe Joutard asks whether Decaris’s stamp competes with or complements the memory of the Camisards – French Protestants who from 1702 to 1704 violently resisted religious oppression.¹⁰³ The olive branch manifestly works to reject armed resistance as a response to oppression and the attractive presentation of the women works to commend their non-violent resistance.

The Marie-Durand-Schule in Bad Karlshafen also remembers Durand for the cause of secular tolerance. The school website describes her actions and guiding principles:

Sie sorgt sich um das Wohlergehen ihrer Mitgefangenen und wird für diese zu einer Art „Seelsorgerin“. Sie spendet Trost, macht Mut, gibt Kraft, lässt Hilfe zuteil werden und solidarisiert sich mit den zum Teil bis aufs Skelett abgemagerten Frauen.

Sie steht für Hoffnung, Menschlichkeit und Toleranz in einem unmenschlichen

¹⁰² “The stamp proposes a memento, a memory, an icon of an event, of an anniversary, or of an important aspect of the national heritage.” Leo H. Hoek and David Scott, “Une Révolution en miniature: Le timbre-poste commémoratif du bicentenaire de la révolution française,” *Word and Image* 9, no. 2 (1993): 108.

¹⁰³ Philippe Joutard, “Le Musée du Désert: la minorité réformée,” in *Les Lieux de mémoire*, ed. Pierre Nora (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), 559.

Umfeld. Sie ist damals wie heute ein Vorbild!

Unsere Schule: Sie ist eine Integrierte Gesamtschule, die möglichst jeden Schüler mitnehmen und im Sinne Marie Durands gemeinsam Wege finden und gehen will. Wie diese ist sie frei von jedem elitären Anspruch. Schwache Schüler werden nicht ausgegrenzt, sondern nach ihren Möglichkeiten gefördert. Solidarität, Toleranz und Menschlichkeit sind Leitprinzipien unserer Schule, so wie sie es auch bei Marie Durand waren.¹⁰⁴

Though Bad Karlshafen is a *Hugenottenstadt*, a historic Huguenot refugee settlement, the mention of Durand's religion is incidental. The emphasis is instead on areligious ideals of solidarity, tolerance, and humanity.

Durand as a figurehead for secular freedom is also the focus of the television movie *Résister: ou les captives d'Aigues-Mortes*, released by France 3 Alsace, October 13, 1985. It was written by David-André Land and directed by Bernard Kurt for the tercentenary of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.¹⁰⁵ It is introduced by Claudette Marquet, author of *Le Protestantisme* (Paris: Seghers, 1977), who explains that at the Revocation “quelque chose de notre conscience à ce moment-la a basculé.”¹⁰⁶ The documentary features period re-enactments set in the Tour de Constance and includes footage of Aigues-Mortes and the Durand house in Le Bouchet. It portrays Durand as a strong leader among the prisoners, receiving relief supplies, reading and writing letters, and comforting other prisoners – some

¹⁰⁴ “She cares about the well-being of her fellow prisoners and becomes a kind of ‘pastor’ for them. She provides consolation, encourages, gives strength, gives help and shows solidarity with the women, some of whom are emaciated. She stands for hope, humanity, and tolerance in an inhumane environment. Then as now she is a role model! We are an integrated comprehensive school that wants to take every student with it and, in the way of Marie Durand, to find and walk paths together. Like them [the prisoners], it is free of any elitist claim. Weak students are not marginalized but are encouraged according to their possibilities. Solidarity, tolerance, and humanity are the guiding principles of our school, just as they were with Marie Durand.” “Schulname,” Marie-Durand-Schule, accessed June 11, 2022, <https://www.marie-durand-schule.de/ueber-unsere-schule/schulname>. Translation by Stefanie Mapley for the author.

¹⁰⁵ A second television production, lost at present, was made about the female prisoners of Aigues-Mortes. *L'histoire en marche: les prisonnières*, directed by Jean-Louis Lorenzi, was released October 9, 1985.

¹⁰⁶ “Something of our conscience was toppled at that moment.”

with children, some who are blind, and some who have become insane. The documentary finishes with Durand hoping that the Huguenots' suffering was "la hache" (the axe) brought to bear against "l'arbre de l'intolérance" (the tree of intolerance). The documentary pays little attention to Durand's faith and presents her as a heroine of conscience quite independently of her religious affiliation. The same secular approach is taken by the radio documentary *Marie Durand et la résistance protestante*, directed by Jacques Sigal and first presented by Jean Lebrun on Radio France, June 24, 2011. Lebrun interviews Philippe Joutard, who explains how Durand prefigured a "modern" principle of resistance which was, unlike that of the Camisards of the preceding generation, non-violent and peaceful.¹⁰⁷ Both of these productions highlight the female prisoners' bravery during the Enlightenment struggle for freedom of conscience without valorising their religious faith.

These secular memorialisations, which disregard Marie Durand's religious heritage and her own expressions of religious devotion and practice found in her own letters, manifest a salient aspect of Assmann's cultural memory: that a cultural group may move beyond, and overtly or tacitly critique, the ideas of those remembered entities who form a part of their heritage. Decaris's stamp and the television and radio documentaries perhaps intend, according to the approach described by Bond, Craps, and Vermeulen, to constitute an empathetic community built on remembrances that cut across cultural boundaries. Further, secular memorialists have, in the language of Nora, made Durand and her story a *lieu de mémoire*, in this case a crystallisation of the abstract value of toleration. Durand's Protestantism, which is referred to in passing or not at all in such secular memorialisations, is given greater prominence in what I describe as the *Voltairean* memorialisation of Durand.

¹⁰⁷ Jacques Sigal and Jean Lebrun, "Marie Durand et la résistance protestante," in *Le Vif de l'histoire* (Radio France, June 24, 2011), .

The Voltairean Memorialisation of Durand

An important paradigm for understanding the memorialisation of Marie Durand relates to Voltaire's complex contribution to Enlightenment freedom of conscience, and especially his championing of the Calas family in the 1760s. In 1762, Jean Calas, a Protestant merchant in Toulouse, was wrongly condemned and executed for the death of his son Marc-Antoine. Although the son had committed suicide, the authorities held that Calas, motivated by the son's recent conversion to Catholicism, had murdered him.¹⁰⁸ Voltaire took up the Calas case for the cause of toleration, as he would with the similarly wrongful executions of François-Jean de la Barre in 1766, and Pierre-Paul Sirven in 1777. In his 1763 *Traité sur la tolérance* he summarises the factual events around Marc-Antoine's suicide, establishes the family's innocence, and explains that the father's execution was the result of religious bigotry, "fanatisme", and the will to coerce conscience: "Crois ce que je crois, et ce que tu ne peux croire, ou tu périras."¹⁰⁹ In response, Voltaire claims (more-or-less dubiously) that religious tolerance had been practiced by Babylonian, Greek, Roman, Jewish, Chinese, and Japanese societies, and presents an impressive list of quotes from church fathers and councils, "Témoignages contre l'intolérance" (Testimonies against intolerance), which condemn forced conversions.¹¹⁰ He argues instead for freedom of conscience on the grounds of humanity, reason, and political benignity: "L'humanité le demande, la raison le conseille, et la politique ne peut s'en affrayer."¹¹¹ Roger Pearson calls the *Traité* "a dangerous work with which it was ill-advised to be associated", yet highly influential nonetheless.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Daniel Roche, *France in the Enlightenment*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 317. Roche contends that the Toulouse authorities were not acting against Protestantism per se, but out of fear of the threat of war with England and concomitant Protestant uprising.

¹⁰⁹ "Believe what I believe, and what you cannot believe, or you will perish." Voltaire, *Traité sur la tolérance: à l'occasion de la mort de Jean Calas*, ed. John Renwick, vol. 56C, *Les Œuvres complètes de Voltaire*, (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2000), 158.

¹¹⁰ Voltaire, *Traité sur la tolérance*, 226-28.

¹¹¹ "Humanity demands it, reason counsels it, and politics cannot be afraid of it." Voltaire, *Traité sur la tolérance*, 157.

¹¹² Roger Pearson, *Voltaire Almighty: A Life in Pursuit of Freedom* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2005), 290.

Voltaire did not contend for religious tolerance for Protestants for the sake of Protestantism, or indeed for any manifestation of Christianity.¹¹³ Instead, he argued for tolerance on pragmatic and epistemological grounds: intolerance had only produced violence and was in any case a useless tool of conversion.¹¹⁴ It is true that in his 1734 *Lettres philosophiques*, which in part describe the state of religious freedom in England at that time, Voltaire appreciated that “chacun puisse ici servir Dieu à sa mode” (everyone can serve God here in their own way).¹¹⁵ Yet Voltaire’s hostility towards “the twin hydras of fanaticism and superstition,” not least the orthodox Christian doctrines of supernatural revelation and Scripture, is widely known.¹¹⁶ Rabaut Saint-Étienne (1743–1793), son of Marie Durand’s correspondent Paul Rabaut and himself a correspondent of Voltaire, recognised in 1788 that Voltaire was no friend of Christianity whatever its form: “Voltaire et les philosophes avaient cru qu’il fallait détruire le christianisme pour détruire l’intolérance, et ce grand écrivain avait contre les protestants, ou le christianisme pur, un préjugé qui perce partout.”¹¹⁷ Though Voltaire denounced the prosecution of Calas as an act of bigotry against a Protestant, universal freedom of conscience was his aim: “En respectant comme je le dois la théologie, je n’envisage dans cet article que le bien physique et moral de la société.”¹¹⁸ Rémy Bijaoui’s subtle analysis of Voltaire’s motives in this affair shows that although the philosophe was genuinely moved by the suffering of the Calas family, ultimately “Calas deviendra un

¹¹³ Hubert Bost, “La Piété huguenote « anamorphosée » dans la pitié des Lumières,” *Bulletin* 145 (1999): 391.

¹¹⁴ Voltaire, *Traité sur la tolérance*, 143–45. Haydn Mason categorically proved Bayle’s influence upon Voltaire’s “critical outlook” and agnosticism, yet urges caution: “For Voltaire, Bayle is but a companion along the way, and the destinations are different.” Haydn Mason, *Pierre Bayle and Voltaire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 138. I explain Bayle’s position more fully in Chapter 4, below.

¹¹⁵ Voltaire, *Lettres philosophiques*, ed. Nicholas Cronk, vol. 6B, *Les Œuvres complètes de Voltaire*, (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2020), 38.

¹¹⁶ David Williams, “Voltaire,” in *The History of Western Philosophy of Religion*, ed. Graham Robert Oppy and Nick Trakakis (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1:199.

¹¹⁷ “Voltaire and the philosophes believed that it was necessary to destroy Christianity in order to destroy intolerance, and the great writer bore a prejudice against the Protestants, or pure Christianity, that pervades everything.” Rabaut, *Lettres*, 2:403.

¹¹⁸ “While respecting theology as I must, I envisage in this section only the physical and moral good of society.” Voltaire, *Traité sur la tolérance*, 152.

symbole, donc un tremplin de lutte – contre la religion at son cortège de préjugés sanglants.”¹¹⁹ John Renwick, in his introduction to the *Traité*, makes a similar claim, arguing that although Voltaire was profoundly perturbed by the Calas family’s suffering, and the state of a nation that could inflict such cruel injustice, the philosophe held major reservations concerning Calvinism. As Renwick explains, the Calas case was, for Voltaire, a proxy for the “confrontation between Enlightenment and Darkness.”¹²⁰ Without making any direct attack on Christian belief, Voltaire campaigned for the Calas family to further the cause of freedom from political and ecclesiastical tyranny.¹²¹ Many of Marie Durand’s memorialisers adopt this same Voltairean pattern, almost certainly unconsciously: decrying the proximate injustice upon a religious minority for the ultimate cause of universal toleration and freedom of conscience.

Voltairean memorialisations of Durand all link her, whether overtly or not, to the Enlightenment. There is much debate over what exactly constitutes the Enlightenment and whether the term has any meaningfully distinct sense today. In his 1784 essay, “What is Enlightenment?”, Emmanuel Kant defined its core idea as “man’s emergence from his self-imposed nonage.”¹²² Yet even Kant’s definition is challenged.¹²³ John Robertson’s definition of the Enlightenment as a commitment to “the better understanding, and hence the practical

¹¹⁹ “Calas became a symbol, a springboard for the fight against religion and its retinue of bloody prejudices.” *Voltaire avocat: Calas, Sirven et autres affaires* (Paris: Tallandier, 1994), 75.

¹²⁰ John Renwick, “Introduction to *Traité sur la tolérance*, by Voltaire,” (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2000), 31, 47-49, 66.

¹²¹ Jonathan I. Israel, *Enlightenment Contested: Philosophy, Modernity, and the Emancipation of Man 1670-1752* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 781. Tarantino shows how at the start of the same decade John Lockman, an English Protestant and translator of Bayle and Voltaire, took a similar approach in his *History of the Cruel Sufferings of the Protestants* (1760), critiquing religious persecution as a means of critiquing fanatical intolerance in general. Giovanni Tarantino, “A ‘Protestant’ approach to colonization as envisaged in John Lockman’s martyrology (1760),” in *Violence and Emotions in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Susan Broomhall and Sarah Finn (London: Taylor & Francis, 2015), 195.

¹²² Cited in Stephen A. Smith, *Freedom of Religion: Foundational Documents and Historical Arguments* (Oxford: Oxbridge Research Associates, 2017), 330.

¹²³ Louis Dupré, *The Enlightenment and the Intellectual Foundations of Modern Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 1.

advancement, of the human condition on this earth” tacitly concedes its imprecision.¹²⁴ The difficulty arises from the Enlightenment’s polyphony, its contested forms and emphases across numerous eighteenth-century nations.¹²⁵ Rousseau’s intellectual falling out with Diderot and Voltaire is just one example of its internal conflicts.¹²⁶ Thus James Schmidt, who critiques any monolithic reduction of eighteenth-century European thought, observed that the Enlightenment “had a number of projects going, not all of which necessarily got along very well with each other.”¹²⁷ It is tempting to discard the term “Enlightenment” as unworkably simplistic. It is nonetheless possible and useful to recognise a late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century philosophical movement – building on the emerging scientific method of the seventeenth century and frustrations over political and religious pretensions to unquestioned authority – that was sceptical, self-conscious, and self-confident in its pursuit of intellectual, political, and religious autonomy.¹²⁸

The first Voltairean memorialisation of Durand that I describe is also the first surviving account of Durand after her 1776 death, an 1819 piece by the Protestant writer and French-Revolutionary politician François-Antoine Boissy d’Anglas (1756–1819). D’Anglas includes his description in an extended endnote in his *Essai sur la vie, les écrits et les opinions de M. Malesherbes*, which describes his visit to the Tour de Constance with his mother when he was aged six or seven. Durand had been imprisoned for over thirty years by that time:

¹²⁴ John Robertson, *The Enlightenment: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 13.

¹²⁵ Dupré, *The Enlightenment*, 4.

¹²⁶ Michael O’Dea, ed., *Rousseau et les philosophes* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2010), 141-50, 225-32.

¹²⁷ Schmidt James, “What Enlightenment Project?,” *Political Theory* 28, no. 6 (2000): 737.

¹²⁸ Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650-1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 3-22. Israel describes both the bewildering complexity of the Enlightenment and its common elements. See also Peter G. Wallace, *The Long European Reformation: Religion, Political Conflict, and the Search for Conformity, 1350-1750* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 194-200.

J'ai vu cette prisonnière qui y était restée trente-huit ans quand elle en sortit. [...] C'était une personne extrêmement pieuse, pleine de raison et de lumières, et pour laquelle les autres prisonnières avaient une grande considération, quoique plusieurs fussent plus âgées qu'elle et que la différence d'âge fût la seule chose qui rompit l'égalité dans ce lieu terrible.¹²⁹

D'Anglas portrays Durand as saintly, wise, and respected, in much the same way as the hagiographic evangelical memorials described above. These are qualities that he was unlikely to have ascertained during such a visit, which may indicate that Durand had developed that kind of reputation by the time he published his report. Yet though d'Anglas describes Durand's suffering, and applauds her piety, he writes not for the cause of religion but for general freedom from tyranny, the kind of freedom which he identifies as the cause of Malesherbes (1721–1794), the subject of his book: "Mais ce n'est pas seulement la liberté de la presse que M. de Malesherbes défendit avec éloquence et courage; ce fut toutes les libertés; la liberté personnelle surtout, si fréquemment et si cruellement violée, sous le règne de Louis XV".¹³⁰ Thus d'Anglas represents Durand as a pious suffering Protestant in the context of the general eighteenth-century struggle for political freedom.

Liberal Protestant theologian Charles Coquerel (1797–1851) likewise depicts Durand as a heroine for the cause of tolerance in his 1841 *Histoire des églises du désert*, which devotes sixteen pages to four letters sent by Marie Durand to the pastor Paul Rabaut.¹³¹ Like

¹²⁹ "I saw that prisoner who had remained [in the Tour de Constance] for thirty-eight years by the time she was released. [...] She was an extremely pious person, full of reason and wisdom, held in great respect by the other prisoners, even though many were older than her, and age difference was the only thing that gave a sense of rank in that terrible place." François-Antoine Boissy d'Anglas, *Essai sur la vie, les écrits et les opinions de M. de Malesherbes, adressé à mes enfans*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1819), 1:382-83. D'Anglas's biographical sketch of Durand contains two errors: that Marie's brother Pierre was shot by those who arrested him; and that Durand and her mother were arrested together in 1730. In fact Pierre was hanged after trial in 1732, and Claudine Durand was arrested in 1719, after which she disappeared.

¹³⁰ "But it is not just the freedom of the press that M. de Malesherbes defended with eloquence and courage; it was all kinds of freedom; personal freedom above all, so frequently and cruelly violated under the reign of Louis XV". Boissy d'Anglas, *Essai sur la vie*, 1:183.

¹³¹ Letters 32, 35, 36, 38.

d'Anglas, Coquerel lauds Durand's Protestant piety, explaining that her letters "respirent le plus grand attachment à la foi protestante" (exude the strongest attachment to the Protestant faith).¹³² He concludes however that "le génie de l'intolérance se retira à pas lents devant les lumières croissantes, devant la nécessité des réformes politiques, et devant l'attitude ferme et prudente des fidèles et des confesseurs."¹³³ In this way Coquerel portrays the prisoners as making a co-contribution to tolerance along with the philosophes and political reform.

A 1914 report by Henry and Weiss of a tour of Aigues-Mortes refers explicitly to the cause of Enlightenment *liberté*. It describes the obstinance of the prisoners Marie Durand and Isabeau Menet and their unbending consciences in the Tour de Constance, "où, grâce à l'invincible héroïsme de quelques pauvres cévenoles, devait apparaître à la fin du xviii^e siècle, l'aurore des libertés modernes."¹³⁴ D'Anglas, Coquerel, and Henry and Weiss leverage Durand's suffering as a Protestant not for the cause of Protestantism, but for secular tolerance and "modern freedoms".

This Voltairean memorialisation of Durand has continued into the twenty-first century. Ysabelle Lacamp's 2016 *Marie Durand: Non à l'intolérance religieuse*, an eighty-eight page booklet for young adults, portrays Durand as a heroine for "liberté de conscience", which she defines as "le respect d'autre et de ses convictions" (respect of the other and of their convictions).¹³⁵ It is one of a series of popular booklets promoting contemporary social libertarian causes. Relying on Gamonnet's edition of Durand's letters and Daniel Benoît's 1863 biography, Lacamp does not shy away from Durand's religious heritage and portrays

¹³² Charles Coquerel, *Histoire des églises du désert chez les protestants de France depuis la fin du règne de Louis XIV jusqu'à la révolution française*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1841), 1:443, 2:428-43.

¹³³ "The spirit of intolerance withdrew by slow steps before the growing enlightenment, before the necessity of political reforms, and before the firm and prudent stance of the faithful and the confessors." Coquerel, *Histoire des églises*, 2:439.

¹³⁴ "Where, thanks to the invincible heroism of some poor Cévenol women, appeared the dawn of modern freedoms at the end of the eighteenth-century." A. E. Henry and N. Weiss, "À Aigues-Mortes," *Bulletin* 63, no. 1 (1914): 81-82.

¹³⁵ Lacamp, *Marie Durand*, 81.

her as a strong and compassionate leader among her fellow prisoners who urges them to resist abjuration both to honour the martyrs before them, and because it is better to be incarcerated than to deny one's beliefs. Lacamp promotes not Durand's religion, but the right for people like Durand to practice their own religion. Lacamp puts these words in Durand's mouth: "Résister, oui, pour lutter contre l'intolérance" (To resist, yes, to fight against intolerance).¹³⁶ Thus Durand is more than a victim of intolerance; she is also a courageous champion of tolerance. Christelle Grossin's cover picture presents a young and determined-looking Marie Durand in period dress. In contrast to the pictures of Goy, Lombard, and Leendhardt she is apparently untouched by malnutrition, sickness, or suffering. In this way Durand's supposed "fight against intolerance" is made to appear an attractive one.

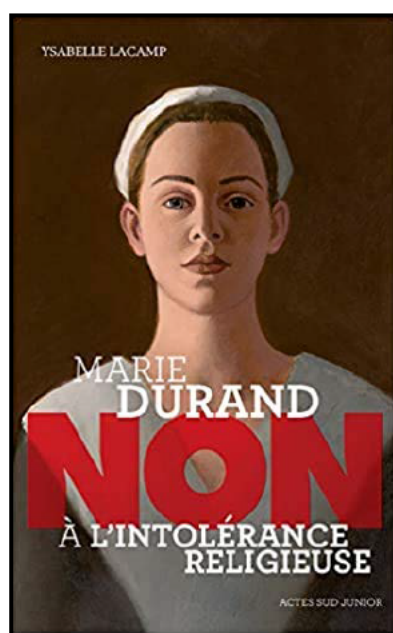


Figure 10. Christelle Grossin, cover for *Marie Durand: Non à l'Intolérance Religieuse* by Ysabelle Lacamp (Arles: Actes Sud Junior, 2016).

Some Voltairean memorialisers overtly link Durand to the cause of the French Revolution. André Fabre, in his 1935 revision of Daniel Benoît's 1884 biography, praises the

¹³⁶ Lacamp, *Marie Durand*, 8-10.

simple but tenacious Protestant faith of the prisoners.¹³⁷ He evinces none of the hagiography of d'Anglas, Coquerel and the Protestant memorialists described above, however, and describes less-than-saintly squabbles between prisoners.¹³⁸ Fabre emphasises the prisoners' non-violent resistance, exemplified by Pierre Durand's refusal to resist his arrest.¹³⁹

Ultimately, Fabre finds that the prisoners' tenacity contributed to the freedoms of the French Revolution: "Il semble certain que la persévérance des recluses connue d'ailleurs bien au-delà des limites du Royaume a contribué pour une part aux mutations nécessaires et à l'instauration finale de la 'Tolérance' jusque-là si cruellement rejetée."¹⁴⁰ Fabre explains that Durand could not herself have understood the full significance of her resistance: "qu'elle n'aurait guère été sensible à une pareille interprétation de son destin."¹⁴¹ This introduces a crucial element into the commemoration of Durand: where, according to the possibility described by Assmann, memorialists overtly set aside her own thoughts and beliefs in order to use her to promote a cause of which she herself was unconscious.

The Protestant artist Samuel Bastide (1879–1962) also conflates the struggle of the eighteenth-century Protestant martyrs with that of the French Revolution. Bastide made paint-on-glass slides of the female prisoners which he later printed in a 1957 pamphlet, *Les*

¹³⁷ André Fabre and Daniel Benoît, *Marie Durand prisonnière pour la foi à la Tour de Constance: sa famille, ses compagnons, son temps (1716-1776): D'après les travaux de Ch. Sagnier, D. Benoît, Ch. Bost, G. E. de Falguerolles, et autres auteurs. [3rd] Édition nouvelle par André Fabre* (1966; repr., Carrières-sous-Poissy: La Cause, 1972), 309.

¹³⁸ Fabre and Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 58, 306.

¹³⁹ Fabre and Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 114, 311-13.

¹⁴⁰ "It seems certain that the perseverance of the isolated prisoners, known well beyond the borders of the Kingdom, contributed in part to the necessary evolutions and to the final installation of 'Tolerance' until that time so cruelly rejected." Fabre and Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 312.

¹⁴¹ "That she could scarcely have been sensible of such an interpretation of her destiny." Fabre and Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 312. The conservative French Protestant pastor Doumergue similarly links the cause of the Camisards ultimately to that of the French Revolution. Émile Doumergue, *Le Centenaire du temple d'Anduze. 1823-1923. Nos Camisards. Le Psaume dans les Cévennes. Le Grand temple d'Anduze de 1823, avant et après. Études et notes documentaires sur les Camisards et le Prophétisme cévenol* (Anduze: Imprimerie du Languedoc, 1926), 42-43.

Prisonnières de la tour de Constance. The following image shows Durand leading the prisoners in psalm singing.¹⁴²



Figure 11. From Samuel Bastide, *Les Prisonnières de la tour de Constance*: (Mialet: Musée du désert, 1957; reprinted 1996).

Strikingly, Bastide concludes the pamphlet by quoting Rabaut de Saint-Étienne before the Assemblée nationale in 1789, “Non, ce n’est pas la tolérance que je réclame, c’est la liberté!”¹⁴³ Then of the female prisoners Bastide writes, “Au creuset de leurs douleurs, le flambeau des libertés modernes s’était allumé.”¹⁴⁴ André Chamson, elected to the Académie Française in 1956, and director of the Archives nationales de France (1959–71), takes a similar line in his 1970 historical novel, *La Tour de Constance*. Chamson specifies the

¹⁴² Samuel Bastide, *Les Prisonnières de la tour de Constance: pages d’histoire protestante* (Mialet: Musée du Désert, 1957), 45. Two of Bastide’s slides (pages 32 and 56) are attributed to Leenhardt and Lombard respectively.

¹⁴³ “No, it is not tolerance that I demand, it is freedom!”

¹⁴⁴ “In the crucible of their suffering, the torch of modern freedoms were lit.” Bastide, *Prisonnières*, 63. In a pamphlet in the same series Bastide explains, under a mawkish engraving of Voltaire, that the philosophe “contribua beaucoup à battre en brèche les Edits surannés de Louis XIV” (contributed greatly to defeating the obsolete edicts of Louis XIV.) Samuel Bastide, *Les Galériens pour la foi* (Mialet: Musée du Désert, 1957), 61.

difference between Roman Catholic, Jansenist, and Protestant Christians, and portrays the female prisoners religiously: reading the Bible, singing psalms, and resisting abjuration for the sake of their faith.¹⁴⁵ Yet notably, in his preface and epilogue, he calls the Tour de Constance “la vraie Bastille” (the true Bastille), “la citadelle du despotisme, l’antre de la tyrannie” (the citadel of despotism, the den of tyranny).¹⁴⁶ “Nulle part ailleurs,” he argued, “la justice et la liberté n’ont été aussi cruellement outragées que dans la personne de ces pauvres femmes.”¹⁴⁷ This identification of the Tour de Constance with the Bastille – the storming of which on July 14, 1789 emblemises the commencement of the French Revolution – conflates the Huguenot struggle with that of the Enlightenment and the Revolutionary struggle for freedom of conscience. For Fabre, Bastide, and Chamson, knowing what Marie Durand herself believed and stood for is not the most important thing. The important thing is that she is capable of being used a symbol for the cause of the French Revolution, a cause to which these memorialisers subscribed, and a cause that Fabre admits Durand herself was not even aware of.

Charles Rist (1874–1955), a prominent economist, war-time diarist, and critic of Vichy, looks beyond the French Revolution when he ties Durand’s resistance to the 1941 Atlantic Charter – Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt’s wartime declaration of human freedoms, and a predecessor of the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.¹⁴⁸ In the Autumn of 1945, a year after France’s liberation from the Nazis, a group of French Protestants gathered at Mas Soubeyran for their first post-war annual assembly. Rist, the keynote speaker, explored the theme of *résistance* and depicted Marie Durand as a

¹⁴⁵ André Chamson, *La Tour de Constance* (1970; repr., Nîmes: Edipro, 2016), 179, 237, 258, 285.

¹⁴⁶ Chamson, *La Tour de Constance*, 13, 453.

¹⁴⁷ “In no other place have justice and liberty been as cruelly outraged as in the person of these poor women.” Chamson, *La Tour de Constance*, 13.

¹⁴⁸ Jaap Verheul, “The Atlantic Charter,” *Atlantisch Perspectief* 45, no. 6 (2021): 44.

historic example of this.¹⁴⁹ Specifically, she was a heroine for “la liberté de conscience pour tous”. Significantly, Durand’s imprisonment was for Rist not merely one episode in the post-Revocation struggle for Protestant freedom, but was part of a broader struggle:

Ce que défendaient les persécutés de jadis, c’était aussi et peut-être surtout un droit: le droit pour chacun de formuler suivant sa conscience les termes de sa croyance, le droit de professer cette croyance au grand jour et de la confesser publiquement, c’était en un mot, au-delà et par-delà leur croyance propre, la liberté de conscience pour tous. La foi du Désert, à travers la Révolution et la déclaration des Droits de l’homme, vient rejoindre cette Charte de l’Atlantique où le grand Président Roosevelt a solennellement proclamé, à la face d’une nation qui, en plein xx^e siècle voulait les abattre, les droits essentiels des membres de toute communauté civilisée.¹⁵⁰

By referring to freedom in the context of the French Revolution and the Atlantic Charter, Rist evokes the non-religious and specifically Enlightenment conception of freedom. If Durand appeared to be struggling for the Protestant cause, this was for Rist the accidental outward manifestation of her real though unconscious struggle for the kinds of Enlightenment freedoms espoused by the Atlantic Charter.

In 1968, Godefroy de Falguerolles (d.1991) offered a particularly telling description of the prisoners of the Tour de Constance, as “Témoins de la liberté chrétienne en ce monde, ils se trouvent appelés à être dans les prisons – trop tôt pour l’exprimer dans le vocabulaire en

¹⁴⁹ Charles Rist, *Season of Infamy: a diary of war and occupation, 1939-1945* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016), xv-xvi.

¹⁵⁰ “What the persecuted defended long ago, was also and perhaps above all a right: the right for each person to formulate the terms of their belief according to their conscience, the right to profess this belief in broad daylight and to confess it publicly; it was, in a word, above and beyond their own belief, liberty of conscience for all. The faith of the Desert, through the Revolution and The Declaration of the Rights of Man, comes to fruition in that Atlantic Charter which the great President Roosevelt solemnly proclaimed before a nation [Germany] which in the midst of the twentieth century wanted to tear down the essential rights of the members of every civilised community.” “Allocution prononcée par M. Ch. Rist à l’Assemblée du Musée du Désert (2 septembre 1945),” *Bulletin* 95 (1946): 50-51.

usage au xix^e siècle – des hommes et des femmes responsables du rétablissement de la liberté de pensée et de la liberté de réunion.”¹⁵¹ Falguerolles explains that although the prisoners suffered ostensibly for Christian freedom, it was only in the nineteenth century that the terminology describing the true cause for which they suffered was elaborated: the Enlightenment ideals of freedom of thought and assembly. Falguerolles confirmed this position in 1970, finding that male and female Huguenots released in the 1760s had “reconquis la liberté de conscience” (won back freedom of conscience).¹⁵²

In his analysis of the Durand family’s suffering, Étienne Gamonnet also drew a link between religious freedom to that of “la conscience humaine entrant en lutte contre le règne de la raison d’État.”¹⁵³ The *raison d’État* refers to the state’s appeal to public interest in order to justify its otherwise illegal or immoral conduct.¹⁵⁴ Thus Gamonnet links the Durands’ struggle to the wider cause of freedom of conscience. As I noted in my chapter introduction, Gamonnet drew a link between Durand’s struggle and that of Sophocles’ *Antigone* – a classical symbol of resistance to tyrannical state authority – and muses that Pierre Durand’s reference to “lumières” (enlightenment) and “conscience” in his final interrogation “évoque pour nous des résonances que le siècle amplifiera” (evokes resonances for us which the century would amplify).¹⁵⁵ We see again this idea that Durand and her peers suffered for the cause of the *siècle des lumières*, for an Enlightenment *liberté* which would only be fully defined after their deaths.

¹⁵¹ “Witnesses of Christian freedom in this world, they found themselves called to live in prisons – too soon to express this in the vocabulary and usage of the nineteenth century – men and woman responsible for the reestablishment of freedom of thought and freedom of assembly.” G. E. de Falguerolles, “La Tour de Constance dans la lutte pour le rétablissement des libertés de pensée et de réunion,” *Bulletin* 114 (1968): 185.

¹⁵² G. E. de Falguerolles, “Les Prisonnières de la tour de Constance,” *Bulletin* 116 (1970): 415-16.

¹⁵³ “The human conscience contesting the reign of ‘national interest.’” Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 123.

¹⁵⁴ *DCLF* 2:692.

¹⁵⁵ Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 123-24.

The Italian author Bruna Peyrot makes a similar argument in her *Prigioniere della Torre* (1997), a historical novel set in the Tour de Constance. Peyrot identifies as a Waldensian, a proto-Protestant sect that arose around the Franco-Italian border in the twelfth century. She learned about the prisoners of the Tour de Constance from childhood, visited Aigues-Mortes in the late 1970s, and described its deep impact on her thinking and identity. It became, for Peyrot, her “incomprensibile ossessione” and she studied the eighteenth-century history of the Tour to understand and feel, as closely as possible, what the prisoners themselves felt.¹⁵⁶ Peyrot’s book stands against intolerance, because “il Settecento francese, considerate epoca dei Lumi, in realtà è stato un secolo affannato a frenare la tolleranza.”¹⁵⁷ The Enlightenment values of freedom were nevertheless won by such as those of the prisoners: “Nella solitudine del confinamento nasceva l’inquietata coscienza moderna, sempre in lite fra diritti individuali e obblighi collettivi.”¹⁵⁸ Though a proud Italian Protestant, Peyrot remembers the prisoners thus suffered for the cause of freedom that transcended their time and circumstances. Marie-France Silver takes a similar line in her 2000 study of the letters of Marie Durand and her fellow prisoner Isabeau Menet:

Les épistolnières de la tour de Constance, venues à l’écriture par accident, ont du fond de leur cachot participé à la lutte pour la liberté de conscience. La lettre devint pour elles l’arme qu’elles utilisèrent pour lutter contre l’oppression. Bien plus qu’un simple moyen d’assurer leur survie physique, l’écriture épistolaire permit donc à ces détenues de s’affirmer en tant qu’êtres pensants.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Bruna Peyrot, *Prigioniere della Torre: Dall’assolutismo alla tolleranza nel Settecento francese* (Florence: Giunta, 1997), 300.

¹⁵⁷ “The French eighteenth century, which is usually considered the time of lights (Enlightenment), is in reality a century focussed on restricting tolerance.” Peyrot, *Prigioniere della Torre*, 301. Translations from Italian were made by John Kinder for the author.

¹⁵⁸ “In the solitude of imprisonment was born the restless modern conscience, always torn between individual rights and collective obligations.” Peyrot, *Prigioniere della Torre*, 14.

¹⁵⁹ “The letter-writers of the Tour de Constance, who came to write by accidental circumstances, participated in the fight for freedom of conscience from the depths of their dungeon. The letter became, for them, the weapon which they used to fight oppression. Much more than simply a means of guaranteeing their physical survival,

Though Silver recognises the sincerity of the prisoners' religious faith she portrays Durand as participating, "par accident", in the Enlightenment's contest for freedom of conscience. By describing the prisoners as "épistoliers" (letter writers) and "êtres pensants" (thinking beings) who fight against oppression and for freedom of conscience, she associates them with the Enlightenment's *république de lettres*, as letter-writing contributors to the cause of freedom of conscience.

The Voltairean memorialisation of Durand continues into the twenty-first century. Philippe Joutard suggests that the legacy of Marie Durand and her suffering peers surpasses its Protestant origins and prefigures contemporary passive resistance:

Cette résistance pacifique, civile dirait-on de nos jours [...] est tout d'abord un patrimoine protestant, mais permettez-moi de le dire, elle le dépasse largement: elle préfigure d'autres résistances pacifiques, de par le monde, célèbres ou non, et encore aujourd'hui, elle reste d'une actualité sans cesse renouvelée.¹⁶⁰

In her 2018 edition of Marie Durand's letters from the Tour de Constance, Céline Borello explains that Durand had a "foi inébranlable en Dieu, un souci du comportement conforme à sa religion [...]. Au fondement de l'attitude de Marie Durand demeure la Bible et ses principes. [...] Toutes ses lettres sont imprégnées d'un univers religieux."¹⁶¹ Further, she exhibited a "culture biblique profondément enracinée depuis l'enfance" (profoundly biblical culture deeply rooted from childhood).¹⁶² In fact, Borello explains that Durand remained in

letter writing allowed these detainees to assert themselves as thinking beings." Marie-France Silver, "Résister: la correspondance des prisonnières protestantes de la tour de Constance," in *Femmes en toutes lettres: Les épistoliers du XVIII^e siècle*, ed. Marie-France Silver and Marie-Laure Girou Swiderski (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2000), 108.

¹⁶⁰ "This passive resistance, 'civil' as we would say today [...] is primarily a Protestant legacy, but allow me to say that it greatly surpasses this: it prefigures other manifestations of passive resistance, around the world, celebrated or not, and is to this day constantly repeated." Joutard, "Antoine Court," 81.

¹⁶¹ "Unshakeable faith in God, a concern for behaving in conformity to her religion [...]. The Bible and its principles remain at the foundation of Marie Durand's mindset. [...] All her letters are imbued by a religious universe." Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, xxvii.

¹⁶² Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, xliii.

“l’orthodoxie réformée” and her letters as the product of a thoroughly French Reformed Christian. At the same time, Borello recognises that Durand can be taken as an example of brave resistance to tyranny in general who has bequeathed to us “un message de courage, de résistance et d’espérance que chacune et chacun au XXI^e siècle peut encore faire sien.”¹⁶³ While giving full recognition to Durand as a faithful and exemplary Protestant, she may be taken ultimately as an example of courage for all people, whether religious or not.

The website of the École Marie Durand in Nîmes, a private school founded 1844, commends Durand’s “faith” without explicitly attaching it to Christianity at all. A 520-word biographical summary of Marie Durand draws particular attention to the *résister* inscription:

C’est ce que va faire Marie Durand tout au long de sa captivité, refusant toujours d’abjurer sa foi, exhortant ses compagnes et écrivant de nombreuses lettres: lettres de suppliques ou de remerciements à ceux qui envoyaient des secours. [...] Marie Durand restera un exemple de foi, de résistance et de courage.¹⁶⁴

Durand’s “faith” is not defined and only someone familiar with her story would know that she had refused to abjure her specifically Protestant beliefs. The description may be intended to inspire a devotee of any kind of religious faith.¹⁶⁵

In a full chapter of her 2010 book, *Vulnerability and Glory*, theologian Kristine Culp links Durand’s life of resistance to progressive Protestant social theology.¹⁶⁶ Culp locates

¹⁶³ “A message of courage, of resistance and of hope that every woman and man in the twenty-first century can continue to make their own.” Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, xlv.

¹⁶⁴ “It is what Marie Durand will do for the duration of her imprisonment, always refusing to abjure her faith, urging her companions on and writing many letters: letters requesting help or of thanks to those who had sent help. [...] Marie Durand will continue to be an example of faith, resistance, and courage.” “Un peu d’histoire: Qui était Marie Durand?,” École Marie Durand, accessed June 11, 2022, <http://www.ecolemariedurand.fr/pages/tourisme.html>.

¹⁶⁵ A second French school is named for Marie Durand, the Lycée d’Enseignement Général et Technologique Agricole (LEGTPA) Marie Durand, on the Chemin des Canaux in Rodilhan, eight kilometres from Nîmes. At the time of writing the school’s website presents no information about its namesake. “Lycée d’Enseignement Général Technologique et Professionnel Agricole Marie Durand,” E.P.L.E.F.P.A. Nîmes - Rodilhan, accessed June 11, 2022, <https://epl.nimes.educagri.fr/le-lycee/presentation-du-legtpa>.

¹⁶⁶ Kristine A. Culp, *Vulnerability and Glory: A Theological Account* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2010), 135-58.

Durand within her Calvinist heritage and describes how she was raised to read the Bible and worship with the Psalms. She ascribes three layers of meaning to the *résister* graffito, which she argues was inscribed by Durand herself: to resist idolatry and superstition, in accord with Calvin; to resist the denial of human dignity, in accord with the second table of the Decalogue; and to resist the ossification of one's theology, in accord with the slogan more recently associated with Karl Barth, *Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda* (The Church reformed, always reforming).¹⁶⁷ Although the slogan may refer conservatively to a church's reform of its belief and praxis to accord more closely with its fixed confessional statements, Culp refers to a progressive approach to reform that may transcend and rewrite such boundaries. She draws a link between Durand's eighteenth-century resistance to the French state, to twentieth-century French Protestant resistance to Nazi authority and their sheltering of Jews, to more recent "feminist and womanist" theological formulations. Culp finds that Durand should be recognised, in relation to her martyred brother, as "a witness in her own right", and gives full recognition to her Calvinist heritage and praxis, letter-writing, and leadership role in the Tour de Constance. But she does not intend to engage with the text of Durand's letters themselves, to understand her according to her own words. Rather, she holds up Durand as an example for the development of a progressive social theology that the prisoner, given her heritage and time in history, could not herself have espoused.

In 2018, Inès Kirschleger suggested that although Durand's letters inform us about the conditions of her imprisonment and about the epistolary network connecting Protestants in France to those in neighbouring lands, "nous ne savons pour ainsi dire rien de la manière dont Marie Durand exprimait au quotidien 'la force invincible de la foi évangélique' qui l'animait et que l'on a tant vanté".¹⁶⁸ What are missing, according to Kirschleger, are the

¹⁶⁷ Karl Barth, G. W. Bromiley, and T. F. Torrance, *Church Dogmatics*, 5 vols. (1932-67; trans., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010), 4.1:705.

¹⁶⁸ "We know practically nothing about the manner in which Marie Durand expressed daily 'the invincible strength of the evangelical faith' which animated her and which has so often been praised." Inès Kirschleger,

words of Durand's prayers, the psalms that she sang, and the Bible passages that she gravitated to – the spiritual words which strengthened her faith. Kirschleger concludes that the *résister* inscription, which she does not necessarily attribute to Durand herself, expresses nonetheless what she says is Durand's most notable quality: “la force d'âme et l'indépendance d'esprit” (fortitude and independence of mind), the product of a faith which has been thoroughly inculcated, and chosen with a free conscience.¹⁶⁹ In fact, Durand's letters contain abundant prayers and quotations and allusions to the Psalms and other Bible passages, and repeatedly express her strength of spirit – one does not need to rely on the anonymous *résister* inscription to discover that. Like Culp, Kirschleger does not engage with the text of Durand's letters; her summation of Durand's legacy is tied to the one-word graffito.

I conclude this section with two “memorials of memorials” of Durand. A 1974 travel piece by Charles Gilbet in *Le Monde* suggests that not just Marie Durand but the memorialisation itself of Durand at the Musée du Vivarais embodies the secular fight against intolerance. Gilbet describes the religious nature of the museum's displays: “Bibles, livres, sceaux, lettres, gravures, sont là pour témoigner qu'au Bouchet [...] des hommes et des femmes ont, au prix de leur liberté et même de leur vie, lutté pour leur foi.” Yet the display itself has become “le symbole de la résistance à l'intolérance, celui de la lutte contre l'oppression.”¹⁷⁰ Gilbet memorialises the memorialisation, and he does this in the Voltairean manner: the museum's presentation of a Protestant heroine symbolises resistance to intolerance and oppression in general. Similarly, in a 2011 article “Impensable pèlerinage”

“‘Mon âme est en liberté, et j'ai la paix de la conscience’: résistance et spiritualité des femmes du Désert,” *Revue d'histoire du protestantisme* 3, no. 3/4 (2018): 570.

¹⁶⁹ Kirschleger, “Mon âme est en liberté,” 579.

¹⁷⁰ “Bibles, books, seals, letters, engravings, are there to testify that in Bouchet [...] men and women, at the cost of their freedom and even their life, fought for their faith. [...] The symbol of resistance to intolerance, of the fight against oppression.” Charles Gilbet, “Une halte dans le vivarais: Le bastion de Marie Durand, la huguenote,” *Le Monde*, 20 April 1974.

(Unthinkable pilgrimage), which examines the annual French Protestant conference at the Musée du Désert, historian Patrick Cabanel refers to the ritual singing of a Huguenot song. *La Complainte des prisonnières de la tour de Constance* was written by Antoine Bigot (1825–1897), a poet from Nîmes, in Languedocien. It was translated into French in 1882 by Ruben Saillens (1855–1942) and depicts the refusal of Marie Durand and her fellow prisoners to abjure their faith:

Mais jamais aucune à son Maître,
 De le trahir ne fit l'affront...
 Huguenotes il les fit naître
 Huguenotes elles mourront!¹⁷¹

The song concludes:

Ah que devant cette ruine
 Un autre passe insouciant
 Mon cœur bondit dans ma poitrine
 Tour de Constance en te voyant.
 Ô sépulcre où ces âmes fortes
 Aux ténèbres ont résisté
 Ô tour des pauvres femmes mortes
 Pour le Christ et la liberté.¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ “But never did anyone before her Master/ Betray him nor affront him/ He made them to be born as Huguenots/ Huguenots they would die.” Antoine-Hippolyte Bigot and Ruben Saillens, *Trois chants populaires huguenots* (Paris: Jules Riaux, 1932).

¹⁷² “Ah, that before this ruin/ Another passes careless/ My heart beats in my chest/ Tour de Constance, seeing you./ O sepulchre where those strong souls/ In the darkness resisted/ O tower of those poor dead women/ For Christ and Liberty.”

Though the song firmly emphasises the prisoners as committed Huguenots, the final stanzas suggest that the prisoners suffered for a cause wider than their own Protestant faith: for “Christ and for liberty.” Cabanel himself describes the ritual singing of *La Complainte* as “à la fois religieux, mémoriels et identitaires” (at once religious, commemorative, and cultural).¹⁷³ The singing of *La Complainte* has taken on its own cultural significance and makes its own contribution to contemporary French Protestant identity: it has itself become a *lieu de mémoire*. Gilbet and Cabanel point to a general truth: that the memorialisations of Marie Durand, whether Protestant, secular, or Voltairean, are to some extent mutually dependent and self-perpetuating, with a life, culture, and message of their own.

Misconceptions and Shortcomings around Durand’s Memorialisation

Marie Durand’s life coincided with the middle period of the French Enlightenment – she was born four years before the death of Louis XIV, died in the year that the American colonies signed the Declaration of Independence, and was an almost exact contemporary of Rousseau (1711–1778). Furthermore, she corresponded, as I show in Chapter 3, with pastors who were open sympathisers of the Enlightenment. The identification that many make between Marie Durand’s struggle and the Enlightenment battle against intolerance may on the face of it seem plausible. It is not overly surprising that Durand is the subject of ostensibly secular memorials such as the odonyms, Decaris’s stamp and first day cover, the Marie-Durand-Schule, and the documentaries directed by Kurt and Sigal. Nor is it surprising that secular memorialists link Durand variously to the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, French resistance against Nazi Germany during the Second World War, the Atlantic Charter, the struggle for freedom of conscience, and freedom *simpliciter*. Yet Durand was explicitly

¹⁷³ Cabanel, “Impensable pèlerinage,” 159.

imprisoned for her Protestant faith, so even these apparently secular memorials reference Durand's religion: Decaris shows a prisoner praying, Lacamp presents Durand as a heroine of specifically religious tolerance, Kurt presents the prisoners singing psalms, and Silver and Borello emphasise Durand's Reformed orthodoxy. The memorialisation of Marie Durand is thus complex: the fine line between Durand as a Christian evangelical and Durand as a French Protestant is blurred, but so is the thicker line between Durand as a Christian heroine and Durand as a secular heroine.

Some memorialists appear to resolve the tension between the Christian and secular in the manner of Voltaire: by recognising her proximately as Christian heroine, but ultimately as Enlightenment heroine. It is true that a number of the memorialisations that I identify as Voltairean have a concurrent or even overtly religious aspect, namely the works of Fabre, Bastide, Chamson, Gamonnet, Peyrot, Silver, and Borello. Yet these portray Durand's story as serving ultimately secular ends. Taken as a whole, the memorialisation of Marie Durand is a complex of both religious and secular ideas, and of Reformation and Enlightenment thought. The only constant is the memory of Durand as – in Winter's phrase – the “suffering witness.” In Chapter 4 I will argue that the French Reformed and Enlightenment ideas of freedom of conscience rest on fundamentally different premises and are conceptually mutually exclusive. If this is true then Durand's various Protestant, secular, and Voltairean memorialisations cannot *all* be true to the beliefs of Durand herself. Some or all of such memorialists, informed by their own collective memory and culture, must have come to diverge from or even to critique Durand's own beliefs.

This possible divergence from the historical draws attention to what I count as the glaring absence in the memorialisation of Marie Durand. There is very little engagement with Durand's own thoughts and words contained in her forty-eight extant letters, read within the context of the French Reformed heritage into which she was born. The exceptions are Silver

and Borello, who give ten and fourteen pages of discussion to Durand's letters respectively, and Gamonnet, who gives a substantial sixty-page discussion.¹⁷⁴ These three critics describe Durand's constant interaction with the Bible and her Protestant heritage, and Gamonnet goes further to discuss Durand's grammar, vocabulary, and style. Besides these works they are referenced or quoted only briefly in the works of Borrel, Coquerel, Benoît, Fabre, Danclos, Mayor, Chamson, Carr, Culp, and Kirschleger. The Musée du Vivarais and the Musée du Désert display Durand's letters, but present no interpretation of their significance or content. The Musée de la Tour de Constance makes no reference to Durand's letters at all. Besides Gamonnet, Borello, and Silver, very few memorialists present Durand as the thinker and writer that she was. She is portrayed predominantly as a silent symbol, and sometimes for a cause that certain of Durand's memorialists explain did not take shape until after her death. In the following chapter I begin to redress this problem by examining Durand's life and imprisonment in the context of her French Reformed heritage.

¹⁷⁴ Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, xxvii-xl; Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 17-76.

2. The Life and Heritage of Marie Durand

In the northern winter of 2018 I visited Marie Durand's prison in Aigues-Mortes and her home in Le Bouchet. After spending almost a year reading about Durand and translating her letters, I stood in the windowless eight-metre diameter stone room in which she lived for thirty-eight years: to feel the cold and to see and touch the stones that she once saw and touched. On the following day I walked beneath the chestnut trees of Le Bouchet, and from room to room in the house in which she spent the first nineteen and the final eight years of her life. For the first time I held one of Durand's letters (Letter 19, 1755), a physical object that she had held in her own hands 263 years before. To move from the written to the concrete, from the cerebral to the sensory, brought a fresh dimension of reality to my thoughts and ideas about Marie Durand.

Although Marie Durand has been taken as a more-or-less dehistoricised and silent figurehead for a variety of causes, in this chapter I turn to Durand as a woman situated in history, with all the complexities that entails. I begin by examining the historical roots of the religious and cultural community into which she was born and raised, with which she never ceased to identify, and apart from which her letters cannot be meaningfully analysed. I describe the early sixteenth-century French Reform movement before showing the profound influence, from the middle 1500s, of John Calvin upon the nascent French Reformed community's theology and praxis. I describe the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre (1572), the Edict of Nantes (1598), and its Revocation (1685) and the circumstances leading up to it, and how these events profoundly shaped the mindset and behaviour of Durand's community. I describe that community's responses to the Revocation: the Refuge, the Camisard Rebellion (1702–4), and the *église du Désert*. I then look at the life of Marie Durand herself in its three main stages: her early life (1711–30), her life in prison (1730–68), and her life after prison

(1768–76). I show that although Durand was not the stereotypical Calvinist that certain Reformed and evangelical authors have portrayed her to be, she maintained nonetheless a costly loyalty to her community's beliefs. This chapter also provides the essential historical and cultural background to the examination of Durand's epistolary network in Chapter 3, and the analysis of Durand's letters in Chapters 4 and 5.

Durand's Heritage – French Protestantism before 1685

Religious Reform in Sixteenth-Century France

The beliefs and practices that shaped Mary Durand's community may be traced back at least as far as Martin Luther (1483–1546), whose teachings were first debated in France in the 1520s. Luther's teaching had some appeal among a growing middle class who tended towards Gallicanism – a movement in favour of the French church being ruled from France not Rome – and a growing taste for self-education and the new humanism that had arisen in the fifteenth century.¹⁷⁵ A French Reform movement arose in the 1520s in the diocese of Meaux around bishop Guillaume Briçonnet (1472–1534), the humanist and Bible translator Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples (1455–1536), and Marguerite de Navarre (1492–1549), author and sister of Francis I (r. 1515–47).¹⁷⁶ Navarre persuaded the King towards some toleration of reform in its early stages.¹⁷⁷ The movement further developed in the 1530s around Calvin's mentor Nicolas Cop (1501–1540) at the Sorbonne, and Guillaume Farel (1489–1565) in Neuchâtel, Lausanne, and

¹⁷⁵ Bruce Gordon, *Calvin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 9-13.

¹⁷⁶ Guy Bedouelle, "Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples," in *Reformation Theologians*, ed. Carter Lindberg (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), 21-23; Henry Heller, "The Briçonnet Case Reconsidered," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 2 (1972): 229-31.

¹⁷⁷ Allan A. Tulchin, "Church and State in the French Reformation," *The Journal of Modern History* 86, no. 4 (2014): 831-34. For the rise and influence of sixteenth-century noblewomen in the French Reformation see Nancy L. Roelker, "The Appeal of Calvinism to French Noblewomen in the Sixteenth Century," *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 2, no. 4 (1972): 391-413.

Geneva.¹⁷⁸ These Reform efforts were repressed by Francis I after a notorious “pro-Lutheran” sermon by Cop in 1533, and the Affaire des placards of 1534, when scandalously anti-clerical and anti-Mass posters appeared throughout Paris and other French cities.¹⁷⁹ Though Cop and Calvin were forced to flee, the seeds of Reformation had been sown in France.

It was Calvin’s writings and organisational endeavours, and the pastors sent out from his training academy in Geneva, that provided the intellectual and theological foundation, trained leadership, structure, and discipline that underpinned French Protestantism’s substantial growth and formal organisation from the late 1550s.¹⁸⁰ Genevan church archives show that 218 church planters were sent from Geneva to France in the years 1555 to 1562 alone.¹⁸¹ Calvin explained and defended his theology in successive revisions of his *Institution de la religion chrétienne* (1536–59). He first translated the work from Latin to French in 1541 and supervised the translation of the final edition in Geneva in 1560.¹⁸² The *Institutes* formed the theological foundation of the French Reformed community into which Marie Durand would be born a hundred and seventy years later.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁸ Gordon, *Calvin*, 14-16; Farel’s important but often overlooked influence on Calvin is described by Jason Zuidema, “Guillaume Farel in Early French Reform,” in *Early French Reform: The Theology and Spirituality of Guillaume Farel*, ed. Jason Zuidema and Theodore Van Raalte (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 2011), 3-15.

¹⁷⁹ Wallace, *Long European Reformation*, 104; Jonathan A. Reid, “French Religious Politics,” in *John Calvin in Context*, ed. R. Ward Holder (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 42-44. That Francis’s religious policies were motivated more by gaining advantage over the Emperor Charles V than by Christian zeal was proven by his willingness to make alliances with the Ottoman Turks.

¹⁸⁰ Hans Joachim Hillerbrand, *The Division of Christendom: Christianity in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 289-344. Hillerbrand summarises Calvin’s reforming influence from Geneva to “the four corners of Europe.”

¹⁸¹ Robert Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France, 1555-1563* (Geneva: Droz, 1956), 79.

¹⁸² Bruce Gordon, *John Calvin’s Institutes of the Christian Religion: a Biography*, Lives of Great Religious Books, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 3; John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (London: SCM Press, 1961), xxxviii-xxxix n13. Olivier Millet explains the why and how of Calvin’s French translations of the *Institutes* in John Calvin, *Institution de la religion chrétienne (1541)*, ed. Olivier Millet, 2 vols. (repr., Geneva: Droz, 2008), 1:46-51. I refer throughout the thesis to the Meyrueis edition of the French translation, John Calvin, *Institution de la religion chrestienne*, 4 vols. (1560; repr., Paris: Meyrueis, 1859).

¹⁸³ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *All Things Made New: The Reformation and its Legacy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 57, 69. MacCulloch ranks Calvin alongside Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Gregory the Great as Christianity’s “Fifth Latin Doctor.” Hillerbrand, *Division of Christendom*, 289-90. Hillerbrand

From 1559, Reformed churches in France formally linked themselves to Calvin's doctrine by adopting the *Confessio Gallicana*, a statement of faith drafted by Calvin and his pupil Antoine de Chandieu (1534–1591).¹⁸⁴ The seventh synod of the Reformed churches in France, chaired by Theodore Beza (1519–1605) in 1571 in the Huguenot fortified city of La Rochelle, adjusted and ratified the *Confessio* into the version used by French Reformed communities to this day.¹⁸⁵ In 1559, *La Discipline ecclésiastique* was adopted with the *Confessio* to rule the organisation and conduct of the French Reformed churches; the first edition contained forty articles, by the eighteenth century it had grown to 222 articles in fourteen chapters.¹⁸⁶ All Huguenot pastors were required to subscribe to both *Confessio* and *Discipline* at their ordination and upon taking up a charge.¹⁸⁷ Thus by the end of the sixteenth century the French Reform movement possessed a well-established polity and theological orthodoxy.¹⁸⁸ The *Discipline* was used by Huguenot churches throughout Durand's lifetime; in 1756 a Huguenot national synod ordered its reprinting and redistribution to every province.¹⁸⁹ In 1762, a document attributed to Paul Rabaut, Durand's pastor and correspondent, describes the *Confessio* as the Protestants' long-standing doctrinal standard: "Protégée par des Princes du Sang, professée par des Sages, & par des Héros."¹⁹⁰ It is true

asserts that prior to the *Institutes* "There had been no summary and cohesive elaboration of the new evangelical religion."

¹⁸⁴ I refer to the *Confessio* throughout from Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom: With a History and Critical Notes*, 3 vols. (New York, 1877), 3:356-82; F. Méjan and D. Robert, "Le Quatrième centenaire de la confession de foi (La Rochelle 11-13 juin 1971)," *Bulletin* 117 (1971): 319.

¹⁸⁵ Michel Reulos, "Le Synode national de La Rochelle (1571) et la constitution d'un 'parti' protestant," *Bulletin* (1974): 712-13.

¹⁸⁶ Gianmarco Braghi, "Between Paris and Geneva: Some Remarks on the Approval of the Gallican Confession (May 1559)," *Journal of Early Modern Christianity* 5, no. 2 (2018): 198; Charles Frossard, "Étude historique et bibliographique sur la discipline ecclésiastique des églises réformées de France," *Bulletin* 35, no. 6 (1886): 271-77.

¹⁸⁷ *Discipline* 1.9, 21.

¹⁸⁸ Richard A. Muller, "Theodore Beza," in *Reformation Theologians*, ed. Carter Lindberg (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), 218.

¹⁸⁹ Rabaut, *Lettres*, 1:332n3.

¹⁹⁰ "Protected by the Princes of Blood, professed by the Wise and by Heroes." Paul Rabaut and [Laurant Angliviell de la Beaumelle], *La Calomnie confondue, ou mémoire dans lequel on réfute une nouvelle accusation intentée aux protestans de la province du Languedoc, à l'occasion de l'affaire du Sr. Calas, détenu dans les prisons de Toulouse* ([n.p.], 1762), 6.

that the label “Calvinist” may obscure differences in belief, practice, and ethics among communities who can trace their roots to the Genevan Reformer.¹⁹¹ It is a useful term nonetheless to describe Durand’s heritage, the theology and praxis of which was grounded in Calvin’s writings more than any other single author and which were distinct from that of other Protestant movements (such as Lutheranism and Anabaptism, for example), and other branches of Reformed Protestantism (such as Zwinglianism, and latter-sixteenth-century English Protestantism).

Other historical, geographical, and sociological factors shaped Durand’s socioreligious heritage.¹⁹² Although Paris contained a large and influential Huguenot community in the sixteenth century, the movement in the main traced a crescent far-distant from the capital, down the Atlantic coast from La Rochelle, across the Pyrenees, and north-east into the Cévennes, Ardèche, and Dauphiné.¹⁹³ This, as Allan Tulchin explains, is where Protestants could find “breathing space” to develop away from direct royal coercion.¹⁹⁴ Mark Gregory Pegg shows that although there was not, as has been widely assumed, an established heretical “Cathar Church” in southern France prior to the thirteenth-century Albigensian Crusade, the culture and Christian doctrine of southern France was nevertheless quite distinct and independent to that of northern France in particular, and Latin Christianity in general.¹⁹⁵ The Crusade hardened the distinctive identity of the region and provided fertile ground for the “otherness” of Reformation doctrines and rituals, and sixteenth-century Huguenots would explicitly identify with the Albigensians in such works as Jean Chassanion’s *Histoire des*

¹⁹¹ Wallace, *Long European Reformation*, 186.

¹⁹² Geoffrey R. Treasure, *The Huguenots* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 106.

¹⁹³ Gilles Deregnaucourt and Didier Poton, *La Vie religieuse en France aux XVI^e, XVII^e, XVIII^e siècles* (Gap: Ophrys, 1994), 40.

¹⁹⁴ Tulchin, “Church and State in the French Reformation,” 840.

¹⁹⁵ Mark Gregory Pegg, *A Most Holy War: The Albigensian Crusade and the Battle for Christendom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

Albigeois (Geneva, 1595).¹⁹⁶ This is why, for some historians, the region's embrace of Calvinism was an "expression de la personnalité culturelle du Midi avant d'être conviction religieuse."¹⁹⁷ Occitanian dialects further divided southerners from French-speakers north of the Loire.¹⁹⁸ In short, the Vivarais, the Durands' home region, was linguistically and culturally independent with a bent towards religious non-conformity and political autonomy. Yet though mainly regional, the Protestant movement was not rural per se but grew disproportionately among middle-class merchants and artisans, military officers, the civil service, and a significant minority of the nobility.¹⁹⁹ By the end of the sixteenth century, about six percent of France's population of 20 million, situated mainly in Paris and these southern regions, was Calvinist.²⁰⁰

As the new theology and praxis took root, pre-existing social divides and the growing theological rupture degenerated into violent conflict. Between 1562 and 1598 a series of eight civil wars erupted, the so-called French Wars of Religion, in which an estimated three million people perished.²⁰¹ To existing divisions were thus added the grievance of war and the memory of its attendant horrors and atrocities, which culminated in 1572 with the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre.

¹⁹⁶ See especially Volume 1 where Chassanion claims, erroneously, that thirteenth-century Albigensian doctrine was in many respects the same as that of the Reformers. Jean Chassanion, *Histoire des Albigeois: touchant leur doctrine & religion, contre les faux bruits qui ont esté semés d'eux, & les ecris dont on les a à tort diffamés: & de la cruelle & longue guerre qui leur esté faite, pour ravir les terres & seigneuries d'autrui, sous la couleur de vouloir extirper l'heresie*, 4 vols. (Geneva, 1595).

¹⁹⁷ "An expression of the cultural character of the south before being a religious conviction." Philippe Joutard, *La Légende des Camisards: une sensibilité au passé* (Paris: Gallimard, 1977), 268.

¹⁹⁸ Charles Debbasch and Jean-Marie Pontier, *La Société française* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2001), 127-28. Efforts to impose French as the national language began only in the sixteenth century.

¹⁹⁹ Philippe Joutard, *La Révocation de l'édit de Nantes, ou les faiblesses d'un état* (Paris: Gallimard, 2018), 30; Penny Roberts, "France," in *Palgrave Advances in the European Reformations*, ed. Alec Ryrie (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 116.

²⁰⁰ Janine Garrisson, *L'Édit de Nantes et sa révocation, histoire d'une intolérance* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1987), 46.

²⁰¹ Robert J. Knecht, *The French Religious Wars, 1562-1598* (Oxford: Osprey, 2002), 91.

The 1572 Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre

The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre, commencing August 24, 1572, requires special mention because of the deep mark it left on both the Huguenot psyche and Catholic-Protestant relations for many generations.²⁰² Louis Bourgeon explains how its scale and ferocity left its mark well into the time of Marie Durand's family in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: "l'histoire de la Saint-Barthélemy était restée jusqu'à nos jours tributaire de l'esprit de passion, conscient ou non."²⁰³ And the *Lettre d'un patriote* (1756), likely written by Court de Gébelin (1728–1784), son of Antoine Court (1695–1760) – leader of the restoration of the Protestant church in France from 1715 and a close associate of the Durand family – describes "le souvenir de ces fleuves de sang [...] de cette journée de la Saint Barthélemy [...] dont l'idée seule fait frémir la nature."²⁰⁴ In fact by the 1760s the Massacre was remembered by both Protestants and Catholics as an horrific crime.²⁰⁵ A brief description of its causes and execution helps to explain this depth of feeling.

From the 1560s France was divided by three mutually hostile religio-political factions: Protestants, moderate Catholics represented by Catherine de' Medici and her second son Charles IX (r. 1560–74), and the reactionary Catholic League associated with the house of Guise.²⁰⁶ Protestant powers to the north of France threatened to turn the Huguenots into a fifth column.²⁰⁷ In August 1572 thousands of Huguenots assembled in Paris for the marriage

²⁰² Nicolas Breton, "Between 'Horror' and 'Honour': The Legacy of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre for the Descendants of Admiral Gaspard de Coligny," *French History* 34, no. 4 (2020): 493-94.

²⁰³ "The history of Saint Bartholomew's continues to this day to be the cause of a spirit of passion, conscious or not." Jean-Louis Bourgeon, "Les Légendes ont la vie dure: à propos de la Saint-Barthélemy et de quelques livres récents," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* (1954-) 34, no. 1 (1987): 102.

²⁰⁴ "The memory of those rivers of blood [...] of that Saint Bartholomew's Day [...] the thought alone of which makes nature tremble." *Lettre d'un patriote sur la tolérance civile des protestans de France: et sur les avantages qui en résulteraient pour le royaume* (n.p., 1756), 39.

²⁰⁵ David Garrioch, *The Huguenots of Paris and the Coming of Religious Freedom, 1685–1789* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 216.

²⁰⁶ The moderates were content to find peace with the Huguenots and even Ottoman Muslims. Joutard, *Révocation*, 36-37.

²⁰⁷ Garrisson, *Nantes et sa révocation*, 14.

of Marguerite de Valois to the Protestant Henri III of Navarre. On August 22, Gaspard de Coligny (1519–1572), a Protestant and Admiral of the French navy, was shot and wounded by a pro-Guise assassin. Coligny refused to leave Paris, a Huguenot army stood to the north, and Protestants within the city threatened retaliation. Catholic Parisians, long antipathetic to the Huguenots, and perhaps fearing for the life of the King and the royal family, took up arms. Catherine and Charles agreed to a pre-emptive strike against Coligny and twenty to thirty Huguenot leaders. The killing spiralled out of control: some three thousand Huguenots were slain in Paris, and many more in the provinces, including up to a thousand slain in Lyons, the so-called Vêpres Lyonnaises.²⁰⁸ The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre, decades of civil war, and deep cultural and religious aversion constituted the brittle context during which the crown descended upon the Protestant Henri de Bourbon, King of Navarre from 1572, and sponsor of the Edict of Nantes.

The 1598 Edict of Nantes

The Edict of Nantes had an immense impact upon the lives of Marie Durand's forebears and her own immediate family. Though it granted religious freedom unprecedented in France, it unintentionally transformed Protestant religious practice into a legal right that could, and eventually would, be dissolved.²⁰⁹ A survey of the fraught circumstances of its writing and its sometimes contradictory wording explains why it was gradually disassembled in the seventeenth century and then annulled by the time of Durand's birth.

²⁰⁸ Gautier Mingous, "Forging Memory: The Aftermath of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre in Lyon," *French History* 34, no. 4 (2020): 439-40; James Smither, "The St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre and Images of Kingship in France: 1572-1574," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 22, no. 1 (1991): 29. For the classic if controversial analysis of the Massacre as an extension of religious ritual and cleansing see Natalie Zemon Davis, "The Rites of Violence: Religious Riot in Sixteenth-Century France," *Past & Present* 59, no. 1 (1973).

²⁰⁹ A notable precursor of religious freedom was the 1568 Hungarian Edict of Torda, which permitted Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, and Unitarian congregations to elect their own preachers. Miklós Molnár, *A Concise History of Hungary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 110.

Henri de Bourbon (1553–1610) had been raised a Calvinist by his mother, Jeanne d’Albret (1528–1572), Queen of Navarre and daughter of Marguerite de Navarre.²¹⁰ Bourbon’s unexpected accession to the throne of France in 1589 as Henri IV brought horror and hope to Catholics and Huguenots respectively. In an effort to bring a peaceful end to the final War of Religion (1585–98), Henri was baptised a Catholic in July 1593.²¹¹ Many doubted his bona fides. Legend attributes to him the cynical “Paris vaut une messe” (Paris is worth a mass), and he himself called his conversion “périlleux”.²¹² Persisting doubts provoked widespread unease when, five years later, he sponsored the Edict of Nantes.²¹³ The ostensibly coercive circumstances under which the Edict was written amplified misgivings. France was threatened by Spanish troops in the Netherlands and the Huguenots were poised to either help or to resist the enemy.²¹⁴ By granting legal recognition and significant property benefits to Henri’s almost one million Protestant subjects the Edict was supposed to forestall further war. This is why the Edict has been described as an armistice imposed by the Huguenot military.²¹⁵ It attempted but failed to erase the past traumas and future causes of religious conflict.²¹⁶

The Edict’s *préambule* reflects its impermanence. Though it declares itself “perpétuel et irrévocable”, it also describes its aim as “l’establissement d’une bonne paix et tranquile repos.” (The establishment of a good peace and tranquil rest.)²¹⁷ This indicates that the Edict

²¹⁰ Ronald Love, *Blood and Religion: The Conscience of Henri IV* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001), 23.

²¹¹ Tulchin, “Church and State in the French Reformation,” 850.

²¹² Pierre de Vaissière, *Henri IV* (Paris: Fayard, 1940), 421-24.

²¹³ Garrisson, *Nantes et sa révocation*, 24.

²¹⁴ Joutard, *Révocation*, 44.

²¹⁵ N. M. Sutherland, *Henry IV of France and the Politics of Religion: 1572-1596. Volume II, The Path to Rome* (Bristol: Elm Bank, 2002), 528. Sutherland describes how close Henri IV came to being overthrown at the siege of Amiens in 1597 because of “Huguenot hostility and blackmail.”

²¹⁶ Paul-Alexis Mellet and Jérémie Foa, “Une ‘politique de l’oubliance’? Mémoire et oubli pendant les guerres de Religion (1550-1600),” *Astérixion* 15 (2016): sec. 10.

²¹⁷ Édît de Nantes, Préambule. All references to the Edict are from “L’Édit de Nantes et ses antécédents (1562-1598),” *École nationale des chartes*, 2009-11, accessed 25 February, 2022, <http://elec.enc.sorbonne.fr/editsdepacification>.

was a sort of ceasefire measure.²¹⁸ Further, it explains that “il ne lui [Dieu] a plu, permettre que ce soit pour encore en une même forme de religion”.²¹⁹ Protestant liberty existed in unstable equilibrium; God had not – as yet – been pleased to grant religious uniformity.

The form and substance of the Edict of Nantes exacerbated its instability. It is long and byzantine, an ensemble of four sometimes contradictory texts with much to provoke Catholic sensibilities.²²⁰ Two brevets guaranteed stipends for Huguenot pastors and specified “places de sûreté” – fortified Huguenot cities. Ninety-two *articles généraux* and fifty-six *articles secrets* permitted limited freedom of worship and Huguenot employment in the civil service, and institutionalised Protestantism.²²¹ Yet although Article 3 recognised “la Religion catholique, apostolique et romaine”, Protestantism is denigrated as “la Religion prétendue réformée” (the so-called Reformed Religion).²²² The fraught production of the Edict of Nantes and its secret agreements scandalised Catholic leaders, and its ad hoc complexities and contradictions opened it to criticism and dismemberment. Eventual revocation of the Edict was, as Janine Garrisson says, “inexorable.”²²³

The key point for Marie Durand’s seventeenth-century forebears was that French Reformed belief and practice would henceforward exist by royal permission and tolerance, and by no means on equal terms with Catholicism.²²⁴ (Thomas Kselman explains that the word *tolérance* was condemned by Protestants in the 1789 Assemblée nationale for precisely

²¹⁸ Charles Johnston, “Elie Benoist, Historian of the Edict of Nantes,” *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 55, no. 4 (1986): 484.

²¹⁹ “It has not pleased [God] to allow as yet that there be one form of religion.”

²²⁰ Garrisson, *Nantes et sa révocation*, 15-18.

²²¹ Hubert Bost, “Des Porte-parole protestants au chevet de l’édit de Nantes moribond,” *Revue de Synthèse* 126, no. 1 (2005): 69.

²²² Léonce Anquez, *Histoire des assemblées politiques des réformés de France (1573-1622)* (1859; repr., Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1970), 398, 400.

²²³ Janine Garrisson, “Réflexions sur l’Édit de Nantes,” *Bulletin* 145 (1999): 395.

²²⁴ Garrisson, *Nantes et sa révocation*, 22; Alain Joblin, “Conscience et liberté de conscience chez les protestants français aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles,” *Moreana* 45, no. 173 (2008): 60.

this reason.²²⁵) It did not recognise a natural or human right for the Huguenots to practice their religion, but instead created a legal right granted as an emergency measure to a “so-called religion.” Thus Garrison explains that the Edict contains, “en germe, bien des menaces pour la minorité religieuse que, par ailleurs, elle met en exergue. [...] Le protestantisme n’est accepté et reconnu dans le royaume que par défaut.”²²⁶ Since Protestant freedom of worship was established by the king, it could be abolished by the king.²²⁷ The Edict of Nantes unwittingly set up its own destruction and the eventual effacement of the rights and freedoms of Marie Durand’s Huguenot community.

The 1685 Revocation and its Aftermath

The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was signed by Louis XIV (1638–1715) in Fontainebleau on October 22, 1685. At a stroke, Protestant religious practice was rendered a criminal offence in France and its territories. The suffering endured by the Durand family was a direct consequence of the Edict of Fontainebleau.

Three forces drove the Revocation: Catholic reform, divine-right absolutism, and the identification of civil and religious loyalty. Reform movements within the Catholic church had gained pace and influence through the fifteenth century and Luther’s sixteenth-century protestations were at first a manifestation of this.²²⁸ The Council of Trent (1545–63) tackled the perceived shortcomings of late-medieval Catholicism and crystallised many of the doctrinal distinctions that exist between Catholic and Protestant doctrine to this day.²²⁹ At

²²⁵ Thomas Kselman, “From Toleration to Liberty: Religious Freedom as Concept and Constitutional Right,” in *Conscience and Conversion: Religious Liberty in Post-Revolutionary France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 14-15.

²²⁶ “In essence, a real threat for the religious minority that it is otherwise dedicated to. [...] Protestantism was only accepted and recognised in the kingdom by default.” Garrison, *Nantes et sa révocation*, 21-22.

²²⁷ Joutard, *Révocation*, 56.

²²⁸ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation: A History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 213-17.

²²⁹ For a summary of Catholic reforms and counter-reforms see Wallace, *Long European Reformation*, 109-13, 123-28.

first, the Gallican impulse delayed the implementation of Catholic reforms in France.²³⁰ Reforms, however, flowered under Louis XIII and were entrenched by the divine-right rule of Louis XIV in the Revocation. New religious orders, such as Vincent de Paul's Filles de la Charité, laboured to educate and ameliorate the lives of France's poor and the good work of these orders strengthened Catholic influence over the hearts and minds of many.²³¹

European divine-right absolutism combines two claims: the divinely-bestowed right of a (typically hereditary) monarch to rule, and that monarch's concomitant right to rule with absolute power.²³² In France, the idea of the monarch as divinely anointed in a sacral coronation took hold in the high middle ages, and was brought to completion in part as a reaction to sixteenth-century Huguenot militarism.²³³ Such religio-political factors as the growth of France into a major European power from the fourteenth century, the Babylonian Captivity of the papacy in Avignon (1309–77), the Conciliar movement of ecclesiastical power away from the pope to church councils, and the Gallican movement of ecclesiastical power from Rome to Paris (formalised in the 1516 Concordat of Bologna), all combined by the seventeenth century to give the French monarchy unprecedented claims over state and church. The mid-seventeenth-century centralisation of administration and growth of taxation added strength to these claims.²³⁴ David Garrioch points out that absolute claims were by no

²³⁰ MacCulloch, *Reformation*, 474-76.

²³¹ James Westfall Thompson, "Some Economic Factors in the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes," *The American Historical Review* 14, no. 1 (1908): 40.

²³² D. Alan Orr, "'God's Hangman': James VI, the Divine Right of Kings, and the Devil," *Reformation & Renaissance Review* 18, no. 2 (2016): 138; Laurent Chevailler, "L'État et l'Église de l'avènement du christianisme aux débuts de la monarchie absolue (à propos d'un ouvrage récent)," *Revue historique de droit français et étranger* 61, no. 3 (1983): 405. Chevailler posits the root of divine-right absolutism in *Césaropapisme*, when under Constantine and the fourth-century Christianisation of the Roman Empire civil and canonical law was united.

²³³ Francis Oakley, *The Watershed of Modern Politics: Law, Virtue, Kingship, and Consent (1300–1650)* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 158-59; Jouanna Arlette and Joseph Bergin, *The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre: The Mysteries of a Crime of State* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 239.

²³⁴ Michael P. Breen, "Law, Society, and the State in Early Modern France," *The Journal of Modern History* 83, no. 2 (2011): 350; Robert J. Knecht, "Absolutism in Early Modern France," *European History Quarterly* 27, no. 2 (1997): 251-53.

means matched by absolute power and rule, which had to be negotiated with the populace.²³⁵ Francesco Di Donato explains similarly that the king's law-making power was balanced by that of lower-level *magistrats*.²³⁶ Divine-right absolutism was nonetheless a living reality in early modern France; its power and control permeated the religious life of the nation.

As Catholic reforms and divine-right absolutism took hold, Huguenot freedom of religion steadily eroded. Louis XIII (r. 1610–1643) chose for his device the Club of Hercules and the motto *Erit haec quoque cognita monstris* (The monsters will make acquaintance with this). The “monsters” were religious heretics, namely Muslims, Jews, and Huguenots. Cardinal Richelieu, Louis XIII's chief minister from 1624 to 1642, simultaneously neutralised Huguenot military power and grew the political power of the Catholic Church.²³⁷ As the seventeenth century progressed the Edict of Nantes was applied more rigorously and counter-edicts multiplied.²³⁸ By the 1680s unapproved Protestant *temples* were being razed, Huguenot children were pressed to convert to Catholicism from the age of seven, Huguenots were excluded from the civil service, law, and medicine, and Protestant seminaries were being closed.²³⁹ Thus Louis Bridel, from the perspective of the mid-nineteenth century, described the Revocation as the consummation of a work which had been “préparée et commencée en détail” at the death of Henri IV in 1610.²⁴⁰

²³⁵ Garrioch, *Huguenots of Paris*, 84.

²³⁶ Francesco Di Donato, “La Hiérarchie des normes dans l'ordre juridique, social et institutionnel de l'Ancien Régime,” *Revus*, no. 21 (2013): 241, 244; Breen, “Law, Society, and the State,” 353.

²³⁷ John B. Roney, “The French Reformed Churches: Caught between the Rise of Absolute Monarchy and the Counter-Reformation,” in *The Theology of the French Reformed Churches: From Henri IV to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes*, ed. Martin I. Klauber (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2014), 102.

²³⁸ Elie Benoist, *Histoire de l'Édit de Nantes, contenant les choses les plus remarquables qui se sont passées en France avant & après sa publication, à l'occasion de la diversité des religions [...] jusques à l'Édit de revocation en Octobre 1685. Avec ce qui a suivi ce nouvel Édit jusques à présent.*, vol. 3, Part 3 (Delft, 1695), final unnumbered five pages. Benoist lists more than 250 such edicts between 1665 and 1685 alone.

²³⁹ Lucien Bély, *Louis XIV: le plus grand roi du monde* (Paris: Jean-Paul Gisserot, 2017), 206.

²⁴⁰ Bridel, *Trois séances*, 8.



Figure 12. The device and motto of Louis XIII in the Palace of Fontainebleau. The club of Hercules with the motto *Erit haec quoque cognita monstris* (The monsters will make acquaintance with this). Photo by the author, December 29, 2018.

The Revocation became inevitable when civil loyalty and religious identity were conflated by Louis XIV. Crowned king at the age of seven, Louis' guardians reinforced the ideas of absolutism in his formative years.²⁴¹ The Fronde, the series of parliamentary rebellions between 1648 and 1653, may have instilled in Louis a paranoia of disloyalty and ultimately strengthened his authority.²⁴² Further, he never doubted his own right and ability to rule.²⁴³ Although Dulaure's 1834 attribution to Louis XIV of the epigram "L'état, c'est moi" (I myself am the State) is likely apocryphal, Louis certainly believed that it was both sin and treason to disobey him.²⁴⁴ Bossuet (1627–1704), the preeminent Catholic orator and

²⁴¹ "Il doit être célébré et servi" (He must be celebrated and served). Bély, *Louis XIV*, 18.

²⁴² Bély, *Louis XIV*, 42-43.

²⁴³ William Beik, "The Absolutism of Louis XIV as Social Collaboration," *Past & Present* 188, no. 1 (2005): 196-99.

²⁴⁴ Angela Partington, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 428.

theologian of Louis' reign, preached that "le trône royale n'est pas le trône d'un homme; mais le trône de Dieu même."²⁴⁵ Divine-right absolutism demanded that the entire realm conform to the king's religion – *une foi, une loi, un roi* (one faith, one law, one king).²⁴⁶ In this context, Protestant yearning for religious freedom was seen as a cover for political autonomy and the Huguenots were stigmatised as both heretics and republicans.²⁴⁷ This was far from the true and complex Huguenot sentiment. André Gounelle cites numerous instances of seventeenth-century Protestant pastors iterating extravagantly the divine right of Louis XIV's reign.²⁴⁸ Chapter 5 will show how Marie Durand and her Huguenot peers expressed nothing but loyalty to the sovereign. The *perception* of Protestant disloyalty nonetheless contributed to its repression.

The *dragonnades* were the tipping point for the Revocation. Forced billeting of campaigning French troops in private homes had been a longstanding practice. From 1681, provincial *intendants* billeted dragoons in Huguenot homesteads with tacit or explicit orders to steal, harass, and intimidate. When the head of the home converted to Catholicism the troops were withdrawn.²⁴⁹ Tens of thousands of Huguenots renounced their faith at even the threat of the *dragonnades*.²⁵⁰ (Madame de Sévigné wryly described the dragoons as "très bons missionnaires".²⁵¹) The Durand family were themselves the victims of a *dragonnade* in 1719. It is true that many Protestants responded with a façade of conversion, and continued their Bible reading, psalm-singing, and catechising behind closed doors. These were

²⁴⁵ "The royal throne is not the throne of a man, but the throne of God himself." Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, *Politique tirée des propres paroles de l'Écriture Sainte à monseigneur le dauphin* (Paris, 1709), 82.

²⁴⁶ Hillerbrand, *Division of Christendom*, 330.

²⁴⁷ Arthur Herman, "The Huguenot Republic and Antirepublicanism in Seventeenth-Century France," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 53, no. 2 (1992): 252-55.

²⁴⁸ André Gounelle, "Force et faiblesse du protestantisme en 1684," *Bulletin* 131 (1985): 135.

²⁴⁹ Jacqueline Gratton, "The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and the Role of the Intendants in the Dragonnades," *French History* 25, no. 2 (2011): 165.

²⁵⁰ Bély, *Louis XIV*, 205.

²⁵¹ Marie de Rabutin-Chantal de Sévigné, *Lettres de Madame de Sévigné: avec les notes de tous les commentateurs*, vol. 5 (Paris, 1844), 4.

described as Nicodemites, after the pharisee described in John chapter 3 who visited Christ in secret. Lee Palmer Wandel explains that “for them, to survive was to hide the truth and to perform a Christianity they held false, but inescapable and lethal.”²⁵² Louis was presented nevertheless with reports of the collapse of Protestantism, that the Edict of Nantes was a dead letter.

The Edict of Fontainebleau begins by affirming the King’s divine-right authority: “Louis, par la grâce de Dieu Roy de France et de Navarre.”²⁵³ It explains that the true goal of the “perpétuel et irrévocable” Edict of Nantes was peace and that Henri IV had intended that it would be a stepping stone to a united church.²⁵⁴ Decades of wars had prevented Louis XIII from fulfilling his father’s objective.²⁵⁵ Louis XIV’s coronation obliged him to complete his grandfather’s intention.

The preamble of the Revocation delegitimises the Huguenots. The Religion Prétendue Réformée is smeared with accusations of “nouvelles entreprises” which Louis XIII had been compelled to repress. Moreover, Huguenots were disappearing; “La meilleure et la plus grande partie de nos sujets de la Religion Prétendue Réformée ont embrassé la Catholique.”²⁵⁶ Henri IV’s Edict is thus defunct, “l’exécution de l’édit de Nantes, et de tout ce qui a été ordonné en faveur de ladite R.P.R., demeure inutile.”²⁵⁷ The Revocation would lay a heretical and effectively extinct religion cause to rest.

²⁵² Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Reformation: Towards a New History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 188.

²⁵³ “Louis, by the grace of God King of France and Navarre.” I refer to the Fischbacher edition of the Edict. *Édits, déclarations et arrêts concernant la religion prétendue réformée: 1662-1751*, ed. Léon Pilatte (Paris: Fischbacher et Cie, 1885), 239-45.

²⁵⁴ Joblin, “Conscience et liberté de conscience,” 60.

²⁵⁵ Namely the Thirty Years War (1618–48) and Franco-Spanish War (1635–59).

²⁵⁶ “The best and largest part of our subjects of the Supposed Reformed Religion embraced Catholicism.”

²⁵⁷ “The execution of the Edict of Nantes, and of all that which was commanded in favour of the said R.P.R., has been rendered futile.”

The Revocation itself consists of twelve laconic clauses, about a thousand words in all. Articles 1-3 ordered Huguenot *temples* in all French domestic and foreign territories to be “incessamment démolis,” and forbade worship even in private homes. Articles 4-6 banished the Huguenot pastorate, giving ministers fifteen days either to convert to Catholicism or leave France, or to be sent to the galleys.²⁵⁸ Articles 7-8 worked to Catholicise the next generation by banning Protestant schools and commanding all children to be baptised and instructed in Catholicism by a priest. Articles 9-10 threatened those who attempted to flee France with life imprisonment and the confiscation of their property. Article 11 forbade relapse to Protestantism and Article 12 exempted any remaining Huguenots from prosecution so long as they did not practise their faith, “en attendant qu’il plaise à Dieu de les éclairer”.²⁵⁹ The Huguenots’ sovereign protector made himself their oppressor. Marie Durand’s community, and every member of her family, would soon suffer the Revocation’s strictures and penalties.

Durand’s Heritage – French Protestantism post-1685

In the fifteen years following the Revocation somewhat over 160,000 Huguenots fled France: around 50,000 to the Dutch Republic; 40,000 to England; 20,000 to Brandenburg-Prussia; 20,000 to other German states; 22,000 to Geneva and Switzerland; 5,000 to Ireland; 3,000 to the English colonies in North America; 2,000 to Sweden and Denmark; and much smaller numbers to southern Africa, Russia, Suriname, and other places.²⁶⁰ It was one of the largest European forced migrations of the early modern period.²⁶¹ This was the Huguenot Diaspora which had a generally positive influence upon the military, arts, technology, and economy of

²⁵⁸ Abandoning a pastoral charge was an excommunicable offence in the French Protestant church. *Discipline* 1.23.

²⁵⁹ “While waiting until it pleases God to enlighten them”.

²⁶⁰ Cabanel, *Histoire des protestants*, 744.

²⁶¹ Mark Greengrass, “Protestant Exiles and their Assimilation in Early Modern England,” *Immigrants & Minorities* 4, no. 3 (1985): 68. For a firsthand description of the dangers and acute social costs of exile see Carolyn Chappell Lougee, “‘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, no. 1 (1999).

the lands in which Huguenots settled.²⁶² Refugee communities in Geneva and Amsterdam would play an important part in Marie Durand's future.

The Revocation severely depleted Protestant leadership in France. Of the approximately eight hundred pastors at the time of Revocation, about a 150 abjured and five hundred fled.²⁶³ The Huguenot laity stepped into the leadership vacuum, including teachers from closed Protestant schools.²⁶⁴ Young women, *prophétesses*, began to preach. Marie Durand's father Étienne spoke, for example, of "une bergère inspirée d'un Esprit inconnu" who "parlait des choses magnifiques de Dieu."²⁶⁵ These charismatic young women were enormously influential among late-seventeenth-century French Protestants and some came to be incarcerated with Marie.²⁶⁶ The Revocation forced Protestant worship into private homes and Huguenot mothers and grandmothers took on a much larger role in the spiritual formation of their children. This became a primary cause of the perpetuation of Protestantism from that time.²⁶⁷ The post-Revocation stepping-up of female leaders makes the willingness of later Protestants to look to Marie Durand as a figurehead less surprising.

The Camisard Rebellion (1702–4) saw the last organised armed resistance of the Huguenots. Deprived of trained pastors, the Huguenots' sophisticated Scriptural arguments

²⁶² Cabanel, *Histoire des protestants*, 709, 775; Bertrand Van Ruymbeke et al., "The Global Refugee: The Huguenot Diaspora in a Global and Imperial Perspective: A Discussion of Owen Stanwood's *The Global Refugee: Huguenots in an Age of Empire*," *Journal of Early American History* 11, no. 2-3 (2021): 196-98, 206; Owen Stanwood, "A Refugee in the Service of Empire: The Life and Lessons of Paul Mascarene," *Diasporas* 34 (2019): 31-32. Recent research by Stanwood links parts of the Huguenot Diaspora to Dutch and English imperialism.

²⁶³ Greengrass, "Protestant Exiles," 69; Gounelle, "Force et faiblesse," 134.

²⁶⁴ Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 13.

²⁶⁵ "A shepherdess inspired by an unknown Spirit [...] telling of the marvellous things of God." Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, vi.

²⁶⁶ Henriette Goldwyn, *Strange Language and Practices of Disorder: The Prophetic Crisis in France following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685*, *Women Writers in History*, (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2014); Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 24, 58.

²⁶⁷ Raymond A. Mentzer, "La Place et le rôle des femmes dans les Églises réformées," *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 113 (2001): 128.

against violent resistance as a response to persecution fell neglected.²⁶⁸ Led instead by such gifted orators and military leaders as Jean Cavalier (1681–1740), Roland Laporte (1675–1704), and Henri Castanet (1674–1705), thousands in the rugged isolation of the Cévennes and Vivarais fought to defend themselves from the Revocation's strictures. This led to scores of church-burnings, pillages, assassinations, and small-scale massacres wrought by Protestants and Catholics upon one another.²⁶⁹ The Huguenot village of Franchassis, whose inhabitants were massacred by royal troops in 1704, is just three kilometres from the Durand family home in Le Bouchet.²⁷⁰ Étienne Durand recorded this event in his notebook, noting that about thirty inhabitants had been put to death, and that other villages in the vicinity of Pranles had suffered.²⁷¹ Although the Rebellion ended in 1704, isolated skirmishes continued in the Vivarais until 1710.²⁷² Such events no doubt deeply marked families like the Durands and embittered Protestant-Catholic relations for generations.²⁷³

From 1715, the young pastor Antoine Court led an underground restoration of the Huguenot church in France.²⁷⁴ Court first appears in 1715 at a clandestine synod in Montèzes, just twenty years old, re-establishing pastoral ordination, (male) eldership, synodal church courts, church discipline, and structured church services.²⁷⁵ Although no communication between Court and Durand survives, Marie's brother Pierre had attended the Montèzes synod and remained a close associate of Court. (Durand's Letter 3, 1740, came to

²⁶⁸ W. Gregory Monahan, *Let God Arise: The War and Rebellion of the Camisards* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 37-45. Claude Brousson attempted organised non-violent resistance in the years immediately preceding the Revocation. See Labrousse, *Une Foi, une loi*, 184-85.

²⁶⁹ Henry Martyn Baird, "The Camisard Uprising of the French Protestants," *Papers of the American Society of Church History* 2, no. 1 (1890).

²⁷⁰ Charles Bost, "Étienne Durand en 1704. Le mariage de Marie Durand (1730)," *Bulletin* 83, no. 2 (1934): 290.

²⁷¹ Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 53.

²⁷² John McManners, *The Religion of the People and the Politics of Religion*, 2 vols., Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 2:592.

²⁷³ Robert Louis Stevenson encountered a "lively memory" of the Camisard war in Occitanie 170 years after its conclusion. Robert Louis Stevenson, *Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes* (London, 1879), 192.

²⁷⁴ *FP* 4:92.

²⁷⁵ Joutard, "Antoine Court," 75-76; Bridel, *Trois séances*, 19-21; Chrystel Bernat, "Une foi au secret? Captivité, hommage à Dieu et clandestinité protestante (1685-1791)," *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 2 (2011): 185.

be preserved among Court's papers.²⁷⁶) The re-established church was known as the *église du Désert* both because assemblies gathered far from any settlements and because it echoed Israel in the Exodus wilderness. It is true that by the time Marie Durand was imprisoned in 1730 the teaching of the Lausanne academy, which trained pastors for the Désert, and where Court was based from 1729, was steadily moving away from the theology of Calvin's *Institutes* and the *Confessio Gallicana*.²⁷⁷ Court was at first a Reformed classicist, however, who sought to rebuild the church according to its traditional theology and governance.²⁷⁸

In 1760, Court published his *Histoire des troubles des Cévennes ou de la guerre des Camisards*, an extensive eye-witness history and analysis of the Camisard Rebellion which demonstrated by its practical effects, rather than explained theologically, why violent resistance was not the right response to persecution.²⁷⁹ He taught that Christians should not actively seek conflict and martyrdom and that the rebellion was not consistent with the Protestant church's own doctrine and governance.²⁸⁰ Court, himself a fugitive, set the example. While in the Désert he moved about secretly to perform his pastoral duties of preaching, baptising, marrying, burying, training leaders, and meeting in church assemblies. From 1730 the Huguenots would never again organise armed resistance against state repression. At his trial in 1732, Pierre Durand testified that he had only taught "la repentance et d'être fidèles au roi" (repentance and to be faithful to the King), and against armed revolts, "contre lesquelles j'ai toujours parlé et prêché" (against which I always spoke and

²⁷⁶ Papiers Court (Geneva) 17. Vol. II. folio 90.

²⁷⁷ Gordon, *John Calvin's Institutes*, 73.

²⁷⁸ Yves Krumenacker, "L'Élaboration d'un 'Modèle Protestant': les Synodes du Désert," *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* (1954-) 42, no. 1 (1995): 46.

²⁷⁹ *Histoire des troubles des Cévennes ou de la guerre des Camisards, sous le règne de Louis XIV, Tirée des manuscrits secrets et authentiques et des observations faites sur les lieux même. [...] Nouvelle édition, Augmentée d'un discours préliminaire et d'une notice sur M. Court*, 3 vols. (1760; repr., Alès, 1819); Joutard, *La Légende des Camisards*, 137-44. Joutard describes the meticulous care with which Court collected eyewitness accounts.

²⁸⁰ Geoffrey Adams, *The Huguenots and French Opinion, 1685-1787: The Enlightenment Debate on Toleration* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1991), 200.

preached).²⁸¹ I will show in Chapter 5 how Marie Durand's writings echo Court's initially Calvinist theology, and commend his non-violent resistance.

The Huguenots responded to the Revocation's prohibition of public worship by convoking secret assemblies. These were critical to the rebuilding of the church.²⁸² The *culte privé* – private worship in the home – was just as important.²⁸³ The psalms were central in Huguenot worship, along with collections of seventeenth-century prayers and sermons. The Durand family, as I show below, was strongly shaped by psalm-centred worship in private homes and paid a heavy price for participating in illegal assemblies.

These are the two centuries of history which produced the cultural, religious, and political environment within which Marie Durand was raised. She was born in the Vivarais, a region with a history of social and religious autonomy stretching back to the middle ages. After the Reformation, the Huguenots' Calvinism strongly opposed medieval Catholicism and its post-Tridentine reforms. The sixteenth-century religious wars bred a deep sense of injury and hostility between French Protestants and Catholics, and the 1572 Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre hardened this grievance for centuries to come. Although the Edict of Nantes brought state-sanctioned freedom of religion for the Huguenots, it unintentionally wrought the social and legal conditions by which their freedom would be extinguished. Catholic reforms and the growth of divine-right absolutism in France in the seventeenth century strengthened state and Catholic opposition to the Huguenots; the freedoms and privileges won under Henri IV were steadily dismantled. From 1682 the *dragonnades* drove tens of thousands of Huguenots to abjuration and the Revocation made the practice of Protestantism in France illegal and dangerous. Most Huguenot pastors fled,

²⁸¹ Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 66.

²⁸² McManners, *Church and Society*, 611.

²⁸³ Yves Krumenacker, "La Place du culte privé chez les protestants français au XVIII^e siècle," *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 217, no. 3 (2000): 625, 630.

untrained leaders arose, and clandestine worship became a religious lifeline. The flight of some 160,000 Huguenots hardened the community's distinct identity and a sense of isolation for those who remained.²⁸⁴ Thousands of Huguenots in the Vivarais and Cévennes took up arms in the short and vicious Camisard Rebellion that ceased just seven years before Durand's birth. Protestants from Durand's region had suffered and even fought for that faith, and a tradition of lay leadership arose. Marie Durand was born into a socioreligious community separate from both Roman Catholicism and pre-Enlightenment thought. It was profoundly rooted and aligned with Calvin's theology and praxis. They were the survivors of severe state and religious opposition and were, under the leadership of Antoine Court from 1715, determined to endure as Calvinists. This is the identity and character of Durand's birth community which must inform any analysis of her life and thought.

Marie Durand 1711–30, Her Early Life

Only two scholarly biographies of Marie Durand exist: Daniel Benoît's 1884 work, and André Fabre's revision of Benoît's work in three editions (1935, 1966, 1972). Fabre included references to Durand's marriage and last will and testimony from documents published after 1933.²⁸⁵ These works formed the starting point for my own biographical survey. I refer in addition to Marie Durand's 1711 baptismal certificate which was discovered in 1989, to the 1768 order for her release, and to source material pertaining to Durand's final years published in Louis Aurenche's 1933 paper, "La Maison de Marie Durand". Falguerolles's 1968 and 1970 publication of records from Aigues-Mortes and the Tour de Constance provides additional valuable primary source material about the prisoners and prison conditions. Étienne Gamonnet's biographies of Étienne and Pierre Durand, published in 1994 and 1999

²⁸⁴ Wandel, *Reformation*, 184.

²⁸⁵ François Delteil, "Review of *André Fabre: Marie Durand, 1715-1776*," *Bulletin* 114 (1968).

respectively, and his biographical preface material to his 1986 edition of Marie Durand's letters, all contribute information not found in the Benoît-Fabre biography: for example references to prison records from the Fort de Brescou in *Étienne Durand et les siens*, and the corpus of Pierre's letters in *Pierre Durand*. Gamonnet's list of the books confiscated from Étienne Durand on September 18, 1728 gives us a glimpse of the kind of books that the Durands preferred and were presumably influenced by. Claude Lasserre's *Séminaire de Lausanne* (1997), a history of the seminary where Antoine Court taught and where Pierre Durand received his theological training, provides additional valuable insights into Marie Durand's eighteenth-century community. I also include observations from my own 2018 visit to Marie Durand's prison in Aigues-Mortes and her house in Le Bouchet, including a description of Pierre Durand's baptism records conserved in the Durand house. My biographical survey relies, above all, on Marie Durand's own extant letters. These tell us much about her life in the Tour de Constance, her prayers, sewing, writing, sicknesses, daily struggle for survival, and relationship to her fellow prisoners and the prison authorities. They describe her longing for freedom, her deteriorating relationship with her niece Anne, her attitude towards Protestants in her region, her dependence upon and reverence for her pastor Paul Rabaut, her constant money difficulties, and her awareness of what was going on outside of her prison. My biographical survey, together with my analysis of Durand's epistolary network in Chapter 3, confirm Durand as a committed member of the French Reformed community into which she was born, and provides the historical context for the interpretation of her letters in Chapters 4 and 5.

Étienne Durand, Marie Durand's Father

I begin my biographical survey of Marie Durand by reviewing the life and influence of her father Étienne (1657–1749). Regrettably, there is very little extant information about Durand's mother Claudine, who was baptised in 1670, and who perished in prison sometime after 1719. Much more is known of Étienne, thanks especially to the survival of some of his writings.

Étienne Durand was a *greffier* (clerk) and *expert-foncier*, a government land agent and assessor, apparently respected for his work among both Catholics and Protestants.²⁸⁶ The *Discipline* forbade Huguenots from participating in Catholic rites but did permit engagement in civil matters.²⁸⁷ In fact Étienne was willing to cross this line. In 1691 he married Claudine Gamonnet in a Catholic church. They bore four children, with only Pierre and Marie surviving to adulthood. All four children were baptised by a Catholic priest and this ensured their legitimacy, unlike children baptised only by outlaw Protestant pastors in illegal ceremonies. (It is not known whether the Durand children were subsequently baptised by a Protestant pastor.) Official prohibition of Huguenots from public office was haphazardly enforced at the time, and Catholic baptisms would have underwritten, at least temporarily, Étienne's government position.²⁸⁸ Gamonnet questions whether Étienne played any active part in these Catholic ceremonies and found that even the named godparents were represented by proxies. By 1706, however, records show Durand family members playing a more active role in Catholic baptisms.²⁸⁹ Étienne's complex social interaction with Catholicism is also evident in his attitude toward the Camisard Rebellion. Though he speaks respectfully of certain Catholic civil and religious leaders, and disapproved of armed resistance, he was

²⁸⁶ Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 59-60.

²⁸⁷ E.g., *Discipline* 13.18.

²⁸⁸ McManners, *Church and Society*, 600.

²⁸⁹ Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 45, 57.

gratified that large forces were needed to pacify the rebels.²⁹⁰ On June 18, 1704, Étienne was arrested at his home during a religious gathering with six other Huguenots. After a brief incarceration at the Pont-Saint-Esprit he seems to have had no more trouble with the authorities until 1719.²⁹¹

Étienne Durand was keenly aware of the suffering of his Huguenot community. He kept a *livre de raison* (commonplace book) and recorded religious conflicts within the Vivarais. He described the Revocation as “une déclaration pour forcer toute la religion de France à changer de religion”, and recorded numerous cruelties towards Protestants such as a man whose feet were burned in a pan of boiling oil, how Protestants were forced to attend Mass, and how “Tous ceux qui voulaient sortir du royaume, on les arrêtait et pillait.”²⁹² The Durands admired the bravery of those who suffered for their faith in this way, and a young Pierre Durand, Marie’s brother, aspired to follow in the footsteps of pastors like the intrepid Claude Brousson (1647–1698), who conducted church services on the ruins of Protestant temples and was executed in Montpellier.²⁹³ Though Étienne Durand was distressed by Huguenot suffering, he apparently did not express bitterness for the persecution of his church and family, and the Durands never practised active resistance. If Étienne was at times willing to defy the authorities, he was at the same time willing to compromise with Catholic baptism and marriage rites – at least formally – and to live and work in peace in a Catholic state. His irenic spirit and respect for the king is evident in Marie Durand’s writings.

²⁹⁰ Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 56.

²⁹¹ Louis Aurenche, “La Maison de Marie Durand,” *Bulletin* 83, no. 3 (1934): 516.

²⁹² “A declaration to force the entire [Protestant] religion of France to change religion.” “They arrested and stole from all those who wanted to leave the kingdom.” Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 29-43.

²⁹³ Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 43; Henry Martyn Baird, *The Huguenots and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes* (1895; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2004), 195-209.

Marie Durand's Home

The Durands' solid stone farmhouse sits among the chestnut groves of the remote town of Bouchet de Pranles, some fourteen kilometres from Privas in the former Vivarais region of the south-east Massif Central (Ardèche). The Edict of Nantes had granted Privas to the Huguenots as a fortified city but Louis XIII personally oversaw its capture in 1629, just twenty-eight years before the birth of Marie's father. In 1850, historian Guillaume de Félice described how the massacre of eight hundred Huguenot soldiers in Privas and the hanging of fifty *bourgeois* terrorised the region.²⁹⁴ The Protestant *temple* in Privas was razed in 1670.²⁹⁵

Today, the Durands' house is preserved as the Musée du Vivarais protestant. My interview with M. Jean-Paul Sarrazin, then Secrétaire d'administration of the Museum, revealed several interesting and important facts about the Durands' home.²⁹⁶ First, the farm's produce would have been an important supplement to Étienne's modest salary as a clerk. Second, a *cachette* was built beneath the kitchen fireplace where a fugitive could be hidden from royal troops. The stout main doors of the house gave enough time to hide a person and cover the hole with a piece of iron, which was covered in turn with the detritus of the fire.²⁹⁷ Étienne recorded two raids in 1704 and 1719.²⁹⁸ Third, in the kitchen there is a recess for storing crockery, and hidden above this, accessible only by twisting one's arm deep into the cavity, is a hiding space for such contraband as Bibles and psalters. Fourth, above the kitchen fireplace is an inscription carved by Étienne Durand, transcribed here with the original lettering.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁴ Guillaume de Félice, *Histoire des Protestants de France: depuis l'origine de la Réformation jusqu'au temps présent* (Paris, 1850), 319.

²⁹⁵ Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 12.

²⁹⁶ Interview conducted November 6, 2018.

²⁹⁷ Solid doors kept out wolves, a serious danger in that area. Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 68.

²⁹⁸ Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 14.

²⁹⁹ "Praise be to God, 1696, É(tienne) D(urand)."

LOVE·SOY

DIEV

1696

E × D

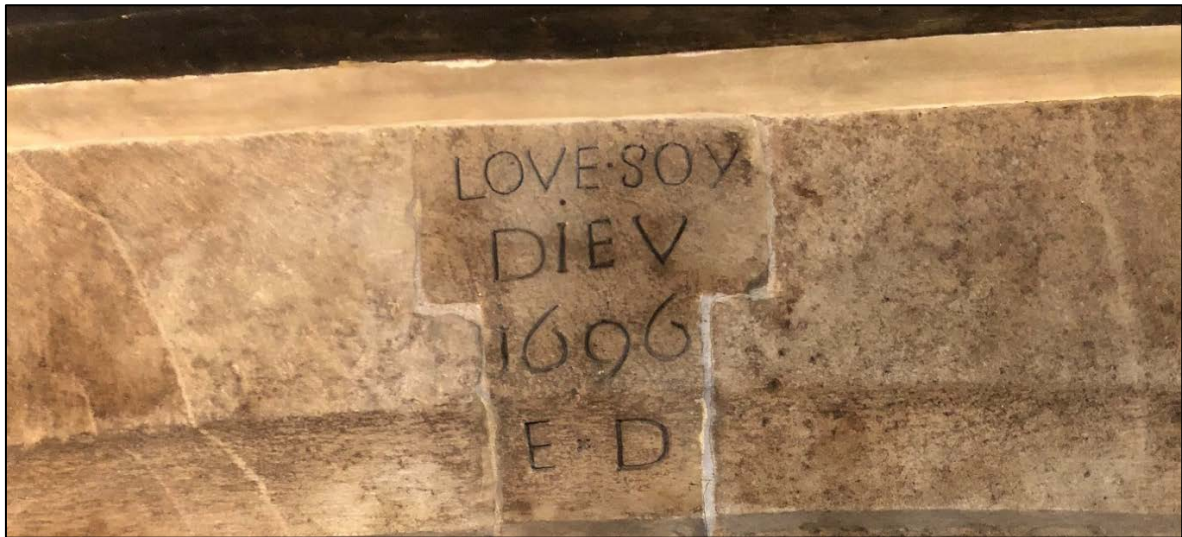


Figure 13. Étienne Durand's inscription above the hearth of the Durands' farmhouse.
Photo by the author, November 6, 2018.

Finally, a tile recovered from the roof of the farmhouse is inscribed with the words “Dieu te pardonne” (God forgive you). Huguenot households were patriarchal and fathers were expected to lead their families in Bible reading, prayer, and psalm-singing.³⁰⁰ These inscriptions, and the deep familiarity with the Bible that Marie Durand demonstrates in her letters, testify to the Christian piety of the Durand home and that Étienne undertook these responsibilities seriously.

³⁰⁰ Garrioch, *Huguenots of Paris*, 124.

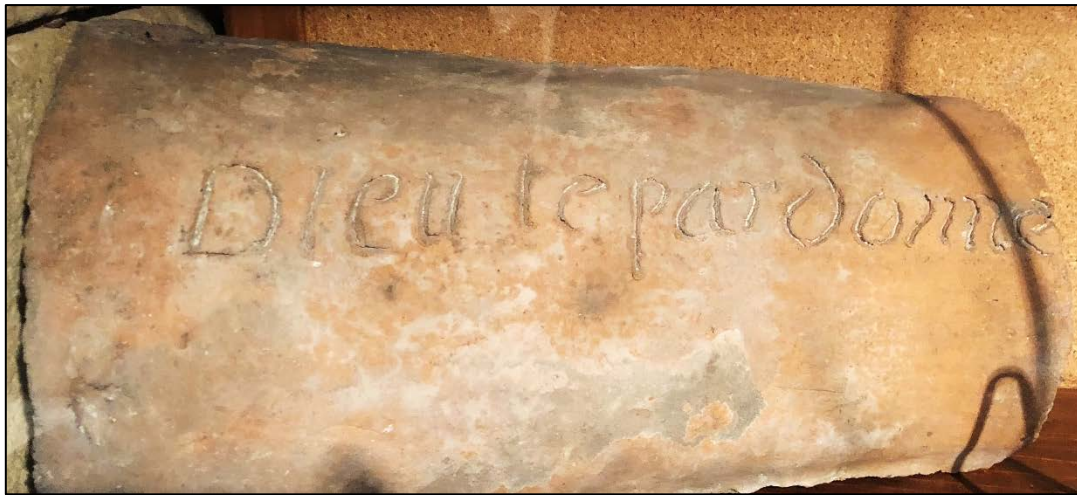


Figure 14. Inscription on a roof tile recovered from the Durands' farmhouse.
Photo by the author, November 6, 2018.

The Musée du Vivarais holds an important collection of eighteenth-century manuscripts including four autographs of Marie Durand's letters (Letters 4, 19, 29, 30), and marriage and baptism registers handwritten by Pierre Durand in the course of his pastoral work.³⁰¹ Pierre testified to performing more than four hundred marriages.³⁰² Because Protestant pastoral records could be incriminating, Pierre wrote his baptismal register using the Greek alphabet to disguise the names from royal agents. These hiding places and primitive encryptions point to lives lived under threat of arrest.

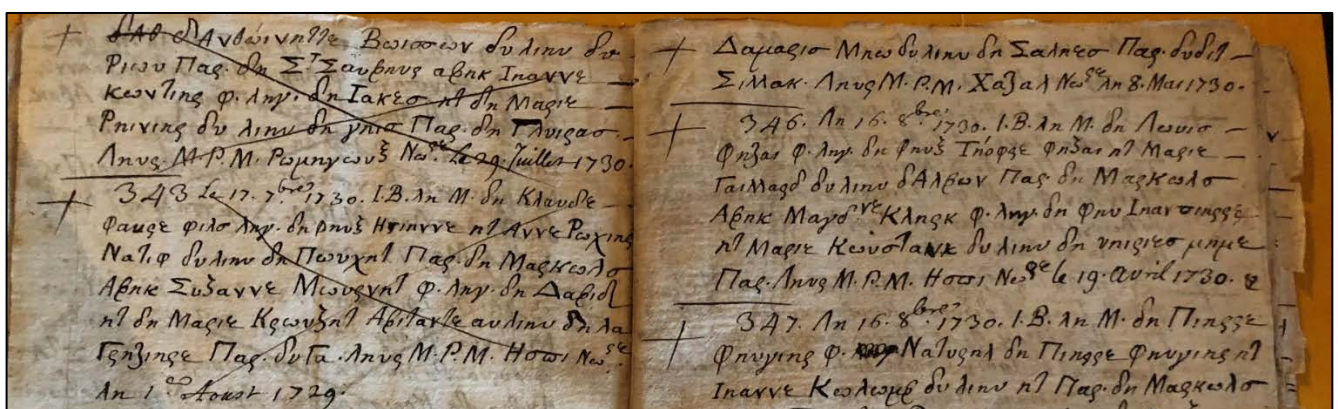


Figure 15. An excerpt from Pierre Durand's marriage register recording marriages that he blessed in 1729 and 1730, written in Greek letters.
From the Musée du Vivarais. Photo by the author, November 6, 2018.

³⁰¹ Such records are mandated in *Discipline* 13.27.

³⁰² Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 56.

Marie Durand was raised in an educated home with books, by a father who testified to his faith on the family hearth, and by parents who gave up their freedom in order to attend illegal Huguenot assemblies. Either or both of her parents taught her to read and write in a day and age when very few women in regional France were literate.³⁰³

Marie Durand's Birthdate

Until Marie Durand's baptismal record was discovered in 1989 in the Catholic church of Pranles, conflicting evidence made her birth date notoriously uncertain. Even the commemorative plaque on the Durands' house (Figure 6) erroneously cites 1715 as her birth year. Various prison records drawn up by Durand herself, which refer to the years of her incarceration, place her birth variously in the years 1708–9, 1712–13, or 1715–16.³⁰⁴

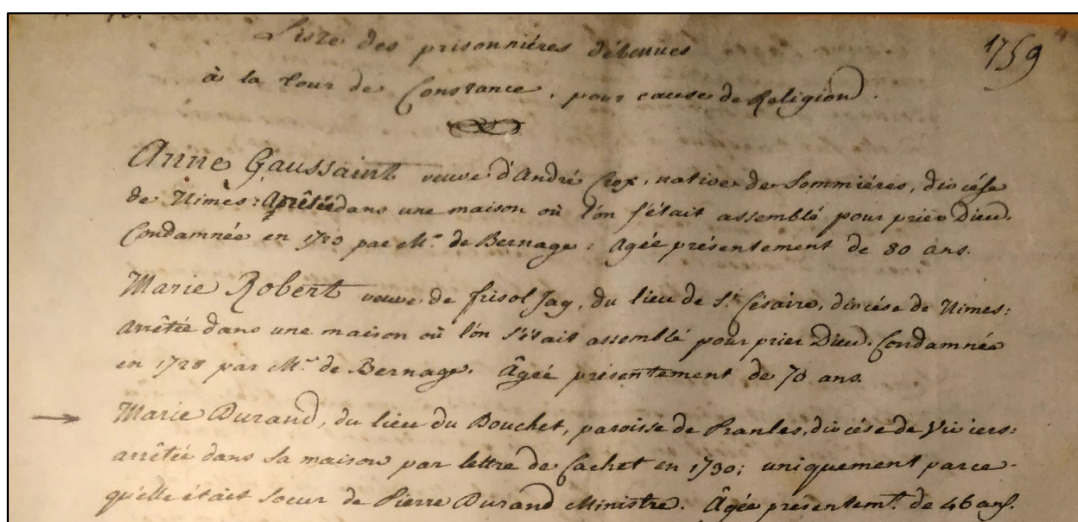


Figure 16. 1759 prison list drawn-up by Marie Durand citing her age as 46. This would wrongly place her birth between 1712 and 1713.

³⁰³ Though working from a small data set, Furet and Ozouf's table of literacy rates for women in Languedoc at the end of the seventeenth-century is indicative: 0% for fisherwomen, 3% for farm workers, 8.2% for housekeepers, 6.5% for artisans, 3.8% for textile workers, 58.1% for merchants, and 72% for "notables." *Lire et écrire: l'alphabétisation des Français de Calvin à Jules Ferry* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1977), 82.

³⁰⁴ Philippe Corbière, *Histoire de l'église réformée de Montpellier depuis son origine jusqu'à nos jours avec de nombreuses pièces inédites sur le Languedoc, les Cévennes et le Vivarais* (Montpellier, 1861), 566-69; "Exposition permanente au premier étage de la Tour de Constance inaugurée en 1968 à l'occasion des cérémonies marquant le deuxième centenaire de la libération des dernières prisonnières 'pour fait de Religion'," *Bulletin* 115 (1969): 135; also a 1759 list of prisoners held by the Musée du Vivarais.

In assessing these discrepancies it should be noted that the Prince de Beauvau, who visited the Tour de Constance in 1767, found that most of the women had forgotten the date of their incarceration.³⁰⁵ Étienne Gamonnet also cites Letter 38 (1764) to Paul Rabaut as a cause of further doubt about cited ages in prisoner records.³⁰⁶

Il y a quelques jours qu'une personne nous dit que notre liberté de conscience était donnée, et qu'en conséquence nous aurions la nôtre, pourvu que personne ne s'y opposât, mais qu'il se pourrait qu'on représentât que la plus grande partie de nous étions fort âgées, et qu'en ce cas on nous retiendrait. Cette personne n'a pas sorti cette raison d'elle-même, il la tient d'un dont ils sont trop V[ieux]. . . , et c'est uniquement l'intérêt qui porte à nous nuire, et qu'il l'a toujours fait. Il y a quelque apparence puisque, lors de la nouvelle si publique de notre liberté, on se hâta de se rendre à la source de nos maux, ce qu'on fit encore le jour avant que j'appris d'agir contre notre âge.³⁰⁷

Durand expresses concern that they will be left in prison because of their advanced age.

Abraham Borrel presents an unsubstantiated account of an Aigues-Mortes official explaining to the prisoners that although religious tolerance was growing the state was unwilling to free the women because it would have to restore to them their confiscated property. The state would simply wait then for older prisoners to die.³⁰⁸ This is plausible and may have motivated Durand to understate her age.

³⁰⁵ Aurenche, "La Maison de Marie Durand," 524.

³⁰⁶ Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 58.

³⁰⁷ "Several days ago someone told us that our freedom of conscience was granted, and that as a result we would have ours, provided that no one opposed this. They also said that they might claim that most of us are very old, and that they should therefore keep us in prison. This person did not come up with this reason himself, he got it from someone else that "they are too o[ld]", and that it is out of self-interest alone that they harm us, as it always has been. There may be some truth in this since, when our freedom was announced so publicly, they hurriedly returned to the source of our misfortunes, which they did again the day before I learned that they were acting against us on the grounds of our age."

³⁰⁸ Borrel, *Pierre et Marie Durand*, 37-38.

Despite these uncertainties, Durand's baptismal record is decisive. The following is my transcription of a facsimile of the record from the Musée du Désert in the Cévennes:

Baptême

Le Bouchet

Le 15^e Juillet 1711 est née et a esté baptizée les 17^e desdits mois et an fille légitime à ettienne et claudine gammonet du lieu du Bouschet. Son parrain a esté pierre Durand, frere de ladite marie, sa marraine marie Durand du lieu du Raboul.

Durand P Volle Curé.³⁰⁹

Durand's baptismal certificate categorically identifies July 15, 1711 as her birthdate.

The Separation of the Durand Family from 1719

On the night of January 29, 1719, Marie Durand's birth family was separated forever. Étienne records the following events:

Le Sieur Dumolard, subdelegue de Mr l'Intendant, donna cinquante écus au nommé Souche, de Marcols, pour faire une assemblée dans la paroisse de Pranles. [...] Et sur la minuit ledit Dumolard, avec cinq compagnies de soldats, vint se jeter sur cette assemblée, mais il ne put prendre que trois filles. [...] Et mit un détachement de dix-sept soldats au lieu du Bouschet en pure perte pendant vingt et un jours, desquels j'en avais sept. Et lorsqu'ils délogèrent ils démolirent ma maison et se saisirent de mes bestiaux et meubles. Depuis ce jour-là Pierre Durand, mon fils, a été absent.³¹⁰

³⁰⁹ "Baptism. Le Bouchet. July 15, 1711, was born, and was baptised the 17th of the said month and year legitimate daughter to Ettienne and Claudine Gammonet in le Bouchet. Her godfather was Pierre Durand, brother of the said Marie, her godmother Marie from Raboul. [Signed:] Durand. Father Volle, Curate."

³¹⁰ "Sieur Dumolard, subdelegate of Monsieur the Intendant, gave fifty ecus to one named Souche, from Marcols, to form an assembly in the parish of Pranles. [...] And at midnight the said Dumolard, with five companies of soldiers, ambushed the assembly, but he could only capture three girls. [...] And in vain he put a

Pierre Durand fled for a time to Lausanne and then Zurich, where he undertook pastoral training. He returned to France and was ordained at a national synod on May 16, 1726, and married Anne Rouvier the following year.³¹¹ Their daughter Anne, born in 1729, was the recipient of sixteen of Marie Durand's surviving letters.³¹² Claudine Durand was arrested and imprisoned very soon afterwards because she was known to be influential, and as a hostage to force Pierre out of France.³¹³ She is never mentioned again in any surviving documents.

Nearly ten years later, on September 18, 1728, twelve soldiers arrived at dawn to arrest Étienne. Finding only Marie, they confiscated Étienne's books and diary. (Gamonet speculates that Étienne may have hidden in the *cachette*.³¹⁴) Étienne listed the books which were taken:

Ma Bible, un Nouveau-Testament, deux Psaumes et quelques autres livres: Diverses feuilles de la Vie des Saints, un Combat chrétien, un volume des Sermons de Daillé; Contre l'état monastique; Réfutation de la lettre pastorale de Sourdis, cardinal-archevêque de Bordeaux; Moyens pour parvenir à la félicité, 2 vol. 1721 [...]; Mémoire de ci qui est arrivé en la ville de Privas.³¹⁵

A brief description of these works will add to our understanding of the ideas and causes that may have shaped the religious culture of the Durand household. The psalmodies were 1673 and 1721 editions of Marot and Beza, both published in Geneva. Between 1533 and 1543

detachment of seventeen soldiers in the area of Bouschet for twenty-one days, of which I billeted seven. And when they left they destroyed my house and seized my livestock and furniture. Since that day Pierre Durand, my son, has been absent." Gamonet, *Étienne Durand*, 63.

³¹¹ Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 19, 23.

³¹² Letters 6-7, 12, 15-23, 25-28.

³¹³ Gamonet, *Étienne Durand*, 64.

³¹⁴ The attempted arrest is recorded in the Archives de l'Hérault: dossiers C. 199 and C. 201. Cited in Gamonet, *Étienne Durand*, 69-71.

³¹⁵ "My Bible, a New Testament, two psalters, and some other books: several copies of *The Life of the Saints*, a *Christian Combat*, a volume of the *Sermons of Daillé*; *The Right Manner of Participating in the Holy Supper*; *Against the Monastic State*; *Refutation of the Pastoral Letter of Sourdis*, *Cardinal-Archbishop of Bordeaux*; *Ways to Happiness*, two 1721 editions [...]; A diary of what has occurred in the city of Privas." Gamonet, *Étienne Durand*, 71-73.

Clément Marot paraphrased forty-nine of the Bible's one hundred and fifty psalms from Hebrew into French poetry. (Though Theodore Beza paraphrased the remainder between 1551 and 1562 the work is commonly attached to Marot's name alone.³¹⁶) Nineteenth-century pastor-scholar Emmanuel-Orentin Douen explained how Marot's popular melodies and rhythms quickly endeared his psalms to the people, so that more than any other book of the Bible they "marqua de son empreinte le caractère Huguenot." (Made its mark on the Huguenot character.)³¹⁷ It became "the hymnal of the French Protestants, sung at the stake, in the Wars of Religion and the Camisard revolt, and serving as a signal everywhere."³¹⁸ The preface to Marot's 1679 edition explains how the Psalms intend to bring "consolation dans les afflictions" and certainly they had a particular attraction for suffering Huguenots.³¹⁹ Étienne's 1730 letter to Marie, written just after her imprisonment, urged her to take comfort from the Psalms:

Mon enfant je vous écris ces de mots pour vous prié de ne vous chagrigné pas en rien que ce soit, au contraire de vous réjouir au Seigneur par de prières par de psaumes et de cantiques à toute heure et à tous momens et par ce moyent le Seigneur vous donnera la force et le courage de suporter toutes les afflictions qui peuvent vous arriver.³²⁰

In Letter 25 (1757) Durand asked her niece Anne to send her "un psaume en gros caractères, qu'il y eût les cinquante-quatre cantiques."³²¹ I will show in Chapter 5 how Durand's

³¹⁶ Robert Weeda, "Le Psautier a conquis l'Europe," *Bulletin* 158 (2012): 286.

³¹⁷ Emmanuel-Orentin Douen, "Le Psaume des Batailles," *Bulletin* 28, no. 5 (1879): 210-11.

³¹⁸ Hans Volz et al., "Continental Versions to c. 1600," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible: The West from the Reformation to the Present Day*, ed. S. L. Greenslade (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 121.

³¹⁹ Clément Marot and Theodore Beza, *Les Psaumes en vers François, retouchez sur l'ancienne version de Cl. Marot & Th. de Bèze* (Paris, 1679), Avertissement. Because the Huguenots so closely associated the biblical psalms with Marot's poetic translations of them, I refer from here simply to "Marot's Psalms."

³²⁰ "My child, I write you these words to urge you not to upset yourself in any way, but rather to rejoice in the Lord by prayers, psalms, and songs every hour and moment, and by this means the Lord will give you the strength and courage to bear any afflictions which may come your way." Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 85.

³²¹ "A psalmody in large letters for me with the fifty-four hymns and musical notation." In the same letter she complains of an acute eye condition. A 1745 almanac records the publication in Geneva of the *Cinquante-quatre*

writings strongly echo the Psalms' general sentiment of looking to God for help in times of distress.

Several others of Étienne's books were written by Protestant authors. The *Sermons de Daillé* probably refers to *XXI sermons de Jean Daillé, sur Le X chapitre de la I Epitre de S. Paul aux Corinthiens* (Geneva, 1667). Daillé (1594–1670) was a prominent Huguenot preacher in Paris.³²² *La Manière de bien participer à la sainte Cène* (Geneva, 1694) was by Benedict Pictet (1655–1724), a generally orthodox Reformed theologian.³²³ The anonymous *Moyens pour parvenir à la félicité* (Amsterdam, 1701) is neither anti-Catholic polemic, nor overtly pro-Protestant, but does describe baptism in Protestant terms.³²⁴ Judging by their titles, *Contre l'état monastique* and the *Réfutation* are anti-Catholic polemic. This was the little library of biblical texts and predominantly Protestant works possessed by the Durand household.

Étienne was eventually arrested in 1728 and incarcerated in the Château de Beauregard.³²⁵ Concerned that he would collaborate with his son for the Protestant cause, he was condemned by *lettre de cachet* to life imprisonment in the Fort de Brescou.³²⁶ Louis XV approved Étienne's transfer from Beauregard to the Fort on June 27, 1729.³²⁷ In fact he

Cantiques en Musique, beau Caractere. Mercure historique et politique contenant l'état présent de l'Europe [...] Mois de Janvier 1745, (The Hague, 1745), 359.

³²² *FP* 4:180-86.

³²³ "Bénédict Pictet," Dictionnaire Historique de la Suisse, Académie suisse des sciences humaines et sociales, last modified February 26, 2010, <https://hls-dhs-dss.ch/fr/articles/011291/2010-02-26>.

³²⁴ *Moyens pour parvenir à la félicité. Ou, réflexions importantes, qu'un chrétien doit faire pendant tout le cours de sa vie, & sur tout au commencement d'une nouvelle Année. Traduit de l'Anglois,* (Amsterdam, 1701), 341-42.

³²⁵ Daniel de Superville (ed.), "Liste: de plusieurs prisonniers et prisonnières, détenus en France pour cause de religion (Dressée par Daniel de Superville, le 13 novembre 1712) [et] une seconde liste rédigée vingt-sept ans plus tard (1739)," *Bulletin* 28, no. 2 (1879): 81.

³²⁶ Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 30. In the ancien régime the *lettre de cachet* was a document which bore the king's seal and ordered imprisonment or exile without trial. *DCLF* 1:1157.

³²⁷ The reward for Pierre's capture was 1,000 livres. Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 82; Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 30.

remained there for fourteen years, until 1743. He returned home and died six years later, aged ninety-two.³²⁸

Marie Durand's Conjugal Status

The government archives of Ardèche show that Marie Durand was contracted to marry Mathieu Serres on April 26, 1730, before Maître Boursarié, the family solicitor, and that the contract was registered in Privas on May 1, eighty-nine days before the couple's arrest and imprisonment:

Du 1 mai 1730

Mariage de Mathieu Serre [*sic*] de St Pierreville et Marie Durand de Pranles. Les biens du fiancé: sept cent nonante neuf livres 19 s. sans augment.

par devant M^e Boursarié, notaire à Pranles, le 26 avril der^f.

Contrôlé [...], reçu huit livres.³²⁹

A list of the prisoners in the Fort de Brescou in April 1745 records that Serres was sixty years old, and a letter sent to Antoine Court in November 1748 indicates that Serres was fifty-eight.³³⁰ These records make Serres at least twenty years Durand's senior.

Although the marriage was legally contracted, and although the couple were living in the same house at the time of their arrest, in her writings Durand only ever uses her maiden name and never describes herself as married. In a 1758 list of prisoners, for example, that

³²⁸ Aurenche, "La Maison de Marie Durand," 518.

³²⁹ "May 1, 1730. Marriage of Mathieu Serres of St Pierreville and Marie Durand of Pranles. The fiancé's goods: 799 livres and 19 s. without increase. [Meaning that Durand would not benefit from her husband's dowry at his death. Littré, s.v. "augment."] Before Master Boursarié, notary at Pranles, April 26 of the same year. Checked [...], received eight livres." *Registre des insinuations de Privas*, vol. 15, no. 37, Archives de l'Ardèche, C 2346. Cited in Bost, "Mariage de Marie Durand," 295.

³³⁰ Archives de l'Herault, C, 400. *Papiers Court*, no. 7, IX, II, folio 673. Cited in Bost, "Mariage de Marie Durand," 296n2.

Durand herself prepared, she describes herself not as *femme* (wife) but as *fille* (unmarried woman).³³¹ Nor does she refer to Serres in any of her surviving letters. Furthermore, in his letter to Marie (September 17, 1730), Étienne Durand, who was in fact incarcerated with Serres at that time, refers to him not as Marie's *mari* (husband) but as her *fiancé*, someone contracted to marry.³³² Serres himself added to Étienne's letter a personal note to Marie. He addresses her as "Ma très chère mie" (My very dear friend) and refers to Étienne as his "beau-père prétendu" (supposed father-in-law).³³³

This uncertainty concerning Durand's marital status is not surprising given how difficult and complicated it was for French Protestants to marry after the Revocation. Margaret Maxwell explains that from 1685 only marriages solemnised by a priest between professing Catholics – which included Protestants who had abjured – were legally recognised, but that in practice Protestants found various "irregular" ways and means of making marriages of "uncertain validity" without abjuring, such as marrying abroad or in foreign embassies, being married by "complaisant" priests, or receiving a marriage blessing by the father of one of the spouses.³³⁴ After the 1715 Restoration, however, the *Église du désert* strove to restore the marriage forms of the *Discipline*.³³⁵ The *Discipline* mandates that couples be affianced before a Protestant pastor by *paroles de futur* (future promises) – also called *les fiançailles* (betrothal) – and that after three Sunday announcements the marriage be solemnised by a pastor in a public ceremony by *paroles de présent* (present promises) – also called *la bénédiction nuptiale* (marriage blessing).³³⁶ After the Revocation, with Protestant *temples* destroyed and pastors working underground, the *bénédiction* was typically given in

³³¹ Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 34.

³³² Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 85.

³³³ Bost, "Mariage de Marie Durand," 293.

³³⁴ Margaret Maxwell, "Protestant Marriage in Eighteenth Century France," *Social Science* 30, no. 2 (1955): 90-91.

³³⁵ Maxwell, "Protestant Marriage," 92.

³³⁶ *Discipline* 13.5, 16, 17, 23.

Protestant homes by itinerant pastors (such as Pierre Durand; see Figure 15). Although Durand and Serre's marriage was contracted before a solicitor there is no evidence that it was solemnised by a pastoral *bénédiction* – the necessary step for the couple to have been united for life in the eyes of God, themselves, and the Protestant community. This is consistent with a prisoner list written by Durand in 1739 where she explains that “Tout le crime qu'on lui impute c'est d'avoir été la sœur de feu le ministre Durand et comme elle était fiancée avec Mathieu Serre on a prétendu faussement qu'ils avaient été épousés par le même ministre, frère de la fiancée.”³³⁷ Pierre had not given the couple the *bénédiction*, and nor is there any evidence that any other pastor had done so.³³⁸

Another possible reason for why Marie never identified herself as married was her brother Pierre's opposition to her marrying. In a letter to his wife on February 17, 1731, written in the year after Marie's imprisonment, Pierre wrote unsympathetically that “Elle reconnaît maintenant le tort qu'elle a eu de ne pas suivre le conseil de ses amis.”³³⁹

Gamonnet suggests that it was Pierre's hope that Marie would flee to Geneva, as his wife had done.³⁴⁰ Antoine Court also noted that “Durand sœur s'est mariée contre le gré du frère” (the Durand sister married against the will of the brother).³⁴¹ Neither Pierre Durand's nor Court's statements constitute evidence that the couple had received the pastoral benediction; they stand even if the marriage had merely been contracted. Perhaps Marie's respect for her martyred brother motivated her later silence about the marriage, whether or not it had been solemnised.³⁴²

³³⁷ “The only crime that they impute to her is to have been the sister of the late minister Durand, and because she was engaged to Mathieu Serres they falsely suppose that they were married by the same minister, brother of the fiancée.” Superville (ed.), “Prisonniers et prisonnières,” 82.

³³⁸ This is the theory of M. Jean-Paul Sarrazin (interview with the author, November 6, 2018); and Bost, “Mariage de Marie Durand,” 296.

³³⁹ “She knows now how wrong it was not to follow the counsel of her friends.”

³⁴⁰ Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 86-87.

³⁴¹ André Fabre, “Marie Durand et sa famille (à l'occasion du bicentenaire de sa mort),” *Bulletin* 122 (1976): 174.

³⁴² This is Charles Bost's speculation. “Mariage de Marie Durand,” 297.

Fabre suggests two more possible reasons for why Durand never described herself as married. First, because marriages before pastors were illegal, she may have denied her marriage to reduce her culpability. Once in prison, however, whether she had been married illegally or not would not have changed her condition. Second, marriages could be legally annulled by *force majeure*, by the forced separation of the couple including by indefinite imprisonment.³⁴³ Similarly, the *Discipline* allows for dissolution between the *fiançailles* and *bénédiction*, stating that *paroles de future* should not be considered as indissoluble as the *paroles de present*, although they should not be dissolved without “grandes & legitimes causes.”³⁴⁴ Durand’s life imprisonment almost certainly constituted just cause for the annulment of her marriage contract and the couple’s presumed intention to receive the pastoral *bénédiction*.

In summary, although Durand and Serres were contracted to marry on April 26, 1730, there is no evidence that the marriage was solemnised and Durand’s own writings – both her letters and prison records – prove that she never considered herself actually married.

Marie Durand 1730–68, Her Arrest and Imprisonment

Marie Durand and Matthieu Serres were arrested on July 28, 1730.³⁴⁵ A local official, La Devèze, ordered “que la femme fût conduite à la Tour de Constance et le mari au fort de Brescou, pour désabuser les religionnaires de faire de pareils mariages.”³⁴⁶ Ostensibly, Durand and Serres were punished for not marrying before a priest. Prison records, first published by a Walloon synod in Nijmegen in 1739, claim that Durand and Serres were

³⁴³ Fabre and Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 77-78.

³⁴⁴ *Discipline*, 13.5.

³⁴⁵ Aurenche, “La Maison de Marie Durand,” 517.

³⁴⁶ “That the wife be sent to the Tour de Constance and the husband to the fort of Brescou, to disabuse the religious [Huguenots] from making similar marriages.” Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 36.

falsely accused of having their marriage blessed by Pierre Durand.³⁴⁷ Whatever the case, Durand was incarcerated by *lettre de cachet*. Serres was released on May 30, 1750, then aged in his sixties, having signed a pledge to leave Languedoc.³⁴⁸

In various prisoner lists which Durand compiled in the Tour de Constance, she never gave unlawful betrothal as the reason for her incarceration. In 1741 she describes herself as “sœur d’un ministre exécuté à Montpellier”, and in 1745 as having recognised the ministry of “P. Durand, martyr, son frère”. In 1755 she says that she was arrested in her house because of her connection to the “ministère de son frère”, and in 1758 for the ministry of her “frère Durand”.³⁴⁹ In 1750, Saint-Florentin, the minister in charge of religious affairs under Louis XV, said that holding relatives as hostages was the only means of making Huguenot preachers leave France.³⁵⁰ It was clear enough to Marie herself that she was taken as a hostage to force Pierre to leave France. She was held initially in the Château de Beaugard.³⁵¹ Sometime before August 25, 1730, she was led across the narrow stone causeway to the Tour de Constance, through its heavy main door, and into the dank stone rooms that were to be her home for the next thirty-eight years.

The Tour de Constance

The Tour de Constance is the key stronghold forming part of the fortified city walls of Aigues-Mortes. The fortifications were built during the thirteenth century by Louis IX as a base to combat Mediterranean piracy and as a port of departure for the Crusades in Palestine.

³⁴⁷ Superville (ed.), “Prisonniers et prisonnières,” 81-82. Serres is erroneously named Daniel Serret.

³⁴⁸ Charles Bost, “Les Prisonniers d’Aigues-Mortes et les notaires: documents P. Falgairolle,” *Bulletin* 72, no. 3 (1923): 144.

³⁴⁹ Bost, “Mariage de Marie Durand,” 293-94.

³⁵⁰ Claude Lasserre, *Le Séminaire de Lausanne, 1726-1812: instrument de la restauration du protestantisme français: étude historique fondée principalement sur les documents inédits* (Lausanne: Bibliothèque historique vaudoise, 1997), 23.

³⁵¹ Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 76.

The tower itself is smooth and circular and has four distinct levels: a cistern, two large circular rooms one above the other, and a narrow lighthouse projecting from the top terrace. The main tower is twenty metres in diameter with six-metre thick stone walls, giving its two interior rooms an eight-metre diameter. The following two figures include a cross section which shows the size of the rooms relative to the thickness of the walls, and a view of the top terrace with the opening into the room below in which the prisoners lived:

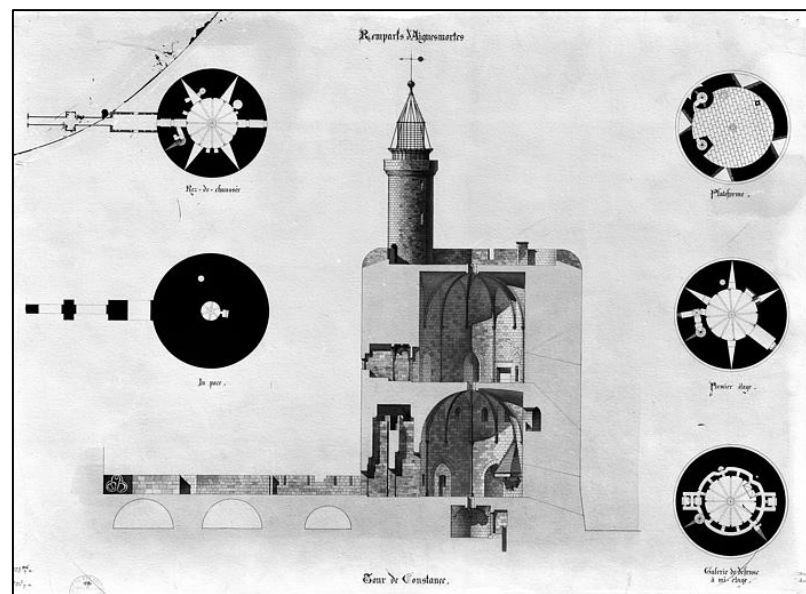


Figure 17. *Remparts; Tour de Constance: Coupe et plan aux différents étages* by Médéric Mieusement (1840–1905). Référence APMH00009681 © Ministère de la Culture (France), Médiathèque du patrimoine et de la photographie, diffusion RMN-GP3.



Figure 18. Terrace and lighthouse of the Tour de Constance, Aigues-Mortes.
Photo by the author, November 5, 2018.

Aigues-Mortes had been designated a Huguenot *place de sûreté* by the Edict of Nantes but lost this status in 1621, from which time the tower was regularly used as a prison.³⁵² In 1704, during the Camisard Rebellion, it was modified specifically to imprison *fanatiques*, religious prisoners.³⁵³ From 1717 to 1768 it was one of twenty sites devoted to incarcerating female Huguenots, mainly in Protestant regions, including prisons at Brescou, Carcassonne, Marseille, Pont-Saint-Espirit, and Sommières; as well as the Hôpital à Montpellier, the Ursuline Convent in Alais, and the Convent de la Providence in Nîmes.³⁵⁴

³⁵² *La Tour de Constance*, (Mialet: Musée du Désert, SHPF, 1985), 7-13.

³⁵³ de Falguerolles, "Tour de Constance," 178.

³⁵⁴ Charles Frossard, "La Tour de Constance: d'Aigues-Mortes," *Bulletin* 24, no. 4 (1875): 174.

(Kirschleger suggests that the authorities typically dispersed groups of Huguenot women who were arrested together to weaken their resolve against abjuring.³⁵⁵) Falguerolles gives a complete list of the 113 women imprisoned within the Tour de Constance during that time.³⁵⁶ Some were incarcerated after trial, for example Marie Vey-Goutet and Isabeau Menet-Fialès, both pregnant, and both sentenced to the Tour de Constance for life.³⁵⁷ Most, like Durand, were incarcerated by *lettre de cachet*.

Conditions in the Tour de Constance

The penal code of the ancien régime was harsh and eighteenth-century French prison conditions were difficult and degrading. For female Huguenots the degradation began with the shaving of their heads upon imprisonment, commanded in Louis XV's *Déclaration du Roy, concernant les Religionnaires* (May 14, 1724).³⁵⁸ There are many records of Huguenot women condemned to be "rasées et enfermées à perpétuité" (shaved and incarcerated for life) or the equivalent, and there is no evidence to suggest that Marie Durand was exempted from this.³⁵⁹ Head-shaving was intended to punish prisoners by shaming them; it was thus also common practice to shave the heads, beards, and eyebrows of the Huguenot *galériens*.³⁶⁰

The Tour de Constance, like European dwellings at the time of all but the very rich, has no plumbing, bathroom, or toilet facilities. It has no glassed or shuttered windows, only the narrow defensive loopholes of a fortress. A well-like hole, about 180 centimetres in

³⁵⁵ Kirschleger, "Mon âme est en liberté," 572-73.

³⁵⁶ de Falguerolles, "Prisonnières," 382-420.

³⁵⁷ Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 79.

³⁵⁸ *Recueil des édits et déclarations du Roy, arrests et règlements de Sa Majesté Louis XV & de sa Cour Souveraine de Parlement à Besançon*, 6 vols. (Paris, 1726), 5:366-67.

³⁵⁹ Isabeau Menet and Samuel Mours, *Isabeau Menet, prisonnière à la tour de Constance (1711-1758)*. [*Lettres d'Isabeau Menet*] (Valence: Charpin & Reyné, 1935), 19-20, 50; Charles Sagnier, *La Tour de Constance et ses prisonnières, liste générale et documents inédits* (Paris, 1880), 17, 112-99.

³⁶⁰ Bridel, *Trois séances*, 103. Calvin associates the shaving of a woman's head with disgrace in his commentary on 1 Corinthians 11:6. John Calvin, *Commentaires de Jehan Calvin sur le Nouveau Testament*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1854-55), 3:429.

diameter, pierces the centre of the entire fort from the upper terrace through the floors of the second and first stories into the cistern, thus opening the interior rooms to the elements. The upper room has a single open fireplace with a chimney that, according to Durand (Letter 30), did not draw. There are no private rooms, nor a dedicated kitchen or laundry. The women could not easily bathe or cook. Though Durand talks about an “apothicaire” in Letter 18, there were no medical facilities nor birthing facilities for the women who were pregnant at their arrest. Marie Vidal, for example, gave birth to her daughter Élisabeth on August 24, 1737. The baby died forty days later and was buried in the cemetery of Aigues-Mortes.³⁶¹

Eighteenth-century French prisoners received a set daily ration of bread and straw, *au pain et à la paille*, commonly known as *le pain du roi*. Sagnier reproduces a receipt of the provision of bread to the Tour de Constance in April 1761, seven years before Durand’s release:

ETAT des prisonniers renfermées dans la Tour de Constance auxquelles le pains du Roy a été fourny pendant le quartier d’avril 1761. [A list of twenty prisoners appears here.] *Par le Sr Etienne Boulary maitre boulanger de cette ville par order de Mr le major [...] a fourny le d. Boulary aux prisonniers suivant l’état cy derrière une livre et demy de pain à chacune par jour, à raison de trois sols la livre.*³⁶²

In the mid-eighteenth century a *livre et demy* amounted to about 610 grams in Avignon and Montpellier, and 595 grams in Marseilles.³⁶³ The straw was for bedding, but healthier women might burn theirs to help dry the clothes of those who were ailing.³⁶⁴ The prisoners’ survival

³⁶¹ Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, xiii.

³⁶² “State of the prisoners incarcerated in the Tour de Constance to whom the King’s bread was provided during the quarter beginning April 1761. [...] By Étienne Boulary, senior, master baker of this town, by order of Monsieur the Major [...] was provided by the said Boulary to the prisoners previously listed a pound and a half of bread for each person per day, at a cost of three sols per pound.” Sagnier, *Tour de Constance*, 210-12. Boulary appears as a witness on Durand’s 1760 will and testimony. Bost, “Prisonniers d’Aigues-Mortes,” 146.

³⁶³ Jean-Joseph Expilly, *Dictionnaire géographique, historique et politique des Gaules et de la France*, vol. 5 (Amsterdam, 1768), 712.

³⁶⁴ Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 39.

depended on gifts of money and food from the outside which is why twenty-one of Durand's extant letters are pleas or receipts for such gifts.³⁶⁵

Contemporary accounts describe the harsh conditions within the Tour de Constance. In 1722 Antoine Court depicted the prisoners as “abandonnées de tout le monde, livrées en proie à la vermine, destituées d’habits, ressemblant à des squelettes, ne respirent qu’autant qu’il fallait pour ne les croire pas mortes.”³⁶⁶ In 1737, Durand's fellow prisoner Isabeau Menet described daily life and conditions:

Nous avons deux heures le matin et deux heures le soir que nous allons en la Basse-Cour du Fort, et le reste du jour et toute la nuit nous sommes enfermées dans notre Tour. [...] Une meurtrière obstruée de quelques planches formait ‘les lieux communs’; quelques bancs, des paillasses avec des draps et des couvertures posées sur les dalles ou sur les planches constituaient tout le mobilier. [...] Aigues-Mortes était alors environné de marécages. Cela rendait plus malsaine la vie à la Tour où l’humidité pourrissait tout. De plus les étroites meurtrières ne laissent pénétrer aucun rayon de soleil.³⁶⁷

The *basse-cour*, in the context of a fortification, typically referred to a courtyard for horses or other farm animals.³⁶⁸ Menet may refer to the upper terrace, or more likely to this courtyard just outside the main tower:

³⁶⁵ Letters 1-3, 9-10, 13-14, 24, 31, 33-34, 40-42.

³⁶⁶ “Abandoned by everyone, given to be the prey of vermin, destitute of clothes, looking like skeletons, breathing only so much as to show that they were not dead.” de Falguerolles, “Tour de Constance,” 186.

³⁶⁷ “We have two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening when we go into the lower courtyard, and the rest of the day and all night we are locked in our Tower. [...] A loophole partitioned by some boards forms “the common area”; some benches, some mattresses with sheets and covers placed on the flagstones or on boards is the whole of our furniture. [...] Aigues-Mortes was surrounded by swamps then. This made life in the Tower most unhealthy, where the dampness rotted everything. Moreover, the narrow loopholes do not allow a single ray of sunlight to enter.” Menet and Mours, *Isabeau Menet*, 23-24.

³⁶⁸ Littré, s.v. “basse-cour”.



Figure 19. The Tour de Constance from an outer courtyard.
Photo by the author, November 5, 2018.

A letter written by a Pastor Clement to Antoine Court, dated 14 August 1743, describes the environment: “Les prisonnières d’Aiguës Mortes sont renfermées dans une tour obscure, humide et puante, ne voyant que peu ou point le jour.”³⁶⁹ The writer and politician François-

³⁶⁹ “The prisoners of Aigues-Mortes are contained in an obscure tower, damp and putrid, seeing little or nothing of the light of day.” de Falguerolles, “Tour de Constance,” 199.

Antoine Boissy d'Anglas (1756–1819) provides an eye-witness account of his visit to the fort with his mother when he was aged six or seven and Durand was still imprisoned there:³⁷⁰

J'ai vu aussi cette tour de Constance, [...] C'était vers 1763, [...] il y avait alors plus de vingt-cinq prisonnières [...]. La prison était composée de deux grandes salles rondes, qui en occupaient la totalité et qui étaient l'une au-dessus de l'autre; celle d'en bas recevait le jour de celle d'en haut, par un trou rond d'environ six pieds de diamètre, lequel servait aussi à y faire monter la fumée, et celle d'en haut d'un trou pareil fait à la terrasse qui en formait le toit. Beaucoup de lits étaient placés à la circonférence de chacune des deux pièces, et c'étaient ceux des prisonnières; le feu se faisait au centre; la fumée ne pouvait s'échapper que par les mêmes ouvertures, qui servaient à faire entrer l'air, la lumière, et malheureusement aussi la pluie et le vent.³⁷¹

Durand herself describes the conditions in Letter 16 (1755), to her niece Anne:

Tu as donc été malade, ma chère enfant, et tu l'es encore par cette cruelle maladie de la goutte et d'un rhumatisme. Que tu dois avoir souffert, ma chère fille, car je sais combien on souffre des douleurs; j'y ai passé à mon tour, car cette année j'en ai senti l'amertume, surtout dans ma tête que je criai pendant huit jours; et après ce temps-là, il me descendait des eaux si mauvaises de ma tête dans mon estomac avec une senteur si insupportable que je me sentais mourir chaque moment. C'était dans les grands

³⁷⁰ Durand refers to Madame Boissy in Letter 37 (1763), written the same year as her visit, and Letter 46 (1773).

³⁷¹ "I also saw that Tour de Constance. [...] It was about 1763 [...] there were more than twenty-five prisoners then. [...] The prison was comprised of two large round rooms which made up the whole of it and which were one above the other. The lower room received daylight from the upper room through a hole of about six feet in diameter, which served also to draw the smoke up into it, and the upper room had a similar hole, opening onto the terrace which formed the ceiling. Many beds were placed around the circumference of each of the two rooms which belonged to the prisoners. The fire was made in the middle; the smoke could only escape by the same openings which served to allow in the air, the light, and also, unfortunately, the rain and the wind." Boissy d'Anglas, *Essai sur la vie*, 381-82.

froids, et notre prison regorgeait l'eau de partout, et je ne pus pas me faire aucun remède.³⁷²

The prisoners were frequently cold and wet. In Letter 30 (1759), "To a lady", Durand vividly describes the effects of such incarceration upon the bodies and minds of the women:

Nous gémissons toujours dans la plus affreuse de toutes les prisons, nous sommes accablées de douleurs et d'infirmités par son extrême humidité et l'horrible obscurité qui règne perpétuellement dans cette maison de force. Nous ne pouvons réfléchir les rayons du soleil de la nature, vrai symbole du soleil de justice, nous nous trouvons toujours entourées de ténèbres, la fumée qui nous étouffe; elle est l'horreur des horreurs, nous pourrions dire un enfer anticipé, nous y passons une vie plus languissante, même plus amère que la mort [...]. Voilà, Madame, notre pitoyable sort et celui de ces misérables infortunés; j'en fais ici un tableau fort raccourci, crainte de trop lasser Votre Grandeur.³⁷³

Further on, Durand describes their existence in "la plus étrange espèce de sepulcre" (the strangest kind of sepulchre). In Letter 36 (1762), to Paul Rabaut, she describes how poorly clothed they were: "Dieu sait comme j'ai passé ma vie: je me suis passée de robe tout l'été, de tablier, de souliers et autres choses bien nécessaires."³⁷⁴ She writes also of her "cruelle prison", and that "Ma santé est toujours altérée par quelque mal" (My health is always

³⁷² "So, you were sick, my darling child, and you suffer still the cruel diseases of gout and rheumatism. What you have had to suffer, my darling daughter, for I know how much one suffers from these pains. I too have suffered from them, for this year I felt the bitterness of them, in my head most of all. I cried out in agony for eight days. After that, a foul liquid ran from head into my stomach with such a vile taste that I felt every moment that I was dying. This was during the spell of bitter cold, our prison overflowed with water, and I could not find any relief."

³⁷³ "We still suffer endlessly in the most awful prison, we are still subject to terrible pain and disease due to the extreme damp and horrible gloom that are constant in this fortress. We are unable to gaze at the sun's natural rays, a true symbol of the Sun of Justice. We are continually enshrouded by darkness and suffocating smoke. It is the horror of horrors; dare I say a foretaste of hell. We live here a life more forlorn and more bitter even than death. [...]. Here is, Madame, our pitiable fate, and that of those wretched unfortunates. I paint a very restrained picture, fearing to weary Your Majesty too much."

³⁷⁴ "God knows how I have lived my life: for the entire summer I went without a dress, an apron, shoes and other necessities."

affected by some malady.) In Letter 15 (1754) Durand describes one of her many illnesses to her niece:

Je me sentis prise de violentes douleurs par tout mon corps, que je n'avais presque point de repos, [...] je me trouvais doublement embarrassée à servir ta grand-mère d'une violente maladie, qu'elle ne m'a donné repos ni nuit, ni jour. [...] je t'assure, ma chère fille, que je me suis épuisée. Il y a autour de quatorze mois que je ne mange rien d'appétit.³⁷⁵

All contemporary witnesses, whether prisoners or visitors, testify to the harshness and degradation of the women's incarceration.

Prisoners could find freedom from the Tour de Constance by abjuring their Protestant beliefs. Benoît explains that abjuration meant attending the parish church of Aigues-Mortes to renounce the "heresies" of Luther and Calvin, and that for the women, therefore: "On n'avait de choix qu'entre l'apostasie ou la prolongation indéfinie du séjour sous la voûte humide."³⁷⁶ Fabré explains that "si les victimes voulaient hâter leur sortie, il leur fallait la solliciter en usant de la formule selon laquelle 'elles reconnaissent humblement le *crime* commis'; et se donnaient comme 'des criminels repentants.'"³⁷⁷ Despite the injustice and humiliation of such a confession, a number of Durand's fellow prisoners chose this course.³⁷⁸ (I discuss the momentousness of abjuration in Chapter 5.) André Chamson writes that "Nulle

³⁷⁵ "My whole body was so overwhelmed with violent pain that I had almost no rest. [...] I found myself doubly burdened for I was also helping your grandmother through a severe illness. She gave me no rest either night or day. [...] Believe me, my darling daughter, I was exhausted. I have not felt like eating for about fourteen months now."

³⁷⁶ "They had only the choice between apostatising or the indefinite prolongation of their stay in their damp vault." Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 89-90.

³⁷⁷ "If the victims wanted to hasten their release, they had to solicit it by using the formula according to which 'they humbly admitted the *crime* they had committed'; and to present themselves as 'repentant criminals.'" Fabre and Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 257-58. Emphasis original.

³⁷⁸ The 1742 abjurations of Susanne Domeson and Elisabeth Michel, e.g., imprisoned the same year as Durand, are transcribed in Charles Sagnier, "Quelques prisonnières de la Tour de Constance en 1730," *Bulletin* 28, no. 11 (1879): 508, 514.

part ailleurs, la justice et la liberté n'ont été aussi cruellement outragées que dans la personne de ces pauvres femmes.”³⁷⁹ Similarly, John McManners muses that the women “were punished by the cynical device used in the twentieth century in the Gulag archipelago, equating prisoners of conscience with the vilest criminals.”³⁸⁰ It was the convergence of the apparent harmlessness of the prisoners – punished only for practising their religion – with the length and harshness of their imprisonment, and the standing offer of freedom upon humiliating abjuration, that has struck later commentators as so cruel and unjust.

In 1732, after two years of her imprisonment, Marie Durand learned of the arrest, trial, and execution of her brother Pierre in Montpellier. Pierre was captured while carrying out his pastoral duties, a capital offence after the Revocation. We have no surviving description by Marie of the impact of this news upon her, but she always speaks of her dead brother in an admiring and respectful tone. In Letter 6 (1751), writing to Anne, who was aged one when her father died, Marie referred to “feu ton cher père” (your dear late father), and in Letter 12 (1753), twenty-one years after Pierre’s death, she urged Anne to “Imite les vertus de ton cher père, qui se faisait aimer de tous ceux qui le connaissaient.”³⁸¹ It is not unlikely that Marie Durand was herself honouring the memory of Pierre, and imitating his virtue, when she resisted abjuration. Respect for Pierre likely tied Marie even more closely to the Calvinist community and heritage into which she was born, and for which Pierre was martyred.

³⁷⁹ “In no other place has justice and liberty been as cruelly outraged than in the persons of these poor women.” *La Tour de Constance*, 13.

³⁸⁰ McManners, *Church and Society*, 621.

³⁸¹ “Imitate the virtues of your dear father, who made himself loved by all those who knew him.”

Marie Durand's Release from the Tour de Constance

The final release of the prisoners from the Tour de Constance came through the intervention of Prince Charles-Juste de Beauvau (1720–1793), appointed Military Commandant of Languedoc in 1747. The memoirs of Beauvau's second wife, Marie Charlotte de Rohan-Chabot, describe how during 1767 he wrote to Saint-Florentin, Secrétaire d'État (1747–75), and requested “vivement” (vigorously) the release of the remaining prisoners in Aigues-Mortes.³⁸² Borrel claims that it was Chabot herself who urged Beauvau to intercede for the prisoners, and that the Prince was moved also by the fact that the prisoner Gabrielle Guinges was the mother of two sons who had died fighting for France.³⁸³ In any case Beauvau's efforts in the 1760s, the same decade as Voltaire's campaign for the rehabilitation of Jean Calas, reflected a growing toleration for the Huguenots and a growing unease with their harsh punishments.³⁸⁴ Jean-Stanislas de Boufflers, the nephew of Beauvau, in a presentation to the Académie Française on July 31, 1805, described his visit to the Tour de Constance with his uncle on January 11, 1766. Although Falguerolles questions the reliability of the report, its description of the prison conditions is consistent with other eye-witness accounts.³⁸⁵ It records, at the very least, the relief Boufflers thought the prisoners must have felt for their impending release.

Nous entrons dans Aigues Mortes et nous allons descendre de cheval au pied de la tour de Constance; nous trouvons à l'entrée un concierge empressé qui, après nous avoir conduits par des escaliers obscurs et tortueux, nous ouvre à grand bruit une

³⁸² Marie Charlotte de Beauvau, *Souvenirs de la Maréchale Princesse de Beauvau suivis des Mémoires du Maréchal Prince de Beauvau*, ed. Sabine de Standish (Paris, 1872), 16-17.

³⁸³ Borrel, *Pierre et Marie Durand*, 39-40.

³⁸⁴ Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, 56-57. Lasserre cites the Seven Years' War (1756–63) as another factor in the lightening of persecution, as troops were withdrawn from internal policing work to foreign combat. Lasserre, *Séminaire de Lausanne*, 26.

³⁸⁵ de Falguerolles, “Tour de Constance,” 223. Fabre also noted the late publication date (1872) and repeated editing of these memoirs. Fabre and Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 282.

effroyable porte sur laquelle on croyoit lire l'inscription du Dante.... Les couleurs me manquent pour peindre l'horreur d'un aspect auquel nos regards étoient alors si peu accoutumés; tableau hideux et touchant à la fois, où le dégoût ajoutoit encore à l'intérêt! Nous voyons une grande salle privée d'air et de jour; quatorze femmes y languissoient dans la misère, l'infection et les larmes; le commandant [Beauvau] eut peine à contenir son émotion, et pour la première fois ces infortunées aperçurent la compassion sur un visage. Je les vois encore à cette apparition subite tomber toutes à ses pieds, les inonder de pleurs, essayer des paroles, ne trouver que des sanglots, puis, enhardies par nos consolations, raconter toutes ensemble leurs communes douleurs. Hélas! Tout leur crime étoit d'avoir été élevées dans la même religion qu'Henri IV. La plus jeune de ces martyres étoit âgée de cinquante ans; elle en avoit huit lorsqu'on l'avoit arrêtée allant au prêche avec sa mère, et la punition duroit encore.³⁸⁶

Though Saint-Florentin only authorised the release of three or four of the oldest and frailest of the women, Beauvau defied him. He released all nine remaining women in 1768 and closed the prison for good.³⁸⁷ Boufflers described Beauvau's announcement to the prisoners of their liberty:

³⁸⁶ "We enter Aigues-Mortes and dismount at the foot of the Tour de Constance. At the entrance we find an officious gaoler who, after having conducted us by dark and torturous stairs, opened with a great noise a frightful door on which one might read the inscription of Dante.... ["Abandon all hope ye who enter in here."] I lack the palette to paint the horror of a sight to which our eyes were then so little accustomed, a picture at once hideous and touching, where disgust added still to the interest! We see a large room lacking fresh air and daylight, fourteen women languished there in misery, pestilence, and tears. The commandant could scarcely contain his emotion, and for the first time these unfortunates saw a compassionate face. I see them still, at his sudden appearance, falling at his feet, washing them with tears, attempting to speak, but finding only sobs. Then, encouraged by our consolations, they recounted together their common suffering. Alas! Their only crime was to have been raised in the same religion as Henri IV. The youngest of these martyrs was aged about fifty. She was eight when they arrested her for having gone to hear a sermon with her mother, and the punishment endured still." de Beauvau, *Souvenirs*, Appendice 76.

³⁸⁷ Aurenche, "La Maison de Marie Durand," 524; de Beauvau, *Souvenirs*, 16-17. McManners describes Saint-Florentin thus: "Insensitive to the suffering of others and stickler for the letter of the law, he had the mentality of the commandant of a concentration camp." McManners, *Church and Society*, 607.

Vous êtes libres, leur dit d'une voix forte, mais altérée, celui à qui, dans un pareil moment, j'étois fier d'appartenir; mais comme la plupart d'entre elles étoient sans ressource, sans expérience, sans famille peut être, et que ces pauvres captives, étonnées de la liberté comme des yeux opérés de la cataracte pourroient l'être du jour, risquoient d'être exposées à un autre genre d'infortune, leur libérateur, ému d'une nouvelle compassion, fit sur le champ pourvoir à leurs besoins.³⁸⁸

The fact that Beauvau risked his career to free the prisoners, announced their liberation in person, and provided some material support, indicates his strong concern for them. Saint-Florentin ordered the release of Marie Durand on March 31, 1768:

Le Roi a bien voulu, Monsieur, rendre la liberté à la no[mm].^{6c} Marie Durand sœur d'un ministre qui fut exécuté à Montpellier en 1732, et qui est détenüe par ordre de sa Majesté depuis plus de 36 ans à la tour de Constance. Je Vous envoie, en conséquence, l'ordre nécessaire pour l'en faire sortir, et je vous prie de le faire exécuter. Je suis parfaitement, votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

Florentin.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁸ “‘You are free’, a strong but affected voice said to them, the one to whom, in such a moment, I was proud to belong; but because the greater part of them were without means, without experience, perhaps without family; and because these poor captives, stunned by freedom – like eyes operated on for cataracts seeing daylight again – risked being exposed to another kind of misfortune, their liberator, moved by a new compassion, then and there provided for their needs.” *Souvenirs*, Appendice 76-77.

³⁸⁹ “The King desires, Monsieur, to give freedom to the one named Marie Durand, sister of a minister who was executed in Montpellier in 1732, and who was detained by order of His Majesty for more than 36 years in the Tour de Constance. I send you, therefore, the necessary order for her release, and pray that you will execute it. I am, perfectly, your very humble and obedient servant, Florentin.”

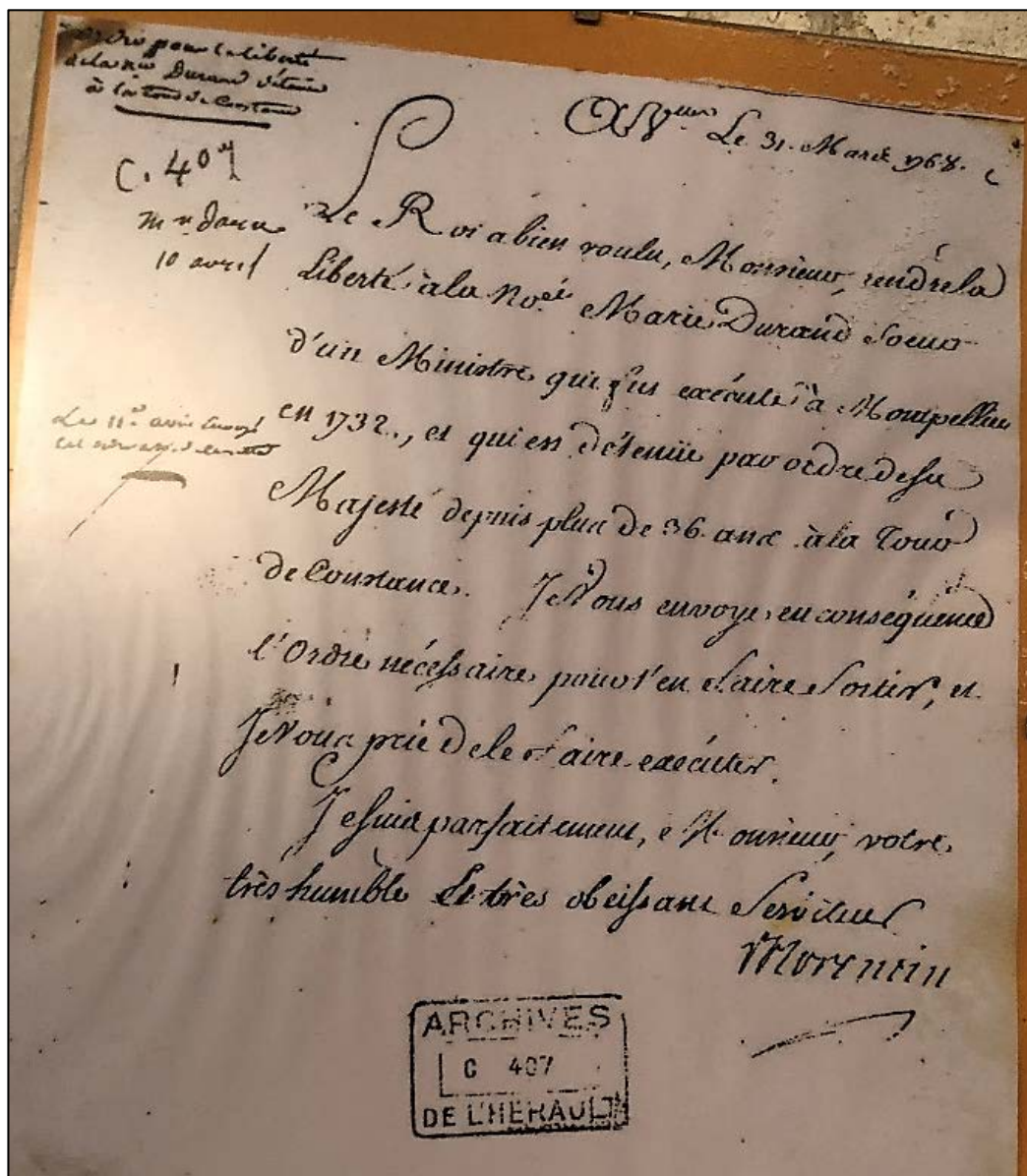


Figure 20. Florentin's release order for Marie Durand, March 31, 1768.
 Facsimile at the Musée du Vivarais. Original from the Archives de l'Herault, C 407.
 Photo by the author November 6, 2018.

Marie Durand was therefore most likely released in April 1768. Though we know that she returned to her home in Le Bouchet, we do not know the means, the timing, nor the route of her return.³⁹⁰

³⁹⁰ Her earliest extant letter from her home, Letter 43, is dated August 7, 1772, some four years after her release.

Borrel, writing in the nineteenth century, suggests plausibly, but without evidence, that imprisonment had “tellement ridé son visage, blanchi ses cheveux, amaigri ses membres, dénaturé son teint et affaibli sa constitution, qu’elle ne pouvait ni marcher, ni travailler assise à des ouvrages de mains.”³⁹¹ Depictions of the prisoners suffering and deterioration, such as those of Court, Clement, Boissy d’Anglas, Borrel, and Goy, have helped to create sympathy for Durand as a “martyr of the faith.” The last two prisoners in the Tour de Constance were released December 26, 1768: Suzanne Pagès had been incarcerated for twenty-nine years, Marie Roux for twenty-three years.³⁹²

Marie Durand 1768–76, The Struggles of her Final Years

Marie Durand’s difficulties did not end when she finally returned to her family home. On June 8, 1765, Anne Durand was both baptised as a Catholic and married to Jean-Claude Cazeneuve, a Catholic with a history of litigation, and she gave birth to a daughter ten days later.³⁹³ On September 5, 1771, Cazeneuve successfully sued Marie, who was the sole beneficiary of her father’s estate, for the sum of 1,800 livres. This amount included: 600 livres which were bequeathed to Anne by Étienne Durand November 3, 1748; 300 livres which the parties agreed was owed to Anne from the estate of her grandmother Claudine Gamonnet; 350 livres which had been paid by Anne to Marie on July 29, 1760 (this was sent from Marie’s property; there had been an informal arrangement whereby Anne was allowed to keep the income of the farm in return for maintaining its upkeep); and the remaining 550 livres interest on the whole.³⁹⁴ The first 600 livres were to be paid within four months, and

³⁹¹ “So lined her face, whitened her hair, emaciated her limbs, distorted her complexion, and weakened her constitution, that she could no longer either walk nor sit to work at her handicrafts.” Borrel, *Pierre et Marie Durand*, 42.

³⁹² *La Tour de Constance*, 17.

³⁹³ Marmelstein, “Dernières pages,” 52n4.

³⁹⁴ Marmelstein, “Dernières pages,” 52-54.

the remainder would be paid to the Cazeneuves from Durand's estate at her death. Furthermore, until her death she would be required to pay five percent interest on the remaining debt, 60 livres per annum. Three weeks after this lawsuit Durand mortgaged her home to a silk merchant, Pierre Marquets, in order to make the initial 600 livre payment to Cazeneuve.³⁹⁵ Cazeneuve's successful lawsuit permanently estranged Durand from her niece and meant that her final years were lived out in penury. Paul Rabaut requested a gift of 100 pistoles (about 1,000 livres) from the Walloon Church in Amsterdam to help meet these expenses; the church agreed instead to pay a 200 livre annual pension.³⁹⁶ Further sums were required however, which Durand obtained by selling a portion of her land to the farmer Jacques Bevengut in 1771.³⁹⁷ In Letter 46 (December 26, 1773) written five years after her release, Durand described her ongoing suffering to Paul Rabaut:

[Vos nouvelles] me sont très nécessaires dans l'état triste et pitoyable où je suis. Je n'ai d'autre consolation dans mes cuisants remords que de l'Écriture et de vos chères lettres, mais elles me sont bien rares. Prodiguez-les moi un peu plus, je vous en conjure par les entrailles du Christ. Ayez compassion d'une créature qui n'a de consolation que deux fois l'année, qu'elle s'y traîne comme elle peut. [...] Conservez-moi votre pastorale protection que je tâcherai de m'en rendre digne. Priez le Seigneur qu'il me fortifie.³⁹⁸

Durand's life after imprisonment was scarcely less impoverished and painful than before.

³⁹⁵ Marmelstein, "Dernières pages," 53-55.

³⁹⁶ Rabaut, *Lettres*, 2:138-39.

³⁹⁷ Marmelstein, "Dernières pages," 56.

³⁹⁸ "[Your news] is indispensable to me in my sad and pitiable condition. I have no other consolation in my bitter remorse than Scripture and your precious letters, but they are so rare. Lavish them a little more upon me, I implore you by the bowels of Christ's mercy. Have compassion for a creature who has no consolation except for twice-yearly communion, where she drags herself as best she can. [...] Continue to offer me your pastoral protection, which I will try to make myself worthy of. Pray to the Lord, that he will strengthen me."

On September 23, 1776, Rabaut informed the Walloon Church in Amsterdam of Durand's death. They had recently sent a gift to her: "Votre lettre de change a été acquittée, et par conséquent j'ai reçu les 200 [livres]. tournois pour Mademoiselle Durand. Peu de jours après que je lui eus écrits pour lui apprendre cette nouvelle, un pasteur du Vivarais me marqua que cette demoiselle venait de mourir."³⁹⁹ Dardier accordingly puts Durand's death in the first half of September 1776.⁴⁰⁰ However, an *acte notarié* from January 21, 1784, concerning Marie Durand's estate, dates her death to July 1776.⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁹ "Your bill of exchange was discharged, consequently I received the 200 livres Tournois for Mademoiselle Durand. A few days after I had written to her to tell her this news, a pastor from the Vivarais remarked that the lady had in fact died." Rabaut, *Lettres*, 2:219.

⁴⁰⁰ Rabaut, *Lettres*, 2:219.

⁴⁰¹ Aurenche, "La Maison de Marie Durand," 530.

Monsieur
 votre lettre de change a été acquittée & par conséquent
 j'ai reçu les 2000 tournois pour mademoiselle Durand.
 Peu de jours après que je lui eus écrit pour lui apprendre
 cette nouvelle, un Pasteur du vicarais me marqua
 que cette Demoiselle venoit de mourir, & quelle avoit
 laissé diverses dettes, mais aussi quelque bien fonds
 dont a hérité un de ses parents. une Dame voisine
 lui avoit prêté 2000 dont elle paye la moitié
 l'année desuivante, avec promesse de lui payer les 1000
 restants l'on quelle recevoir la permission. Voilà
 au vrai monsieur l'état des choses. En assurant de
 mon respect votre vénérable compagnie je la prie
 de déterminer comment elle veut disposer de ces deux
 cent livres, ce que j'exécuterai ponctuellement sur les
 premiers avis qui m'en sera donné.
 voudrais vous m'en donner des nouvelles de m^r
 molinet dit flechier, de frise de monsieur le digne Pasteur
 versuade, que j'ai l'honneur de voir chez moi il y a
 quelques mois, mais sans que ledit m^r molinet étoit
 arrivé heureusement. Voilà tout ce que j'ai vu,
 seulement quelqu'un m'a assuré depuis peu, qu'il
 avoit été reçu membre de votre vénérable consistoire

Figure 21. Paul Rabaut's letter to the Walloon church, September 23, 1776. Rabaut informs the elders that Marie Durand had died. First page. ARW folio 1199-1200.

Durand had made her last will and testimony on September 12, 1774. Three facts about the document should be noted. First, Durand instructs that she be buried in a cemetery chosen by the sole beneficiary, Mary Vey: "Elle a recommandé son ame à Dieu et a eslu la sépulture de

son corps au cimetière qu'il plaira à son héritière bas nommée."⁴⁰² Concerning her gravesite today, Jean-Paul Sarrazin writes, "Il n'y a aucune trace de la tombe de Marie Durand. Elle a dû être enterrée à proximité de la maison, mais aucun écrit ne l'atteste. A l'époque il était courant de ne pas mettre de pierre tombale."⁴⁰³ Following the Revocation, Protestant cemeteries were closed, their funeral rites and burial in church yards was forbidden, and the cadavers of converts to Protestantism could be desecrated. It was not until 1736 that official Protestant burials were permitted on a case-by-case basis. This meant that eighteenth-century Protestant burials and gravesites tended to be discreet.⁴⁰⁴ (Official concerns over the burial of Protestants as Protestants were being expressed as late as 1768.⁴⁰⁵) Second, Durand bequeathed a pittance of five sols to her niece Anne, to ensure that her disinheritance could not be contested by mistaken omission.⁴⁰⁶ Third, Mary Vey is instructed to pay Durand's outstanding debts from the estate. In fact, Rabaut discovered that Durand had, in her last years, borrowed 200 livres from a certain Dame Boissy, of which she had repaid half, and the final half of which she planned to repay from her Amsterdam pension.⁴⁰⁷ This is perhaps the same Madame Boissy who visited the Tour de Constance in about 1763, and to whom Durand referred in Letter 37 (1763). Durand's life, "a succession of tribulations" (Letter 43), ended in poverty and debt.

⁴⁰² "She commended her soul to God and elected the burial of her body in whatever cemetery it would please the undersigned beneficiary to choose." Marmelstein, "Dernières pages," 57.

⁴⁰³ "There is no trace of the grave of Marie Durand. She must have been buried near to the house, but no record attests to this. At the time it was usual not to erect a gravestone." Jean-Paul Sarrazin, personal communication, October 22, 2020.

⁴⁰⁴ 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, no. 2 (2002): 240-41.

⁴⁰⁵ "Enterrement Protestant dans le diocèse de Laon. Verse la fin du règne de Louis XV. Dépêche ministérielle inédite à l'intendant de la généralité de Soissons. 1768," *Bulletin* 7, no. 1/3 (1858): 43-44.

⁴⁰⁶ Marmelstein, "Dernières pages," 57-58.

⁴⁰⁷ Rabaut, *Lettres*, 2:220.

Durand's Alignment with the Reformation in France

In Chapter 1 I showed that Marie Durand has been memorialised as both a Christian and secular heroine of freedom of conscience. I showed that memorialisers like Fabre, Rist, Bastide, Falguerolles, Chamson, and Peyrot, in the manner of Voltaire's *Traité sur la tolérance*, claimed Durand ultimately for the cause of the secular freedoms of the Enlightenment. In fact, Marie Durand was born into a community that was explicitly and consciously connected to the Reformation in France and, to an even greater degree, the theology and praxis of Calvin. It was a community whose identity was forged amidst the bloodshed of the sixteenth-century religious wars, and grief for the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre. They saw themselves as a persecuted minority, the survivors of almost two centuries of oppression.⁴⁰⁸ Their religious freedom had been legislated by Henri IV's Edict of Nantes, then steadily constricted by Louis XIII, and then outlawed altogether by Louis XIV's Revocation. Durand was born into a family whose books, whose religious devotion in the home, whose determination to attend dangerous Huguenot assemblies, and whose willingness to suffer for their faith, was inherited from their Calvinist forebears. In short, Durand chose to remain for thirty-eight years in that "strangest of sepulchres" out of devotion to her French Reformed heritage. She should not be caricatured, however. I will show in Chapter 5 how seventeenth-century French Protestantism shifted somewhat from its sixteenth-century Calvinist roots and how Durand herself expressed a strain of conscious independence from her community. Durand demonstrated nonetheless a lifelong commitment to her Protestant heritage.

⁴⁰⁸ Roberts, "France," 116. Luc Racaut, "Religious Polemic and Huguenot Self-Perception and Identity, 1554-1619," in *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World, 1559-1685*, ed. Raymond A. Mentzer and Andrew Spicer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 42-43.

If understanding Durand's heritage and life is essential to the correct interpretation of her letters, just as important is an understanding of Durand's correspondents. I analyse Durand's epistolary network in the following chapter, before turning to Durand's letters themselves.

3. Marie Durand's Epistolary Network

This chapter describes Marie Durand's epistolary aid network and compares it to a contemporary Huguenot aid network directed by Antoine Court from Lausanne. The comparative analysis draws attention to a number of the distinctive elements of Durand's network. It shows that while Court's network consisted of social and ecclesiastical notables who directed aid to the French Protestant church "top down" from the Huguenot Refuge, Durand participated instead in a primarily grassroots network which attempted to direct aid "bottom up" from within France. The analysis adds to our overall understanding of how aid for suffering Protestants in France was solicited and directed in the eighteenth century.

The term "Refuge" refers both to the two waves of Protestant refugees from France – the first around French Religious Wars (1562–98), the second around the 1685 Revocation – and to the Huguenot expatriate communities formed by these refugees. The largest of these communities were established in north-west Europe: Geneva and Switzerland, the Dutch Republic, Brandenburg-Prussia and other German states, the British Isles, Denmark, and Sweden.⁴⁰⁹ This European Refuge, in turn, became the base for an international aid network, what Ducommun and Quadroni describe as a "réseau protestant d'entraide financière et diplomatique" (Protestant financial and diplomatic mutual-aid network.)⁴¹⁰ The Réseau shared news and theological discussion, directed funds for the training of French pastors in Lausanne, and provided practical financial and diplomatic aid to Huguenots in France suffering under the strictures of the Revocation.⁴¹¹ From the 1720s, the Réseau was directed primarily by Antoine Court and Benjamin Du Plan (1688–1763), a controversial figure

⁴⁰⁹ Cabanel, *Histoire des protestants*, 711, 744. Cabanel discusses the ambiguities of the term "Refuge" on pg. 711.

⁴¹⁰ Marie-Jeanne Ducommun and Dominique Quadroni, *Le Refuge protestant dans le pays de Vaud (fin XVII^e - début XVIII^e s): Aspects d'une migration* (Geneva: Droz, 1991), 43-44. I refer to this as the Réseau from hereon.

⁴¹¹ Duley-Haour, "Désert et Refuge," 615-16.

appointed by the Synod of Bas-Languedoc in 1725 to be *député général des églises* – a roving ambassador of the *église du Désert* to the European powers of the Refuge.⁴¹² (In London on June 28, 1739, Du Plan arranged a collection of funds specifically for the prisoners of the Tour de Constance.⁴¹³) The Réseau was supported by ambassadorial chaplains and charitable committees established in Geneva, the Hague, and London – the latter two under royal patronage.⁴¹⁴ It pursued delicately balanced aims: to provide financial support to the Désert whilst shielding it from dangerous attention; and to provide leadership and direction to the Désert whilst respecting its autonomy. Huguenots within the Refuge tended to look to suffering Huguenots in the Désert as either martyrs of the faith, like those of the early church and Reformation, or as orphans needing their superior resources and protection.⁴¹⁵ None of Durand’s letters are addressed to foreign notables, nor to these high-level charitable committees, so they do not form a part of the Réseau per se.

This chapter proceeds with a preliminary overview which describes letter-writing in eighteenth-century France, Durand’s letters as artefacts, and the personal qualities and abilities which are demonstrated in her letters. The destinations and addressees of Durand’s letters are then described. Next, a comparative analysis with the Réseau draws attention to the notable distinctives of Durand’s network, and what it adds to our understanding of how aid was directed to the eighteenth-century *église du Désert*. The chapter concludes by observing what Durand’s epistolary network tells us about her socioreligious commitment: whether she saw herself as aligned with the Enlightenment, or with her French Reformed heritage.

⁴¹² Edmond Hugues, *Les Synodes du désert: actes et règlements des synodes nationaux tenus au désert de France, de l’an 1715 à l’an 1793*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1885), 1:38-42.

⁴¹³ de Falguerolles, “Tour de Constance,” 198.

⁴¹⁴ Pauline Duley-Haour, “La Correspondance d’Antoine Court, une correspondance pastorale?,” *Bulletin* 159 (2013): 154-56; Pauline Duley-Haour, “Les Tribulations d’un député général des Églises: l’affaire Du Plan (1743-1751),” *Revue d’histoire du protestantisme* 1, no. 1 (2016): 99; *FP* 4:443.

⁴¹⁵ Duley-Haour, “Désert et Refuge,” 617-18.

An Overview of Durand's Letters

The forty-eight surviving letters of Marie Durand have only ever been published together in Gamonnet's 1986 *Lettres de Marie Durand*. Gamonnet edited forty-five of these letters from surviving autographs and three from facsimiles of autographs.⁴¹⁶ I was able to access forty-one of these autographs for my own translation and analysis, sufficient to confirm the accuracy of Gamonnet's edition.⁴¹⁷ Letters 1 (1740) to 42 (1767) were written in the Tour de Constance, Letters 43 (1772) to 48 (1775) in Durand's home in Le Bouchet. Céline Borello published a new edition of Durand's letters in 2018 with three editorial differences to Gamonnet's edition. First, Borello does not include the letters that I have asterisked, which were not written in Durand's hand. Second, Borello incorporates Gamonnet's Letters 41 and 42 into one letter.⁴¹⁸ Letter 42 does indeed appear as a postscript to Letter 41, but I have followed Gamonnet and enumerated it separately because of their distinct dates (June 22, 1767; November 30, 1767) and their distinct addressees: the elders of Lédignan and the Walloon Church in Amsterdam respectively. Third, Borello does not include Letters 43 to 48, which Durand wrote after leaving the Tour de Constance.

News and Postal Networks in Eighteenth-Century France

News in eighteenth-century France was distributed within and between markets, cafés, taverns, salons, bookshops, and reading groups, and was conveyed by *bruits publics* (gossip), songs, poems, letters, newsprint, and books. The interplay between such diverse milieux and media wove a functional news network.⁴¹⁹ Durand's letters show that news came to the prison via direct correspondence, and indirectly from the commandant's household via

⁴¹⁶ The facsimiles are Letters 8 (1752), 36 (1762), and 48 (1735).

⁴¹⁷ Letters 4, 6-7, 9-35, 37-38, 40-48.

⁴¹⁸ Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, 57-59.

⁴¹⁹ Robert Darnton, "An Early Information Society: News and the Media in Eighteenth-century Paris," *American Historical Review* 105, no. 1 (2000): 8.

prisoners working there.⁴²⁰ She refers to a “bruit public” in Letter 19 and to “nouvelles” thirty-five times across her corpus. In Letter 46, less than three years before her death, she describes “nouvelles” as “très nécessaires dans l’état triste et pitoyable où je suis.”⁴²¹ News was an important comfort to Durand in her suffering.

From 1676, letters in France were classified for postage fees as either a *lettre simple*, a *lettre double*, or a rarer *lettre avec envelope*. A *lettre simple* was a folded letter with the address written on the outside, which was sealed and sent without an envelope.⁴²² The majority of Durand’s epistles match this description of *lettres simples*, with the exception of nine of her letters sent to the Walloon Church in Amsterdam.⁴²³ These are folded two or three times without an address and were probably included with other papers sent to the church by Paul Rabaut.

Writing and receiving letters was costly. In 1760, it cost 8 sous (0.4 livres) for a *lettre simple* to be carried from Paris to Lyon, a distance of some 460 kilometres: a little more than the 400 kilometres from Aigues-Mortes to Geneva, but far less than the 1,200 kilometres from Aigues-Mortes to Amsterdam. Fees were not strictly proportional to distance and these official tariffs only approximate what may have been paid to unofficial couriers.⁴²⁴ On the reverse of Letter 43, sent from Aigues-Mortes to Amsterdam in 1761, a separate hand indicates that the letter passed through Montpellier and appears to list a two-part courier’s fee of 6 sous then 1 livre 10 sous, totalling 1 livre 16 sous.⁴²⁵ Adhesive postage stamps were not used in France until 1849 and prior to that letters were usually paid for by the recipient.⁴²⁶ In

⁴²⁰ Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, xxii.

⁴²¹ “Indispensable to me in my sad and pitiable condition.”

⁴²² Georges d’Avenel, “Le Port des lettres depuis sept siècles,” *Revue des Deux Mondes (1829-1971)* 22, no. 1 (1914): 153.

⁴²³ Letters 9, 10, 24, 31, 33, 34, 40, 45, 46. ARW folio 1199-1200.

⁴²⁴ d’Avenel, “Port des lettres,” 153.

⁴²⁵ ARW folio 1199-1200.

⁴²⁶ David Scott, “Post and the Postage Stamp,” in *Postcolonial Realms of Memory*, ed. Étienne Achille, Charles Forsdick, and Lydie Moudileno (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), 351.

Letter 18 Durand expresses concern about the cost of her letters to her niece, but asks her not to be concerned about the cost of her letters to Durand: “Si tu m’aimais autant, tu m’écirais deux lettres pour une, car je te plains ton argent, mais pour me marquer ton amitié, tu ne plaindrais pas le mien.”⁴²⁷ Paying for postage upfront, however, risked the letter not being delivered. In Letter 7 Durand is concerned that if she posts a letter it may not arrive, so she chooses instead to send the letter via personal courier. Such couriers might also “flesh out” the letter with oral news about the letter writer.⁴²⁸ We do not know what it cost the prisoners of the Tour de Constance to receive their correspondence, but given their lack of food, clothing, and fuel, letters that did not enclose money must have been received at no little sacrifice.

The vicissitudes of early modern travel meant that no letter was guaranteed to reach the addressee. In 1731 Pierre Durand wrote to his wife Anne that some of his letters to her must have been lost; he was dismayed that she thought that he had not written to her: “Accusons plutôt, mon cher enfant, le bureau. [...] Je suis très mortifié que ma lettre se soit perdue.”⁴²⁹ A reference by Marie Durand in Letter 28 to missing letters from Geneva shows that some letters sent to (and no doubt from) Aigues-Mortes were likewise lost.

⁴²⁷ “If you could love me the same, you would write me two letters for every one of mine, for though I’m concerned about the money you pay [on receipt], as a mark of your affection toward me, do not be concerned about what I pay.”

⁴²⁸ Gary Schneider, *The Culture of Epistolarity: Vernacular Letters and Letter Writing in Early Modern England, 1500-1700* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), 31.

⁴²⁹ “Blame the post office instead, my dear child. [...] I was mortified that my letter was lost.” Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 109.

Letters in the Eighteenth-Century French Penal System

The fraught business of letter writing in eighteenth-century France was even more difficult for prisoners. Paul Bamford describes the strong official in-principle disapproval of galériens – convicts working on or around the royal galleys – writing and receiving letters:

Written communication from *forçats* or slaves to persons outside the galleys was at all times illicit, unless supervised or inspected. As one memoirist remarked in 1751: ‘It must be agreed that criminals such as the *galériens* are not supposed to have dealings with other men. They can appropriately be regarded as cut off from the body of society. [...] Malefactors cannot rightly exercise the liberties of writing and receiving letters, unless with the participation of the persons to whom their discipline is confided.’⁴³⁰

Correspondence was for prisoners a privilege that depended on opportunistic prison guards who could charge prisoners a fee to send letters, and who could demand a part of monies received by prisoners.⁴³¹ Food and other necessities sent to the prisoners might also reduce the prison’s burden of care. Correspondence was an even greater challenge for Protestant prisoners. Bamford explains:

The most rigorous supervision was reserved for the Huguenots’ correspondence. But even they were allowed to write to their family and friends, and it was deemed necessary to issue a special ordinance in 1696 requiring galley officials take particular care to censor such mail. [...] A considerable amount of uncensored correspondence took place as well, in spite of rigorous surveillance.⁴³²

⁴³⁰ Bamford, *Fighting Ships*, 218-19.

⁴³¹ Bamford, *Fighting Ships*, 219.

⁴³² Bamford, *Fighting Ships*, 219.

A letter from the Intendent Bernage to Saint-Florentin, January 21, 1731, shows that a prison official intercepted and read Étienne Durand's letter to Marie (September 19, 1730), and that it was used as evidence against releasing him from the Fort de Brescou. The official wrote: "Il a écrit depuis peu à sa fille prisonnière dans la Tour de Constance une lettre par laquelle il l'exhorte à prendre courage et à ne point regretter sa maison, il lui cite l'exemple de son frère [...]. Ce prisonnier est lui-même un religionnaire très obstiné."⁴³³ In fact, all eighteenth-century letter writers in France could expect their letters to be opened and checked by the authorities. In his history of the Huguenot seminary in Lausanne, Claude Lasserre describes how correspondence was conducted with great secrecy. Teachers and students knew that letters sent by official post could be opened by government agents, so they tended to send letters via merchants and other known third parties.⁴³⁴

The letters that Durand wrote from prison were sent with varying degrees of security and regularity. In Letter 4 (1740) she invites Justine Peschaire, a Huguenot in the town of Vallon, to share the letter with other Protestants. But in Letter 29 she urges Savine de Coulet, a Catholic at Versailles: "Ne faites voir ma lettre à personne car vous m'exposeriez extrêmement."⁴³⁵ Five times she asks a recipient to burn her letter: once to Anne in Letter 6 (1751), the remaining times to Paul Rabaut in Letter 32 (1760, twice), Letter 35 (1762), and Letter 38 (1764). There are two notable gaps in Durand's surviving corpus: nearly six years between Letters 4 and 5 (May 1740 to February 1746), and more than five years between Letters 5 and 6 (February 1746 to June 1751). These may be gaps in letters that have survived, or may also reflect the particularly harsh repression Huguenots faced in the 1740s, described in the *Mémoire historique* (1751), presumably by Antoine Court, which may have

⁴³³ "He wrote a little while ago to his daughter – a prisoner on the Tour de Constance – a letter in which he exhorted her be courageous and not to regret her house, citing to her the example of her brother [...]. This prisoner is himself a very obstinate Protestant." Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 88-89.

⁴³⁴ Lasserre, *Séminaire de Lausanne*, 45-46.

⁴³⁵ "Do not let anyone see my letter, you would compromise me drastically."

halted the prisoners' correspondence.⁴³⁶ From 1751, letters survive from every year (except 1765) until Durand was released in 1768, and Durand's references to postal charges in Letters 6 (1751), 7 (1752), 18 (1755), and 32 (1760) indicate that her epistles were sent openly at these times.

Distributing books promoting Protestant ideas was also risky in eighteenth-century France. In 1744, for example, a certain Jacques Guillot was condemned to the galleys for ten years "pour avoir introduit en France des livres protestants: son ballot contenant 169 volumes est brûlé à Grenoble."⁴³⁷ Krumenacker believes Durand's requests for books indicate the ease with which Protestant books circulated.⁴³⁸ Yet though Durand requested books, there is no evidence that she received them. On the contrary, I show below that when she does quote from books, she quotes from memory. Although there were times and circumstances when sending letters was apparently difficult and dangerous, the prisoners seem to have been generally permitted to send and receive letters, and that was certainly the case from 1751. Receiving books may have been more difficult.

A Physical Description of Marie Durand's Letters

Marie Durand refers several times to her writing materials and circumstances. She begins Letter 37 by saying, "Permettez-moi de profiter du vide de ce papier."⁴³⁹ And in Letter 46, to Paul Rabaut, "[je me] trouve avec cette seule feuille de ce mauvais papier."⁴⁴⁰ In Letter 29 Durand apologises for the quality of her ink, "Mon encre gâte mais ce n'est pas ma faute

⁴³⁶ [Antoine Court], *Mémoire historique de ce qui s'est passé de plus remarquable au sujet de la religion réformée en plusieurs provinces de France depuis 1744 jusqu' à la présente année 1751* ([Lausanne], 1751).

⁴³⁷ "For having imported Protestant books into France: his package, containing 169 volumes, was burned in Grenoble." Yves Krumenacker, "La Circulation clandestine des livres protestants au XVIII^e siècle," *La Lettre clandestine* 13 (2004): 87.

⁴³⁸ Krumenacker, "Circulation clandestine," 97.

⁴³⁹ "Allow me to take advantage of this blank sheet of paper."

⁴⁴⁰ "I have only this single sheet of bad paper."

étant captive.”⁴⁴¹ Notwithstanding her complaints, Durand’s writing materials seem to be of a high quality and have survived for some two-and-a-half centuries in excellent condition. The cream-coloured paper is generally thick and firm. The handwriting, with few exceptions, is neat and legible. Despite Durand’s apology her ink is generally evenly applied with few blotches.⁴⁴² The ink has sometimes bled through to the reverse side, without affecting legibility. The size of Durand’s writing noticeably increases between the earlier and later letters, not surprising given Durand’s apparent eye problems, which she refers to in Letters 18, 25, 36, and 37. In Letter 37, for example, she explains, “À peine je vois écrire” (I can barely see to write). The autographs evince few crossings-out or other corrections.

Durand’s *lettres simples* are written on a single sheet of paper, roughly foolscap in size. The paper has been cut, mostly cleanly, or folded and then carefully torn along the seam. Almost all are then folded in half, giving four writing sides. Typically, the author’s address, “La Tour de Constance,” is given on the top of the first side, and then the date. The more formal letters begin with a salutation, those to her niece without any salutation. The writing generally covers the first three pages and sometimes spills over onto the fourth. None of the letters is crossed – the practice of writing a second set of writing over the first at right angles – which one might expect given the expense of postage and paper. The address and a salutation are written in the centre of the fourth page. The letter was then folded around the address and sealed as a rectangular packet, about sixteen by eight centimetres. Most bear the remnants of a broken red or black wax seal. Three letters to Anne (Letters 18, 22, 23) include a postscript written on a separate slip of paper corresponding to the dimensions of the folded

⁴⁴¹ “My ink is bad but, being a prisoner, this is not my fault.”

⁴⁴² William Barrow writes that tests “on a large number of early documents” from American, English, and Continental publications, have showed that “iron gall [iron (II) sulfate] inks were used almost exclusively. [...] The iron gall inks flow easily from a quill pen, penetrating the fibres of the paper to form a black insoluble compound.” “Black Writing Ink of the Colonial Period,” *The American Archivist* 11, no. 4 (1948): 291-92.

packet, and which was included within it.⁴⁴³ With the exception of her relatively short receipts, Durand's letters are generally between eight hundred and a thousand words long.

The following series of six photos are of Letter 18 (1755) to Anne. They show, in order, the first three pages of writing, the address page with fold marks around the address, and an inserted second postscript with writing on both sides. The stain of a red wax seal can be seen on the third page. The third page also shows where Durand finished and signed the letter, "La Durand," before completing the page with the first post-script. Jean-Paul Sarazin explains that it was typical to sign letters with the family name preceded by the masculine or feminine definite article to distinguish family members of different sexes.⁴⁴⁴ "La Durand" thus distinguished Marie from her brother Pierre.

⁴⁴³ Étienne Gamonnet's edition prints the words on these slips below the main body of the letter.

⁴⁴⁴ Interview, November 8, 2018.

De La tour de Constance le 9^e 8bre 1755
 Je t'avois promis une fille que je affectement
 bien tenu, que je te ferois deponer, & je
 n'avoit pas manqué de le faire à la foire
 De beaucaire. Le monsieur coconas n'avoit été
 malade en ce temps, car tout seroit petit absent
 étoit prêt, & le dit monsieur, & mon apothicaire
 & nous sommes fort amis, il en a paru autant
 facher que moy, il vouloit même me faire
 partir mon paquet par la voie d'un de ces
 ces amis, mais comme il n'alloit pas en cette
 foire je craignois qu'il se perdît, & je ne
 pas le mettre au hazard, cela en conséquence
 le sujet de cette interruption, puisque j'ay
 tant fait je ne t'enverray pas encore les
 chemises, parce que je n'ay pas ajoutés quelque
 petite chose, & d'autres raisons qui peut être
 seront favorables, du moins nous avons cette
 esperance, de nous le mettre, & j'oppose
 cependant ne me veut point du mal ma bran

Figure 22. Marie Durand Letter 18 (1755). Part 1/6.

Page one of the letter. Photograph by the author, November 2018. BPF Ms. 358.
The library's stamp and folio page number in red ink is visible under the sender's address.

petite, car je suis portée de tres bonne volonté, &
 je t'ayme autant qu'on, et capable d'aimer. Et tu
 m'aimi autant tu m'écrit de deux lettres pour
 une, car je te pleure ton argent, mes yeux me
 marquent ton amitié tu ne pleureroit pas
 le mien fait de machere fille. Et tu m'obligera
 infiniment, de m'envoyer la Lettre de l'ami j'ay eue une
 fluxion tres violente au visage, mes yeux s'en
 resistent encore, mes tout cela ne sera rien
 ce n'est adieu, conserve toy le mieux que tu
 pourras de cette cruelle maladie donc tu fus
 attaquée, & apprends moy de tout de ta sante
 le plus possible, car je t'embrasse tendrement
 mon amie t'embrasse tendrement de même que la
 fille, & la petite ta fait de plus principal de
 te chercher elle font beaucoup pour toy la
 petite fit d'amulette. et je t'ay fait l'assure que
 la fit fort bien, toutes mes compagne te font
 mille compliments. Et te souhaitent une sante
 de plus parfaite, et que dieu te mette au pres
 de moy, nous parlons souvent de toy avec
 mon amie, soit toujours bien sage ma chere sœur
 que l'amour de dieu & la crainte fassent toujours la

Figure 23. Marie Durand Letter 18 (1755). Part 2/6.
Page two of the letter. Photograph by the author, November 2018. BPF Ms. 358.

Reigle de ta conduite, console toy dans la divine
 parole, adieu mon ange aime moy. Et croie que tu
 es grace dans mon cœur en ongle de diamant, et que tu
 seras toute ma vie, ton affectionnée et bonne amie
 sincère tante La D^{me} Durand

Le petit neveu de mon père qui a été
 malade, mes aprèsant, il est bien, il vouloit
 apprendre le métier à bas de soie, ou laine,
 on luy a voulu cinquante. Et il dit pour
 passer le contrat, sa mère ne pas en état de
 fournir à cette dépense. Depte de rendre du bien
 ce qui ne pas aisé dans ce pays, d'ailleurs cet enfant
 na d'ambition que pour l'étude, et se nous assure
 qu'on ma protesté qu'il étoit dommage que cette
 jeune plante ne fut cultivée, cet enfant a été
 malade de chagrin de ne pouvoit aller joindre
 ses chers oncles, il se remercie très humblement de ta
 tendre attention, et il se supplie au nom de
 de jesus christ, de mettre à part pour luy, la portion de
 l'éternel des biens que ces auteurs de tous don passés, luy
 donne, et de luy permettre de voir sa face, il embrasse
 de toute les tendres affection, sa mère luy présente
 bien ses respects et plus fournis, elle embrasse aussi sa fille
 elle et force contente que son chers oncle lui soit satisfait
 elle l'exhorte d'agir toujours de même, elle me vint
 voir, elle vous fait toutes complimens, le petit
 gaulant embrasse la taut

Figure 24. Marie Durand Letter 18 (1755). Part 3/6.

Page three of the letter. Photograph by the author, November 2018. BPF Ms. 358. Note red seal remnant and the *paraph* – stylised letters that were first introduced to make forgery more difficult – that concludes Durand's signature. The first postscript commences below Durand's signature.

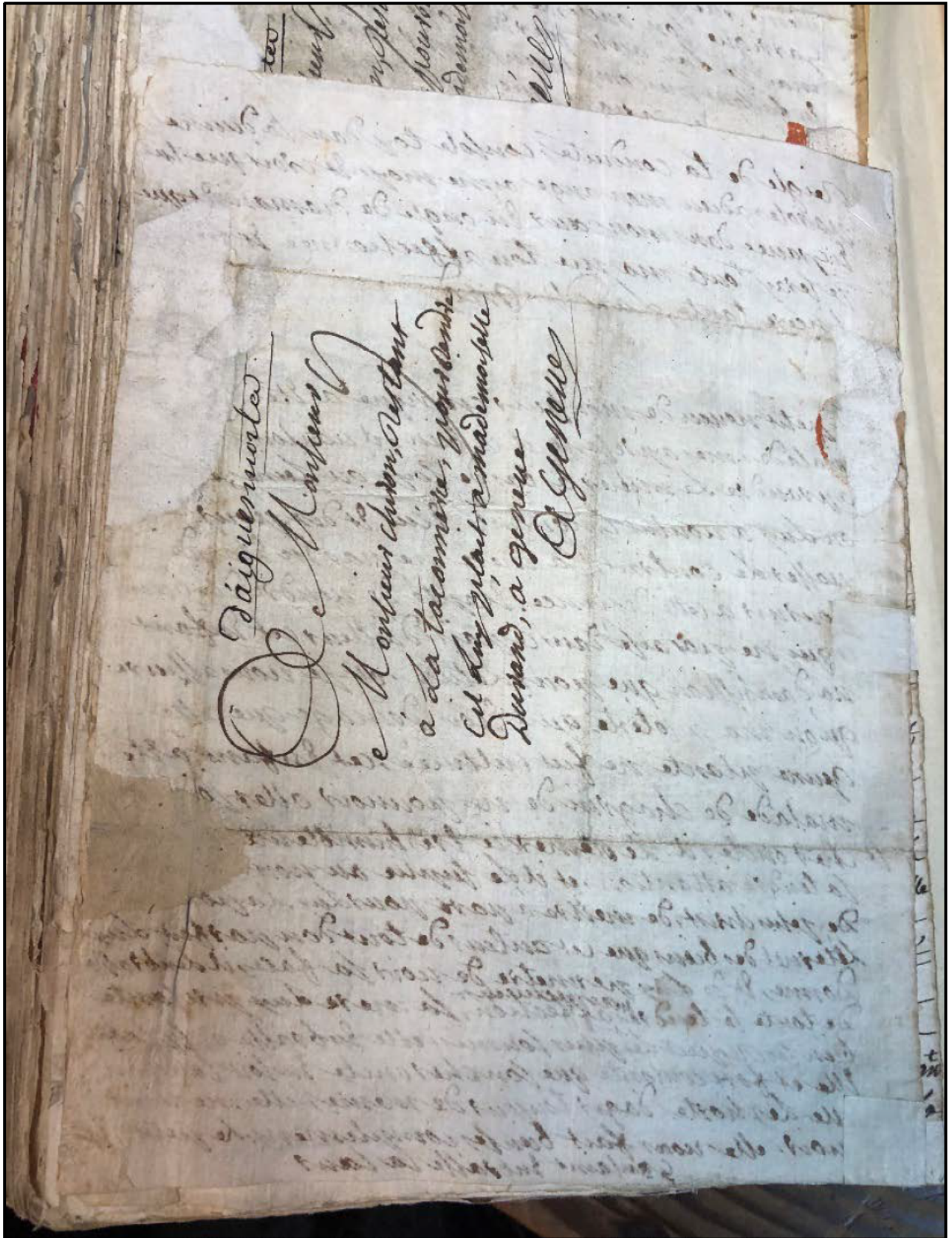


Figure 25. Marie Durand Letter 18 (1755). Part 4/6. Address.

Fold marks around the address are visible, typical of a *lettre simple*. Note the *paraphs* that begin and end the salutation and destination city. This view shows how the letters were bound by the BPF into a folio, Ms. 358.

fait en sorte que m^r. Goussier l'ait
 croye ces deux mots que j'aim
 dans ta lettre en faveur de
 un petit neveu, tu entendra
 la consequence des sentiments
 qui aura pour cet enfant &
 tu consultera la suite &
 me dira la façon de passer
 car ce petit voudroit se rendre

Figure 26. Marie Durand Letter 18 (1755). Part 5/6. Front of insert slip.
 The dimensions of the slip correspond to the fold marks around the address.

au près de luy & embrasse
 leur, fait bien mes compl
 à m^r. Chiron à madame
 & à toute tes amies
 & tes protecteurs, madame
 De sentiments de fait les compl
 écrit moy au plutôt. avec
 Grace

Figure 27. Marie Durand Letter 18 (1755). Part 6/6. Reverse of insert slip.

Marie Durand's Style

Étienne Gamonnet, a literary scholar, observes in Durand's writing the signs of a thorough education and explains that the "sobriété" and "réserve" of her letters is typical of her region, class, and religion. He cites her use of rare and educated expressions and turns of phrase, subtle nuances, and frequent use of the imperfect subjunctive, though on occasion with erroneous spelling.⁴⁴⁵ He also praises Durand's style, as "claire, variée, riche, une langue qui se plie parfaitement aux règles du bon usage de son temps."⁴⁴⁶ From this he concludes that Durand had "une intelligence remarquable puisque, sans aucun moyen, sans livres, sans maîtres, elle a pu acquérir une formation intellectuelle dont la solidité dépasse non seulement celle des femmes de son temps et de sa condition, mais celle de beaucoup de ses contemporains."⁴⁴⁷ Durand was modest about her own abilities. In Letter 29, to Savine de Coulet, she writes, "Priez Madame de pardonner les fautes et les défauts de ma lettre; je suis une fille, c'est tout dire pour le manque de tour et de capacité."⁴⁴⁸ And in Letter 19, she writes to her niece:

Tu trouves mes lettres à ta fantaisie, ma chère petite! C'est l'amitié que tu as pour moi qui fait que tu n'y découvres pas les défauts ; car pour le style ni les termes je n'y fais guère d'attention quand il est question de t'écrire, et pour te dire vrai, je n'en recopie jamais aucune, si ce n'est que j'écrive à des grands.⁴⁴⁹

The final aside shows that Durand consciously adjusted her style to her recipients.

⁴⁴⁵ Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 69.

⁴⁴⁶ "Clear, varied, rich, a language that submits perfectly to the rules of 'good writing' at the time." Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 73.

⁴⁴⁷ "A remarkable intelligence since, without any means, without books, without teachers, she was able to acquire an intellectual formation of a solidity that surpassed not only the women of her time and condition, but that of many others of her contemporaries." Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 77.

⁴⁴⁸ "Beg Madame to pardon the mistakes and errors of my letter. I am of humble birth, that is all I need to say for the lack of polish and ability."

⁴⁴⁹ "You find my letters to your fancy, my little darling! It is your affection for me which causes you not to see the mistakes, for I scarcely give attention to style or expression when I am writing to you and, to tell you the truth, I never redraft any of my letters, except when I am writing to the lords and ladies."

Marie Durand's Memory

Three strands of quotations in Durand's letters suggest that she could quite accurately recall texts that she had read some thirty years prior. First, in Letter 30 (1759), Durand closely paraphrases numerous sentences from *Les Larmes de Jacques Pineton de Chambrun* (1688).⁴⁵⁰ She quotes the address Pineton delivered in the Hague on March 28, 1687 before Marie the Princess of Orange. (I address the significance of the quotation below.) The following table places the original text of Pineton's *Larmes* in the left-hand column, and Durand's recollection of it to the right.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁵⁰ Céline Borello identifies the quotation in Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, 10-11.

⁴⁵¹ Jacques Pineton de Chambrun, *Les Larmes, qui contiennent les persécutions arrivées aux églises de la principauté d'Orange, depuis l'an 1660: la chute et le relèvement de l'auteur: sermon* (1688; repr., The Hague, 1726), 297-300.

Pineton (1687)	Durand, Letter 30 (1759)
La bonté de V[otre] Altesse Royale ne doit pas être mise au dernier rang de ses rares vertus. J'en fais aujourd'hui une heureuse expérience.	Les bontés de Votre Grandeur ne doivent pas être mises au dernier rang de vos rares vertus ; nous en avons fait une heureuse expérience. ⁴⁵²
Vous êtes regardée comme l'Espérance d'Israël, & comme cette sage & pieuse Esther, qui fit tant de bien du peuple de Dieu. Mais que fais je, Madame, de vous comparer à cette grande Reyne? Je ne prens pas garde, qu'autant que l'Evangile est élevé par dessus la loi, autant vos incomparables vertus sont élevées au dessus de cette Princesse. La force de la Grace, qui regne dans le cœur de V[otre]. A[ltesse]. R[oyale]. produira sans dout des effets plus glorieux que les siens.	Nous vous regardons, Madame, comme l'espérance d'Israël et comme cette sage et pieuse Esther qui fit tant de bien au peuple de Dieu. Mais que faisons-nous, Madame, de vous comparer à cette grande reine, nous ne prenons pas garde qu'autant que l'Évangile est élevé par-dessus la loi, autant vos incomparables vertus sont élevées au-dessus de cette princesse. La force de la grâce qui règne dans le cœur de Votre Grandeur produira, sans doute, des effets plus merveilleux que les siens. ⁴⁵³
Voici la bienheureuse Marie de nos jours qui fait renaître le Sauveur du monde.	Voici la grande & bienheureuse Marie de nos jours, qui fait renaître le Sauveur du monde. ⁴⁵⁴

⁴⁵² “Your Majesty’s kindness is not the least of your rare virtues. We had the good fortune to experience it.”

⁴⁵³ “We look to you, Madame, as the hope of Israel, like that wise and pious Esther who brought so much good to the people of God. By comparing you to this great queen, Madame, we acknowledge that as much as the Gospel is lifted above the Law, so too your incomparable virtue rises above that princess. The power of grace which reigns in Your Majesty’s heart will beyond doubt produce even more marvellous effects than it did in hers.”

⁴⁵⁴ “Here is the blessed Mary of our days who gives birth again to the Saviour of the World.”

Second, in Letter 32 (1760), a quotation from Nostradamus’s “Sixain 48”, first published in 1557, something that Durand claims to have read before her incarceration in 1730: “Il y a bien vingt-cinq ans que je l’ai lu.”⁴⁵⁵ A quotation from a circa 1691 edition is in the left-hand column, Durand’s quotation in the right:

Nostradamus, Sixain 48 (from an edition ca. 1691, Lyon)	Durand, Letter 32 (1760)
Du vieux Charon on verra le Phœnix, Estre premier & dernier de ses fils, Reluire en France, & d’un chacun aimable, Regner long-temps, avec tous les honneurs, Qu’auront jamais eu ses predecesseurs Dont il rendra sa gloire memorable. ⁴⁵⁶	Du vieux charron autant que le phénix sera premier et dernier de ce fils reluire en France et d’un chacun aimable régner longtemps avec tous ses honneurs, plus que n’ont jamais fait tous ses prédécesseurs dont il rendra la gloire mémorable.” ⁴⁵⁷

Third, Durand frequently quotes the Bible. A number of her quotations are listed here in the right hand column, alongside the translation that most closely corresponds to them, the 1707 version of David Martin.⁴⁵⁸ Though I cannot be certain that this is the translation of the Bible that Durand had read, her quotations correspond with Martin’s more closely than other translations: the *Bible de Genève* (1560) or its 1744 revision by Ostervald, for example.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁵ “It was easily twenty-five years ago that I read it.”

⁴⁵⁶ Nostradamus, *Les Vrayes Centuries et Propheties de Maistre Michel Nostradamus: Où se voit représenté tout ce qui c’est passé, tant en France, Espagne, Italie, Allemagne, Angleterre, qu’autres parties du Monde. Revûës & corrigées suivant les premieres Editions imprimées à Paris, Roüen, Lyon, Avignon, Troyes, Hollande, & autres. Avec la vie de l’Auteur. Et plusieurs de ces Centuries expliquées par un Sçavant de ce temps* (Lyon, ca. 1691), 179.

⁴⁵⁷ “From the old wheelwright to the phoenix, will come the first and last of that son to shine in France, and from each beloved, a long reign with all its honours, more than any of his predecessors, upon whom he will restore memorable glory.”

⁴⁵⁸ *La Sainte Bible, qui contient le Vieux et le Nouveau Testament, [...] Par David Martin, Pasteur de l’Église Wallonne d’Utrecht*, (Amsterdam, 1707).

⁴⁵⁹ For an introduction to the history of French Bible translations see Clive R. Sneddon, “The Bible in French,” in *New Cambridge History of the Bible*, ed. Richard Marsden and E. Ann Matter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Reference	BDM 1707 (italics original)	Durand	Letter
James 1:26	Si quelqu'un entre vous pense être religieux, et il ne tient point en bride sa langue, mais séduit son coeur, la religion d'un tel homme <i>est vaine</i> .	Si quelqu'un pense être religieux et qu'il ne tienne pas en bride sa langue, la religion d'un tel personnage est vaine. ⁴⁶⁰	Letter 12, 1753
Job 13:15	Voilà, qu'il me tue, je ne laisserai pas d'espérer <i>en lui</i> .	Quand tu me tuerais, Seigneur, j'espérerai toujours en toi. ⁴⁶¹	Letter 16, 1755
1 Peter 3:17	Il vaut mieux que vous souffriez en faisant bien, si la volonté de Dieu est que vous souffriez, qu'en faisant mal.	Il vaut infiniment mieux souffrir en faisant bien si telle est la volonté du Seigneur, qu'en faisant mal. ⁴⁶²	Letter 29, 1759
Mark 12:17	Rendez à César les choses qui sont à César; et à Dieu celles qui sont à Dieu	Rendre à César ce qui appartient à César et à Dieu ce qui appartient à Dieu. ⁴⁶³	Letter 30, 1759
Revelation 19:6	J'entendis ensuite comme la voix d'une grande assemblée, et comme le son de grandes eaux, et comme le bruit de grands tonnerres, disant; Alléluia! car le Seigneur notre Dieu tout-puissant est entré en son Règne.	Puisse bientôt la grande assemblée faire entendre sa voix comme celle d'un fort tonnerre en disant: 'Alléluia!' Le Seigneur est entré dans son règne! ⁴⁶⁴	Letter 36, 1762

⁴⁶⁰ "If anyone thinks he is religious but does not bridle his tongue, that person's religion is empty."

⁴⁶¹ "Though you slay me, Lord, I will always hope in you."

⁴⁶² "It is infinitely better to suffer for doing good, if such is the will of the Lord, than for doing evil."

⁴⁶³ "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God." Durand's quotation of Mark 12:17 is closer to the 1744 version of Ostervald, which likewise puts the direct object demonstrative in the singular. "Rendez à César ce qui appartient à César, et à Dieu ce qui appartient à Dieu." *La Sainte Bible, ou l'Ancien et le Nouveau Testament, d'après la version revue par J. F. Ostervald*, (1744; repr., London, 1858).

⁴⁶⁴ "May the great assembly soon make its voice heard, like that of mighty thunder, shouting: 'Hallelujah! The Lord enters into his reign!'"

Durand tells us that she had not read Nostradamus for twenty-five years and the quote from that text alone indicates an excellent memory. It is possible that she had *Les Larmes* and the Bible in prison and paraphrased these texts but is more likely that the differences are due to quoting from memory.⁴⁶⁵ Durand's quotations from memory also suggest that the prisoners' access to books was limited, and gives some indication of Durand's reading and intelligence.

Durand's Addressees

There are three main reasons why Durand wrote her letters. First, she writes on behalf of her fellow prisoners to secure urgent material support. Letters sent to request supplies and to record receipt of supplies and their correct disbursement reassured benefactors and encouraged ongoing support and were, therefore, almost certainly a matter of life and death to the prisoners. This explains the formal – practically legal – declaration in Letter 3* (1740), acknowledging receipt of a consignment of approximately 650 kilograms of food and thread, and 300 metres of cloth: “Nous déclarons et confessons avoir reçu tout ce qui est énoncé au rôle ci-dessus, [...] et nous sommes signées pour servir de décharge aux personnes qui nous les ont livrées.”⁴⁶⁶ Second, Durand writes to influential people in France, whether Protestant leaders or Catholic members of the court, pleading that they advocate for the prisoners' freedom. Third, Durand wrote as the only means by which she could remain connected to family and friends. John Kinder's study of epistolary networks shows how letters and gifts bring together two separate parties: “Metonymically a trace of the giver also comes into the presence of the recipient.”⁴⁶⁷ Gary Schneider observes that early modern letters even acted as

⁴⁶⁵ Susan Broomhall, *Women and Religion in Sixteenth-Century France* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 82. Broomhall suggests that even illiterate early modern female Bible teachers may have memorised Scripture from hearing it read aloud.

⁴⁶⁶ “We declare and profess to have received all that which is recorded in the above list, [...] and we returned a signed receipt with those who delivered these goods.”

⁴⁶⁷ John J. Kinder, “Letters and Other Gifts: On a Nineteenth-Century Italian-Australian Epistolary Network,” *Life Writing* 12, no. 3 (2015): 328-29.

“testimonies, as material evidence of social connectedness.”⁴⁶⁸ In the fourth century Jerome had written similarly that letters “make the absent present.”⁴⁶⁹ This was especially important with Anne; it was by letters alone that Marie could convey a sense of motherly presence to her orphaned niece. Correspondence assuaged the prisoners’ isolation. It was, as Silver put it in her study of Durand’s letters, the “antidote de l’oubli” (antidote to oblivion).⁴⁷⁰

In fact Durand acted as a secretary for her prison community. Thirteen of her extant letters were written on behalf of her fellow prisoners as a group (Letters 1**, 2, 3*, 9, 10, 13, 14, 24, 31, 33, 34, 40, 42) and Durand penned letters for individual prisoners. Two extant letters from Isabeau Sautel, for example, Pierre Durand’s mother-in-law imprisoned in the Tour de Constance from 1731, are in Durand’s handwriting, and in one of these letters she calls Durand “ma secretère”.⁴⁷¹ In 1758, pastor Paul Rabaut reassured Étienne Chiron, an important figure within the eighteenth-century Continental *refuge*: “Mlle Durand n’est point morte; elle est toujours à la Tour d’Aiguesmortes et n’y est pas inutile.”⁴⁷² Durand’s letters maintained a vital connection between the isolated prisoners of Aigues-Mortes with their family members and benefactors within the French Reformed community.

Marie Durand’s Letters to the Genevan Refuge

Seventeen of Durand’s letters were sent to Geneva. Sixteen were written to her niece Anne through Anne’s guardian Étienne Chiron. One was written to Chiron himself. This section

⁴⁶⁸ Schneider, *Culture of Epistolarity*, 27.

⁴⁶⁹ Letter 8.

⁴⁷⁰ Silver, “Résister,” 100.

⁴⁷¹ Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 88-89.

⁴⁷² “Mlle Durand is not dead; she is still in the Tour of Aigues-Mortes and is not without usefulness there.” Rabaut, *Lettres*, 1:225.

introduces the Huguenot Refuge in Geneva, before giving brief profiles of Chiron and Anne Durand.

Geneva and the French Reformation

Geneva is renowned for its association with the French-born Reformers Farel, Calvin, and Beza. Today, their five-metre high statues dominate the 1909 *Monument international de la Réformation*, built into the wall of Geneva's Old Town. Guillaume Farel worked to establish the Reformation in Geneva until it was formally adopted in 1535, before securing Calvin's services the following year. John Calvin's contribution was summarised in Chapter 2 and suffice it to say that the city, under his leadership, became renowned as "Calvin's Geneva."⁴⁷³ Theodore Beza, Calvin's colleague and successor in Geneva, maintained the link between French Protestants and the city through his writings, leadership formation, and personal visits to France. That the Reformed church in Geneva was founded and formed by French expatriates helps to explain its support for the Huguenot cause in France, and for Huguenot refugees from France.

Geneva was also a major source for the printed books that established and shaped the French Protestant church. In 1559, almost eighty percent of French Protestant texts were published there.⁴⁷⁴ In addition, hundreds of Genevan-trained pastors ministered in France.⁴⁷⁵ From 1726, a further 480 pastors were trained in Lausanne under the supervision of Genevan professors.⁴⁷⁶ Reformed scholarship in Geneva formed the foundation of the theology and praxis of Marie Durand and her eighteenth-century Huguenot peers.

⁴⁷³ Matthew J. Tuininga, *Calvin's Political Theology and the Public Engagement of the Church: Christ's Two Kingdoms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 11.

⁴⁷⁴ Andrew Pettegree, *The French Book and the European Book World* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 100.

⁴⁷⁵ Tuininga, *Calvin's Political Theology*, 82-83.

⁴⁷⁶ Lasserre, *Séminaire de Lausanne*, 90.

Huguenot ties to Geneva multiplied when tens of thousands of exiles passed through the city during the two great Refuges. Olivier Fatio records that by 1720 fifty-thousand people, nearly a third of all Huguenot refugees following the Revocation, had fled to Geneva as the first port of call for their life of exile, with some four thousand making it their permanent home.⁴⁷⁷ Many kept up their links to their home churches in France.⁴⁷⁸ After the Revocation, refugees to Geneva from the merchant, technical, and agricultural classes of the Dauphiné and Vivarais – the Durands’ home region – were prominent.⁴⁷⁹ Contemporary descriptions of refugees arriving in the city give a sense of the pathos of their flight and the corresponding generosity of the Genevans, and help explain the deep emotional connection felt by Huguenots like the Durands for Geneva.⁴⁸⁰ Geneva had become a Protestant Promised Land where, in the words of a refugee from the Cévennes, “on fait un exercice libre & pur, de la veritable Religion.”⁴⁸¹ Further, the Genevan church raised one-hundred thousand florins annually for the decades following the Revocation to aid those who remained in France.⁴⁸² Pierre Durand fled to Geneva in 1719 and kept his family safe there while undertaking pastoral work in France. It remained a haven for his orphaned daughter Anne.

⁴⁷⁷ “Genève et le refuge,” *Bulletin* 133 (1987): 115; H. Meylan, “Aspects du refuge huguenot en Suisse romande,” *Bulletin* 115 (1969): 523.

⁴⁷⁸ Tuininga, *Calvin’s Political Theology*, 61.

⁴⁷⁹ “Registres du Consistoire de l’Église de Genève. Notes et extraits inédits. 1541-1800,” *Bulletin* 2, no. 9/11 (1854): 517.

⁴⁸⁰ Bénédicte Pictet[?], “Le Refuge Helvétique: lettre écrite par un ministre de Genève en novembre 1685,” *Bulletin* 22, no. 12 (1873): 559-60. Jean Marteilhe also described the joy of the freed *galériens* when they arrived, in 1713, in “notre Jérusalem.” Jean Marteilhe, *Mémoires d’un galérien condamné pour cause de religion* (1757; repr., Nîmes: Edipro, 2009), 217.

⁴⁸¹ “One practised the true Religion freely and purely.” Jean-François Bion, *Relation des tourments qu’on fait souffrir aux protestants qui sont sur les galères de France. Faite par Jean Bion, c’y devant prêtre & curé d’Ursy, ancien aumonier de la galère nommée La Superbe* (London, 1708), 27.

⁴⁸² Fatio, “Genève et le refuge,” 116. Some funds were transferred to Marseille and were secretly distributed to the *galériens* by Turkish prisoners. Marteilhe, *Mémoires*, 141.

Étienne Chiron

Almost all of Marie Durand's letters to Anne were sent through Étienne Chiron (1709–1780), and Letter 11 was sent to Chiron himself. Chiron was born in Geneva to Huguenot refugees from near the Vivarais. In 1742 he opened a boarding school for boys and the three sons of Paul Rabaut were prominent alumni. Chiron was a member of the Genevan Comité français which coordinated support for Protestants in France, and Gamonnet places him at the heart of the network connecting refugees to their families at home.⁴⁸³ Chiron himself corresponded with Court de Gébelin, Paul Rabaut, and Voltaire. In a 1764 letter to Rabaut he describes a visit to Voltaire in Ferney, adjacent to Geneva. He recounts his gushing compliment to the philosophe: “‘Ah! monsieur,’ lui dis-je alors, ‘vous prenez tant de plaisir à soulager les misérables et à faire des heureux! Vous êtes un vrai ami des hommes; vos écrits ne respirent que des sentiments d’humanité, et vos actions les réalisent.’”⁴⁸⁴ He also urges Rabaut to be circumspect in sharing this anecdote, fearing to scandalise some. Chiron knew that not all Huguenots viewed Voltaire as an ally.

Marie Durand relied on Chiron to provide for Anne. Letter 11 (1753) is only 220 words long and mainly itemises the clothes that she had enclosed for her niece. She urges Chiron and his wife to go on caring for her Anne: “Ayez la bonté, Monsieur, de lui accorder toujours l’honneur de votre protection, votre charitable bienveillance et les soins de votre rare piété. Je demande la même grâce à madame votre chère épouse [...]. J’ose me flatter sur votre bonté naturelle.”⁴⁸⁵ Given her reliance on Chiron, Durand's taciturnity is surprising. Perhaps

⁴⁸³ Étienne Chiron, "Étienne Chiron to Antoine Court de Gébelin: c. Thursday, 19 December 1754," ed. Robert McNamee et al., vol. 2019, *Electronic Enlightenment Scholarly Edition of Correspondence* (University of Oxford), doi.org/10.13051/ee:doc/voltfrVF0990343a1c; Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 192n16.

⁴⁸⁴ “‘Ah! Monsieur,’ I then said to him, ‘you take much pleasure in supporting the destitute and making them happy! You are a true friend of mankind; your writings breathe only the feelings of humanity, and your actions realise them.’” Cited in Coquerel, *Histoire des églises*, 2:426.

⁴⁸⁵ “Please be good enough, Monsieur, to continue to grant her the honour of your protection, your charitable goodwill, and the care of your uncommon piety. I ask the same grace of Madame your dear wife [...]. I dare to presume on your natural goodness.”

it is a surviving exception to more fulsome letters, since in that same year in Letter 12 (1753) she expresses some annoyance with Chiron to Anne, that he “n’ait pas voulu se donner la peine de m’écrire un mot dans ta lettre. Peut-être ne fut-il pas satisfait de celle que je me fis l’honneur de lui écrire.”⁴⁸⁶ And in Letter 23 (1756) she says to Anne, “Je voudrais écrire à monsieur Chiron; mais je crains, comme j’ai tant tardé, qu’il ne veuille pas la recevoir.”⁴⁸⁷ Durand doubted Chiron’s attitude toward her. Her letters sent to, through, and about Chiron, nonetheless accord with his reputation as a leader and notable benefactor of the Huguenot Refuge in Geneva.

Anne Durand

Pierre Durand married Anne Rouvier in 1727 and they had three children. Their firstborn Jeanne died in 1730 aged two, their third-born Jacques-Étienne died in 1740 aged ten. Pierre was hanged in 1732 and his widow died in 1747, leaving only their second-born child Anne, born in 1729.⁴⁸⁸ Anne was one when her aunt was imprisoned, and three when her father was executed. Twelve-year-old Anne wrote to Chiron in 1741, six years before her mother’s death, and describes her suffering and reliance on the Chirons – the letter may well have been written at her mother’s instigation.

Monsieur, il et bien dons dans une situation aussi triste que la miene de trouver des personnes qui ayent lame aussi bien placee que vous et Madame votre epouse et qui

⁴⁸⁶ “He didn’t trouble himself to add a word to me in your letter. Perhaps he was displeased with the one I was honoured to write him.”

⁴⁸⁷ “I would like to write to Monsieur Chiron, but I fear that I have delayed it so long that he won’t want to accept it.”

⁴⁸⁸ Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 86.

partissent a mos afflictions les miene sont des plus grande puis que jai perdu tout ce que javais au Monde.⁴⁸⁹

By this time Anne's father had been executed, her paternal grandmother had perished in prison, her octogenarian paternal grandfather was in prison, her aunt and maternal grandmother were in the Tour de Constance, an uncle was in the galleys, and her mother was in debt. She did not exaggerate her "afflictions". Durand was conscious of never having seen Anne. In Letter 17 (1755) she imagines Anne asking: "De quoi vous flattez-vous, ma chère tante. Je ne vous ai jamais vue. Voulez-vous que je vous aime? Peut-être n'êtes-vous en rien digne d'être aimée!"⁴⁹⁰ Marie nonetheless expresses real and sustained devotion to her niece.

Durand's letters to Anne focus on three things: motherly affection and counsel, descriptions of gifts of clothing, and Anne's proposed visit to Aigues-Mortes. Marie always expresses her yearning to see Anne and in 1757 proposes specific plans for her to come to take the remedial sea baths of Aigues-Mortes (Letters 22 and 23). In Letter 26 (August 1757) and Letter 27 (November 1757) Durand is distressed to learn that plans have for some reason failed. Anne's silence affects her health: "Rien ne la traverse que ton silence. [...] Ne me cache point ce qui s'est opposé au dessein que tu avais formé."⁴⁹¹ In Letter 28 (July, 1758), Durand's last surviving letter to her niece, she is still pleading with her to come. Paul Rabaut's letter to Chiron, June 8, 1759, explains that Anne was at that time living and working as governess in Nîmes, forty five kilometres from Aigues-Mortes.⁴⁹² On July 6, 1759, Rabaut writes to Chiron that Anne had had to leave her place in Nîmes and says that

⁴⁸⁹ "Monsieur, it is a good gift in a situation as sad as mine to find people having a soul in the right place like you and Madame your wife and who participate in my afflictions, mine which are the greatest since I lost all that I had in the World." October 5, 1741. Transcribed from the autograph, BPF Ms. 358.

⁴⁹⁰ "Why do you claim this, my dear aunt. I have never seen you. You want me to love you? Perhaps you are not at all worthy of being loved!"

⁴⁹¹ "Nothing upsets it but your silence. [...] Please tell me what has impeded the plan that you made."

⁴⁹² Rabaut, *Lettres*, 1:243n2.

“elle va rester un mois avec sa tante” (she will stay with her Aunt for a month).⁴⁹³ This is apparently the source of Benoît’s claim that Anne spent July of 1759 with Durand.⁴⁹⁴ Charles Bost and Fabre repeat Benoît’s assertion.⁴⁹⁵ Borello suggests that Anne “sans doute” (probably) visited Aigues-Mortes.⁴⁹⁶ The idea of such a visit is attractive but other than Rabaut’s claim that she *intended* to make the visit there is no evidence that she did so.

Though Marie’s extant letters to Anne cease in July 1758, in Letter 32 (1760) she tells Rabaut that she is still sending her clothing. In the same year, April 18, 1760, she gives Anne Power of Attorney over the family home and its income.⁴⁹⁷ In Letter 35 (1762) she writes to Rabaut about some bad news that she has received from Anne regarding the deterioration of the home and chestnut groves. “Ma nièce vient de m’écrire que tout un quartier de ma maison allait crouler sur ses fondements.”⁴⁹⁸ In Letter 36 (1762) she suggests to Rabaut that Anne is responsible for problems with her property: “Ma nièce me cause toutes mes misères.” (My niece is the cause of all my miseries.) Durand’s last reference to Anne is found in a postscript to Letter 46 (1773), her final letter to Paul Rabaut: “Ma nièce est fort affaiblie” (My niece is very weak). Anne is either unwell, morally compromised, or both.⁴⁹⁹ As described above, in 1771 Anne abjured her parents’ Protestant faith and married Cazeneuve ten days before giving birth to a child. Her husband’s lawsuit left her aunt in penury. Given the warm affection and solicitude expressed in Marie’s sixteen surviving letters to her niece over a seven-year period, Anne’s abjuration, the circumstances of her marriage, and her joint suit against her aunt must have caused some distress.

⁴⁹³ Rabaut, *Lettres*, 1:246-47.

⁴⁹⁴ Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 126.

⁴⁹⁵ Bost, “Prisonniers d’Aigues-Mortes,” 144; Fabre and Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 247.

⁴⁹⁶ Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, xxvi-xxvii.

⁴⁹⁷ Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 36-37.

⁴⁹⁸ “My niece has just written to me that a full quarter of my house is crumbling on its foundations.”

⁴⁹⁹ Littré, s.v. “affaiblir”, defines both a literal and figurative meaning for the verb.

The Gaussaint Family

There are fourteen references to the name Gaussaint (Gaussainte, Gaussen) in Durand's extant letters.⁵⁰⁰ In Letter 3*, "Gaussainte de Crose" appears in the list of prisoners at the end of a receipt of goods received. The other thirteen references appear in her letters to her niece.⁵⁰¹ Anne Gaussaint had given birth to a son in the Tour de Constance. Her older daughter was being fostered in Geneva by her uncle, a certain Garrigues. Durand refers six times to Garrigues and makes numerous indirect appeals to him through Anne to adopt Gaussaint's son. In Letter 17 (1755), for example, she writes: "Ce jeune enfant aurait un désir extrême de se rendre près de ce cher oncle, mais il n'oserait y paraître sans ses ordres."⁵⁰² He must have relented for in Letter 27 (1757) Durand passes on Madame Gaussaint's greetings to her daughter and son in Geneva.

Durand's seventeen letters sent to Anne and Chiron connect her to a city which was, historically, very important to French Huguenots. When put alongside her letters to Rabaut and to Amsterdam they indicate her desire to be involved with the Refuge, and even to influence it as far as possible in favour of her family and prison community.

Marie Durand's Letters to the Walloon Church in Amsterdam

Fourteen of Durand's surviving letters were sent to benefactors at the Église Wallonne, the Walloon Church in Amsterdam.⁵⁰³ The first nine were written from prison (1752–67), the other five from her home in Le Bouchet (1772–75). Covering a period of twenty-three years, including Durand's final extant letter of October 1775, this subset of Durand's letters

⁵⁰⁰ Gaussaint appears as number 113 in Falguerolles résumé of the prisoners of the Tour de Constance. de Falguerolles, "Tour de Constance," 241.

⁵⁰¹ Letters 17-19, 21, 22, 25-27.

⁵⁰² "The little boy longs to be with his dear uncle, but wouldn't dare go to him without his invitation."

⁵⁰³ Letters 9, 10, 14, 24, 31, 33, 34, 40, 42-45, 47, 48.

constitutes one side of an important longstanding relationship.⁵⁰⁴ Amsterdam lies approximately five-hundred kilometres north of Paris, and twelve-hundred kilometres north of Aigues-Mortes. This section explains how the Walloon Church came to support Durand, a distant indigent prisoner whom its members had never met.

In the middle ages, Wallonia denominated the francophone provinces of the Low Countries. The first Protestant churches were established there from 1567. An estimated one-hundred thousand Wallonian Protestants fled to the Netherlands from late-sixteenth-century Spanish oppression. They established twenty-six Reformed francophone churches, including one in Amsterdam in 1578.⁵⁰⁵ The Revocation brought a second wave of refugees, derived from France and the Vaudois, which was assimilated by the French-speaking descendants of the first wave.⁵⁰⁶ The number of Wallonian churches almost doubled at that time.⁵⁰⁷

Wallonian churches devoted considerable effort to active diaconal ministries which provided money, clothes, and fuel to destitute Huguenots both in the Refuge and the Désert, including female prisoners and *galériens*.⁵⁰⁸ In September 1686 the Walloon Church in Amsterdam was specifically commissioned by its synod to receive and disburse funds for Huguenot *galériens* and female prisoners, with bills of exchange being sent to Marseilles in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, then Montpellier in the eighteenth century.⁵⁰⁹ In 1690 alone one hundred thousand florins were distributed from the Amsterdam church to support

⁵⁰⁴ All fourteen letters were archived by the church and are held today in the Bibliothèque wallonne de Leyde.

⁵⁰⁵ J. P. Hugues, "Tournée de M. J.-P. Hugues en Hollande et en Belgique [Part 1]," *Bulletin* 5, no. 9/10 (1857): 365. The Dutch churches were organised according to theology and praxis of their French counterparts.

⁵⁰⁶ Chrystel Bernat and David van der Linden, "Rethinking the Refuge: A Systemic Approach to Huguenot Communities in the Dutch Republic," *Church History and Religious Culture* 100, no. 4 (2020): 440; Freed *galérien* Jean Marteilhe received a hero's welcome in Amsterdam. Marteilhe, *Mémoires*, 135-38, 223.

⁵⁰⁷ Kazimierz Bem, "Protestant Solidarity in the Eighteenth Century: Relief Efforts of the Walloons for the Polish Reformed Churches," *Church History* 73, no. 1 (2004): 91-92. In 1857, after inspecting the diaconal registers of Walloon churches in Amsterdam, Hugues recorded a post-Revocation influx of 5,156 refugees. "Tournée de M. J.-P. Hugues en Hollande et en Belgique [Part 2]," *Bulletin* 5, no. 11 (1857): 479.

⁵⁰⁸ Hugues, "Hugues en Hollande [Part 1]," 366-67.

⁵⁰⁹ W.R., *Les Lettres de Marie Durand et de Paul Rabaut dans la collection de la bibliothèque Wallonne de Leyde*, 1931, folio 1199-1200, pages 1-3, Leiden University, Leiden.

French Huguenots and their pastors.⁵¹⁰ Jules Michelet extols the generosity of the Amsterdam churches after the Revocation, who established women's refuges, and whose support extended to Jews, Anabaptists, and Catholics, those whom Reformed Christians classed as heretical sects.⁵¹¹ Dutch support extended as far as Reformed Protestant communities in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.⁵¹²

The Walloon Church in Amsterdam began sending aid to prisoners in the Tour de Constance as early as 1739.⁵¹³ Letters 43, 44, 45, and 48 show that Paul Rabaut had personally referred Durand's needs to the Amsterdam church and surviving correspondence demonstrates strong links between the parties. In 1772 Rabaut wrote to the church thanking them for the pension they were giving Durand, and expressing his embarrassment for the lack of support from French Protestants: "Je rougis pour nos églises" (I blush for our churches).⁵¹⁴ In 1775, he wrote to acknowledge receipt of their two-hundred livres annual pension to Durand, and recognised "la piété, le zèle et la générosité de votre respectable Compagnie".⁵¹⁵ Later that same year he forwarded a receipt from Durand, Letter 48 (October 15, 1775), her last extant letter. Rabaut wrote to the church, September 23, 1776, sending receipt of their two-hundred livre pension for Durand for the impending year, but informing them that she had since died.⁵¹⁶

⁵¹⁰ Hugues, "Hugues en Hollande [Part 2]," 478.

⁵¹¹ Jules Michelet, *Histoire de France, nouvelle édition, revue et augmentée*, 19 vols., vol. 15 (Paris, 1877), 327.

⁵¹² Bem, "Protestant Solidarity," 107.

⁵¹³ "La Charité wallonne. Discours prononcé à l'ouverture de la réunion des députées des églises wallonnes assemblés à bois-le-duc, le 22 juin 1899 et jours suivantes," *Bulletin de la Commission pour l'histoire des églises Wallonne* 2, no. 3 (1902): 12.

⁵¹⁴ Rabaut, *Lettres*, 2:139-40.

⁵¹⁵ "The piety, zeal, and generosity of your respectable Company". Rabaut, *Lettres*, 2:178.

⁵¹⁶ Rabaut, *Lettres*, 2:219.

Amsterdam le 6 Juillet - 1772 200. Livres
 à l'usage _____ il vous plaira payer par cette Seconde de Change
 (la Première ne l'estant) à l'ordre de Monsieur Reynier Willem Meij, Dou-
 cins Surres Tournois, en espèces au cours de ce jour _____
 valeur au dit lieu _____ que passerez au Compte
 Suivant l'avis de
 à Messieurs Reynier
 Messieurs Henry Rey &
 à Montpellier
 Vos tres humble Serviteurs
 Verne de Longis

Figure 28. Bill of exchange for 200 livres from the Walloon Church. Front.
 Dated July 6, 1772, to be paid to Paul Rabaut. This was almost certainly the pension given to
 Durand in her final years. ARW folio 1199-1200.

Paul Rabaut
 Comptable, Amsterdamsche &
 Tournois

Figure 29. Bill of exchange for 200 livres from the Walloon Church. Reverse.
 ARW folio 1199-1200.

Durand's letters from the Tour de Constance to the *Bienfaiteurs d'Amsterdam* are receipts for money and goods received. Averaging one hundred and fifty words, they are quite short, and follow an identical pattern: salutation, list of goods received, the number of prisoners (except Letter 40), a description of the even distribution of the goods among the

prisoners, thanks and assurances of the prayers of the prisoners, and final respects.⁵¹⁷ The amounts received are set out in the following table:

Letter	Month/ Year	Total livres	Number of prisoners	Livres per prisoner	Other goods
9	12/1752	450	25	18	-
10	11/1753	450	25	18	700kg food worth 97 livres and 6 livres each for two children
14	10/1754	468	26	18	700kg food
24	02/1757	432	24	18	Food, no weight given
31	12/1759	378	21	18	650kg food
33	12/1760	378	21	18	300kg food
34	12/1761	342	19	18	Wood
40	02/1767	12 louis d'or (208 Livres)	8?	26? ⁵¹⁸	-
42	11/1767	312	9	24	108 livres wood/vegetables
43/44	08/1772	200	Annual pension sent to Marie Durand after she had returned home to Bouchet de Pranles.		
45	07/1773	200			
47	07/1774	200			
48	10/1775	200			

Table: Material support sent from the Église Wallonne in Amsterdam to the Tour de Constance and Marie Durand 1752–75.

The table shows that over a period of sixteen years the Church regularly sent enough money for each prisoner to have at least eighteen livres per annum, as well as sending additional food and wood. Durand's note at the end of Letter 33 (1760) shows how the Church had commissioned an agent to buy goods for the prisoners from local suppliers, obviating cartage. Durand's receipts assured the benefactors that their gifts were being received, properly distributed, and appreciated. Such receipts were apparently expected; in 1772 the Walloon church complained to Rabaut for not promptly replying with a receipt of goods.⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁷ Letter 9 (1752) concludes with a list of the prisoners, twenty-five at that time.

⁵¹⁸ A list drawn up by Durand on December 8, 1766 numbers eight prisoners. de Falguerolles, "Tour de Constance," 211.

⁵¹⁹ Deduced from Rabaut's reply, dated October 21, 1772, in Rabaut, *Lettres*, 2:139-40.

Among Durand's letters to Amsterdam, Letter 33 (1760) stands out for its salutation to an anonymous number of women, "Mesdames et chères bienfaitrices", and for its rather longer and more elaborate assurances of prayers. Durand had written specifically, in certain of her letters to the Walloon Church, to both "Nos très chers frères et sœurs" (Letters 9, 13, 14), to the "Très illustres protecteurs et protectrices" (Letters 9, 31, 34), and to "Très illustres et généreux bienfaiteurs et bienfaitrices" (Letter 40). Putting this alongside Durand's reference in Letter 22 to three female benefactors in Nîmes, we note her awareness that provision came from both men *and* women. This supports Philippe Chareyre's observation that Protestant women were known in early modern Huguenot churches for their important role in diaconal work.⁵²⁰

Durand's receipts and letters to the Walloon Church, which testify to the bond between Huguenots in the Dutch Republic and their suffering coreligionists in France, confirm the direction of recent studies of the Refuge. Chrystel Bernat and David van der Linden describe a change that began to occur in scholarship during the 1980s, as historians moved away from the "strangers to citizens" narrative of Huguenot exiles and their eventual separation from France and assimilation into their new nation, and instead began to focus more on the complex and continuing links between the exiles and French Protestant communities.⁵²¹ The long-term generous support given by a church in Amsterdam to an isolated French woman with no shared family connections, beginning some sixty years after the Revocation, both during and after her imprisonment, testifies to the remarkable durability of transnational Huguenot ties. Durand and the Amsterdam church were linked not by political, scholarly, philosophical, or commercial links, but because the church had been

⁵²⁰ Philippe Chareyre, "Les Dames protestantes de la miséricorde et la naissance d'un diaconat féminin à Nîmes au XVII^e siècle," in *Les œuvres protestantes en Europe*, ed. Judith Becker & Céline Borello (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013), 2.

⁵²¹ Bernat and van der Linden, "Rethinking the Refuge," 442.

founded by suffering Huguenot refugees from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Scholarly notes, hand-written in 1931, which introduce the collection of autograph letters by Marie Durand and Paul Rabaut held by the Archief van de réunion wallonne (ARW), describe the letters as “un hommage rendu à la largesse et à la générosité de nos Pères et de nos Églises.”⁵²² Similarly, Jacques Allier and R. F. le Gras, in their 1974 reflections at the opening of the Bibliothèque Wallonne in Amsterdam, referred to the real pride that the Walloon church had felt for the Reformed church in France, their “Église-mère”.⁵²³ The epistolary network joining the prisoners of the Tour de Constance, Paul Rabaut, and the Walloon church in Amsterdam, testifies to a loyalty built on a deep shared religious and cultural heritage.

Marie Durand’s Letters to Pastors

Six of Marie Durand’s extant letters were written to Huguenot pastors: five to Paul Rabaut and one to Jean Gal-Pomaret (1720–1790).⁵²⁴ Although Durand expresses no doubts about the theology of these leaders, the following will show that they were not strictly orthodox teachers of the Reformation teaching and praxis of Calvin. Durand wrote to them nonetheless as a Huguenot to leaders of the Huguenot cause.

⁵²² “A homage to the largesse and generosity of our Fathers and Churches.” W.R., *Lettres*: 12.

⁵²³ Jacques Allier and R. F. C. le Gras, “À propos de la réouverture de la Bibliothèque Wallonne à Amsterdam,” *Bulletin* 120 (1974): 149.

⁵²⁴ She also wrote repeatedly to a M. Peirot, referred to in Letters 20, 21, and 23, whom Borello identifies as “Pierre Peirot dit Pradier,” a pastor in the Vivarais 1740–68. Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, 87. These letters are not extant.

Paul Rabaut

Durand's five extant letters to pastor Paul Rabaut (sometimes Rabaud) cover a period of almost fourteen years, from February 1760 to December 1773. Letters 32 (1760), 35 (April 1762), 36 (August 1762), and 38 (1764) were written while Durand was still in the Tour de Constance. Letter 46 (1773) was written from her home, five years after her release and three years before her death. Beginning soon after Durand's extant letters to Anne Durand cease (July 1758), these five letters are an important record of her mindset in her later years. Furthermore, the first three of Durand's letters to Rabaut are among her longest (1,587, 1,035, and 1,167 words respectively), allowing access to Durand's thoughts when she develops her thinking more fully than in her other letters.

As a protégé of Antoine Court, Paul Rabaut was a second-generation pastor of the *église du Désert*. For fifty years, until his death in Paris during the Revolution, he was the widely recognised leader of the Huguenots, well connected with Protestant Europe and French political and religious authorities.⁵²⁵ In 1738 Rabaut commenced work as a trainee pastor in the underground Protestant church in the city of Nîmes, from Roman times an important regional centre. In 1740 he left France to study for three years in Lausanne under Court. He was ordained in 1741, before returning to pastoral work in Nîmes in 1743, by which time Durand had been incarcerated for thirteen years.⁵²⁶ The authorities knew that Rabaut urged Huguenots to honour the King and live peaceably, and during a disturbance in 1751 the Intendent of Languedoc recruited Rabaut as a conciliator to preserve peaceful order.⁵²⁷ This cooperation was exceptional and until the 1760s Rabaut lived as a fugitive and

⁵²⁵ Charles Dardier, "Paul Rabaut," *Bulletin* 32, no. 10 (1883): 463-65; Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, 1. There are two biographies of Paul Rabaut: Abraham Borrel's *Biographie de Paul Rabaut, Pasteur du Désert, et de ses trois fils* (Nîmes, 1854), and Hermann Krafft's *Paul Rabaut, der Prediger der Wüste* (Elberfeld, 1896). Borrel's work is the basis of my biographical sketch.

⁵²⁶ *FP* 8:344-45.

⁵²⁷ Borrel, *Biographie de Paul Rabaut*, 26-27.

his wife and three sons lived in hiding or exile. He frequently evaded capture by last-minute escapes, false names, and male and female disguises.⁵²⁸

Notwithstanding Rabaut's eloquence and heroic struggle for the church of the Confessio Gallicana, he was not strictly a Calvinist. Eighteenth-century pastors in the Désert did not write substantial theological works, so assessing their doctrine is not always straightforward. It is true that Rabaut's 270-word statement of faith, written in 1757 to explain Huguenot beliefs to a Catholic, is consistent with the Confessio Gallicana.⁵²⁹ Haag and Haag challenge nonetheless the depth and sophistication of his beliefs, and claim that Rabaut "n'était point versé dans les sciences théologiques; il ne possédait même qu'une instruction très-ordinaire."⁵³⁰ He had a penchant also for Episcopalian church polity and eschatological millennialism, neither of which ideas were espoused by Calvin.⁵³¹ It may have been Rabaut's theological superficiality that allowed him to be an avowed Protestant teacher, leader, and defender, and simultaneously openly supportive of Voltaire's campaign for freedom of conscience despite the philosophe's disavowal of orthodox Christian supernaturalism. Rabaut claimed, for example, in 1768 to pastor Paul Moulou (1731–1787), regarding Protestant freedom, that "personne ne sent plus vivement que je le fais, les obligations que nous avons à Monsieur de Voltaire."⁵³² Voltaire wrote to Rabaut in 1767,

⁵²⁸ Borrel, *Biographie de Paul Rabaut*, 31-35.

⁵²⁹ Rabaut, *Lettres*, 1:466-67. Daniel Robert notes that the doctrine of the co-eternity of the Son is lacking, though in such a short statement not too much can be read into such an omission. "Le XVIII^e siècle," in *La France protestante: histoire et lieux de mémoire*, ed. Henri Dubief and Jacques Poujol (Montpellier: Éditions de Paris, 1996), 106.

⁵³⁰ "Was not adept in the theological sciences; he had only received very rudimentary instruction." *FP* 8:345.

⁵³¹ *FP* 8:349.

⁵³² "No one feels more keenly than I, the debt that we owe to Monsieur de Voltaire." Rabaut, *Lettres*, 2:79; "Paul Moulou," *Dictionnaire Historique de la Suisse*, Académie suisse des sciences humaines et sociales, last modified January 15, 2009, <https://hls-dhs-dss.ch/fr/articles/015903/2009-01-15>.

apropos the trial of Pierre-Paul Sirven, lamenting that tolerance for Protestants had not yet been granted.⁵³³

While there is no record of Rabaut visiting the Tour de Constance, and no letters from Rabaut to Durand survive, her letters to him are notably direct and affectionate. The first sentence of Letter 36 (1762), for example, is a surprisingly warm expression of love: “Excellent et sublime vase chéri de mes désirs les plus purs et les plus sincères, passez-moi, s’il vous plaît, ce dernier terme, vous que j’honore, que je respecte; qu’il me soit permis de vous aimer jusques au dernier soupir de ma vie.”⁵³⁴ Gamonnet suggests that this went beyond cultural forms of affection, that Durand’s “ardeur” was personal, though correct nonetheless.⁵³⁵

Durand’s letters to Rabaut communicate four main concerns. First, she expresses hopes for Huguenot liberty. In Letter 32 (1760) she relates that the prison commandant had commissioned her to draw up a new list of the prisoners and had personally expressed his regret at their incarceration. Durand hoped that wheels were turning for their release: “Dieu veuille qu’elle soit favorable” (May God grant that this turns out favourably). Two years later, in Letter 35, based on a second-hand conversation, she expresses even more confident hopes to Rabaut: “Je vous dirai, Monsieur, que je crois que notre liberté est assurée.”⁵³⁶ Later in that same year, in Letter 36, she relays unlikely fourth-hand news of a general change of religious policy: “Le curé du lieu dit à un catholique honnête homme que les protestants auraient leur liberté entière de conscience avant que cette année finît.”⁵³⁷ In fact it would be

⁵³³ Voltaire, *Correspondence and related documents: XXXII April-December 1767, letters D14078 - D14634*, ed. Theodore Besterman, vol. 116, *Les Œuvres complètes de Voltaire*, (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1974), D14185.

⁵³⁴ “Excellent, sublime, and precious vessel of my purest and sincerest desires; allow me, please, this last phrase, you whom I honour, whom I respect; may I be permitted to love you until my life’s last breath.”

⁵³⁵ Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 65-66.

⁵³⁶ “I can tell you that I think our freedom is assured, Monsieur.” Later, she expresses similar hopes for the *galériens*.

⁵³⁷ “The local priest told him, an honest Catholic man, that Protestants would have entire freedom of conscience before the end of this year.”

another fifteen years before Louis XVI's Édít de tolérance (1787). Such frangible hopes manifest Durand's painful longing for freedom of conscience for the Huguenots, and physical freedom from her prison.

Second, Durand urges Rabaut to advocate personally for the prisoners. In Letter 32, for example, she writes: "Continuez-moi, s'il vous plaît, votre protection et votre chère amitié pastorale que je prise infiniment plus que tous les trésors du monde."⁵³⁸ Durand's marginal note in the same letter alludes to the possibility of Rabaut petitioning the king on their behalf: "Je ne vous demande point s'il serait besoin de faire placet pour Sa Majesté. Vous êtes très sage et très prudent."⁵³⁹ In Letter 38, she continues to plead for Rabaut to petition the king for them. There is no evidence, however, that Rabaut had the influence that Durand may have thought that he had.

Third, Durand expresses her financial worries to Rabaut and asks for help. In Letter 35, for example, she describes the problem of the prisoners' indebtedness to merchants in Aigues-Mortes:

J'eus l'honneur de vous informer que plusieurs de mes compagnes avaient été forcées de s'endetter dans leurs maladies de l'année dernière, et que j'étais du nombre. Je peux vous dire à la vérité qu'alors je devais vingt-sept écus ; aujourd'hui je n'en dois pas tant, peu s'en faut. [...] Je vous demande au nom de Dieu de ne pas tarder à nous faire donner secours, car si Dieu nous accorde la faveur de notre liberté, nous serions obligées de vendre nos hardes pour satisfaire ceux qui nous ont fait plaisir.⁵⁴⁰

⁵³⁸ "Please maintain the protection you have given me, and your precious pastoral friendship which I prize infinitely more than all the world's treasure."

⁵³⁹ "I do not ask you if a petition should be sent to His Majesty. You are very wise and prudent."

⁵⁴⁰ "I had the honour of informing you that because of the illnesses that they suffered last year many of my companions were forced into debt, and I was included in that number. I tell you honestly that I owed twenty-seven écus. I do not owe quite as much as that today. [...] In the name of God do not delay with this, for if God grants us our freedom, we'd be obliged to sell our tattered clothes to repay those who lent to us."

Later that same year, in Letter 36, she describes the other prisoners' debts to her, and her own debt, and pleads for Rabaut's help – her clothes had worn to rags.

Fourth, Durand describes to Rabaut her confidence that God has things in hand, despite their sufferings. In Letter 35, she reassures Rabaut that the trials which God had brought to him would result in “sublimes fruits” which would benefit Rabaut and bring honour to God:

Il semblait que la nue allait faire éclater la foudre sur le vaisseau chéri du ciel et de tous les vrais fidèles. Mais, comme quelquefois un mal sert de remède à de grands maux, j'espère que ce digne et excellent vase qui jette tant d'admirables fleurs de la meilleure odeur tirera avantage de ces sublimes fruits répandus, et que gloire s'entassera sur gloire à l'honneur qui est dû à un si célèbre Jéhosuah.⁵⁴¹

And in Letter 36, after expressing hope for release and freedom of conscience, Durand writes “Dieu veuille, par ses grandes compassions, y mettre sa main toute bonne et puissante et achever son œuvre.”⁵⁴² Durand was certain about God's sovereignty and goodness, which comes out particularly clearly in her practical theology of suffering (Chapter 5).

In all, Durand displayed enormous respect and affection for Rabaut and looked to his intervention for liberty and financial support. Though Rabaut's influence was limited, he did advocate for the prisoners with the court and personally oversaw the pension given to Durand from the Walloon Church of Amsterdam.⁵⁴³ Durand's letters confirm Rabaut's position as

⁵⁴¹ “It looked as though the sky was going to explode with wrath upon that precious vessel of heaven [Rabaut], and upon all the truly faithful. Just as sometimes one disease serves to cure more serious diseases, I hope that this worthy and excellent vase, displaying so many delightful flowers of the finest perfume, will reap the benefit of all these widespread sublime fruits, and that glory will be heaped upon glory, to the honour which is owed to such a celebrated Joshua.”

⁵⁴² “May God will, according to his great compassion, to extend his good and powerful hand to accomplish his work.”

⁵⁴³ See Rabaut's letter dated October 21, 1772. Rabaut, *Lettres*, 2:139-42.

putative head of the French Protestant church in the generation prior to the Revolution and the high esteem in which he was held by its grassroots members.

Jean Gal-Pomaret

Only one of Durand's extant letters was written to pastor Jean Gal-Pomaret. Letter 39 (1766) was sent two years before the end of Durand's thirty-eight-year incarceration. Gal-Pomaret ministered for forty-seven years at Ganges, in Languedoc. He was, with Rabaut, one of the two most distinguished pastors of the Désert, known for his tolerance of viewpoints not strictly tied to Calvin's theology and praxis.⁵⁴⁴ Gal-Pomaret corresponded with Rabaut, Chiron, Voltaire, and Rousseau, clashing with the latter over his limited support for Protestant freedom.⁵⁴⁵ In 1768 Gal-Pomaret writes positively about the philosophes to Chiron: "C'est principalement à la philosophie que j'attribue cette heureuse revolution."⁵⁴⁶ Though Gal-Pomaret had moved further from Calvinism than Rabaut, like Rabaut he linked the philosophes' struggle for freedom of conscience with growing Huguenot freedom – a connection which Durand herself never makes.

In Letter 39, just over six-hundred words long, Durand notes that while religious toleration is growing, charity is cooling among Protestants. Durand thanks Gal-Pomaret for his own support for the captives. In his biography of Marie Durand, Fabre confirms Gal-Pomaret's charitable work, referring to a letter from the pastor to his brother urging a collection for the prisoners.⁵⁴⁷ Letter 39 includes a direct prayer, rare in Durand's surviving letters: "C'est ta volonté, Dieu tout-puissant; nous nous y soumettons avec une sainte

⁵⁴⁴ Besides his surviving letters only one published work of Gal-Pomaret is known: Jean Gal-Pomaret, *Le Bon père ou le chrétien protestant* (Neuchâtel, 1786). FP 5:198-99.

⁵⁴⁵ Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, 154-55.

⁵⁴⁶ Rabaut, *Lettres*, xxiv.

⁵⁴⁷ Fabre and Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 257.

resignation. Donne-nous par ta grâce la force de tout surmonter et demeurer fermes.”⁵⁴⁸

Letter 39 is notable also for her description of a new prison commandant whom she believes has written to his superiors on their behalf:

Il a fait son possible auprès du prince [de Beauvau] et de la princesse pour nous obtenir notre liberté. Il se rendit à Montpellier aux États. Depuis il leur a encore écrit à Paris et nous a fait voir les lettres: ce qui est fort bon pour nous, qu’un commandant s’intéresse si fortement.⁵⁴⁹

It was the Prince de Beauvau, as I described above, who finally closed the Tour de Constance.

Two conclusions may be drawn from the fact that Durand wrote to two pastors who did not tie themselves closely to Protestant orthodoxy, and who recognised the philosophes’ struggle for freedom of conscience. First, Durand’s affection and honour for these pastors helps explain why it was not difficult for French Protestants from the nineteenth century onwards who, like Rabaut and Gal-Pomaret, had more-or-less separated from Calvin’s theology and praxis and were supportive of the philosophes, to second Marie Durand as a heroine for their own theology and praxis. Thus André Encrevé notes that the main value accorded by Protestant liberals of the nineteenth century to the persecuted church of the eighteenth century was not its theological commitments, but its “victorieuse résistance” to persecution.⁵⁵⁰ Second, Durand’s regard for Rabaut and Gal-Pomaret does not prove that Durand herself supported the Enlightenment cause, or the pastors’ shift from Calvinism. Durand’s regard does not spring from her knowledge and approval of their ideology, but from

⁵⁴⁸ “It is your will, Almighty God; we submit to it with holy resignation. By your grace give us the strength to overcome everything and to remain firm.”

⁵⁴⁹ “He has done all he can with the Prince [de Beauvau] and the Princess to obtain our freedom. He went to see the authorities in Montpellier. Since then he wrote again to them in Paris and has shown us the letters. This is very good for us, that a commandant is so deeply interested in our freedom.”

⁵⁵⁰ André Encrevé, “Le XIX^e siècle,” in *La France protestante: histoire et lieux de mémoire*, ed. Henri Dubief and Jacques Poujol (Montpellier: Éditions de Paris, 1996), 120-1.

her esteem for their position and their practical efforts on behalf of the prisoners. Durand's own ideology ought to be determined not from the views of those she wrote to and admired, but by her own writings.

Marie Durand's Letters to Versailles

Three of Durand's surviving letters were written to members of the court, to people whom she believed could exert political influence on the prisoners' behalf. Her letters to Paulmy d'Argenson (Letter 8*), Savine de Coulet (Letter 29), and Marie Leszczyńska (Letter 30), reflect the respect that Huguenots typically expressed toward the governing authorities after the Edict of Nantes, though this attitude was severely tested in the years after the Revocation and before Antoine Court's post-1715 restoration.⁵⁵¹ In Letter 19 (1756) Durand describes the care that she takes when writing "à des grands", to those with titles or who bear some social or political importance – as though writing to such people was routine for her.⁵⁵² Her three surviving letters to the court may only be a fraction of what she wrote to this class.

Paulmy d'Argenson

Letter 8* (September 19, 1752) is addressed to the "marquis Paulmy d'Argenson." This was Marc-Antoine René de Voyer de Paulmy d'Argenson (1722–1787), who from 1751 to 1757 was *Secrétaire d'État à la Guerre en survivance* (Deputy Secretary of State for War), and who then succeeded his uncle to the full post from 1757 to 1758.⁵⁵³ D'Argenson was later

⁵⁵¹ Joutard goes as far as to say that Court was a "prisonnier d'un culte monarchique" inherited from seventeenth century pastors. Joutard, "Antoine Court," 80.

⁵⁵² *DCLF* 2:1423–24.

⁵⁵³ His uncle, le Comte Marc-Pierre de Voyer d'Argenson, was *Secrétaire d'État à la Guerre* 1743–57. Baird, *Huguenots*, 487. Borello describes the addressee as the same Marquis Paulmy d'Argenson, nephew of the "ministre de la guerre". Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, xxxvii .

ambassador to Poland (1762–64), then Venice (1766–70), and in retirement wrote as an amateur historian.

The autograph of Letter 8* is lost and Gamonnet reproduced his text from a photocopy sent to the *Musée du Desert* by J. Massip, pastor of the *Église réformée d’Aimargues*, with the following note attached: “Le document primitif qui se trouvait dans la Bible de famille de feu madame Marioge, receveur des postes à Aimargues, s’est malheureusement égaré. Il portait au dos en écriture savant: Placet des prisonnières d’Aigues-Mortes.”⁵⁵⁴ Daniel Benoît published this letter in 1903, arguing that even though it lacked Durand’s signature it clearly manifested her style and handwriting.⁵⁵⁵ Gamonnet disagrees that the handwriting is Durand’s, but maintains that “les idées, les tours, le ton à la fois déferent et ferme, la logique du développement, jusqu’à la formule finale, semblent bien lui appartenir.”⁵⁵⁶ Thus two sentences that appear in Letter 8*, amounting to twenty-four words, appear almost word-for-word (lacking only the pronoun *vos*) seven years later in Letter 29 to Coulet.⁵⁵⁷ That Letter 8* refers to twenty-five prisoners, the same number of prisoners listed by Durand just two months later in Letter 9 (December 15, 1752), further supports Letter 8* deriving from the Tour de Constance in September 1752. In addition, Paul Rabaut described a visit made by Paulmy d’Argenson to the Tour, and his emotion upon seeing the women’s suffering.⁵⁵⁸ Benoît maintains that Letter 8* was written after the visit, and certainly it refers to that visit and d’Argenson’s reaction: “Votre Excellence a été frappée d’horreur de nos

⁵⁵⁴ “The original document, which was found in the family Bible of the late Madame Marioge, post-master of Aigues-Mortes, is unfortunately lost. It bore on the back, in an educated hand: ‘Petition from the prisoners of Aigues-Mortes.’” Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 192n32.

⁵⁵⁵ Daniel Benoît, “Nouveaux échos de la tour de Constance: Trois lettres inédites de Marie Durand (1752-1759),” *Bulletin* 52, no. 1 (1903): 56.

⁵⁵⁶ “The ideas, the turns of phrase, the tone simultaneously deferential and firm, the logic of the development, including the closing address, do seem to belong to her.” Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 192-93n32.

⁵⁵⁷ “Le cœur de notre monarque est un sanctuaire dont [vos] vertus vous ont ouvert les avenues les plus secrètes. Notre liberté est entre vos mains.” “The heart of our monarch is a sanctuary and [your] virtues have opened a way to its secret paths.”

⁵⁵⁸ Dardier, “Paul Rabaut,” 476-77.

pitoyables demeures et des duretés de notre esclavage; votre grande âme, aussi susceptible d'attendrissement que des autres vertus héroïques, nous laisse entrevoir sa sensibilité à notre infortune.”⁵⁵⁹ Letter 8* must at the very least be a letter written by a member of Durand's prison community in 1752. Gamonnet concludes that Durand was the “inspiratrice” of this letter.⁵⁶⁰ Borello does not include the letter in her edition, but refers to it and describes Durand as a participant in its production.⁵⁶¹ On the basis of the letter's origin from the Tour de Constance, its affinity to Durand's style, and the repetition of two of its sentences in Letter 29, I have included the letter in Durand's corpus, with a single asterisk to indicate some uncertainty.

Paul Rabaut intercepted Paulmy d'Argenson on September 19, 1752, when he was inspecting military establishments in the Languedoc. Rabaut handed him a petition for the King, a “mémoire justificatif de la conduite des protestants” (explanatory statement of the Protestants' conduct).⁵⁶² Rabaut himself referred to the meeting in a letter to Étienne Chiron dated October 25 of that same year, and thirty-three years later to Charles Végobre in Geneva.⁵⁶³ Abraham Borrel imagines the fraught encounter in this way:

[Rabaut] s'approcha de sa voiture avec une contenance respectueuse, déclina aussitôt son nom, sa qualité, le but de son message, et présenta l'écrit qu'il tenait à la main [...]. Le général, dont les pouvoirs militaires étaient immenses, et qui d'un seul mot aurait pu le faire arrêter par son escorte et l'envoyer à la potence sans jugement,

⁵⁵⁹ “Your Excellency was struck by the horror of our miserable abode and our harsh slavery; your great soul, as susceptible to tenderness as it is to the other heroic virtues, allows us to glimpse its compassion for our misfortune.”

⁵⁶⁰ Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 192-93n32.

⁵⁶¹ Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, xxxvii.

⁵⁶² Borrel, *Biographie de Paul Rabaut*, 27-28.

⁵⁶³ Rabaut, *Lettres*, 1:26-27; 2:357. Rabaut summarised the memorandum in a letter to Chiron in 1775. Rabaut, *Lettres*, 2:202-3.

touché de son courage et de sa confiance en sa loyauté de soldat, se découvrit devant lui, accepta le mémoire et promit de le remettre lui-même au roi.⁵⁶⁴

Notably, this meeting is dated just two days after Letter 8*. The letter from the Tour de Constance takes a different approach to Rabaut's *mémoire*. The first paragraph begs a hearing for the prisoners' lamentations on the grounds of "principes de justice". After describing their lengthy incarceration, some for more than thirty years, Durand comes to the heart of the matter:

Vous en savez la cause, Monseigneur; elle est digne de compassion et non de châtement. Notre crime n'est que de suivre les maximes d'une religion qui nous ordonne de rendre à César ce qui appartient à César et à Dieu ce qui appartient à Dieu. Mais fussions-nous véritablement coupables, la durée et la grandeur de nos maux auraient expié les plus grands crimes.⁵⁶⁵

The prisoners were harshly punished for doing nothing more than obeying Christ's command (Mark 12:17). So Durand entreats d'Argenson: "Rendez libres [...] des misérables qui soupirent depuis tant d'années dans une tour des plus affreuses, rendez-les à leurs patries, à leurs familles qui ont tout perdu en les perdant."⁵⁶⁶ Letter 8* supports my analysis below of Durand's social theology of civil governance, that Durand and the prisoners, repudiating the violent resistance of the Camisards, willingly submitted to and respected the governing

⁵⁶⁴ "[Rabaut] approached his carriage with a respectful disposition. He immediately proffered his name, his rank, and the purpose of his message, and presented the document that he was carrying [...]. The general, whose military powers were immense, and who with a single word could have had his escort arrest him and send him to the gallows without trial, touched by his courage and confidence in his soldierly loyalty, raised his hat, accepted the memorandum, and promised to hand it personally to the King." Borrel, *Biographie de Paul Rabaut*, 27-28.

⁵⁶⁵ "You know the cause [Protestant worship], Monseigneur. It deserves sympathy, not reproach. Our only crime is to follow the principles of a religion that commands us to render to Caesar that which belongs to Caesar and to God that which belongs to God. Even if we had been truly guilty, the length and magnitude of our suffering would have atoned for the worst of crimes."

⁵⁶⁶ "Monseigneur, free these wretched creatures who have sighed for so many years in such a ghastly tower. Return them to their homelands and families, who in losing them lost everything."

authorities – except in forsaking their religion – and relied only on legal petitions for their hope of freedom.

Savine de Coulet

Letter 29 (March 29, 1759), is addressed to “Mademoiselle et très chère amie”. It was found in Saint-Hippolyte-du-Fort, apparently unsend, in a dossier left there by Savine de Coulet, a Catholic noblewoman who had served in Versailles.⁵⁶⁷ At 1,562 words, this is Durand’s longest extant letter, and is in fact a covering letter for Letter 30 (1759): “Ne tardez pas à la lui remettre avec la liste de nos pauvres frères; le temps est favorable, ne le perdez pas. J’ai été occupée pendant plus de quinze jours, que je n’ai pas le temps de refaire la lettre de l’illustre Madame.”⁵⁶⁸ In the next section I argue that the “illustre Madame” is the Queen, Marie Leszczyńska.

On July 17, 1758, Paul Rabaut described to Chiron a petition he had sent to Louis XV in favour of the prisoners of the Tour de Constance. He had transmitted it by an unnamed intermediary to an unnamed lady of the court, who presented it to the Queen, who in turn gave it to Saint-Florentin, who “le reçut mal” (received it badly).⁵⁶⁹ A letter from the same unnamed lady of the court to Savine de Coulet, dated June 16, 1758, refers to Rabaut’s petition to the King and proves that Coulet was in fact Rabaut’s unnamed intermediary.⁵⁷⁰ The June 16 letter also includes a request for a second petition from Coulet to remit to the King’s *maîtresse-en-titre*: “J’ai un conseil à vous donner, faites un mémoire pareil à celui que vous m’avez donné pour Mme la Marquise de Pompadour; envoyez le moi, je chercherai les

⁵⁶⁷ Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 195n91.

⁵⁶⁸ “Do not delay forwarding this to her with the list of our poor brothers. The time is favourable, do not miss it. I have been busy for more than a fortnight, so I did not have the time to rewrite the illustrious Madame’s letter.”

⁵⁶⁹ Rabaut, *Lettres*, 1:201.

⁵⁷⁰ Benoît, “Nouveaux échos,” 47.

moyens de lui faire remettre.”⁵⁷¹ This proves that prior to June 1758 Coulet had remitted petitions to both Marie Leszczyńska and Madame de Pompadour by this lady and thus had second-hand access to the highest ranks of the court.⁵⁷²

The Musée du Vivarais holds the autograph of a letter written by Coulet to Marie Durand, dated without the month, “24^e l’an 1765.”⁵⁷³ The letter was written approximately six years after Letter 29, and refers to another letter from Durand dated October 12 (since lost), and presumably also sent in 1765. Coulet refers to several personal matters and requests that Durand pray for the happiness of her daughter’s recent marriage. She assures Durand that she has done everything possible to help her. Though it appears that Coulet’s letter was never sent, its existence, written six years after Durand’s letter to her, along with her presentation of Rabaut’s 1758 petition to the court, shows that Coulet had in the 1750s and 1760s some kind of connection to the *église du Désert* and a sustained interest in the prisoners of Aigues-Mortes.

In Letter 29 Durand urges Coulet to advocate for Huguenot *galériens* and prisoners. It includes some of her most moving descriptions of their suffering. About the *galériens* she writes:

Leur sort est des plus déplorables, il arracherait des larmes des plus durs cailloux:
trainant une chaîne des plus pesantes, couchant actuellement sur la dure, exposés à la rigueur du temps et de la tempête, extrêmement mal nourris, réduits à des travaux fort

⁵⁷¹ “I have some advice to give you, set out your case in writing, in the same form as what you gave me for Madame the Marquise de Pompadour; send it to me, and I will look for opportunities to pass it on to her.” Benoît, “Nouveaux échos,” 47.

⁵⁷² In his report of this event Charles Bost confuses the lady with Savine de Coulet herself. Charles Bost, *Les Martyrs d’Aigues-Mortes* (1922; repr., Paris: Regard, 2013), ch. 3, sec. 2.

⁵⁷³ This letter is referred to by Benoît in “Nouveaux échos,” 47n2.

pénibles, que cela est accablant pour de pauvres persécutés qui n'ont fait aucun tort à personne.⁵⁷⁴

Durand pleads for Coulet's help on the grounds of Christian charity, and the injustice of imprisoning people for following their religious conscience. Letter 29 also expresses Durand's fears for a possible English invasion and what English troops might do to the prisoners. We thus catch a glimpse of the effect of an international conflict, the Seven Years War (1756–63), on the prisoners' mental wellbeing. I engage with Durand's arguments from Letter 29 regarding the injustice of her imprisonment, and her description of the war as the manifestation of God's anger, in the next chapter.

Queen Marie Leszczyńska: a probable addressee

Letter 30 (1759) was discovered, apparently unsent, in the same dossier as Letter 29 with its covering letter to Coulet.⁵⁷⁵ Nothing within the text of Letter 30 definitively identifies the addressee. The salutation, *Madame*, could apply to any rank of the court, including the Queen.⁵⁷⁶ The letter begs the addressee to use her influence to work for the prisoners' freedom. According to Letter 30, this noblewoman had arranged an inspection of the prisoners in the Tour de Constance by Commissaire de Fitte (in about October 1758), a visit which Durand described to Coulet in Letter 29 (March 1759).

Some maintain that Letter 30 was written to the Marquise de Pompadour (1721–1764), Louis XV's *maîtresse-en-titre* from 1741 to about 1751. Charles Bost presumes this

⁵⁷⁴ “Their position is utterly deplorable. It would draw tears from the hardest stone; they wear the heaviest chains, sleep every night on the ground, exposed to harsh weather and storms, extremely malnourished, forced to do agonising work, all of which is overwhelming for these poor persecuted men who have done no harm to anyone.”

⁵⁷⁵ March 29, 1759. Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 196n106.

⁵⁷⁶ Littré, s.v. “Madame”, sec. 7.

on the basis that the letter written to Coulet from a noblewoman in Versailles, dated June 16, 1758 (described above), requested from her a second petition to pass on to Pompadour.⁵⁷⁷ But there is no evidence that Letter 30 is in fact that second petition. Borello describes Letter 30 as written “vraisemblablement” (apparently) to Pompadour, and “sans doute” (probably) addressed to Madame de Pompadour.”⁵⁷⁸ She gives no evidence for this, however. Silver, likewise, does not engage with evidence for or against this letter being addressed to Pompadour, and notes simply that she is probably the addressee.⁵⁷⁹

It is true that Pompadour had influence over the King. Though sometime in the 1750s she ceased to share the King’s bed, she continued as his confidante. Certainly, the public perceived that Pompadour stood for some twenty years, until her death in 1764, at the heart of royal power.⁵⁸⁰ Durand may plausibly have perceived her as someone who could, as she writes in Letter 30, remove “tous les obstacles qui pourraient s’opposer aux moyens de nous obtenir notre liberté.”⁵⁸¹ But it is unlikely that Pompadour would have committed herself to the cause of the Huguenot prisoners. Though her religious, political, and philosophical convictions were quite inscrutable, she was nonetheless hostile toward religious *fanatisme* whatever its cast.⁵⁸² If she had interested herself in the Calas tragedy this was for humanitarian rather than political or religious reasons, for she was wholly committed to royal authority.⁵⁸³ Pompadour’s loyalty to the King placed her at odds with freedom of conscience, however it might be construed, though it is impossible to know whether Marie Durand knew this.

⁵⁷⁷ Bost, *Les Martyrs d’Aigues-Mortes*, ch. 3, sec. 2.

⁵⁷⁸ Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, xxxv, 9n5.

⁵⁷⁹ Silver, “Résister,” 107.

⁵⁸⁰ Thomas Kaiser, “Madame de Pompadour and the Theaters of Power,” *French Historical Studies* 19, no. 4 (1996): 1026.

⁵⁸¹ “All obstacles which might block the way for us to win our freedom.”

⁵⁸² Philippe Hourcade, “Mme de Pompadour, femme des Lumières?,” *Dix-huitième Siècle* 36 (2004): 365; Jean de Viguerie, *Histoire et dictionnaire du temps des Lumières* (Paris: Laffont, 1995), 1296-97.

⁵⁸³ Hourcade, “Pompadour,” 365-66.

The internal evidence of Letter 30 strongly suggests that it was not written to Pompadour. First, Durand refers to the addressee's prior concern for their plight, for which there is no external evidence in the case of Pompadour: "Je sais, Madame, que vous êtes extrêmement touchée de nos misères."⁵⁸⁴ Second, Durand refers repeatedly to the addressee's noble birth and house: to the privilege of "votre naissance", to "votre noble et illustre maison", and to "votre noble et excellente maison". Though she was made a marquise in 1745, Jeanne-Antoinette Poisson, the illegitimate daughter of François Poisson, had not been born into a noble house with the privileges of the court. Third, Durand refers repeatedly and extravagantly to the addressee's celebrated piety. She describes the "zèle de l'amour divin dont votre grande âme est revêtue", and "votre piété exemplaire."⁵⁸⁵ She goes so far as to compare her to Queen Esther, and even to Mary the mother of Christ: "Voici la bienheureuse Marie de nos jours qui fait renaître le Sauveur du monde."⁵⁸⁶ Given the comparatively strict sexual ethics of the Huguenots, would Durand have referred to the "exemplary piety" of the King's mistress?⁵⁸⁷ Flattery and polite expressions of praise were, as the eighteenth-century *salonnière* Suzanne Necker once said, "le rempart de ceux qui ne peuvent pas se défendre" (the bulwark for those who cannot defend themselves).⁵⁸⁸ Praise could be a tool for the weak in society to manipulate the strong, and certainly Durand uses this tool with people of influence. It is not impossible that Durand might praise Pompadour's "piété exemplaire" as an homage to a noblewoman whose favour she needed.⁵⁸⁹ Yet the lack of any written evidence that Letter 30 was addressed to Pompadour, and the cumulative internal evidence against this, means that other theories should be tested.

⁵⁸⁴ "I know, Madame, that our misery moves you deeply."

⁵⁸⁵ "Zeal of divine love with which your great soul is invested." "Your exemplary piety."

⁵⁸⁶ "Here is the blessed Mary of our days who gives birth again to the Saviour of the world."

⁵⁸⁷ Cissie Fairchild, *Women in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1700* (Harlow, UK: Longman, 2007), 203.

⁵⁸⁸ Suzanne Curchod Necker, *Nouveaux mélanges extraits des manuscrits de Mme Necker*, ed. Jacques Necker, 3 vols. (Paris, 1801), 2:291 .

⁵⁸⁹ Silver finds Durand's comparisons to Esther and Mary "Très habile" (Very clever) and "flatteuse" (flattering). "Résister," 107.

The internal evidence of Letter 30 makes it more likely that it was addressed to Marie Leszczyńska (1703–1768), daughter of Polish King Stanisław I, and Louis XV’s Queen from 1725. This is suggested, first, by Durand comparing her to Queen Esther from the Old Testament:

Nous vous regardons, Madame, comme l’espérance d’Israël et comme cette sage et pieuse Esther qui fit tant de bien au peuple de Dieu. Mais que faisons-nous, Madame, de vous comparer à cette grande reine, nous ne prenons pas garde qu’autant que l’Évangile est élevé par-dessus la loi, autant vos incomparables vertus sont élevées au-dessus de cette princesse.⁵⁹⁰

It would be natural for Durand to compare one queen with another. Second, Durand says that “Après Dieu et le roi, Madame, vous êtes la personne du monde pour laquelle nous avons le plus de vénération et de respect.”⁵⁹¹ Leszczyńska naturally fits this third place in Durand’s hierarchy of veneration. Third, the intimacy that Durand supposes the addressee has with the King – and it is unlikely that Durand would have referred to anything other than *legitimate* intimacy – also fits Leszczyńska: “Le cœur de notre monarque est un sanctuaire dont vos vertus vous ont ouvert les avenues les plus secrètes.”⁵⁹² Fourth, Leszczyńska who was devoted to the arts, conversation, and cards, had also by the 1740s developed a strong public reputation for religious piety and her love of the poor.⁵⁹³ Durand’s lavish praise of her addressee’s godliness fit much better with the devout Queen than the *maîtresse-en-titre*. Fifth, Durand likens Marie Leszczyńska to Marie the mother of Christ. Although Versailles

⁵⁹⁰ “We look to you, Madame, as the hope of Israel, like that wise and pious Esther who brought so much good to the people of God. By comparing you to this great queen, Madame, we acknowledge that as much as the Gospel is lifted above the Law, so too your incomparable virtue rises above that princess.”

⁵⁹¹ “After God and the King you are, Madame, the person in the world for whom we have the most admiration and respect.”

⁵⁹² “The heart of our monarch is a sanctuary and your virtues have opened a way to its secret paths.”

⁵⁹³ Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly, “Picturing Marie Leszczinska (1703–1768): Representing Queenship in Eighteenth-Century France by Jennifer G. Germann,” *Early Modern Women* 12, no. 2 (2018): 297-301.

historian Pierre de Nolhac shows repeatedly that Leszczyńska had almost no influence over the King's decision-making from the 1740s, it is unlikely that the prisoners of Aigues-Mortes would have known this; they would reasonably have assumed that the Queen could bring some influence to bear upon their affairs.⁵⁹⁴

I conclude that Durand almost certainly did not write Letter 30 to Pompadour. Though it is possible that she wrote it to the unnamed *dame* who wrote to Coulet on June 16, 1758, the text of Letter 30 points to Marie Leszczyńska as the most likely addressee. If true, this obviates the awkward notion that Durand addressed Pompadour, who was living in open adultery, with manipulatively spurious attributions of piety and biblical heroism. These attributions are not however out of place with Leszczyńska. This testifies also to Durand's boldness – perhaps desperation – in her willingness to write to the Queen of France. In any case, in Letter 30 Durand writes to a woman of high rank and perceived influence, appeals to her piety and compassion, and urges her to intercede for the prisoners. Although Huguenot pre-Revocation petitions for state support tended to appeal to their legal rights, Durand – whose religion was illegal – was compelled to appeal instead to the compassion of the Court.⁵⁹⁵

The Influence of Jacques Pineton's Address on Marie Durand

I reproduced above from Letter 30 apparent quotations from *Les Larmes de Jacques Pineton de Chambrun* (1688). In fact, Pineton's address appears to be a template for Letter 30. A brief

⁵⁹⁴ Pierre de Nolhac, *Louis XV et Marie Leczinska d'après de nouveaux documents* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1928).

⁵⁹⁵ Penny Roberts, "Huguenot Petitioning during the Wars of Religion," in *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World, 1559-1685*, ed. Raymond A. Mentzer and Andrew Spicer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 62-77.

discussion of Pineton's work, which Letter 30 proves to be well known to Durand, may add to our understanding of Durand's prolonged resistance to abjuration.

From 1660, Jacques Pineton (1637–1689) pastored a Huguenot church in Orange, then occupied by French troops.⁵⁹⁶ In 1685, he endured the forced billeting of forty-two dragoons, four of whom were ordered to beat drums day and night. Pineton was crippled with gout and a broken leg which had not properly healed. In a moment of weakness, after they threatened to exile his wife, nephew, and two servants, he cried out, “Eh bien! je me réunirai!” (Alright! I will rejoin!)⁵⁹⁷ This was to Pineton's perpetual regret, thus his “Tears.” Although van der Linden refers to Pineton's *Larmes* as an example of “dramatic stories of suffering and rebirth” that “conferred on refugees a sense of pride”, it is full of self-deprecating confessions of weakness.⁵⁹⁸ Having found safety in the Dutch Republic the following year, Pineton was made a chaplain to Marie, Princess of Orange. He died in London in 1689 having been made a Canon of Windsor by William of Orange, crowned William III of England that same year.⁵⁹⁹ In Letter 30 Marie Durand quotes an address by Pineton to Mary. It is not surprising that Durand, writing to a noblewoman, modelled her letter on a distinguished example of an address before a sovereign. The similarities prove Durand's familiarity with Pineton's work, and her approval of it. Given that Pineton's work is one long expression of regret for his apostasy Durand's familiarity with it may have bolstered her determination to resist abjuration.

⁵⁹⁶ Gamonnet explains that more than four thousand refugees found shelter in Orange after the Revocation, including sixty pastors.” Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 37.

⁵⁹⁷ *FP* 8:245-47.

⁵⁹⁸ David van der Linden, “A Tearful Diaspora,” in *Feeling Exclusion: Religious Conflict, Exile and Emotions in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Giovanni Tarantino and Charles Zika (Milton Park: Taylor and Francis, 2019), 45.

⁵⁹⁹ *FP* 8:248.

Madame Boissy

Besides her letters to d'Argenson, Coulet, and Leszczyńska, in Letter 37 (1763) Durand asks the cloth merchant M. Bonnet to write on her behalf to Madame Boissy: “la supplier de ma part d’employer sa piété dans son pays pour nous procurer quelques secours et de se souvenir de mes maux, je suis sûre qu’elle fera de son mieux.”⁶⁰⁰ Borello explains that this is Madame Boissy d’Anglas, wife of a doctor near Vernoux, who visited the Tour de Constance with her son François-Antoine, who later entered politics.⁶⁰¹ François’s valuable eye-witness testimony of the Tour de Constance, from his visit in 1763, the same year as Letter 37, was cited in Chapter 2. The fact that Durand begs that Boissy will remember her suffering, and her confidence that she will “do her best” suggests some prior connection, that Letter 37 was written after Boissy’s visit. Ten years later, in Letter 46 (1773), Durand asks Rabaut whether he had remained in touch with Madame Boissy. Durand still thought of her in her final years.

Marie Durand’s Letters to General Benefactors

I conclude this chapter with a brief description of Durand’s letters written to various named and unnamed benefactors that I have not yet described.

Letter 1** (1734), beginning with the salutation “Nos très chers frères [et] sœurs en notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ,” is the earliest extant letter from the female prisoners of the Tour de Constance. It briefly thanks the addressees for a gift of oil, promises to pray for their wellbeing, and was neither penned nor signed by Durand.

⁶⁰⁰ “To urge her to use her pious influence to procure from her region some help for us, and to remember my suffering. I am sure that she will do her best.”

⁶⁰¹ Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, 54n65.

Letter 2* (1738), with the salutation “Monsieur”, thanks the addressee for a gift of eighteen livres and offers an elaborate prayer for his wellbeing. It refers also to Mademoiselles de Couste and Boureille, who delivered supplies to the Tour de Constance. It is signed “Lavassas, La Durand.” Gamonnet states the handwriting of both Letter 1** and Letter 2* is that of Suzanne Vassas. Vassas was the daughter of a baker in Marvejols, was sent to the Tour de Constance by *lettre de cachet* dated February 7, 1727, and in 1745 refused an offer of liberation that was conditioned upon non-participation in Protestant worship.⁶⁰²

Letter 3* (1740) is another receipt of goods, sent to an unnamed benefactor and signed by thirty-two prisoners. Of these, eleven sign their own name. Although the receipt itself is not in Durand’s writing, the remaining twenty-one names are written by Durand: “pour celles qui ne savent pas signer” (for those who do not know how to sign their name).⁶⁰³ This is an example of Durand’s secretarial role among the prisoners, and shows also that only one in three of the prisoners knew how to write their own names.

Letter 4 (1740) was written to Justine Peschaire de Vallon. Vallon-Pont-d’Arc is halfway between Le Bouchet and Alès, an area closely linked to the Camisard Rebellion. Durand did not know Peschaire personally: “je n’[ai] pas l’honneur de vous connaître que par votre digne réputation.”⁶⁰⁴ Gamonnet refers to an oral tradition linking the Durand and Peschaire families, which link may explain the correspondence.⁶⁰⁵ Durand complains of the neglect of the people of her own region, and urges Peschaire to do her utmost for suffering Huguenots.

⁶⁰² de Falguerolles, “Tour de Constance,” 244.

⁶⁰³ Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 191n4.

⁶⁰⁴ “I do not have the honour of knowing you, except by your excellent reputation.”

⁶⁰⁵ Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 191n6.

Letter 5 (1746) is addressed to Mademoiselle Guiraudet, who according to Gamonnet was the widow of a lawyer in Alès. Apparently Guiraudet had sent help to the Tour de Constance; Durand apologises for her delay in replying and urges her to continue her support.

Letter 13 (1754) bears the salutation “Nos très chers frères [et] sœurs en Jésus-Christ”. It is a receipt, sent to unnamed benefactors, for a gift of twenty livres, which Gamonnet notes was delivered to the prisoners by Rabaut.⁶⁰⁶ It contains Durand’s usual elaborate assurances of the prisoners’ prayers for their wellbeing.

Letter 41 (1767) is addressed “Aux anciens de Lédignan.” Lédignan lies between Alès and Rabaut’s hometown of Nîmes. There had been a minor clash there in 1752 between Huguenots and Catholics and two priests were mortally wounded.⁶⁰⁷ The letter is interesting for two reasons. First, it suggests that by the time of writing, when the strictures of the Revocation were loosening, that many thought the prisoners of Aigues-Mortes must already have been released, and that this “a si fort refroidi les charités à notre égard” (has so greatly reduced the charity given to us). Secondly, this letter does not acknowledge any previous help received from Lédignan. It may be a cold call, sent to a church with which there does not seem to be any prior relationship, pleading for their help. It cannot be known how many such letters were sent out.

Durand’s French Reformed Epistolary Network

Durand’s epistolary network represents a notable international complement to the Réseau *Protestant d’entraide* defined and described by Ducommun, Quadroni, and Duley-Haour. Both networks were international, both shared news, and both attempted to secure material

⁶⁰⁶ Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 193n42.

⁶⁰⁷ Borrel, *Biographie de Paul Rabaut*, 26.

(diaconal) and political support for the Désert. The Réseau, in addition, supported theological education in Lausanne. But whereas the Réseau connected Protestant correspondents outside of France, Durand corresponded with churches and individuals, both Protestant and Catholic, both within and without France. The benefactors of the Réseau were committees, sometimes under royal patronage, who had access to large resources.⁶⁰⁸ The benefactors of Durand's network were individuals and local churches and included a notable number of women. Of all Durand's Protestant correspondents only the Walloon Church in Amsterdam provided the prisoners with a generous fixed annual payment. Whereas the Réseau linked Protestant pastors and statesmen to provide top-down support and direction for the Désert, Durand wrote from a grassroots network of French Protestant churches and individuals, many of whom were in the Désert. She forcefully urged pastors and courtiers (as I will describe more fully in Chapter 5) to do "their Christian duty" to relieve the suffering of the *galériens* and female prisoners. The comparative analysis of these two networks helps to build a more comprehensive picture of how support and aid came to the Désert.

Whereas the Refuge tended to look at the *église du Désert* as either heroic defenders of the faith in the mould of the early church martyrs and Reformers, or as helpless orphan children to be fed and protected, Durand saw herself and others suffering in the Désert in neither of these ways. As I will show from her letters in Chapters 4 and 5, she saw her community as neither heroes nor helpless victims, but as patient sufferers who needed the kind of advocacy and practical succour that the Refuge could provide – without seeking either its praise or its condescension.

Finally, Durand's network links her, conceptually, not to the philosophes, but to her own self-consciously French Reformed community. Durand writes to the court – to

⁶⁰⁸ Duley-Haour, "Affaire Du Plan," 113.

d'Argenson, Coulet, and Leszczyńska – not as allies of the Enlightenment, but as supposedly virtuous and powerful Catholics. (The relationship between the court and the philosophes was in any case generally antagonistic.⁶⁰⁹) Durand writes to the pastors Rabaut and Gal-Pomaret, who had moved from French Protestant orthodoxy and were optimistic supporters of the philosophes, not as “fellow supporters of the Enlightenment,” but as pastors of the Calvinist church of her ancestors, the church for which her family had suffered. And Durand writes to those in the Refuge – to Anne Durand, Chiron, and the Walloon Church in Amsterdam – and to churches and individuals in the Désert itself, not from a shared commitment to Enlightenment ideas, but from a shared Calvinist heritage. Durand's commitment to this heritage is confirmed by what she writes about freedom of conscience and matters of practical theology, which will be described in the next chapter.

⁶⁰⁹ Davidson, for example, frequently describes Voltaire's regular fallings-out with the monarchy. Ian Davidson, *Voltaire: A Life* (London: Profile Books, 2012).

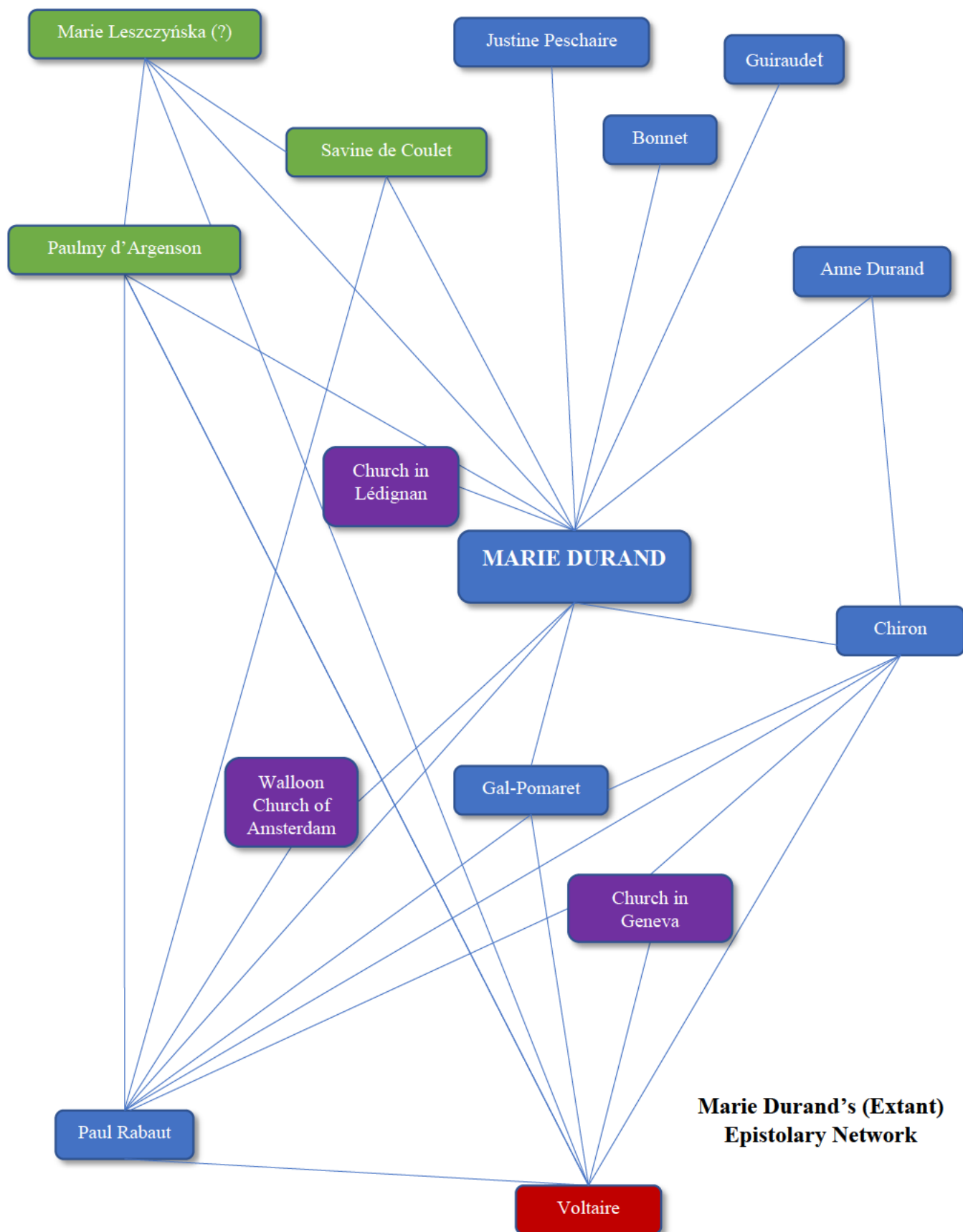


Figure 30. Marie Durand's (Extant) Epistolary Network.

Green boxes refer to the court; blue to individual Protestants; purple to Protestant churches. Voltaire is Voltaire. Connections indicate known active and/or passive correspondence between parties.

4. Marie Durand and Freedom of Conscience

Chapter 1 showed how Marie Durand has frequently been remembered as an “Enlightenment heroine of freedom of conscience.” Questions arise as to what Durand herself thought about freedom of conscience and whether she in fact construed it in the same way as the philosophes. Chapter 4 will show that although Durand lived and wrote during the Enlightenment, her idea of freedom of conscience aligns more with a Reformation than an Enlightenment idea of the phenomenon. The chapter begins by establishing that the Reformation and Enlightenment ideas of freedom of conscience are fundamentally different – that the Reformation idea is *theocentric* (God-centred), and that the Enlightenment idea is *anthropocentric* (human-centred). Having established this analytical framework, Durand’s vocabulary of freedom and conscience is examined, as well as what she says about freedom from incarceration. An analysis of Durand’s letters vis-à-vis the anthropocentric-theocentric framework shows that Durand ought to be identified with the theocentric idea.

The Western Phenomenon of Freedom of Conscience

In the history of Western thought the idea of conscience, an inner judgement of approbation or disapproval of one’s own actions, is very old. Christian Maurer’s discussion of the ancient Greek vocabulary around conscience shows how the cognate nouns σύννοια (*synoia*) and συνείδησις (*syneidēsis*) – both of which are ordinarily translated “conscience” in French and English – imply a second voice within the one subject, a “central self-consciousness of knowing and acting man.”⁶¹⁰ Romans 2:14-15, the *locus classicus* of the Christian

⁶¹⁰ “σύννοια, συνείδησις” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1971), 7:900-17; *DCLF* 1:1795; Frederick W. Danker and Walter

understanding of conscience, describes a universal συνείδησις, an inner voice which “bears witness,” causing a person’s “thoughts either to accuse or defend them.” This is the so-called *bellum intestinum*, the inner struggle of conscience widely portrayed in both ancient pagan and Christian literature, and which became a staple of Christian medieval thought.⁶¹¹ The 1762 *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* defines the Latin-French *conscience* as the “Lumière intérieure, sentiment intérieur, par lequel l’homme se rend témoignage à lui-même du bien & du mal qu’il fait.”⁶¹² In the nineteenth century, Littré defined *conscience* in the same way, as the “Témoignage ou jugement secret de l’âme, qui donne l’approbation aux actions bonnes et qui fait reproche des mauvaises.”⁶¹³ These definitions suggest that the ancient phenomenon of conscience as inner judgement passed intact into the early modern period in which Durand lived.

The notion of *freedom of conscience* implies external coercive powers that threaten one’s ability to act in accord with one’s conscience. In early modern France such powers included at various times and places the state and either Protestant or Catholic church authority, the latter of which was intertwined with state power.

Reformation Theocentric Freedom of Conscience

The Reformation of Western Christianity contended, among other things, for the civil freedom to obey what one’s conscience judged to be the will of God in order to pursue, ultimately, the *gloria dei*, the glory of God. It is true that the Western development of civil

Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 967-68, 973. (Hereafter cited in text as BDAG.)

⁶¹¹ C. S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), 56-66.

⁶¹² “The inner light, inner feeling, by which man renders testimony to himself of the good and the evil that he does.” *Dictionnaire de l’Académie Française. Quatrième édition* 2 vols. (Paris, 1762), 1:371.

⁶¹³ “Witness or secret judgment of the soul, which gives approval to good acts and which reproaches the bad.” Littré s.v. “conscience.”

freedoms began long before the Reformation: John Witte links them back to European classical and medieval ideas of natural law, Brian Tierney to late medieval struggles against papal power, and István Bejczy to the medieval concept of *tolerantia*.⁶¹⁴ The distinctively Protestant idea of freedom of conscience may be traced to Martin Luther who aimed to free “the afflicted and troubled conscience” in both the theological and political spheres.⁶¹⁵ Theologically, Luther argued that a person’s conscience is liberated when they are “justified by faith,” when God has declared them “not guilty” of their sins. Politically, Luther’s entire post-1521 career was embroiled within the European geopolitical conflicts of that age. Amidst this power struggle, Luther argued against political control of a person’s inner life, of their soul and conscience. Thus he explains in his 1523 pamphlet, *On Temporal Authority*:

Temporal authority has laws, which extend no further than to life and property and external affairs on earth, for God cannot and will not permit anyone but himself to rule over the soul. [...] Caesar can neither teach the soul nor guide it, neither kill it nor give it life, neither bind it nor loose it, neither judge it nor condemn it, neither hold it fast nor release it.⁶¹⁶

The Reformation idea that a person’s religious belief and praxis ought to be free from external coercion developed extensively in sixteenth-century France. But we should not confuse results with intention and Pierre-Olivier Léchoy observes that if pluralism and the

⁶¹⁴ John Witte, Jr., *The Reformation of Rights: Law, Religion and Human Rights in Early Modern Calvinism* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 23; Brian Tierney, “Medieval Canon Law and Western Constitutionalism,” *The Catholic Historical Review* 52, no. 1 (1966): 6; István Bejczy, “Tolerantia: A Medieval Concept,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 58, no. 3 (1997): 368-70.

⁶¹⁵ Martin Luther, *A Commentary on St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians*, trans. Samuel S. Schmucker and John F. W. Tischer (Philadelphia, 1860), 132; Richard Sorabji, *Moral Conscience Through the Ages: Fifth Century BCE to the Present* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 115.

⁶¹⁶ Martin Luther, *Christians in Society II*, ed. Helmut T. Lehmann, trans. Walther I. Brandt, 55 vols., vol. 45, Luther’s Works, (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1962), 105, 111.

modern idea of freedom of conscience ensued from the work of Luther and other Reformers, their intention was that all people submit to the authority of Scripture.⁶¹⁷

The pre-Enlightenment French Protestant idea of freedom of conscience was, as Witte, Domingo, Zachman, Andrew, and Hämäläinen demonstrate, deeply influenced by John Calvin, and any analysis of Marie Durand's idea of freedom of conscience must take account of his thought.⁶¹⁸ Calvin defined conscience as "une cognoissance moyenne entre Dieu et l'homme, laquelle ne permet point à celuy qui voudroit supprimer ses fautes, de s'oublier: mais le poursuyt à luy faire sentir qu'il est coupable."⁶¹⁹ The conscience thus voices approval or disapproval on the grounds of God's revealed will.⁶²⁰ God's will alone ought to rule the conscience and a conscience ruled otherwise is defective.⁶²¹ Like Luther, Calvin distinguished between theological and political freedom of conscience.⁶²² Like Luther, he gave primacy to the former: "La liberté chrestienne en toutes ses parties est une chose spirituelle: de laquelle toute la force gist à pacifier envers Dieu les consciences timides".⁶²³ The analyses of David Bosco and Darren Walhof show that Calvin draws a distinction between "conscience as judge" and "conscience as responding to God's judgment".⁶²⁴ In both instances nonetheless the conscience ought to be formed by God. For Calvin, freedom of

⁶¹⁷ Pierre-Olivier Léchoy, "De la célébration de la liberté de conscience à l'interprétation de la modernité," *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 180 (2017): 186.

⁶¹⁸ John Witte, Jr., "Moderate Religious Liberty in the Theology of John Calvin," in *Religious Liberty in Western Thought*, ed. Noel B. Reynolds and W. Cole Durham Jr. (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1996), 43; Rafael Domingo, "Restoring Freedom of Conscience," *The Journal of Law and Religion* 30, no. 2 (2015): 178; Randall C. Zachman, "John Calvin," in *The Reformation Theologians: An Introduction to Theology in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Carter Lindberg (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), 190-1; Edward Andrew, *Conscience and its Critics: Protestant Conscience, Enlightenment Reason, and Modern Subjectivity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 12-13; Hasse J. Hämäläinen, "Moral Conscience's Fall from Grace: An Investigation into Conceptual History," *Intellectual History Review* 31, no. 2 (2021): 285, 290.

⁶¹⁹ "A middle consciousness between God and man, which does not allow the one who wills to overlook his faults to forget himself: but pursues him and makes him feel that he is culpable." *Institution* 4.10.3.

⁶²⁰ *Institution* 4.10.4.

⁶²¹ *Institution* 4.10.5.

⁶²² Witte, "Moderate Religious Liberty in Calvin," 43, 89.

⁶²³ "Christian liberty in all its aspects is a spiritual thing, of which the whole effort lies in granting peace to frightened consciences in God's presence." *Institution* 3.19.9.

⁶²⁴ David Bosco, "Conscience as Court and Worm: Calvin and the Three Elements of Conscience," *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 14, no. 2 (1986): 337-39; Darren R. Walhof, "The Accusations of Conscience and the Christian Polity in John Calvin's Political Thought," *History of Political Thought* 24, no. 3 (2003): 403.

conscience is always theocentric; it is concerned above all with the freedom to obey what one's conscience believes to be the will of God.⁶²⁵

Calvin shows, however, that from theological freedom the complications of political freedom emerge.⁶²⁶ The central question was put succinctly by the sixteenth-century Dutch theologian Dirck Coornhert in his *Synod on the Freedom of Conscience* (1582), a hypothetical gathering of prominent and ideologically diverse sixteenth-century theologians:

Is it right or not for each person to have such freedom of conscience that he may not only believe what he deems necessary for his salvation, but that he may also live this faith, both in refraining from practicing a religion he deems wrong and in practicing the religion that he sees as right?⁶²⁷

Calvin taught that although all human authorities, whether civil or ecclesiastical, are instituted by God, their innate corruption may nevertheless cause them to make laws that contradict God's laws.⁶²⁸ In this circumstance, blind obedience to the laws of human authorities is unconscionable. Though we must undertake to obey the authorities, the claims of specific civil and ecclesiastical laws upon the conscience must be weighed.⁶²⁹ For this purpose Calvin distinguishes between laws that aim at "bon ordre et police entre nous" (good order and rule between us) and which ought to be obeyed to that end and out of respect to God, from human laws that aim to regulate a person's religious belief and practice "outré sa Parole" (outside his Word) which "imposent une nécessité précise, quant aux choses libres et

⁶²⁵ Zachman, "John Calvin," 190-1.

⁶²⁶ Darren Walhof clarifies that Calvin's distinction, vis-à-vis conscience, between spiritual and political kingdoms is not that between church and state, but between divine and (merely) human and laws. Walhof, "Accusations of Conscience," 410.

⁶²⁷ D. V. Coornhert, *Synod on the Freedom of Conscience: A Thorough Examination during the Gathering Held in the Year 1582 in the City of Freetown*, trans. Gerrit Voogt (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), 125.

⁶²⁸ I discuss this at length in Chapter 5.

⁶²⁹ *Institution* 4.10.5.

indifférentes.”⁶³⁰ Such laws impinge upon Christ’s universal sovereignty, fall outside of the civil or ecclesiastical authorities’ remit to establish good order, and tyrannically oppress the conscience.⁶³¹ Political freedom of conscience is freedom from such despotic demands.

For Calvin, political freedom of conscience has soteriological implications. Those who deny certain Christian beliefs and duties, even when coerced to do so by the state, forfeit salvation: “Jesus Christ ajourne devant Dieu son Père, tous ceux qui auront par crainte de la mort corporelle renié la vérité.”⁶³² Yet, laws that prohibit saving belief and practice do not threaten salvation absolutely because a person may maintain their salvation by disobeying them. Thus Charles Drelincourt (1595–1669), influential seventeenth-century pastor of the Huguenot church at Charenton, wrote that “Le glaive temporel ne sauroit couper les sacrez liens, par lesquels nos ames sont liées avec Dieu.”⁶³³ Calvin’s concern was the collateral impact of tyrannical laws, that their constant threats could tempt someone to find relief by giving up saving belief and practice. Thus, “Ceux qui sont touchez de quelque soin de leur salut, sont bien loing de s’estimer libres ce pendant qu’ils sont estreints de leurs liens.”⁶³⁴ Freedom of conscience is important because it removes a threat to salvation.

For French Protestants, freedom of conscience meant not just *tolérance* – the more-or-less reluctant permission for Huguenots to pursue their religion in private – but *liberté*, full

⁶³⁰ “Impose an exact necessity upon free and indifferent things.” *Institution* 4.10.5. Bradbury’s analysis fails to make this distinction, possibly contributing to his thesis that a “systematic treatment” of conscience cannot be derived from Calvin. John P. Bradbury, “Non-Conformist Conscience? Individual Conscience and the Authority of the Church from John Calvin to the Present,” *Ecclesiology* 10, no. 1 (2014): 33.

⁶³¹ *Institution* 4.10.1.

⁶³² “Jesus Christ denies before God his Father, all those who by fear of physical death deny the truth.” *Six sermons de Jan Calvin: à sçavoir, Quatre exhortatifs à fuir toute idolatrie, et à endurer toutes persecutions, à converser en l’Église du Seigneur [...] (Geneva, 1555), 27*; Bernat explains that for the Église du Désert “La tension prudence/confession est constante.” Bernat, “Une Foi au secret?,” 200.

⁶³³ “The temporal sword cannot cut the sacred links by which our souls were linked to God.” *Le Triomphe de l’église sous la croix; ou la gloire des martyrs. Nouvelle édition reveuë & de beaucoup augmentée par l’auteur (Geneva, 1670), 158.*

⁶³⁴ “But those who are touched by some concern for their salvation are very far from counting themselves free while they are bound by their chains.” *Institution* 4.10.2.

and open public worship and participation in society.⁶³⁵ Freedom of conscience was thus by no means synonymous with “freedom of choice.” Nor was it even, as Terrance McConnell defines it, a person’s freedom “to act on their own moral beliefs.”⁶³⁶ For Calvin, freedom of conscience is concerned proximately with the freedom to live and believe the things that are necessary for salvation, and ultimately with the freedom to honour the *gloria dei*.⁶³⁷ “Ceux-là sont francs, qui servent à Dieu” (Those who are free are those who serve God).⁶³⁸ It is better to disobey laws that bind the conscience to acts that disobey God, and to suffer the consequences of disobedience, than that the *gloria dei* be affronted and salvation be threatened. These dire consequences of abjuration explain the widespread contemporary scepticism toward the sincerity of such abjurations, and Huguenot leaders’ frequent denouncements of even insincere abjurations.⁶³⁹ Thus the *Discipline* warns Huguenots “de ne se départir, par quelque persécution qui survienne, de l’union sacrée du corps de l’Eglise, pour se procurer une paix et une liberté à part.”⁶⁴⁰ The theocentrism of Calvin’s freedom of conscience is most starkly seen in a paradox: that he did not permit a conscience the freedom to pursue heresy. Thus Calvin defended the execution of the antitrinitarian Servetus in Geneva in 1553 in his *Defensio orthodoxae fidei* (Geneva, 1554). Calvin’s doctrine was codified in the Confessio, Article 34, which condemns “inventions humaines, et toutes lois

⁶³⁵ Jean Baubérot, “Protestantisme et liberté de conscience ‘Leçons’ du passé, questions d’aujourd’hui,” *Bulletin* 2, no. 3 (2017): 393.

⁶³⁶ Terrance McConnell, “The Inalienable Right of Conscience: A Madisonian Argument,” *Social Theory and Practice* 22, no. 3 (1996): 399.

⁶³⁷ *Institution* 3.20.41; Barbara Pitkin, “Calvin on the Early Reformation,” in *Calvin and the Early Reformation*, ed. Brian C. Brewer and David M. Whitford, *Studies in Medieval and Reformation traditions* 219 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 214.

⁶³⁸ Calvin, *Commentaires*, 4:580.

⁶³⁹ 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): 117.

⁶⁴⁰ “Not to depart, no matter what persecution may arise, from the sacred union of the body of the Church, in order to procure a separate peace and freedom.” *Discipline* 6.3.

qu'on voudrait introduire sous ombre du service de Dieu, par lesquelles on voudrait lier les consciences.”⁶⁴¹

The post-sixteenth-century Protestant development of freedom of conscience proceeded from two aspects of Calvin's thought and conduct. First, the execution of Servetus provoked many, beginning with Sebastian Castellio (1515–1563) at the University of Basel, in his 1554 *De haereticis an sint persequendi* (*Should Heretics be Persecuted?*), to argue for tolerance for heretics.⁶⁴² Second, political scientist Edward Andrew shows how seventeenth-century British non-Conformists, unwilling to tie their consciences to Erastian Anglicanism, built upon Calvin's dogma that the conscience must be formed solely upon one's private understanding of Scripture. This opened the door for both British and continental thinkers to subjectivize the grounds of conscience.⁶⁴³ In France, the subjective determination of freedom of conscience was developed most prominently by Pierre Bayle.

Pierre Bayle, Bridging Theocentrism and Anthropocentrism

The writings of Pierre Bayle (1647–1706) bridge the Reformed theocentric idea of freedom of conscience and the Enlightenment's anthropocentric idea.⁶⁴⁴ Bayle was born into a Protestant household and cited Plutarch and Montaigne as early influences.⁶⁴⁵ After entering the Jesuit University of Toulouse he converted to Catholicism, then reconverted to Protestantism eighteen months later. By 1681 he was teaching philosophy in Rotterdam. His

⁶⁴¹ “Human inventions, and all laws that one would wish to introduce under the guise of serving God, by which one would wish to bind consciences.” See also references to conscience in Articles 22 and 24.

⁶⁴² Joblin, “Conscience et liberté de conscience,” 63-67; For an introduction to both Castellio's *De haereticis an sint persequendi* and Calvin's *Defensio orthodoxae fidei* see Hans R. Guggisberg, *Sebastian Castellio, 1515–1563: Humanist and Defender of Religious Toleration in a Confessional Age*, St. Andrews Studies in Reformation History, (Florence: Routledge, 2003), 73-96.

⁶⁴³ Andrew, *Conscience and its Critics*, 26-32.

⁶⁴⁴ Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, 331.

⁶⁴⁵ Montaigne's ambiguous but significant sixteenth-century contribution to the development of freedom of conscience is summarised in Kselman, “From Toleration to Liberty,” 17-21.

elder brother Jacob, a Protestant minister, was arrested in 1683 – possibly as a hostage to silence Pierre – and died in prison. The writings of Montaigne, apparent trauma for his “double apostasie”, and the persecution and death of his brother are traceable influences and motives behind Bayle’s lifelong struggle for religious toleration.⁶⁴⁶

Bayle argues for freedom of conscience and metaphysical belief on both epistemological and pragmatic grounds. Epistemologically, there can be no certainty about the beliefs for which people persecute one another because they are strongly conditioned by time and place. Pragmatically, coercion of the conscience, though it might be motivated by a person’s salvation, is both cruel and useless: “Dieu lui-même ne nous sauroit sauver par Force” (God himself would not save us by Force).⁶⁴⁷

Que l’on doit bien travailler de toutes ses forces à instruire par de vives & bonnes Raisons ceux qui errant; mais, leur laisser la Liberté [...] de servir Dieu selon leur Conscience, si l’on n’a pas le bonheur de les détromper: &, quant au reste, ne proposer à leur Conscience aucune Tentation de Mal temporel, ou de Récompense capable de les séduire.⁶⁴⁸

Neither church nor state should by any means coerce the conscience and Bayle is careful to distinguish a person’s obligation to obey the state from their right to choose to adhere, or not,

⁶⁴⁶ Élisabeth Labrousse, “Note sur la théorie de la tolérance chez Pierre Bayle,” *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 4, no. 1 (1975): 206; Michael W. Hickson, “Pierre Bayle and the Secularization of Conscience,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 79, no. 2 (2018): 209; Pierre Bayle, *Bayle: Political Writings*, ed. Sally L. Jenkinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), xviii-xix; Rainer Forst, “Pierre Bayle’s Reflexive Theory of Toleration,” *Nomos* 48 (2008): 82-83; Hubert Bost, *Pierre Bayle* (Paris: Fayard, 2006), 51, 225-26.

⁶⁴⁷ Pierre Bayle, *Commentaire philosophique sur ces paroles de Jésus-Christ, Contrain-les d’entrer: ou Traité de la tolérance universelle*, 2 vols. (1686; repr., Rotterdam, 1713), 2:27. Similar arguments are made by William Penn, *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience* (n.p.1670), 22-23; and Jean-Edme Romilly, “Tolérance,” in *L’Encyclopédie, 1^{re} édition*, ed. Diderot and D’Alembert (Paris: 1751-72), 16:391.

⁶⁴⁸ “Let one work with all one’s strength to instruct those who err by lively and good Reasons; but, leave them the Freedom [...] to serve God according to their Conscience, if one does not have the happiness to disabuse them: and, as to the rest, to hold out to their Conscience no Temptation of temporal evil, or Reward capable of seducing them.” Bayle, *Commentaire philosophique*, 1:351.

to a religion.⁶⁴⁹ Intolerance results from the false assumption that where there is a state religion civil obedience necessitates participation in that religion.

For Bayle, freedom of conscience was the corollary of the Reformation doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, that every individual has the right and duty to read and interpret Scripture for themselves.⁶⁵⁰ Yet Bayle was only too aware of Protestant intolerance – the Zwinglian persecution of Anabaptists and Elizabethan persecution of Catholics were notorious examples – and he himself was threatened with censorship in Protestant Rotterdam. Further, Bayle rejected attempts by such Huguenot *rationaux* as Le Clerc, Jacques Saurin, and Basnage, to defend Calvinism as a comprehensive rational scheme.⁶⁵¹ In fact Bayle’s Protestantism is complex.⁶⁵² He speaks from two perspectives: as a Christian he subscribes formally (and sincerely) to Calvinism; as a philosopher he cannot subscribe to Calvinism, or Christianity more generally, as a rational system – there can be no “raison théologique” per se; an idea which Calvin himself criticised.⁶⁵³ Bayle was neither a fideist nor an “athée masqué”, he did not intend to tear down faith or reason; to view him otherwise is to miss the true complexity of his thought, and indeed of all human thought and motivation.⁶⁵⁴ The upshot is that for Bayle salvation cannot necessarily be tied to orthodox doctrine because such beliefs are nonrational and unattainable to those outside of faith communities. God must therefore be content with people who “aiment ce qui leur paroitra vrai” (love that which will seem true to them), so that although two people may hold what each believes to be orthodox truth, and although the orthodoxy of one, or neither, may align with “la vérité absolue”, both

⁶⁴⁹ Marta García-Alonso, “Tolerance and Religious Pluralism in Bayle,” *History of European Ideas* 45, no. 6 (2019): 806.

⁶⁵⁰ Labrousse, “Tolérance chez Pierre Bayle,” 207-8.

⁶⁵¹ Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 71-79.

⁶⁵² Hubert Bost, “Pierre Bayle, Un ‘Protestant Complicé’,” in *Pierre Bayle (1647-1706), le philosophe de Rotterdam: Philosophy, Religion and Reception: Selected Papers of the Tercentenary Conference held at Rotterdam, 7–8 December 2006*, ed. Wiep van Bunge and Hans Bots (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 83-84.

⁶⁵³ Hubert Bost, *Bayle calviniste libertin*, *Vie des huguenots* 88, (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2021), 178-79, 187, 251.

⁶⁵⁴ Bost, *Bayle calviniste libertin*, 205, 212-13.

may find salvation.⁶⁵⁵ Here Bayle departs from the classical Christian idea – expressed in the Nicene Creed for example – that saving belief is essentially transitive, that it is belief in particular doctrines. God weighs only the sincerity of a person’s beliefs, not their truth or error.⁶⁵⁶ Falsehoods believed in good conscience will suffice to save, so that even the sincere atheist may be considered a moral person.⁶⁵⁷ Bayle maintains the link between salvation and freedom of conscience, but breaks the nexus between salvation and Christian orthodoxy. This, in part, is what made him “a landmark in the birth of the modern mind.”⁶⁵⁸

One step further was needed to arrive at the Enlightenment idea of freedom of conscience: to exclude salvation from the frame altogether. This meant prizing freedom of conscience not as something valuable for salvation, but as something valuable in itself. Bayle himself did not take that step, but by severing any necessary link between belief in Christian orthodoxy and salvation he allowed for “salvation” itself to be re-imagined. At a time of growing scrutiny of the Bible and Christian belief, when scepticism and deism were on the rise, it is not surprising that such a new conception did indeed arise among the eighteenth-century philosophes. Freedom of conscience shifted from a means to the *gloria dei* and Christian salvation, to being itself the *summum bonum*, free from ulterior and transcendent motives.⁶⁵⁹ Of course numerous seventeenth-century thinkers paved the way for the Enlightenment, including such rationalists as Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz, and empiricists such as Bacon, Locke, and Newton. What makes Bayle important for my analysis is that he shows how an avowed Calvinist could sever the link between conscience and Protestant orthodoxy and argue that a person’s freedom of conscience needed protecting

⁶⁵⁵ Bayle, *Commentaire philosophique*, 1:468-69.

⁶⁵⁶ Similarly Bayle’s English contemporary John Locke, “Faith only, and inward Sincerity, are the things that procure acceptance with God.” John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government and a Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. Ian Shapiro (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 232.

⁶⁵⁷ Pierre Bayle, *Œuvres diverses de Mr. Pierre Bayle*, 4 vols. (The Hague, 1727), 3:410a.

⁶⁵⁸ Jean-Luc Solère, “The Coherence of Bayle’s Theory of Toleration,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 54, no. 1 (2016): 21.

⁶⁵⁹ Sorabji, *Moral Conscience*, 163.

whatever it held to.⁶⁶⁰ He held theocentric faith and anthropocentric rationalism in respectful tension and built a conceptual bridge by which they might be linked.

Enlightenment Anthropocentric Freedom of Conscience

Although the philosophes embraced a range of metaphysical views – Christian theism (of all kinds), scepticism, agnosticism, deism, pantheism, and atheism – they were consistent in their removal of the divine as the ultimate focus of human endeavour and its replacement with individual and anthropocentric aims. When it comes to Enlightenment rights it is true, as Edelstein emphasises, that: “With very few exceptions, natural right was perceived as deriving from God, the ‘divine legislator.’”⁶⁶¹ The point, however, is not so much from whence human rights are derived, but what their purpose is. For the theocentrist, such rights are fulfilled in the *gloria dei*. For the anthropocentrist, such rights are fulfilled in human flourishing not as a by-product of theocentric aims, but as an end in itself. Formally, Enlightenment anthropocentrism thus severed freedom of conscience from Christian salvation and linked it instead to “salvation” recast as peace and happiness in this world, to what Alasdair MacIntyre describes as “a complete human life lived at its best.”⁶⁶² Christian orthodoxy casts peace and happiness in both a theological and anthropological frame: in relation to God, they arise from reconciliation with him; in relation to humanity, they arise as a secondary consequence of divine reconciliation.⁶⁶³ With God removed from the frame by scepticism, atheism, or deism (which removes God from personal involvement with the world), Enlightenment thinkers construed peace and happiness in exclusively anthropological terms and as ends in themselves. Freedom of conscience in this framework is the freedom to

⁶⁶⁰ Hickson, “Pierre Bayle,” 220.

⁶⁶¹ “Enlightenment Rights Talk,” *The Journal of Modern History* 86, no. 3 (2014): 558.

⁶⁶² Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd ed. (London: Duckworth, 1985), 149.

⁶⁶³ *Institution* 3:13.4-5.

pursue one's own idea of human happiness without the coercion of political or religious tyranny. Given that Marie Durand's memorialisation occurred post-Enlightenment, the anthropocentric idea must be considered in any analysis of Durand as a "heroine of conscience".

The Relationship between Protestant and Enlightenment Freedom

Although the philosophes took a consciously different path to thinkers of previous centuries, there are nonetheless clear links between their idea of freedom of conscience and their European Christian heritage in general, and the Reformation in particular. Jonathan Israel makes a distinction at this point between what he calls the Radical and Moderate Enlightenment. A Radical Enlightenment – with the materialist Spinoza in the front rank – eschews any attempt to reconcile Christian supernaturalism with Cartesian rationalism and its scientific and philosophical developments, a reconciliation attempted in one way or another by the *rationaux* (liberal French Protestants), Locke, Hume, Voltaire, and Enlightenment deists in general.⁶⁶⁴ For Israel, it was the Radical rather than Moderate Enlightenment that was the source of modern political, intellectual, sexual, and social liberties which arose from the eighteenth century. Burson and Collins critique Israel's severance of modern liberties from any roots in Christian thought as overstrained.⁶⁶⁵ Domingo takes a similar position when he describes the Enlightenment's liberation of conscience from religio-political governance as the "secularisation" of conscience.⁶⁶⁶ Secularisation – the metamorphosis of the sacred to the secular – is the determining paradigm. Likewise, Baubérot and Bost, Jacobs,

⁶⁶⁴ Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 36-38, 51-68.

⁶⁶⁵ Jeffrey D. Burson, "The Interweaving of Sacred and Secular: Metaphysics, Reform and Enlightenment in the Rivalry between Dom Deschamps and Claude Yvon, 1769-1774," *Intellectual History Review* 29, no. 3 (2019): 439-42; Collins, "Redeeming the Enlightenment," 621-24.

⁶⁶⁶ Domingo, "Restoring Freedom of Conscience," 179.

Smith, Ryan, Zuber, and Witte argue that modern post-Enlightenment freedoms were not *causa sui*, but Christian freedoms secularised; that the Christian consciousness of human worth and dignity and the Protestant emphasis on individual responsibility were the philosophes' starting point and more or less persisted in their thought.⁶⁶⁷ Hämäläinen suggests that the philosophes reached beyond the Reformers, who grounded conscience on Scripture, to pagan classical and Thomist ideas of natural law as the foundation of conscience. He finds that they were inspired also by the seventeenth-century British development of the Reformers' idea, of an individually formed conscience freed from external standards and constraints.⁶⁶⁸ Though Hämäläinen's analysis grounds Enlightenment thought ultimately in the medieval period and earlier, he affirms nonetheless a Reformation influence upon the Enlightenment idea of freedom.

It is important to note that although the Reformation theocentric idea of freedom of conscience arguably paved the way for the Enlightenment anthropocentric idea, and was bridged by professing Protestants like Bayle, they cannot be linked in a kind of Hegelian development, as naturally succeeding stages in the inexorable progress of human freedom. Notable post-war analyses of Enlightenment human-rights statements by Leo Strauss, Hannah Arendt, and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, and the more recent analyses of Western thought of MacIntyre, Knud Haakonssen, and Charles Taylor, show that the theocentric and anthropocentric ideas are not two species of the same genus, but have a fundamentally

⁶⁶⁷ Jean Baubérot and Hubert Bost, *Protestantisme*, Dossiers de l'encyclopédie du protestantisme 9, (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2000), 39-45; Margaret Jacobs, "The Enlightenment Critique of Christianity," in *Enlightenment, Reawakening and Revolution 1660–1815*, ed. Stewart J. Brown, The Cambridge History of Christianity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 268; Steven D. Smith, *The Rise and Decline of American Religious Freedom* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 8; Alan Ryan, *On Politics: A History of Political Thought from Herodotus to the Present*, 2 vols. (London: Liveright, 2012), 2:668; Valentine Zuber, "Are Human Rights of Religious Origin?," *International Journal on Human Rights* 16, no. 29 (2019); Witte, *Reformation of Rights*, 137-38. Witt refers to John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau as "cradle Calvinists."

⁶⁶⁸ Hämäläinen, "Moral Conscience's Fall from Grace," 286-94. Though Bosco locates Calvin's idea of conscience "deep within the natural law tradition", Hämäläinen's thesis stands nonetheless. Bosco, "Conscience as Court and Worm," 339-40.

different source and orientation.⁶⁶⁹ This foundational and essential distinction is crucial for my analysis of Durand's letters on freedom of conscience.

Remarkably, while many theorists locate Christian principles at the root of Enlightenment freedom of conscience, from the latter-eighteenth century certain liberal Protestants located Enlightenment principles at the root of Protestant freedom of conscience.⁶⁷⁰ In 1847, Haag and Haag's *France protestante* identified Bayle's idea of *liberté* as the "principe vraiment protestant" (truly Protestant principle).⁶⁷¹ Paul Rabaut included Bayle – along with Leibnitz and Locke – among those Protestants who, in his opinion, "ont plaidé avec le plus de force pour la liberté de croire et de penser."⁶⁷² Athanase Coquerel (1795–1868), pastor of the Oratoire du Louvre, went so far as to identify the genius of Protestantism and the true goal of the Reformation with Enlightenment freedom of conscience. For Coquerel, Protestantism reached its full maturation in Enlightenment liberty.⁶⁷³ Charles Dardier makes a similar claim in his 1891 preface to Rabaut's *Lettres*. First, he pays respect to the martyrs, "ces héros de la foi et de la conscience [...]. C'est par leur persévérance indomptable qu'ils ont conquis en France la liberté religieuse."⁶⁷⁴ He then coordinates their struggle with the philosophes, who "après Dieu et nos pères, [ont] grandement contribué par leurs écrits, à l'avènement de la tolérance [...], les droits sacrés et

⁶⁶⁹ Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), 184; Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 2nd enlarged ed. (Cleveland, OH: World Publishing, 1958), 290; Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future: Six Exercises in Political Thought* (London: Faber and Faber, 1961), 150-51; Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *A World Split Apart: Commencement Address delivered at Harvard University June 8, 1978*, trans. Irina Ilovayskaya Alberti (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 47-48; MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 39, 54; Knud Haakonssen, "Protestant Natural Law Theory: A General Interpretation," in *New Essays on the History of Autonomy: A Collection Honoring J. B. Schneewind*, ed. Natalie Brender and Larry Krasnoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 97-98; Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Harvard, 2007), 192, 222-24, 266.

⁶⁷⁰ Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 23-24. Kaplan finds this approach anachronistic.

⁶⁷¹ *FP* 2:81.

⁶⁷² "Pleaded the most powerfully for the freedom to believe and think." Borrel, *Biographie de Paul Rabaut*, 76.

⁶⁷³ *La Liberté chrétienne et l'autorité, sermon prêché le 13 mars 1864, dans le temple de Saint-Lazare* (Paris, 1864), 14-27.

⁶⁷⁴ "Those heroes of faith and conscience [...]. It is by their invincible perseverance that they won religious freedom in France." Rabaut, *Lettres*, xxii.

imprescriptibles de l'homme et du citoyen.”⁶⁷⁵ Anti-Protestant polemicists developed this idea in the nineteenth century, concluding that Protestantism had been a trojan horse for secularism.⁶⁷⁶ Charles Rist, therefore, drew on a long tradition when he commended Marie Durand for enduring thirty-eight years of incarceration specifically for the Enlightenment idea of *liberté*.⁶⁷⁷ The upshot is that whereas Crespin's *Livre de martyrs* extolled Huguenots who chose death over abjuration for their faithfulness to Protestant truth, and whereas Voltaire portrayed them from 1763 as pitiable examples of what happens when tolerance is denied, post-Revolution Protestants could portray them as a composite. Like Crespin's martyrs, they suffer for the truth. But the truth that they suffer for is, ultimately, Enlightenment freedom of conscience as an end in itself. My examination of Marie Durand's letters shows that she did not share this anthropocentrism.

Durand's Vocabulary of Freedom

Marie Durand's forty-eight extant letters evince a rich variety of words and expressions pertaining to freedom of conscience and freedom per se. In this section I introduce these words and expressions, define them, and explain them in their context when apposite. This semantic overview informs my analysis of Durand's writings on freedom of conscience in the sections which follow.

The noun *conscience* appears eight times in Durand's corpus. Three times it is used informally to emphasise the truth of a statement, sworn or assured on someone's *conscience*. In Letter 6, for example, Durand affirms her veracity to Anne, “je te jure sur ma conscience”

⁶⁷⁵ “After God and our fathers, greatly contributed by their writings, to the arrival of tolerance [...], the sacred and imprescriptible rights of person and citizen.” Rabaut, *Lettres*, xxiii.

⁶⁷⁶ Udi Greenberg, “Is Religious Freedom Protestant? On the History of a Critical Idea,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 88, no. 1 (2020): 76-78.

⁶⁷⁷ Rist, “Allocution,” 50-51.

(I swear to you on my conscience). Five times it refers to the metaphysical inner judgment which I described above. In the same letter, for example, Durand mentions a certain Rey who held three-hundred livres in trust for Anne; “On ne peut pas se confier sur une conscience qu’on ne connaît pas”.⁶⁷⁸

The abstract noun *liberté* appears twenty-six times. In a general sense the word describes the absence of constraint from forces which are either exterior (in the realm of law and government), or interior (in the realm of psychology and philosophy).⁶⁷⁹ Three times Durand uses it as part of a polite expression. She writes for example in Letter 7, “je prends la liberté de vous écrire” (I take the liberty of writing to you). Seventeen times she refers to *liberté* as physical freedom from imprisonment. Six times she uses it in reference to freedom of conscience with the formulae *liberté de conscience* or *liberté entière*. (I discuss these terms in detail below.) The adjective *libre* (free) appears seven times: twice in a metaphorical sense, “je te laisse libre” (I leave you free); the remaining five in the literal sense of freedom from incarceration. Thus in Letter 8* she urges d’Argenson: “Rendez libres, Monseigneur, des misérables qui soupirent depuis tant d’années dans une tour des plus affreuses”.⁶⁸⁰ The noun *libérateur* appears twice; in Letter 8* Durand lauds d’Argenson as a “grand libérateur” and in Letter 39 she personifies death as the “grande libératrice”. The adverb *libéralement* (freely) appears twice, both in Letter 4 within a single paraphrase of 2 Corinthians 9:6, “s’ils sèment libéralement, ils moissonneront libéralement, comme s’exprime l’apôtre.”⁶⁸¹ Durand quotes this verse to urge her benefactors to give unrestrainedly, generously.⁶⁸² The abstract noun *libéralité* appears once: Durand refers in Letter 48 to the “pieuse libéralité” of the Walloon

⁶⁷⁸ “You cannot trust the conscience of a person you don’t know”.

⁶⁷⁹ *DCLF* 3:36.

⁶⁸⁰ “Monseigneur, free these wretched creatures who have sighed for so many years in such a ghastly tower.”

⁶⁸¹ “If they sow plentifully, they will reap plentifully, just as the Apostle says.”

⁶⁸² Littré s.v. “libéralement.”

Church. The transitive *libérer* (to free) also appears once, in Letter 19: “On a commencé de libérer des prisonniers qu’il y avait aux citadelles de Montpellier et de Nîmes”.⁶⁸³

The verb *délivrer* appears six times. Etymologically, *délivrer* and *délivrance* share with *libérer* the same Latin root *liber*.⁶⁸⁴ Five times Durand uses *délivrer* to mean deliverance from incarceration, and once to deliverance from suffering; she writes to Anne in Letter 16: “je voudrais pouvoir te délivrer de tes douleurs”.⁶⁸⁵ The noun *délivrance* appears five times and always in reference to deliverance from incarceration.

There are five occurrences of words that refer to “breaking free.” The phrase *rompre les verrous* (to break the locks) appears twice. The verb *briser* (to break) appears three times: *briser les liens* (to break the bonds); *briser les chaînes* (to break the chains); and the obscure *briser les lacs* (to break the snare). This last expression is probably derived from Isaiah 24:17-18 (BDM), “La frayeur, la fosse, et le lacs *sont* sur toi, habitant du pays. [...] celui qui sera remonté hors de la fosse, sera attrapé au lacs.”⁶⁸⁶ *Lacs* means “snare” in this context, cognate with the Latin *laqueare* (to ensnare, trap).⁶⁸⁷

The word *franchir* (to overcome) appears twice. First in Letter 8: “Puisse la durée de vos jours franchir les bornes les plus reculées de la Vie humaine!”⁶⁸⁸ The second occurrence, to Leszczyńska (Letter 30), concerns freedom directly: “fera franchir tous les obstacles qui pourraient s’opposer aux moyens de nous obtenir notre liberté”.⁶⁸⁹ The phrase “quitter la

⁶⁸³ “They began to free some prisoners from the citadels of Montpellier and Nîmes.”

⁶⁸⁴ Littré, s.v. “libérer” and “délivrer.”

⁶⁸⁵ “I would like to be able to relieve you from your pain”.

⁶⁸⁶ “Fear, the pit, and snares surround you, inhabitant of the land. [...] The one who will be lifted up out of the pit will be caught in the snare.”

⁶⁸⁷ R. E. Latham and D. R. Howlett, *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*, vol. 1: A-L (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 1556.

⁶⁸⁸ “May your length of days surpass the remotest limits of human life!”

⁶⁸⁹ “Will overcome all obstacles which might block the way for us to win our freedom”.

prison” (to leave the prison) appears once (Letter 36), as does the word “relâcher” (to release) (Letter 38).

There is only one occurrence of the word *tolérance* in Durand’s surviving letters, and it is significant. It appears in Letter 32 (1760) to Rabaut, in the context of her surprising request for “the book of Michel Nostradamus”, which I discuss in the next chapter. Durand refers back to when she first read the book, more than thirty years before:

J’ai entrevu le peu de tolérance de notre désolée Sion depuis la mort de l’empereur, père de la reine de Hongrie, et il y a un endroit qui parle favorablement de notre bien-aimé monarque. [...] Il parle de beaucoup d’autres choses qui me paraissent nous être favorables, et surtout de ce temps.⁶⁹⁰

Durand does not define or explain *tolérance*, she simply links it to the amelioration of religious oppression and other undefined “favourable things”. Thomas Kselman shows how *tolérance* and *liberté de conscience*, in relation to Protestant religious freedom, came to be carefully distinguished in speeches made before the Assemblée nationale (1789–91): the former referred to reluctant legal permission for restricted Protestant worship; the latter to freedom of worship apart from any legal restraints or permissions.⁶⁹¹ Durand’s extant letters give no evidence that she distinguished between these terms in this exact way. I will argue below, however, that her references to “liberté de conscience” and “liberté entière” tend to the latter sense, that she means by these terms unrestrained freedom of worship.

The fact that Durand refers to freedom in one way or another at least fifty-nine times in her forty-eight extant letters, with at least forty-eight of those occurrences referring to

⁶⁹⁰ “I glimpsed therein a spark of tolerance towards our ravaged Zion, since the death of the Emperor, father of the Queen of Hungary; and there is a place that speaks favourably of our beloved monarch. [...] He speaks of many other things which seem to be favourable to us, about this time above all.” Durand refers here to the death of the Hapsburg Charles VI (r.1711–1740), and to the reign of his daughter Maria Theresa (r.1740–1780).

⁶⁹¹ Kselman, “From Toleration to Liberty,” 15-16.

freedom from incarceration, yields the banal observation that she was preoccupied with the cause of freedom for Huguenot prisoners and *galériens*. Durand's use of such a rich variety of expressions apropos liberty and conscience gives some indication of the degree of thought that she gave to these matters, and of how personal they were. The following two sections analyse Durand's letters to determine why freedom in general, and why freedom of conscience in particular, was important to her.

Why Durand Argues for Freedom from Incarceration

Durand argues for the liberation of the female prisoners and *galériens* on social rather than philosophical grounds. Thus she frequently urges her addressees to look with compassion upon the appalling conditions faced by the prisoners. She describes the *galériens* to Coulet in Letter 29 as, "ces pauvres affligés" (these poor afflicted men).⁶⁹² In Letter 30 she urges the Queen to free such "misérables victimes".⁶⁹³

In Letter 8*, Durand pleads for d'Argenson's pity on the grounds that their incarceration had placed the prisoners in conditions similar to slavery: "Votre Excellence été frappée d'horreur de nos pitoyables demeures et des duretés de notre esclavage."⁶⁹⁴ The idea was not unique to Durand; two of her fellow prisoners also describe themselves as slaves: Isabeau Sautel writes in 1732 "je suis dans un esclavage sans pouvoir" (I am in a powerless slavery), and Isabeau Menet writes to her sister in 1739, "je suis esclave" (I am a slave).⁶⁹⁵ From the middle of the eighteenth century the philosophes were increasingly critical of

⁶⁹² Littré describes the force of the cognate verb *affliger*, "Causer un grand dommage, désoler, tourmenter" (To cause great harm, to afflict, to torment). Littré, s.v. "affliger."

⁶⁹³ The adjective *misérable* may describe both one who suffers wretchedness and misfortune, and one who is worthy of compassion. *DCLF* 3:660.

⁶⁹⁴ "Your Excellency was struck by the horror of our miserable abode and our harsh slavery."

⁶⁹⁵ Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 88; Menet and Mours, *Isabeau Menet*.

French colonial slavery.⁶⁹⁶ Simon Gikandi notes the tension in France between the Enlightenment ideals of liberty and the ongoing eighteenth-century slave trade.⁶⁹⁷ Serious public debate over the legality of slavery would however have to wait until the Revolution.⁶⁹⁸ Durand's 1752 reference to "notre esclavage" must assume nonetheless some degree of unease with the institution.

Durand adds urgency to her appeals for freedom on the grounds of the length of the prisoners' incarceration. She pleads with d'Argenson, for example, to be "touchée de compassion envers de pauvres captives [...] qui souffrent, les unes depuis dix ans, les autres depuis vingt, et quelques-unes depuis plus de trente années."⁶⁹⁹ In Letter 11 (1753) she refers to herself as a "misérable captive depuis vingt-six ans" (wretched captive for twenty-six years). In Letter 30 she pleads for Leszczyńska's help also on the grounds of decades-long incarceration: "les unes depuis vingt, les autres depuis plus de trente années."⁷⁰⁰ And in Letter 41 (1767) she urges the elders of Lédignan to assist those who had suffered "depuis tant d'années pour les intérêts du saint Évangile."⁷⁰¹ Such lengthy incarcerations ought to arouse the pity of those who may be able to help.

Durand also appeals for freedom on the grounds of the natural injustice of their incarceration. For the French state, the Huguenots' beliefs were not only heretical, they were treasonous.⁷⁰² It is true that the Huguenots had fought in the sixteenth-century Wars of Religion, the Rohan Wars (1620–29), the Camisard Rebellion, and numerous other smaller

⁶⁹⁶ Sue Peabody, 'There Are No Slaves in France.' *The Political Culture of Race and Slavery in the Ancien Régime* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 96-97; *DCLF*, 2:635.

⁶⁹⁷ Simon Gikandi, *Slavery and the Culture of Taste* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 292n104.

⁶⁹⁸ Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, "Discrediting Slavery: From the Société des Amis des Noirs to the Haitian Revolution – Ideological Patterns and Anthropological Discourses," in *Discourses of Tolerance & Intolerance in the European Enlightenment*, ed. Hans Erich Bödeker, Clorinda Donato, and Peter Reill (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

⁶⁹⁹ "Touched by compassion for these poor captives [...] who have suffered, some for ten years, others for twenty, and some for more than thirty years."

⁷⁰⁰ "Some have been here for twenty years, others for more than thirty years."

⁷⁰¹ "For so many years for the cause of the holy Gospel."

⁷⁰² Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, 10.

conflicts. But from 1715, under Antoine Court's leadership, Huguenot pastors once again urged passive resistance and demanded obedience to all state laws except those which contradicted Scripture. Thus Durand writes to both d'Argenson and Leszczyńska – members of the court – that the prisoners had done nothing more than to give “à César ce qui appartient à César et à Dieu ce qui appartient à Dieu.”⁷⁰³ And in Letter 29, Durand refers to the *galériens* as those “pauvres persécutés qui n'ont fait aucun tort à personne.”⁷⁰⁴ (This coheres with Voltaire's quip, that the state was persecuting “nos frères errants qui prient Dieu en mauvais français.”⁷⁰⁵) To Leszczyńska Durand writes, “Notre liberté est entre vos mains, Madame, excellente, noble protectrice de l'innocence opprimée.”⁷⁰⁶ If the Queen cares about the unjust punishment of the innocent, then she will help free the prisoners. In Letter 32 Durand also refers approvingly to a comment by Roqualte, her prison commandant in 1760, who wished “qu'on ôterait d'ici d'honnêtes gens pour y mettre des impudiques, mais qu'il donnerait dix louis pour que la chose fût.”⁷⁰⁷ The commandant would pay handsomely, in other words, for innocent Huguenots to be replaced by guilty prostitutes. Innocent women had no place in prison.

Durand's use of social rather than philosophical arguments for freedom is notable. The development of freedom of conscience in the eighteenth century is often described as a battle of philosophical ideas, fought and won by the philosophes within the salons and publishing houses, with legal freedoms as the subsequent fruits of their victory.⁷⁰⁸ The analyses of Martin Fitzpatrick and Sylvana Tomaselli, however, suggest that social, political, cultural, religious, economic, and utilitarian factors contributed more to change than the

⁷⁰³ “To Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.”

⁷⁰⁴ “Poor persecuted men who have done no harm to anyone.”

⁷⁰⁵ “Our wandering brothers who pray to God in bad French.” Voltaire, *Traité sur la tolérance*, 146.

⁷⁰⁶ “Our freedom is in your hands, Madame, excellent and noble protector of oppressed innocence.”

⁷⁰⁷ “That they would remove honest people from here and replace them with harlots, moreover that he would give ten louis for this to be done.”

⁷⁰⁸ Jeffrey Collins cites as examples of this paradigm the classic mid-twentieth-century works of W. E. H. Lecky, W. K. Jordan, Joseph Lecler, and Henry Kamen. Collins, “Redeeming the Enlightenment,” 609.

ideological debate, and in fact drove that debate. Thus Fitzpatrick's study of religious freedom in eighteenth-century Britain highlights the Dissenters use of social and pragmatic arguments.⁷⁰⁹ Tomaselli suggests similarly that "It may well be that the Enlightenment proves to be first and foremost a movement calling for good government and well-policed countries, and that pleas for toleration are to be considered, and hence judged, primarily in that context."⁷¹⁰ Indeed, although Durand appeals to several motives for freeing the prisoners, she does not replicate the diverse philosophical and rationalist arguments for freedom proposed by pre-Enlightenment and Enlightenment thinkers. She does not appeal, for example, to the epistemological and pragmatic arguments of Bayle. She does not appeal to Voltaire's criticism of obscurantism and fanaticism. Nor does Durand refer to the philosophes' critical scepticism, individualism, deism, or atheism. Though six of Durand's extant prison letters were written post-1763, and though in Letter 39 (1766) she tells Gal-Pomaret that she is aware that they were living "dans un temps si favorable à notre sainte religion" (during such a favourable time for our holy faith), Durand does not evince any familiarity with the works and authors commonly associated with the Enlightenment and its seventeenth-century precursors. While certain of Durand's Protestant contemporaries – such as Antoine Court after 1730, Rabaut, and Chiron – expressed some admiration for Enlightenment thought, and while Durand's secular and Voltairean memorialisers tended to view her through the lens of the Enlightenment, Durand appeals to social and practical arguments for freedom: to the impropriety and cruelty of locking loyal and harmless men and women away for decades in harsh galleys and prisons. The plight of Durand and her fellow prisoners was in itself an argument for tolerance.

⁷⁰⁹ Martin Fitzpatrick, "From Natural Law to Natural Rights? Protestant Dissent and Toleration in the Late Eighteenth Century," *History of European Ideas* 42, no. 2 (2016): 220.

⁷¹⁰ Sylvana Tomaselli, "Intolerance, the Virtue of Princes and Radicals," in *Toleration in Enlightenment Europe*, ed. Ole Peter Grell and Roy Porter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 87.

How Durand Understands Freedom of Conscience

There are six references to *liberté de conscience* and the potentially synonymous *liberté entière* in Durand's surviving letters. All six references are found in letters written from 1759 to 1764, and five of the six are found in letters to Rabaut. She refers three times to *liberté de conscience*, once in Letter 29 (1759) to Coulet, and twice in Letter 38 (1764) to Rabaut. She refers to *entière liberté* in Letter 35 (1762), and to *liberté entière* in Letter 36 (1762), both to Rabaut. She also refers in Letter 36 to *liberté entière de conscience*. Freedom of conscience was not a practical matter that arose in her letters of motherly counsel to Anne, or in letters requesting or giving receipt of supplies. It was a higher order matter to be raised with those who could contend for such things in places of power. How did Durand understand these phrases?

First, *liberté de conscience* ought naturally to result in physical freedom. In Letter 38 she equates incarceration with the denial of freedom of conscience: "Il y a quelques jours qu'une personne nous dit que notre liberté de conscience était donnée, et qu'en conséquence nous aurions la nôtre, pourvu que personne ne s'y opposât [...], et qu'en ce cas on nous retiendrait."⁷¹¹ The prisoners would be retained only if freedom of conscience was withheld. Yet for Durand *liberté de conscience* and *liberté entière* were not merely alternate expressions for freedom from imprisonment. The fact that Durand uses the word *liberté* on its own seventeen times to refer to physical freedom suggests that when she refers more specifically to *liberté de conscience* or *liberté entière* she intends something that includes physical *liberté* but that goes beyond it.

⁷¹¹ "Several days ago that someone told us that our freedom of conscience was granted, and that as a result we would have ours, provided that no one opposed this [...], and that they should therefore keep us in prison."

The ultimate outcome of freedom for Durand was religious freedom. This is what she means in Letter 32 when she describes her hopes for “la délivrance de notre Sainte Sion.” The Old Testament city of Zion (Jerusalem) was in Calvinist Bible commentary a trope for the church. The exiles longed to return to Jerusalem, as Calvin himself put it, “à rendre vraye obéissance et pur service à Dieu” and to find “une certaine espérance de salut.”⁷¹² By hoping for the deliverance of “our Holy Zion” Durand hopes for religious freedom for the Huguenot church. Such freedom would come with what Durand refers to as *liberté entière*, the prima facie meaning of which is “freedom without limitation.”⁷¹³ Granted, the adjective *entière* might serve simply to intensify an abstract noun like *liberté*.⁷¹⁴ In the early modern context of Huguenot freedoms, however, *liberté entière* refers specifically to religious freedom, the freedom to sing the Psalms, worship in public, marry, and baptise, without the threat of arrest and punishment. Augustin Calmet gives this sense of the phrase in his *Histoire universelle* (1771). When describing the Prince de Condé’s petition for Protestant freedom before Henri III in the sixteenth century, he coordinates “Liberté entière de conscience” with the “exercice public de la religion calviniste en tout lieu, en tout tems & au regard de toutes sortes de personnes sans nulle modification ni restriction.”⁷¹⁵ Jesuit historian Gabriel Daniel (1649–1728) similarly coordinates “liberté entière de conscience, & le libre exercice de [Huguenot] Religion.”⁷¹⁶

⁷¹² “To render true obedience and pure service to God [...] certain hope of salvation.” From Calvin’s commentary on Psalm 137, wherein the Jewish exiles express a longing for “Sion.” *Commentaires de Jehan Calvin sur le livre des psaumes*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1859), 2:523.

⁷¹³ Littré, s.v. “entière”; *DCLF*, 2:538.

⁷¹⁴ Littré, s.v. “entière.” Littré refers to “entière confiance” as an example of how the adjective can be used with “des choses abstraites, morales, qui sont dans leur totalité.” (Abstract things, morals, which are in their totality.)

⁷¹⁵ “Public exercise of the Calvinist religion in all places, at all times, and in the sight of all manner of people without any modification or restriction.” Augustin Calmet, *Histoire universelle sacrée et profane: depuis le commencement du monde jusqu’à nos jours*, vol. 16 (Nancy, 1771), 133.

⁷¹⁶ “Entire liberty of conscience, and the free exercise of [Huguenot] religion.” Gabriel Daniel, *Histoire de France, depuis l’établissement de la monarchie françoise dans les Gaules*, vol. 9 (Paris, 1729), 33; see also Antoine Court, *Le Patriote français et impartial, ou réponse à la lettre de Mr. l’évêque d’Agen à Mr. le contrôleur général, contre la tolérance des Huguenots [...]* ed. Otto H. Selles, *Vie des huguenots* 26, (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2002), CLV-CLVI, CLXIII-CLXIV.

In Letter 35, Durand uses the phrase *liberté entière* to mean the free exercise of Protestant religion. The phrase appears in the context of relaying some gossip to Rabaut about the prisoners' imminent freedom:

Je vous dirai, Monsieur, que je crois que notre liberté est assurée. Voici ce qui me donne lieu d'avoir cette certitude: monsieur le major, qui nous avait toujours dit fermement que nous ne verrions jamais de délivrance que sous des conditions contre notre conscience, dit le 7 courant à une de mes compagnes qui a été son domestique qu'il était sûr que nous aurions notre liberté entière, que monsieur le commandant de P... travaillait de toutes ses forces, et qu'il en avait eu des lettres d'avis.⁷¹⁷

In the Tour de Constance the offer of freedom upon abjuration and the promise to abstain from Huguenot worship was practically a standing offer, and contemporary records show that numerous prisoners made use of this.⁷¹⁸ Durand describes this as freedom "against our conscience." *Liberté entière* was the freedom to leave the prison without abjuration, without acting against conscience. This is confirmed by the way she reports some further preposterous gossip about imminent freedom to Rabaut in Letter 36: "que bientôt la France se verrait toute protestante. [...] Le curé du lieu dit à un catholique honnête homme que les protestants auraient leur liberté entière de conscience avant que cette année finît".⁷¹⁹ Later in the same letter she expresses the hope that "bientôt nous aurons notre liberté entière" (soon we should have our entire freedom). Durand reasons that if France was soon to be completely

⁷¹⁷ "I can tell you that I think our freedom is assured, Monsieur. This is what gives me reason for this certainty: on the seventh of this month Monsieur the Major, who has always told us firmly that we will never see freedom, except under conditions which conflict with our conscience, told one of my companions, who is also his domestic, that he was sure that we would enjoy entire liberty, that Monsieur the commandant of P... laboured with all his might for this, and that he had letters of advice about this."

⁷¹⁸ See de Falguerolles, "Prisonnières," 382-420.

⁷¹⁹ "That soon France would be entirely Protestant. [...] The local priest told him, an honest Catholic man, that Protestants would have entire freedom of conscience before the end of this year."

Protestant, then Protestants would be free not just from prison, but free to live and worship as Protestants.

Durand's yearning for *liberté entière*, in the context of early modern discourse and the French Revolution, is in effect a yearning to move from *tolérance* to *liberté*. The Edict of Nantes extended tolerance: it permitted those of "the supposed Reformed religion" to conduct Protestant worship only within specified places, while waiting for their "enlightenment" and restoration to the mother church. Until the Revocation, the Bourbon kings continued the policy of tolerance, denying the legitimacy of Protestantism while requiring Huguenots to respect Catholicism to some extent – by not working on Catholic holidays for example, and by paying a tithe (*la dîme*) to the Catholic church.⁷²⁰ Intriguingly, this same idea of tolerance appears in certain prominent seventeenth-century Protestant writings. Pierre Jurieu (1637–1713) for example, in his defence of freedom of conscience, *Des Droits des deux Souverains en matière de Religion* (1687), explains that "Le Papisme ne veut point de tolerance. Nos indifferens la veulent universelle, les sages tiennent le milieu. Ils tolerent beaucoup, mais ils ne tolerent pas tout."⁷²¹ Jurieu thus disagrees with the Catholic dislike of tolerance, yet agrees in principle with their practical policy of "tolerance with limitations." Similarly, writing from Amsterdam, Protestant theologian Élie Saurin (1639–1703) refers to the "justes bornes" (just limits) of tolerance. Although human governors must not tyrannically overrule a person's God-established conscience, they still have a duty to suppress the promulgation of heresy.⁷²² (Bayle denied this duty, arguing that to constrain a person's conscience is to force them to sin

⁷²⁰ Joblin, "Conscience et liberté de conscience," 60.

⁷²¹ "Papism does not want tolerance. The indifferent among us want universal tolerance, the wise hold a middle way. They tolerate much, but they do not tolerate everything." Pierre Jurieu, *Des Droits des deux Souverains en matière de Religion, la Conscience et le Prince Pour détruire le dogme de l'indifférence des Religions & de la tolérance Universelle* (Rotterdam, 1687), 274.

⁷²² Élie Saurin, *Réflexions sur les droits de la conscience, où l'on fait voir la différence entre les droits de la conscience éclairée & ceux de la conscience errante [...] et on marque les justes bornes de la tolérance civile en matière de religion* (Utrecht, 1697), 500-2.

against God.⁷²³) For Jurieu and Saurin tolerance is a positive principle if it is applied “wisely” and by the correct – that is Protestant – authorities. This seventeenth-century idea of toleration, both Protestant and Catholic, corresponds to the medieval practice of *tolerantia* described by Bejczy, which permitted the presence of heretical groups (such as Jews and Muslims) and certain condemned institutions (such as prostitution) without conceding any moral legitimacy to such groups or institutions. This was done in the hope of preventing greater evils: expelling Jews might mean the loss of loans; expelling prostitutes might increase the risk of sexual violence.⁷²⁴ In France, it was thought that the abolition of tolerance might reignite the religious wars of the sixteenth-century. Yet as the seventeenth century progressed the French state’s willingness to indulge in such *realpolitik* diminished and the last vestiges of toleration were swept away by the Revocation.

This distinction between *tolérance* and *liberté de conscience* was also made by Rabaut’s son, Saint-Étienne, in his famous declaration before the Assemblée nationale in August 1789. A speech by Jean-Joseph de Laborde urged for “liberté de conscience”, “liberté de religion”, and “tolérance” indiscriminately. In his reply, Mirabeau strongly denounced the confusion, explaining that tolerance implied the existence of a power that may choose to exercise tolerance or not: “l’existence de l’autorité qui a le pouvoir de tolérer, attente à la liberté de penser, par cela même qu’elle tolère, et qu’ainsi elle pourrait ne pas tolérer.”⁷²⁵

Saint-Étienne concurred:

Ce n’est pas la tolérance que je réclame; c’est la liberté. La tolérance! Le support! Le pardon! La clémence! Idées souverainement injustes [...]. La tolérance! Je demande

⁷²³ Bayle, *Commentaire philosophique*, 390-98.

⁷²⁴ Bejczy, “Tolerantia: A Medieval Concept,” 372-74.

⁷²⁵ “The existence of the authority which has the power to tolerate attacks freedom of thought, for that which it tolerates, it might thus not tolerate.” M. J. Mavidal (ed.), *Archives parlementaires: de 1787 à 1860; recueil complet des débats législatifs et politiques des Chambres Françaises, Tome VIII: du 5 mai 1789 au 15 septembre 1789* (Paris, 1875), 473.

qu'il soit proscrit à son tour, et il le sera, ce mot injuste qui ne nous présente que comme des citoyens dignes de pitié, comme des coupables auxquels on pardonne.⁷²⁶

This is the moment that Samuel Bastide evokes at the conclusion of his *Prisonnières de la tour de Constance* (1957), a moment that is for him the culmination and fulfilment of the cause for which the prisoners suffered.⁷²⁷ There is not enough context around Durand's positive reference to "tolérance" in Letter 32 (1760) to suggest that she drew the same terminological distinctions as Mirabeau and Saint-Étienne. Yet her correlation of *liberté de conscience* with *liberté entière* suggests that she means by the former phrase not the limited idea of *tolérance* commended by Jurieu and Saurin, but the complete freedom urged by Mirabeau and Saint-Étienne.

The full physical and religious freedom for which Durand yearned is portrayed in Jean-Baptiste Renoult's book of sermons, *Le Vray et le faux jubilé* (1737), a book which Durand asked Anne to send her (Letter 25, 1757). Renoult was a monk who had converted to Protestantism and then served as a pastor in England from 1695.⁷²⁸ In his sermons he integrates physical, social, and religious freedom: "Bien-tôt les exilés seroient rappelés, les captifs affranchis, les prisonniers relâchez, bien-tôt nos familles seroient réunies, & nos enfans restitués, nos temples rebâti, nos sanctuaires réparés, nos maux adoucis, nos troupeaux rassemblés."⁷²⁹ For this Huguenot preacher, requested by Durand, *liberté de conscience*, religious freedom, and physical *liberté*, were tied together.

⁷²⁶ "It is not tolerance that I demand; it is liberty. Tolerance! Endurance! Forgiveness! Clemency! Sovereignly unjust ideas [...]. Tolerance! I demand that it in turn be banned, and it will be, this unjust word which presents us as citizens worthy of pity, like criminals that one pardons." Mavidal (ed.), *Archives parlementaires*, 479.

⁷²⁷ Bastide, *Prisonnières*, 63.

⁷²⁸ *FP* 8:416-17.

⁷²⁹ "Soon the exiles will be recalled, the captives freed, the prisoners released, soon our families will be reunited, and our children restored, our temples rebuilt, our sanctuaries repaired, our injuries healed, our flocks restored." Jean-Baptiste Renoult, *Le Vray et le faux jubilé en deux sermons sur ces paroles du XXV du Lévitique vers. XII [...]* (Geneva, 1737), 11.

That Durand contended not for limited tolerance but for complete religious freedom is confirmed by her refusal to abjure. Given that Durand's brother Pierre died in 1732, and that she was no longer held as a hostage for him after that date, there is no evidence to suggest that she herself could not have abjured and found freedom if she wanted to. But for Durand physical liberty under abjuration precluded freedom of conscience. This is why she hopes for *liberté entière*. Freedom from prison without freedom of conscience would not be a freedom worth having. Falling short of *liberté entière*, it would not be freedom at all.

Durand accords great value to *liberté de conscience* and *liberté entière*. In Letter 29 she describes the (false) report that the king had granted *liberté de conscience* as “la meilleure de toutes les nouvelles.” The “best of all news” was not in this instance physical freedom, but freedom of conscience. Similarly, in Letter 38 Durand describes to Rabaut “la plus grande satisfaction que je désire au monde qui est, après la paix de l'Église, celle d'avoir le doux avantage de voir celui que j'aime.”⁷³⁰ Couched in flattery, Durand explains that the peace of the church – which in the context of Letter 38 means the freedom to worship in peace – is the thing she most desired. Durand's refusal to abjure shows that *liberté de conscience* and *liberté entière* were even more valuable than physical freedom from what she calls, in the same letter, her “dreadful sepulchre.”

Durand's Theocentric Construal of Freedom of Conscience

While it might seem obvious that Durand would have attached a religious meaning to the idea of freedom of conscience, there were other possibilities. It was possible for her to have construed the idea according to its Enlightenment anthropocentric idea, its Reformed

⁷³⁰ “The thing that would most satisfy me in all the world which is, after the peace of the Church, that of having the sweet advantage of seeing the one whom I love.”

theocentric idea, neither of these ideas, or some combination of the two. We may dismiss the “neither” up front. Durand was not writing original theology or philosophy. Her letters are occasional, not didactic; she assumed a common understanding of freedom of conscience with her readers. This can only be the theocentric or anthropocentric idea, or some confusion of these ideas, for there was no *tertium quid* in discussion at the time. In this section I present the reasons why Durand should be associated with the theocentric idea. The first two reasons are circumstantial; the remainder are drawn from an analysis of Durand’s letters themselves.

First, as was shown in Chapter 2, there is no evidence that Marie Durand was raised in a home that engaged with the seventeenth-century theological and political precursors of the philosophes. The ten books listed in Étienne Durand’s possession were orthodox Protestant works: Bibles and psalmodies, books of devotion, and anti-Catholic polemic.⁷³¹ He did not possess the writings of Descartes, Spinoza, Pierre Bayle, or the like. Nor do any of Étienne’s extant writings show any familiarity with such emerging ideas. The Durand family were literate but Le Bouchet was – geographically, socially, and philosophically – a world away from the intellectual circles of Paris and the Dutch Republic. Marie grew up in a home that faced in the main towards Calvinist orthodoxy and entirely toward Calvinist orthopraxy.

Of course the apparent orthodoxy of Durand’s home does not necessarily mean that her family were uncompromising Calvinists who had carefully thought through their position. In the mid-seventeenth century the attitude of many Huguenots softened towards Catholicism, to the point of accepting mixed marriages and accepting that Catholics could be “true Christians.”⁷³² They became less committed to Calvinist statements which anathematised Catholic ritual and belief.⁷³³ In his study of ecclesiastical and civil registers in

⁷³¹ Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 71-72.

⁷³² Élisabeth Labrousse, “Le XVII^e siècle,” in *La France protestante: histoire et lieux de mémoire*, ed. Henri Dubief and Jacques Poujol (Montpellier: Éditions de Paris, 1996), 61.

⁷³³ For example, Calvin’s condemnations of the “erreur pestilentielle” of the Mass, and the Catholic sacramentalisation of marriage, *Institution* 4.18.1; 4.19.35.

seventeenth-century Aquitaine, Gregory Hanlon hesitates to credit the Protestant community there with any pronounced understanding or enthusiasm for Christian doctrine, let alone for their inherited Calvinism.⁷³⁴ Tellingly, although Kaspar von Greyerz describes seventeenth-century Protestant spiritual renewal movements in England (Puritanism), Germany and Switzerland (Pietism), and the Dutch Republic (*Nadere Reformatie*), the only comparable movement in France was Jansenism, which was – despite bearing certain affinities to Calvinist soteriology – a Roman Catholic movement.⁷³⁵ Seventeenth-century French Protestantism aimed more for social survival and theological refinement or revision than spiritual renewal, and French Protestant leaders adopted less orthodox positions. In the two generations preceding the Revocation the Huguenot seminaries in Saumur and Sedan taught Amyraldianism, a soteriological system which partially deviated from that of Calvin.⁷³⁶ Doctrinal changes went far beyond the soteriological, however. By the turn of eighteenth century a highly influential school of French Protestant theologians and pastors, the so-called *rationaux*, attempted to synthesise Cartesian rationalism and incipient criticism of the Bible's supernaturalism with their inherited beliefs. This liberal and “rational” revision of Protestantism moved away from strict adherence to the doctrines of the Confessio.⁷³⁷ André Gounelle, who rejects the idea that the late-seventeenth-century French Protestant church was as weak as has often been claimed, points nonetheless to an ecumenical tendency that weakened commitment to specifically Calvinist doctrines, and an uncritical reverence for the monarchy.⁷³⁸ By the time of Marie Durand's birth there had been a general shift away from

⁷³⁴ Gregory Hanlon, *Confession and Community in Seventeenth-Century France: Catholic and Protestant Coexistence in Aquitaine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 136-51.

⁷³⁵ Caspar von Greyerz, *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Europe 1500-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 79-104.

⁷³⁶ Oliver Crisp, “The Election of Jesus Christ,” *Journal of Reformed Theology* 2, no. 2 (2008): 133-34. For an overview of the formation and closure of the eight Huguenot seminaries in France see Karin Maag, “The Huguenot Academies: Preparing for an Uncertain Future,” in *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World, 1559-1685*, ed. Raymond A. Mentzer and Andrew Spicer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 139-56.

⁷³⁷ Hubert Bost, “Calvin au prisme du ‘Dictionnaire’ de Bayle,” *Bulletin* 155 (2009): 245, 262; Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 65-66.

⁷³⁸ Gounelle, “Force et faiblesse,” 134-35.

“hard line” sixteenth-century Calvinism so that rural Huguenots – and Étienne Durand is an example of this – felt able to find some degree of social acceptance by formalising their marriages and children’s baptisms with Catholic priests.⁷³⁹ On balance, it would be unwise to caricature Marie Durand’s birth family as staunch Calvinists who refused to compromise with the Catholic mores of their wider community. They appear nonetheless as generally pious Protestants who were apparently unaware of – let alone sympathetic towards – the incipient anthropocentric ideas of the late seventeenth century.

Despite the seventeenth-century tendency towards liberalism, the first generation of the *église du Désert* constituted under Antoine Court’s leadership at the synod at Montèzes in 1715 – the church movement that Marie Durand grew up in – did not engage with or demonstrate familiarity with the writings of the philosophes. This suggests a second circumstantial reason for why Durand ought not to be associated with Enlightenment freedom of conscience. Hugues’s comprehensive 1875 study of the first decades of the *restauration* of the Huguenot church in France from 1715, drawn primarily from the 116 folios of Court’s collected letters in the Bibliothèque de Genève (the *papiers Court*), shows that the church struggled against two perceived threats to its survival. On one side, government repression, the severity of which increased after the Regency (1715–23) and Louis XV’s Edict of 1724, which strongly reinforced the constraints of the Revocation.⁷⁴⁰ On the other side, the perceived threat of the so-called *Inspirés*, lay Huguenot leaders and *prophétesses* who emphasised the value of immediate ecstatic revelation over the teaching of Scripture.⁷⁴¹ Court and the founding pastors of the *Désert* responded by turning not to the *rationaux*, but to the Calvinist orthodoxy of the Confessio and Drelincourt’s 1652 *Catéchisme*.⁷⁴² Court hand-

⁷³⁹ Hanlon, *Confession and Community*, 262-63.

⁷⁴⁰ Joutard, “Antoine Court,” 76; Edmond Hugues, *Antoine Court. Histoire de la restauration du protestantisme en France au XVIII^e*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1875), 1:256-58; *Recueil des édits et déclarations du Roy*, 366-72.

⁷⁴¹ Hugues, *Antoine Court*, 1:179.

⁷⁴² Jane McKee, “La Correspondance de Charles Drelincourt, 1620-1669,” *Bulletin* 159 (2013): 67.

copied the *Catéchisme* in 1714 and in 1715 the leaders of the Désert adopted it as a standard training text.⁷⁴³ It is true that Court would, after relocating to Lausanne in 1729, eventually participate in the more liberal teaching of the seminary there.⁷⁴⁴ Lassere explains that from the middle of the eighteenth century the seminary's theology shifted toward Socinian doctrines that denied Christ's deity, and a soteriology that granted a far greater human contribution to salvation than Calvin did. Antoine-Noé Polier de Bottens, president of the Seminary committee from 1759 to 1783, openly denied the deity of Christ and the miracles of the New Testament.⁷⁴⁵ In his first fifteen years of pastoral work in France, however, Court looked only to the Calvinist orthodoxy and orthopraxy of the sixteenth century.⁷⁴⁶ Mours and Robert, in their 1972 study of the eighteenth-century French Protestant church, did not credit the philosophes with any influence upon the church before Calas's execution in 1762.⁷⁴⁷ Krumenacker also rejects the notion that the philosophes exerted as large an influence upon French Protestant leaders in the latter part of the eighteenth century as has sometimes been thought.⁷⁴⁸ If these analyses seem – in light of the support expressed for the philosophes by Rabaut, Gal-Pomaret, and Chiron – a little overstated, it is true nonetheless that Marie Durand's life before prison, from 1711 to 1730, was lived under the auspices of an orthodox church movement that from 1715, and to no earlier than 1729, looked not to the emerging writings of Bayle and Voltaire and the philosophes, but to the Calvinism of the past.⁷⁴⁹ To whatever extent Durand was influenced by the ideas and convictions of the early Désert, it was not at that time wedded to the anthropocentrism of the philosophes.

⁷⁴³ Hugues, *Antoine Court*, 1:27.

⁷⁴⁴ Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, 11.

⁷⁴⁵ Lassere, *Séminaire de Lausanne*, 127-28. See also Cabanel, *Histoire des protestants*, 878-79.

⁷⁴⁶ Robert, "Le XVIII^e siècle," 87.

⁷⁴⁷ Samuel Mours and Daniel Robert, *Le Protestantisme en France au XVIII^e siècle à nos jours (1685-1970)* (Paris: Librairie Protestante, 1972), 159-71.

⁷⁴⁸ Yves Krumenacker, "Les pasteurs français face à la Révolution," *Revue d'histoire du protestantisme* 1, no. 2 (2016): 199-205.

⁷⁴⁹ Philippe Joutard, "Une Mentalité du 16^e siècle au temps des Lumières: les protestants du Vivarais," *Dix-huitième Siècle* 17 (1985).

Durand was not oblivious to what was going on in France outside of her prison, to what she refers to as “les temps” (the times, circumstances).⁷⁵⁰ She was aware in particular of a general eighteenth-century movement for freedom of conscience. In Letter 7 (1752) she hopes that “Dieu nous fera la grâce de changer les temps” (God will by his grace change our present circumstances). She hopes, in other words, that “the times” were becoming more favourable to the Protestants. In Letter 23 (1756) she refers to Anne’s report “sur le bruit sourd qui court sur notre sujet” (about the rumours about our situation.) And to Coulet in Letter 29 (1759), in the same paragraph in which she repeats the false news that *liberté de conscience* had already been granted, she writes about her enclosed letter to Leszczyńska, “Ne tardez pas à la lui remettre [...]; le temps est favorable, ne le perdez pas.”⁷⁵¹ Similarly, in Letter 38 (1764) she writes to Rabaut in the same paragraph in which she hopes that *liberté de conscience* had been granted, that “Le temps devenu plus favorable, je vous prie de lui [Fitz-James] faire passer un placet pour le roi, et un pour lui, pour le supplier de se rendre favorable pour nous auprès de Sa Majesté.”⁷⁵² Durand was aware that opinions were changing in a way that would favour them. In Letter 39 (1766), to Gal-Pomaret, Durand expresses frustration that in a time of growing favour toward the Huguenots she and others are still incarcerated: “Hélas! Il faut que nos péchés soient bien grands, que dans un temps si favorable à notre sainte religion nous soyons toujours captives.”⁷⁵³ By coordinating *liberté de conscience* with a consciousness of changing times, as she does in Letter 38, Durand shows that she was aware of some kind of mid-eighteenth-century struggle for freedom of conscience. But we cannot infer from this that Durand chose incarceration over abjuration as

⁷⁵⁰ *Temps* may refer to the moral quality of an epoch, such as is expressed in the proverb: “Autres temps, autres mœurs” (Other times, other customs). *DCLF* 4:1295.

⁷⁵¹ “Do not delay forwarding this to her [...]. The time is favourable, do not miss it.”

⁷⁵² “The times being now more favourable, I beg you to send him a petition for the King, and one to him, to beg him to act in our favour before His Majesty.”

⁷⁵³ “Alas! Our sins must be very great if we remain in captivity during such a favourable time for our holy faith.”

part of a conscious fight for *liberté de conscience* per se, let alone for the Enlightenment conception of *liberté de conscience*. Durand's motivation for resisting abjuration can and ought to be determined by her own writings.

Turning to Durand's letters themselves, we find no direct or indirect references to the works and ideas of the philosophes. This suggests prima facie that she had no leaning towards Enlightenment anthropocentrism. This argument from silence must be contextualised, however. Some of the books commonly associated today with the French Enlightenment, such as Montesquieu's *De l'esprit des lois* (1748), the *Encyclopédie* (1751–72), Rousseau's *Du Contrat social* and *Émile* (both 1762), Voltaire's *Traité sur la tolérance* (1763) and *Dictionnaire philosophique* (1764), and Beccaria's *Des Délits et des peines* (French translation 1765), were not necessarily the books that were most widely read by the French public at the time of their publication. Both Robert Darnton's 1989 study of book sales from Neuchâtel to France in the generation preceding the Revolution, and Mark Curran's 2013 re-valuation of Darnton's work, show that the texts that most helped post-Revolution readers to understand Enlightenment thought were not the books that created a *popular* appetite for political change prior to the Revolution.⁷⁵⁴ From his analysis of early twentieth-century scholarship on the French Enlightenment, Collins suggests that the works of the philosophes cited above were more the effect of the social and political agitation for freedom than its cause.⁷⁵⁵ And Garrioch, in his study of eighteenth-century Paris, observes that "the religious questioning of the philosophes was directly accessible only to a small proportion of the Paris population. Even though basic literacy was high, books were expensive, time limited, and such works were too challenging for most working people."⁷⁵⁶ We should not expect, a

⁷⁵⁴ Robert Darnton, "The Forbidden Bestsellers of Prerevolutionary France," *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 43, no. 1 (1989): 28; Mark Curran, "Beyond the Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France," *The Historical Journal* 56, no. 1 (2013): 108.

⁷⁵⁵ Collins, "Redeeming the Enlightenment," 628-30.

⁷⁵⁶ David Garrioch, *The Making of Revolutionary Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 195.

priori, that an indigent female prisoner in Aigues-Mortes was reading the canonical works of the Enlightenment when the majority of free and literate Parisians were not. In any case it is doubtful, as I argued in Chapter 3, whether Durand possessed any books at all in the Tour de Constance, for even if books had been permitted it is unlikely that hungry prisoners would have foregone food and fuel for such expensive items.⁷⁵⁷ Unlike Rabaut, Gal-Pomaret, and Chiron – the Protestant leaders with whom Durand corresponded – she makes no reference to the philosophes by name, nor to their works, nor even to their ideas. If Greyerz’s contention seems overstated that the Enlightenment had at best only an indirect influence on the “mentality” and religious practice of the French populace in the generation prior to Revolution, Marie Durand’s own silence on Enlightenment thought is nonetheless consistent with it.⁷⁵⁸ She does refer in Letter 32 to the mid-sixteenth-century *Prophéties* of Nostradamus. Yet Nostradamus was not a political or philosophical agitator, had enjoyed considerable royal patronage, and made no contribution to pre-Enlightenment thought. Though Durand’s letters indicate some awareness of the news and thought going on outside of the Tour de Constance, her writings offer no evidence that the philosophes’ ideas pierced her prison walls or influenced her thinking.

Durand’s refusal to win freedom by abjuration was motivated not by the cause of Enlightenment freedom of conscience but, as I showed above, by her commitment to religious *liberté entière*; not *tolerantia* but the physical and religious freedom to worship God as a Protestant. It is important to note in any case that in France, agitation for religious freedom extended far beyond the philosophes. Protestants had argued for religious freedom from the beginning of the Reformation and, from the mid-eighteenth century, lawyers,

⁷⁵⁷ Elliott’s cautious study of book prices in eighteenth-century England is indicative. “Even lower priced reading material would have absorbed a much larger portion of household budgets than would be the case today.” J. E. Elliott, “The Cost of Reading in Eighteenth-Century Britain: Auction Sale Catalogues and the Cheap Literature Hypothesis,” *ELH* 77, no. 2 (2010): 374.

⁷⁵⁸ Greyerz, *Religion and Culture*, 200.

Jansenists, progressive Catholic theologians (French, Italian, and Polish), and playwrights also joined the cause, each with their own methods and motives.⁷⁵⁹ Malesherbes, for example, was concerned that the oppression of Protestantism led not to conversions to Catholicism, but “indifférence pour la religion.”⁷⁶⁰ Eighteenth-century playwrights, on the other hand, evoked pity for Protestant suffering as their primary lever toward toleration – Charles-Georges Fenouillot’s *L’Honnête Criminel* (1767) is probably the most famous work of this kind.⁷⁶¹ Another factor is the steady eighteenth-century decline of the alliance between church and state.⁷⁶² Although Paris in the decades prior to the Revolution maintained a strong outward devotion to Catholicism, the church’s influence was waning. The number of feast days, religious confraternities, and priests fell; revulsion for the oppression of Jansenists and Protestants grew. There was mounting confidence in medicine and the empirical sciences, and a spirit of secularism began to take hold.⁷⁶³ Durand’s desire for religious *liberté entière* places her in a movement that was considerably older and broader than the philosophes and was in any event directly concerned for free Protestant worship.

Neither was Durand’s refusal to abjure motivated by any Enlightenment considerations. It was motivated in part by a sense of solidarity with Huguenot martyrs and their cause. The *prisonnières* had husbands, sons, and brothers in the galleys, and in Letter 29 she expresses strong sympathy for “nos pauvres frères qui gémissent sur ces funestes galères”.⁷⁶⁴ Durand describes people who suffered for their faith as “martyrs.” Thus in Letter 12 Durand refers to the “fille d’un martyr” and in Letter 22 to “l’enfant d’un martyr et d’une

⁷⁵⁹ Adams, *Huguenots and French Opinion*, 90-92, 165; Garrioch, *Huguenots of Paris*, 209, 228-29; Ulrich L. Lehner, “Catholic Theology and the Enlightenment (1670–1815),” in *The Oxford Handbook of Catholic Theology*, ed. Lewis Ayres and Medi Ann Volpe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 600.

⁷⁶⁰ Cited in Pierre C. Grosclaude, “Comment Malesherbes élabore sa doctrine sur le problème des Protestants,” *Bulletin* 103 (1957): 163.

⁷⁶¹ Bost, “Piété huguenote,” 377-81.

⁷⁶² David Garrioch, “The Protestant Problem and Church-State Relations in Old Regime France,” in *Church and State in Old and New Worlds*, ed. Hilary M. Carey and John Gascoigne (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 73-74.

⁷⁶³ Garrioch, *The Making of Revolutionary Paris*, 151, 189-201.

⁷⁶⁴ “Our poor brothers who groan in those deplorable galleys.”

misérable captive depuis vingt-six ans.”⁷⁶⁵ In Letter 22, Durand describes a martyr as one who suffers for “les intérêts du divin Crucifié”. This is consistent with the New Testament μάρτυς (*martyrs*) who, primarily, “bears witness” to the truth of Christ, and who, secondarily, commends the truth of their witness by suffering for it.⁷⁶⁶ Thus in Letter 41 Durand describes the prisoners who had suffered so many years for “les intérêts du saint Évangile”. The corollary is that for Durand abjuration would have meant betraying the martyrdom of her family and forebears. Moreover, abjuration would have meant rejecting the cause of Christ and the gospel.

The equation of abjuration with social and religious betrayal had been deeply inculcated into the Huguenot community by Jean Crespin’s mid-sixteenth-century *Livre de martyrs* (1st ed. 1554). Crespin (c.1520–1572) was born in Arras, trained as a lawyer, and began to print works by Calvin and Beza in Geneva from 1550.⁷⁶⁷ His martyrology describes the trials and executions of Christians who refused to abjure their faith. The first edition begins with the burning of Jan Hus (d. 1414) and concludes with the executions of Huguenots in the year of publication.⁷⁶⁸ Crespin wrote that it was “tout nécessaire que les fidèles pour remède en leurs faiblesses, réduisent en mémoire, et se proposent devant les yeux les exemples de ceux qui ont maintenu la vérité de la doctrine du Fils de Dieu, et qui ont constamment enduré la mort pour la confession d’elle.”⁷⁶⁹ Although in the twentieth century Crespin’s historical reliability was frequently questioned, Tucker, Randall Coats, and Racaut

⁷⁶⁵ “The child of a martyr and to a wretched captive for twenty-six years.”

⁷⁶⁶ BDAG, 619-20.

⁷⁶⁷ Jameson Tucker, “Vrais Chrestiens: Strangers in the Martyrologies of Jean Crespin,” (PhD diss., University of Warwick, 2011), 5-6.

⁷⁶⁸ Jean Crespin, *Le Livre des martyrs, qui est un recueil de plusieurs martyrs qui ont enduré la mort pour le Nom de notre Seigneur Iesus Christ, depuis Iean Hus jusques à cette année present MDLIII* (Geneva, 1554).

⁷⁶⁹ “The faithful, to remedy them in their weakness and their short memories, [must] place before their eyes examples of those who maintained the truth of the doctrine of the Son of God, and who steadfastly endured death for their confession of this truth.” Crespin, *Livre des martyrs*, ii.

describe how it powerfully shaped Huguenot identity well into the eighteenth century.⁷⁷⁰

Though we do not know if Durand read Crespin, in Letters 12 and 22 she describes other suffering Huguenots as martyrs – suffering witnesses of the faith – in just the way that

Crespin models. Blaise Pascal wrote similarly of the martyrs in the seventeenth century:

“Leur resolution peut former la nostre non seulement par l’exemple, mais parce qu’elle a peut estre merité la nostre.”⁷⁷¹ Though not a Protestant, Pascal’s sentiment coheres with Étienne

Durand’s reminder to Marie in September 1730, after her imprisonment, of her brother’s willingness to sacrifice all for their faith: “Il ne faut pas regretter la bienséance que vous aviez

[pour Pierre] car vous voyez que votre frère a tout quité pour travaillé à leuvre du Seigneur et qui nauze point paraître en publy et pourtant je crois qu’il ne pert point courage, faite vous en

de même.”⁷⁷² For Étienne, Pierre’s sacrifice deserved the respect and emulation of his family.

Isabeau Menet’s third letter (December 26, 1743) likewise urges that the guardians of her son

“aient soin de son salut afin de lui faire reconnaître que son cher père est mort pour la profession de l’Evangile.”⁷⁷³ For Menet, it was important that her son knew why his father

had suffered, and in a sense her son’s salvation depended on this knowledge. Durand herself

urges Anne in Letter 12, twenty-one years after the execution of Pierre, to “Imite les vertus de ton cher père.”⁷⁷⁴ In this case Durand, and those near to her, resisted abjuration not for the

cause of Enlightenment freedom of conscience, but out of respect for the cause and

martyrdom of their loved ones and *coreligionnaires*.

⁷⁷⁰ Tucker, “Vrais Chrestiens,” 6-7; Catharine Randall Coats, “Reconstituting the Textual Body in Jean Crespin’s *Histoire des martyrs* (1564),” *Renaissance Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (1991): 62; Racaut, “Religious Polemic,” 29.

⁷⁷¹ “Their resolve can form ours not only by example, but because it may have deserved ours.” *Pensées de Pascal: texte de l’édition Brunschvicg* (Paris: Garnier, 1930), B481.

⁷⁷² “You should not regret the respect that you had [for Pierre] for you see that your brother has left everything to labour at the Lord’s work, and he cannot show himself openly, and yet I believe that he has not lost courage. Do the same.” Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 87.

⁷⁷³ “Take care of his salvation so that he will recognise that his dear father died for the profession of the Gospel.”

⁷⁷⁴ “Imitate the virtues of your dear father.” Menet and Mours, *Isabeau Menet*.

Durand also links Protestant freedom of conscience in part to freedom from the false perception of Protestant disloyalty. In light of French divine-right absolutism, Protestants were often stigmatised as anti-royal “republicans” and many saw their yearning for religious freedom as a cover for political freedom. We see this sentiment in such seventeenth-century anti-Protestant satires as *Le Magot genevois* (1612), which portrayed the Huguenots as aspiring to a “state within the state”.⁷⁷⁵ Protestantism itself came to be identified with “Libertinage.”⁷⁷⁶ This perception was hardened by the French Religious Wars and the Camisard Rebellion. In reality, the churches’ positions on this were more complex: after the 1589 accession of the Protestant Henri IV certain Protestants found new arguments to respect sovereigns, and certain Jesuits discovered new arguments for the deposition of non-Catholic kings. Both Henri III (d. 1589) and Henry IV (d. 1620) were assassinated by avowed Catholics, but the Protestant theologian Moïse Amyraut, in his *Discours de la souveraineté des roys* (1650), argued that kings were God’s anointed rulers and strongly critiqued the arguments of the Jesuits Bellarmine and Saurez that irreligious kings ought to be deposed.⁷⁷⁷ As I described in Chapter 2, Étienne Durand evinced some ambiguity about these things, finding a *modus vivendi* as a Protestant civil servant in a Catholic setting, whilst approving of his own family’s non-violent resistance. Marie expressed no doubt that her fellow French Protestants ought to be, and in fact were, loyal subjects. In Letter 32 Durand writes to Rabaut about the provincial commander’s order for an updated list of prisoners from Roqualte, the military commander of Aigues-Mortes, which would in turn be sent to Versailles. Durand reports that this order moves Roqualte to express his regret for the prisoners’ plight, and that he would pay ten louis for them to be replaced with true criminals. Durand, putting the request for the list together with the commandant’s words, prays that it leads to freedom:

⁷⁷⁵ Herman, “Huguenot Republic and Antirepublicanism,” 252-55.

⁷⁷⁶ de Falguerolles, “Tour de Constance,” 174.

⁷⁷⁷ Moïse Amyraut, *Discours de la souveraineté des roys* (Paris, 1650), 180-81.

“Dieu veuille qu’elle soit favorable et, pour vous et pour nous, confondre le mensonge et faire triompher la vérité.”⁷⁷⁸ She prays that the authorities will see in the list of prisoners the loyal subjects that they truly are. Durand was consistent with Antoine Court’s denunciation of the Camisard Rebellion and with Rabaut’s consistent respect for the crown. Though I discuss Durand’s attitude towards the governing authorities more fully in the next chapter, I note that her hopes for Protestant freedom were not at this point pinned to Enlightenment philosophy, but to the fact that Protestants were loyal to the king.

For Durand the supreme goal of humanity was not “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness”, as one notable Enlightenment declaration put it, nor any other this-worldly felicity, but Christian salvation. She thus writes in Letter 7 to Anne: “Modère cette vivacité qui fait quelque fois tort au corps et au salut”, and in Letter 12, “Lis souvent l’Écriture et instruis-toi de ton salut.”⁷⁷⁹ In Letter 17 she urges that the Gaussaint boy, imprisoned with his mother in the Tour de Constance, be adopted by his great-uncle in Geneva for the sake of his salvation: “Je l’en conjure par l’intérêt de son salut.”⁷⁸⁰ And in Letter 15 she describes the condition of a fellow prisoner – Anne’s maternal grandmother – who had died: “Elle avait extrêmement souffert. Dieu lui a fait bien de grâces de la retirer du lieu de combat pour la faire jouir du triomphe de la gloire.”⁷⁸¹ Though the woman had endured great suffering in this life, all had ended well for she had begun to enjoy the heavenly glory of salvation. So she prays in Letter 32 for Rabaut’s family, that “vous la verrez couronnée de grâces et de la gloire de la maison de Dieu, et l’éternelle félicité en fera l’entier couronnement à la fin des

⁷⁷⁸ “May God grant that this turns out favourably, and for your sake and mine that he will confound the lie and make the truth triumph.”

⁷⁷⁹ “Moderate that vivacity which sometimes harms the body and the hope of salvation.” “Read the Scriptures often and instruct yourself for your salvation.”

⁷⁸⁰ “I plead with him, for the sake of the child’s salvation.”

⁷⁸¹ “She had suffered terribly. God has been very gracious to take her from this place of combat so that she will enjoy the triumph of glory.”

siècles.”⁷⁸² Durand makes repeated references to heavenly glory: that a correspondent would be “couronnée de gloire” (crowned with glory) (Letters 9, 14, 29, 30, 32, 48), and “couronnée de gloire et d’immortalité” (Letter 5); or would know the “triomphe de la gloire” (Letter 15), and be filled with “toutes les sortes de la gloire dans l’éternité” (all kinds of glory forever) (Letter 31); that “gloire s’entassera sur gloire” (glory will be heaped upon glory) (Letter 35), and that an addressee would be raised to “la félicité et de la gloire” (happiness and glory) (Letter 47). For Durand, *gloire* does not refer to earthly honour, but to the glory that God bestows – what Littré defines as “la béatitude celeste” (heavenly blessing).⁷⁸³ Durand’s fellow prisoner Isabeau Menet, writing to her sister after thirty months of incarceration (December 23, 1739), also speaks at length of persevering through trials to the goal of salvation: “Dieu nous fasse la grâce de le suivre, en quelle part qu’il nous appelle, puisque c’est pour sa gloire et pour notre salut [...]. Soyons-lui fidèles jusques à la mort afin que nous puissions acquérir cette couronne d’immortalité bien heureuse.”⁷⁸⁴ Durand’s greatest hope for her correspondents and fellow prisoners was not Enlightenment freedom of conscience or worldly happiness, but Christian salvation and heavenly glory.

Taking her letters as a whole, Durand writes not as a sceptical deist, in the mould of philosophes like Voltaire, but as an orthodox Reformed Protestant. It is true that Durand refers in Letters 4, 5, and 39 to God as “l’Être suprême” (the Supreme Being), a term often associated with the impersonal deity of early modern deism.⁷⁸⁵ Yet Durand frequently predicates personal attributes and actions to God, referring to his grace (Letters 7, 15, 19, 25), mercy (12, 33), promises (19), commands (21), judgment (25), protection (31), pleasure (32),

⁷⁸² “You will see them crowned by the grace and glory of God’s house, which will be crowned entirely with eternal happiness until the end of the ages.”

⁷⁸³ Littré, s.v. “gloire.”

⁷⁸⁴ “May God give us the grace to follow him, in whatever lot he calls us, since it is for his glory and our salvation [...]. Let us be faithful to him unto death so that we may acquire that very happy crown of immortality.” Menet and Mours, *Isabeau Menet*, 37-38.

⁷⁸⁵ Littré s.v. “être.2”, “suprême.”

love (32), compassion (36), kindness (36), and goodness (39). Durand's God is far from the impersonal and detached God of the deists. In the context of her extant corpus, *l'Être suprême* probably refers to no more than God's sovereign power and rule, synonymous with her reference in Letter 29 to "l'Être tout puissant" (the All-Powerful Being). Durand's God is not the deistic God of Voltaire, Rousseau, or Jefferson, but the personal God of the Scriptures.

Durand consistently writes as a pious and orthodox Huguenot. Her letters are replete with references to Scripture as an absolute and unquestioned authority. She urges Anne, accordingly, "Lis souvent l'Écriture" (read the Scriptures often) (Letter 12), and "Console-toi dans la Sainte Écriture" (Console yourself in Holy Scripture) (Letter 15). Gamonnet is right to say that the "source essentielle" of her thought is her reading and meditation upon the Bible.⁷⁸⁶ She advises Anne, furthermore: "Que la crainte du Seigneur et sa parole fassent la règle de ta conduite" (Letter 17), and to "N'aie en vue que la Parole de Dieu" (Letter 20).⁷⁸⁷ She refers repeatedly to God's sovereignty, a prominent doctrine in Calvin and the *Confessio* (Article 8). Thus God is not the merely transcendent prime mover of the deists, but both the transcendent and immanent "Souverain Juge" (Letter 15), the "souverain Arbitre des événements" (sovereign Arbiter of events) (Letters 17, 29), and the "souverain dispensateur de toutes les faveurs" (sovereign dispenser of all favours) (Letter 30). She describes Christians as "les élus," (the elect) (Letters 4, 35), a term also closely associated with Calvin and the *Confessio* (Article 12). She refers to Jesus, consistent with Christian orthodoxy, as our "Seigneur Jésus-Christ" (Lord Jesus Christ) and in Letter 22 to the "divin crucifié" (divine Crucified One).⁷⁸⁸ She refers to the Reformed doctrine of penal substitution (Letter 5), that the love of Jesus moved him to "se donner pour notre rançon" (give himself for our

⁷⁸⁶ Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 57.

⁷⁸⁷ "Let the fear of the Lord, and his word, govern your behaviour." "Look only to the Word of God."

⁷⁸⁸ Letters 1, 4, 9, 13, 14.

ransom).⁷⁸⁹ She refers to the Holy Spirit by the dominical title, “Paraclet” (John 14:16, 26), and as a divine personhood who enlightens and inspires love and zeal (Letter 5). Marie Durand’s letters do not evince the philosophes’ scepticism, higher criticism, or deism. On the contrary, Durand’s doctrines of God, Christology, and soteriology are orthodox Calvinist. Thus Silver argues extensively that the *prisonnières* were committed to Calvinism, and both Borello and Silver are right to identify Durand as one of a number of prisoners who “ne cessent d’affirmer leur adhésion à la religion réformée” (do not cease to affirm their adhesion to the Reformed religion).⁷⁹⁰

Durand believed that she suffered for the greatest good, which was for her the essentially theocentric *gloria dei*. Durand accepted the Reformation’s teaching that God’s glory is paramount, that, as Calvin taught, “Le monde à la vérité a esté créé afin qu’il fust un théâtre de la gloire de Dieu.”⁷⁹¹ She believed that God is motivated by “l’amour de la gloire de son grand nom” (the love of the glory of his great name) (Letter 32). Thus in Letter 35 she writes to Rabaut with a sense of peace about the deterioration of her house: “Que ma maison qui est rasée soit totalement perdue, c’est pour la gloire de Dieu.”⁷⁹² Isabeau Menet expressed the same idea in her second extant letter: “Dieu nous fasse la grâce de le suivre [...] pour sa gloire et pour notre salut, car quant à moi je m’estime bien heureuse que le Seigneur m’ait appelée pour Souffrir opprobre pour son nom puisque telle est sa volonté!”⁷⁹³ For Durand, ultimate happiness comes by participating in the divine glory (Letter 15). This theocentric desire for the *gloria dei* is reinforced by what Durand sees as the ultimate product of freedom, the public worship of God. Thus in Letter 36 she likens the coming of freedom to

⁷⁸⁹ *Institution* 2.17.5; Confessio 17.

⁷⁹⁰ Durand and Borello (ed.), *Résister*, xxxiv; Silver, “Résister,” 101-3.

⁷⁹¹ “In truth the world was created to be a theatre for the glory of God.” *Commentaires*, 4:487.

⁷⁹² “If my house, which was razed, be completely lost, it is for the glory of God.”

⁷⁹³ “May God give us the grace to follow him [...] for his glory and our salvation, for as far as I am concerned I count myself very happy that the Lord has called me to suffer opprobrium for his name since such is his will!” Menet and Mours, *Isabeau Menet*.

the Apocalypse's descriptions of the end of time, "La multitude a commencé de rendre grâce à Dieu en disant: 'Alléluia!' Puisse bientôt la grande assemblée faire entendre sa voix comme celle d'un fort tonnerre en disant: 'Alléluia! Le Seigneur est entré dans son règne!'"⁷⁹⁴ Unlike the philosophes, Durand is overtly theocentric. The *gloria dei* is primary. Human happiness counts only inasmuch as it facilitates this.

Finally, in Letter 36 Durand gives further proof of her theocentric conception of *liberté de conscience* by pinning her hopes for such freedom to a passionate work of God: "Dieu veuille, par ses grandes compassions, y mettre sa main toute bonne et puissante et achever son œuvre."⁷⁹⁵ *Liberté* will come not come through human endeavour as the first cause, but by a divine work. *Liberté* is, ultimately, God's work.

Marie Durand was not born into a community that engaged with the philosophes and their predecessors and she herself never quotes from or refers to their writings. She quotes Scripture and expresses orthodox Calvinist doctrines. She holds to the biblical and Huguenot idea of martyrdom and salvation. Freedom meant freedom from her long and cruel imprisonment, enslavement, and the slander of Protestant disloyalty. Ultimately, freedom is soteriological, the work of God, and all of her references to *liberté de conscience* and *liberté entière* refer to the freedom to worship and serve God for the *gloria dei*. The circumstantial evidence, and Durand's letters themselves, link her not to Enlightenment anthropocentrism, but to the Reformed theocentrism of her family, community, and forebears.

⁷⁹⁴ "The throng began to give thanks to God, saying, 'Hallelujah!' May the great assembly soon make its voice heard, like that of mighty thunder, shouting: 'Hallelujah! The Lord enters into his reign!'" This is a paraphrase of Revelation 19:6.

⁷⁹⁵ "May God will, according to his great compassion, to extend his good and powerful hand to accomplish his work."

We may nonetheless grant two points in favour of Marie Durand's frequent memorialisation as an Enlightenment heroine of conscience. First, it is not inappropriate to hold Durand up as an inspiring figure of courageous and principled resistance against tyranny, of someone who contended and suffered for the cause of freedom in its broadest sense. Second, the Enlightenment memorialisation is plausible. Durand was imprisoned under a tyrannical regime. She referred explicitly to *liberté de conscience* and believed that its bestowal would free the Protestant prisoners and *galériens*. She wrote and suffered during the century of the Enlightenment. The attribution seems even more plausible in light of Voltaire's contest for Protestant freedom of conscience. Voltaire contributed to the perception that Calas, and other Protestant martyrs, prisoners, and *galériens*, were suffering in some sense for what he was committed to, the Enlightenment project to *écrasez l'infâme*. Prominent Protestant leaders like Paul Rabaut, Gal-Pomaret, and Chiron, with whom Durand corresponded, reinforced this conflation with their support for Voltaire and the Enlightenment. Yet, memorialisation that respects Durand for what she herself said and stood for will present her as resisting abjuration not for the sake of the various causes of her memorialisers, but for the Reformed heritage that she repeatedly describes and commends, and the theocentrism which underpins that heritage.

If the memorialisation of Marie Durand has often misrepresented her, it has even more often obscured her contribution to Huguenot practical theology. In the final chapter I undertake a close reading of her extant letters to demonstrate her sophisticated contribution to the practical theological subjects of Christian charity, suffering, and civil governance.

5. Marie Durand's Practical Theology

Though many writers, artists, and civic and religious memorialists have appropriated the compelling story and person of Marie Durand for a wide range of causes – whether as a saintly evangelical, a brave Huguenot, an areligious heroine of the Enlightenment, a Voltairean Protestant victim suffering unconsciously against general fanaticism and tyranny, or as a blend of these – Durand's contribution to Huguenot practical theology has remained largely unexplored.

Practical theology examines how Christian thought is put into practice in society and culture.⁷⁹⁶ From the late eighteenth century it was concerned with the training of clerics in liturgy, homiletics, pastoral care, and church governance. Since the 1980s this narrow approach has been broadened to include the outworking of doctrine by the whole church in all aspects of life: work, community, marriage, family, illness, and death.⁷⁹⁷ The possible benefits of practical theology to church and society have made it, in the eyes of some, “the crown of theology.”⁷⁹⁸ Recent practical theologians stress its engagement with daily life. Michel Bertrand observes that practical theology “se nourrit de l’observation de réalités concrètes, de pratiques, d’expériences, d’engagements.”⁷⁹⁹ Élisabeth Parmentier describes practical theology as “l’analyse des pratiques de la religion chrétienne dans ses multiples expressions, la réflexion concernant la communication de l’Évangile dans le monde

⁷⁹⁶ Stephen Pattison, *The Challenge of Practical Theology: Selected Essays* (London: Jessica Kingsley, 2007), 13.

⁷⁹⁷ Mary McClintock Fulkerson, “Theology and the Lure of the Practical: An Overview,” *Religion Compass* 1, no. 2 (2007): 295-96; David J. Atkinson and David H. Field, eds., *New Dictionary of Christian Ethics and Pastoral Theology* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1995), vii.

⁷⁹⁸ Jérôme Cottin, “The Evolution of Practical Theology in French Speaking Europe,” *International Journal of Practical Theology* 17, no. 1 (2013): 134; Morris and Cameron (eds.), *Evangelicals Engaging in Practical Theology: Theology that Impacts Church and World*, 6.

⁷⁹⁹ “Is nourished by the observation of concrete realities, practices, experiences, commitments.” Michel Bertrand, *L’Église dans l’espace public: de quel droit prend-elle part à ses débats?* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2011), 18.

contemporain, la critique réciproque et prospective de la théologie et de ses lieux de mise en œuvre.”⁸⁰⁰ Bertrand and Parmentier’s emphasis on the critical analysis of the practice of one’s theology within one’s environment informs my assessment of the value of Durand’s practical theological thought.

In establishing a framework for my analysis of Durand’s practical theology I have drawn from the work of a number of recent theorists from across the Protestant-Catholic divide. Arnaud Join-Lambert, for example, in his discussion of the epistemology of practical theology, describes the influence of Paul Tillich’s *correlation*, of writing theology in the context of the mutually dependent relationship between Christian faith and contemporary society.⁸⁰¹ This approach has been adopted by Marc Donzé, who identifies four axes of practical theology with Greek New Testament appellations: *martyria* (testimony and witness to the Christian message), *leitourgia* (prayer and worship), *diakonia* (charity and justice), and *koinônia* (caring for one’s own community). Donzé points also to the essentially outward posture of practical theology, to its primary concern with the transmission “de la foi et de la vie dans la foi”.⁸⁰² I use Donzé’s four categories to draw attention to the complexity of Durand’s thought. Helen Cameron provides another useful analytical framework with her “four voices of theology”: *operant*, theology embedded in a group’s practices; *espoused*, theology drawn from the articulation of a group’s beliefs; *normative*, theology drawn from sources considered authoritative by a group; and *formal*, theology articulated by the academy.⁸⁰³ I use this framework to better understand Durand’s practical-theological “voice”

⁸⁰⁰ “The analysis of the practices of the Christian religion in its multiple expressions, reflection on the communication of the Gospel in the contemporary world, the reciprocal and prospective critique of theology and its scene of implementation.” Élisabeth Parmentier, “Review of *La Théologie pratique: analyses et prospectives*, by Élisabeth Parmentier (ed.),” *Revue d’histoire et de philosophie religieuses* 88, no. 3 (2008): 413.

⁸⁰¹ Arnaud Join-Lambert, “La Théologie pratique au défi de son épistémologie,” *Laval théologique et philosophique* 75, no. 1 (2019): 42-48.

⁸⁰² “Of faith and of the life of faith.” Marc Donzé, “Objectifs et tâches de la théologie pratique,” *Revue des sciences religieuses* 69, no. 3 (1995): 295-96, 301-2.

⁸⁰³ Cited in Andrew Dunlop, “Using the ‘Four Voices of Theology’ in Group Theological Reflection,” *Practical Theology* 14, no. 4 (2021): 295.

by situating her writings within, and comparing her writings with, the practices of her community, the writings of her peers including Court and Rabaut, official statements of theology and praxis such as the *Confessio*, *Discipline*, and *Liturgie* (1768), and with prominent members of the French Reformation academy such as Beza, Marot, Drelincourt, and, above all, Calvin. Drawing comparisons with her community's practices and authoritative texts clarifies our understanding of Durand's thought and permits, moreover, an assessment of both her sources and her contribution to her heritage.

Although sixteenth-century French noblewomen like Marguerite de Navarre and her daughter Jeanne d'Albret played an important part in the French Reformed movement, the contributions of non-titled and untrained women like Durand are not nearly so well known.⁸⁰⁴ We may compare the limitations which Durand faced to those encountered by the lay Protestant theologian Argula von Grumbach (c.1490–c.1564): she was not trained in philosophy, patristics, medieval scholasticism, Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, and was limited to poetry and letters for the communication of her thought.⁸⁰⁵ Durand faced exactly the same limitations of training and expression, with the additional disadvantage of imprisonment. Jeff Astley's advocacy of what he calls "ordinary theology", the study of "the theological beliefs and processes of believing that find expression in the God-talk of those believers who have received no scholarly theological education" helps establish a scholarly space for the study of Durand's theology.⁸⁰⁶ Building on Astley's approach, Nicholas Healy argues, from a Barthian existentialist position, that ordinary theology should take its place alongside the theologising of the clergy and academy.⁸⁰⁷ While indicating the value of "ordinary

⁸⁰⁴ Catharine C. Randall, "Shouting Down Abraham: How Sixteenth-Century Huguenot Women Found Their Voice," *Renaissance Quarterly* 50, no. 2 (1997): 412, 432.

⁸⁰⁵ Peter Matheson, "Argula von Grumbach," in *Reformation Theologians*, ed. Carter Lindberg (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), 96.

⁸⁰⁶ Jeff Astley and Leslie J. Francis (eds.), *Exploring Ordinary Theology: Everyday Christian Believing and the Church* (Farnham, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2013), 1-9.

⁸⁰⁷ Astley and Francis (eds.), *Exploring Ordinary Theology*, 13-20.

theologians”, this egalitarian methodology attempts, unlike Parmentier, simply to assimilate rather than critique and appraise lay contributions. I accord Durand’s writings the dignity of the same kind of theological scrutiny to which we subject the writings of clerics and academics.

Durand’s letters reveal an intelligent and articulate Huguenot woman who lived out her tradition’s teaching on suffering, charity, and civil governance under arduous conditions. Broomhall’s comprehensive study of published sixteenth-century female authors shows how literate women engaged in doctrinal and devotional discourse.⁸⁰⁸ Durand’s letters, by contrast, focus on the practical as the outworking of the doctrinal. The fact that Durand was untitled, a lay member of a religious minority, and an impoverished prisoner, as well as her lack of technical training and her emphasis on the practical, gives her writings an interest and significance within French Protestant theology that transcends her mere twenty-five-thousand extant words. Although she did not add any new doctrines to her tradition, she makes an important contribution nonetheless by the way that she expressed and lived out her theological principles *in extremis* and at great personal cost. That Durand’s letters cover a forty-two-year period, from her twenties to old age, through the social, political, and intellectual upheavals of her period, adds further depth and interest to her writings, and helps us to understand the durable and flexible nature of her theological tradition and its ability to cope with difficult and changing circumstances.

Durand’s theological thoughts focus mainly on the doctrines of suffering, charity, and civil governance. These doctrines were most relevant to her specific circumstances and are the ones that I shall examine most closely. The relation between her theological ideas and the graffito *résister* in the Tour de Constance, an inscription which has often been associated

⁸⁰⁸ Broomhall, *Women and Religion*, 70, 77-89.

with Durand and whose meaning has been contested by later commentators, will also be addressed.

Assessing Durand's Orthodoxy

I have already described how seventeenth-century French Protestantism shifted away from the conservative Reformed theology of Calvin's *Institutes*, and how eighteenth-century Huguenot leaders moved towards the scepticism and rationalism of the philosophes. This is reflected in the eighteenth-century shift from *orthodoxie calviniste* to *orthodoxie raisonnée* at the Huguenot seminary in Lausanne, and the official replacement in 1748 of Drelincourt's conservative *Catéchisme* (1652) with that of Ostervald (1721), which makes the human will rather than the divine will decisive for salvation.⁸⁰⁹ From the middle of the eighteenth century, Parisian Huguenots increasingly blurred the once distinct social, matrimonial, liturgical, and doctrinal lines between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism.⁸¹⁰ Such changes seem to be reflected by French Protestant leaders across the nation. Did Durand go along with this general late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Protestant tendency to ecumenism and theological liberalism?

Chapter 4 showed that the way in which Durand speaks about Scripture, Jesus Christ, salvation, the sovereignty of God, and the *gloria dei*, gives no reason to think that she moved away from her sixteenth-century Calvinist heritage. This general assessment must be qualified, however, by two aspects of Durand's thought. First, her exhortations in relation to moral conduct bear a superficial resemblance to "salvation by self-renovation" rather than to

⁸⁰⁹ Lasserre, *Séminaire de Lausanne*, 126-28; Jean-Frédéric Ostervald, *Catéchisme, ou instruction dans la religion chrétienne. Par J. F. Ostervald [...] Cinquième édition revûe & corrigée par l'auteur.* (Amsterdam, 1721), 39-44.

⁸¹⁰ David Garrioch, "Huguenot Belief and Practice in Eighteenth-Century Paris," *Journal of Religious History* 39, no. 1 (2015): 22-29.

the Reformed doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ apart from works.⁸¹¹ In her letters to Anne, for example, she repeatedly urges upstanding conduct without the (typically) Reformed qualification that good works are the consequence rather than the cause of salvation.⁸¹² Similarly, in Letter 13 she prays that God will give her benefactors “les fruits de la justice dus à votre persévérance et à vos biens répandus.”⁸¹³ Durand never denies the primacy of faith, however, and these statements may be taken in line with Reformed doctrine that saving faith is proved genuine by subsequent good works.⁸¹⁴

Second, Durand’s request to Paul Rabaut (Letter 32) for a book by Nostradamus – described by Littré as “Sorcier, magician, astrologue” – is surprising coming from a Huguenot.⁸¹⁵ In *Les Prophéties* (1555, Centurie I.47) Nostradamus apparently, in his abstruse way, disparaged his near contemporary Calvin.⁸¹⁶ Calvin himself wrote that it is “folle curiosité de juger par les astres de tout ce qui doit advenir aux hommes.”⁸¹⁷ Pierre Durand also vigorously condemned astrology.⁸¹⁸ Marie guesses that Rabaut may disapprove of her request and consider her a “visionnaire”, a believer in extravagant and foolish revelations.⁸¹⁹ Further, Durand knows that her own people disapprove of Nostradamus: “Il y a bien vingt-cinq ans que je l’ai lu. [Le livre] est dans cette ville, mais ils le cachent.”⁸²⁰ Neither is Durand’s interest in the book merely aesthetic, for she hopes that a prophecy will be fulfilled

⁸¹¹ Confessio 22.

⁸¹² Letters 7, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20.

⁸¹³ “The fruits of righteousness, of that which is owed to your perseverance and your widespread gifts.”

⁸¹⁴ Confessio 22.

⁸¹⁵ Littré, s.v. “Nostradamus.”

⁸¹⁶ “Du Lac Lemman, les sermons fascheront;/ Les jours seront reduicts par les sermaines,/ Puis mois, puis an, puis tout deffailliront/ Les Magistrats damneront les loix vaines.” (From Lake Léman [Lake Geneva] the sermons will anger./ Days will be reduced by weeks,/ then months, then a year, then everything will fail/ The Magistrates will damn the vain laws.) Nostradamus, *Centuries*, 7. Max Engammare interprets this as written specifically against Calvin. “Calvin: A Prophet without a Prophecy,” *Church History* 67, no. 4 (1998): 660.

⁸¹⁷ It is “mad curiosity to judge all that must come to man by the stars.” Quoted in Gilbert Schrenck, “Jean Calvin, Advertissement contre l’astrologie judiciaire,” *Réforme, Humanisme, Renaissance* 22 (1986): 70.

⁸¹⁸ Pierre Durand and Étienne Gamonnet (ed.), *Pierre Durand: restaurateur du protestantisme en Vivarais: lettres et écrits* (Bez-et-Esparon: Études & Communication, 1999), 58-59.

⁸¹⁹ DCLF 4:1955.

⁸²⁰ “It was easily twenty-five years ago that I read him. The book is still in the village [presumably Le Bouchet], but they hide it.”

in the reign of Louis XV: “Il y a un endroit qui parle favorablement de notre bien-aimé monarque.”⁸²¹ In asking for Nostradamus Durand is not asking for something new and unknown to the prisoners, but a book that had been in print for two centuries and that uses astrology, something that Calvin, Scripture, and her own brother had condemned.⁸²² It seems strange that Durand would risk her Protestant bona fides by requesting a copy of Nostradamus’s book from a Reformed pastor within a letter that appeals for his advocacy. Perhaps, unlike Calvin and her brother, she perceived no reprehensible incompatibility between the ideas of an astrologer and her Reformed faith. Or perhaps she intended to take whatever pleasure and benefit she could find in Nostradamus without accepting his metaphysics. Though Durand’s request is evidence of a strain of independent thought, or naivety, or perhaps even both, when set against her otherwise constant adherence to her Reformed theological heritage it does not seriously call into question her Reformed orthodoxy.

Durand’s Theology of Suffering

The Huguenots saw themselves as suffering victims, but not as the victims of pointless suffering. The frontispiece of the 1580 *Histoire ecclésiastique*, a history of French Protestantism compiled by Beza, pictures three panoplied soldiers beating an anvil with two-handed overhead blows. Though the anvil remains unscratched, the shaft of one hammer is breaking and a second lies broken on the ground. Framing the picture is some wry doggerel, “Plus à me frapper on s’amuse, Tant plus de marteaux on y use.”⁸²³

⁸²¹ “There is a place that speaks favourably of our beloved monarch.”

⁸²² “Divination” is forbidden, e.g. Leviticus 19:26. In the book of Daniel astrologers are the villains.

⁸²³ “The more they amuse themselves by striking me, the more hammers they wear out.” Theodore Beza and Nicolas des Gallars, *Histoire ecclésiastique des églises réformées au royaume de France: en laquelle est descrite au vray la renaissance & accroissement d’icelles depuis l’an M.D.XXI. iusques en l’année M.D.LXIII. [...]* (Antwerp, 1580).

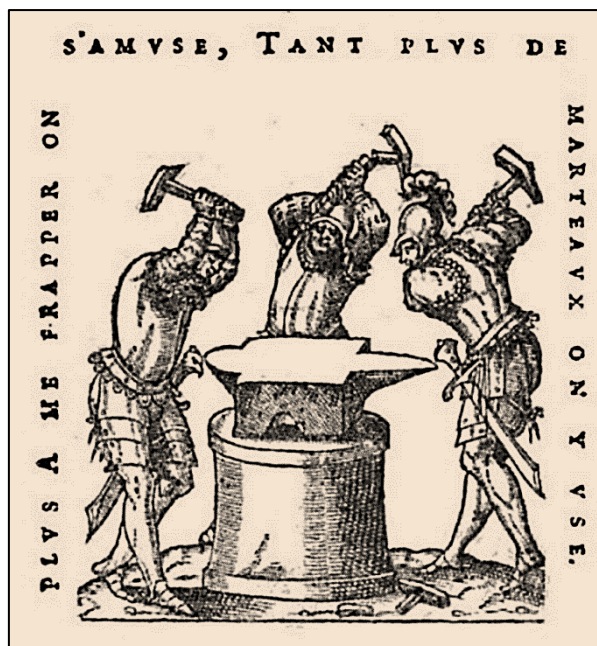


Figure 31. Frontispiece from Beza's *Histoire ecclésiastique* (Antwerp, 1580).
 "The more they amuse themselves by striking me, the more hammers they wear out."

This image encapsulates the counter-intuitive and optimistic French Protestant understanding of persecution. Though the church is afflicted by powerful enemies, God preserves it from ultimate harm and its opponents must ultimately lose. Durand's passiology coheres with this paradigm. Further, in Letter 43 (1772), near the end of her life, she writes: "Ma vie a été un tissu de tribulations et de persécutions qui m'ont réduite dans l'état le plus triste de la misère."⁸²⁴ Durand writes about suffering not as a theoretician, but as a sufferer trying to make sense of her plight.

The foundation of Durand's passiology is that all suffering derives from God. In Letter 5 she urges the widow Guiraudet to "Soutenez, s'il vous plaît, mes mains tremblantes tant que la volonté de Celui qui dispense les maux et les biens voudra m'infliger des maux et des afflictions."⁸²⁵ In Letter 39 (1766), after thirty-six years in the Tour de Constance,

⁸²⁴ "My life has been a succession of tribulations and persecutions which have reduced me to the most wretched state."

⁸²⁵ "Uphold, please, my trembling hands as long as the will of He who distributes good and ill chooses to inflict me with such ills and afflictions."

Durand affirms that it is God's will that they are in prison: "C'est ta volonté, Dieu tout-puissant; nous nous y soumettons avec une sainte résignation."⁸²⁶ In Letter 17 she urges Anne to pray to "ce souverain Arbitre des événements, dans toutes tes prières, qu'il veuille par sa puissance infinie mettre fin à tous nos maux, car si sa grande miséricorde voulait bien nous accorder cette grâce, tu serais bientôt entre mes bras."⁸²⁷ Durand understands that if God is sovereign over all events – standard Reformed doctrine – then suffering too must be willed by him.⁸²⁸ Thus in the *Institutes* 3.8.1-11, an extended analysis of Christian suffering, Calvin presupposes that God is the ultimate cause of suffering. Christians must face hard lives, full of challenges and afflictions; "C'est le bon plaisir du Père céleste, d'exercer ainsi ses serviteurs afin de les expérimenter."⁸²⁹ Marot's Psalm 88 is the lament of a person who feels that they are already lying in the "sepulchre", a metaphor that Durand herself uses to describe her imprisonment in Letters 2 and 38. Yet, the same psalm firmly identifies God as the cause of the suffering: "Helas! Seigneur, tu m'as jêtté dans des gouffres épouvantables."⁸³⁰

If suffering comes from God, then for Durand it results from his judgment for sin. In Letter 19 she explains to Anne that the Huguenots suffered because of God's anger for their transgressions. She prays, therefore, not for justice, but for God's mercy and pity: "Délaissions nos voies et retournons à l'Éternel, car, dans sa plus grande colère, il se souvient d'avoir compassion."⁸³¹ In Letter 29 (1758), written during the Seven Years War, Durand fears that an English fleet will attack Toulon, 145 kilometres from Aigues-Mortes. This threat was for her the drawn sword of God's anger upon the nation's wickedness: "Prions tous le

⁸²⁶ "It is your will, almighty God; we submit to it with holy resignation."

⁸²⁷ "That sovereign Arbitrator of events, in all your prayers, that he may by his infinite power put an end to all our trials. If in his great mercy he really wanted to grant us this grace, you would soon be in my arms."

⁸²⁸ Confessio 8.

⁸²⁹ *Institution* 3.8.1. "It is the good will of the heavenly Father, to exercise servants in this way and so to test them." See also 4.20.20.

⁸³⁰ "Alas! Lord, you threw me into terrifying gulfs." Marot and Beza, *Psaumes*, LXXXVIII.

⁸³¹ "Let us forsake our ways and return to the Lord, for in his very great anger he remembers to have compassion."

souverain arbitre des événements qu'il apaise sa colère envers ce pauvre royaume et qu'il fasse rentrer s'on épée en son fourreau, qu'il ait compassion de cet État et de ses pauvres enfants par sa grande miséricorde."⁸³² And in Letter 39 she writes: "Il faut que nos péchés soient bien grands, que dans un temps si favorable à notre sainte religion nous soyons toujours captives."⁸³³ Suffering as judgment for sin is basic to Christian thought and the Reformed tradition. Calvin teaches from Psalm 2 that God bears "un sceptre de fer, pour briser et menuiser comme pots de terre, tous les hautains et rebelles."⁸³⁴ Beza, too, suggests that human tyranny is God's punishment for sin, that "c'est un mal ou fleau envoyé de Dieu le plus souvent pour chastier les peuples."⁸³⁵ Marot's Psalm 143, which he recommends to those who are afflicted, says the same:

J'ay trop mérité ta colere,
 Mais que ta justice severe
 N'entre point en conte avec moy.⁸³⁶

Drelincourt writes in 1670 that given what sin deserves, the church ought not to be surprised by the severity of God's judgment, but by its restraint; that the Protestants' condition was "sans comparaison plus douce" (beyond comparison more gentle) than that of previous times, and that their suffering should be seen in that light.⁸³⁷ Like Marie, Pierre Durand also attributes the persecution of the Huguenots in part to "la colère de Dieu".⁸³⁸ Similarly, the

⁸³² "Let us pray to the sovereign arbiter of all events that he appease his anger towards this poor kingdom and that he return his sword to its scabbard, and that by his great mercy he has compassion for this state and its poor children."

⁸³³ "Our sins must be very great if we remain in captivity during such a favourable time for our holy faith."

⁸³⁴ "A sceptre of iron, to break and shatter all the proud and rebellious like clay pots." *Institution* 2.15.5.

⁸³⁵ "It is a harm or scourge sent from God most often to chastise people." Theodore Beza, *Du Droit des magistrats sur leurs sujets: traité très-nécessaire en ce temps, pour advertir de leur devoir, tant les magistrats que les sujets: publié par ceux de Magdebourg l'an M.D.I. & maintenant reveu & augmenté de plusieurs raisons & exemples* (n.p., 1575), 17.

⁸³⁶ "I fully deserved your anger,/ Your severe justice/ Is no mere legend for me". Marot and Beza, *Psaumes*, CXLIII.

⁸³⁷ Drelincourt, *Triomphe de l'église*, Dédicatoire épître.

⁸³⁸ Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Pierre Durand*, 108.

1768 *Liturgie* explains that although God had blessed the church with good teaching, the church had become morally complacent and had earned his anger.⁸³⁹

For Durand, suffering does not however result from a simple calculus of “God punishes evil,” for Christian suffering is simultaneously God’s fatherly chastisement. She thus distinguishes chastisement in subtle but important ways from God’s judgment *simpliciter*, symbolising it with “la verge” (the rod), a biblical metaphor that appears five times in her extant corpus.⁸⁴⁰ In Scripture, the rod refers either to the sceptre of God’s judgment upon his enemies, or the rod of parental discipline upon his own children.⁸⁴¹ Proverbs 22:15 (BDM) is an example of the latter usage: “La folie *est* liée au cœur du jeune enfant: *mais* la verge du châtiment la fera éloigner de lui.”⁸⁴² Drelincourt’s *Catéchisme* likewise distinguishes God’s affliction as punishment for sin, and “les châtimens de Père” – *châtiment* bearing in this context the sense of severe correction.⁸⁴³ Huguenot pastors in the Refuge also argued that because God is sovereign over the world’s affairs the Revocation must have been God’s chastisement for the Huguenots’ sins.⁸⁴⁴ Durand’s reference to the rod in Letter 4 is telling: “Permettez-moi, dis-je, de dire que je ne m’étonne pas si Dieu fait sentir ses verges d’une manière si terrible aux fidèles de notre misérable province; car ils ne suivent pas les ordres de ce divin Maître.”⁸⁴⁵ God severely chastises “the faithful”, Durand believes, for disobeying his frequent commands to care for prisoners. “Baiser la verge” (to kiss the rod)

⁸³⁹ “Ils se sont détournés de tes voies, [...] tu as étendu sur nous les effets de ta colère & de ton indignation.” (They turned from your ways, [...] you stretched out over us the effects of your anger and indignation.) Pierre Dangirard, *Liturgie pour les protestants de France, ou, Prières pour les familles des fidèles privées de l’exercice public de leur religion [...]* (Amsterdam, 1768), 5, 14.

⁸⁴⁰ Letters 4, 15, 16, 19, 21.

⁸⁴¹ This dual function of the rod is explained in Willem VanGemeren, *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, 5 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 4:27-28. Calvin distinguishes God’s *chastiments* and *punitions* in *Institution* 3.4.31, 33.

⁸⁴² “Folly is joined to the heart of the young child: but the rod of chastisement will take it away from him.”

⁸⁴³ Charles Drelincourt, *Catéchisme, ou instruction familière sur les principaux points de la religion chrétienne. Fait par M. Drelincourt, en faveur de sa famille. Dernière édition, révisée selon la dernière intention de l’auteur* (London, 1708), 19; *DCLF* 1:1448.

⁸⁴⁴ van der Linden, “A Tearful Diaspora,” 48.

⁸⁴⁵ “Please allow me to say that I am not surprised if God makes his rod felt in such a terrible manner among those of the faith in our wretched region; for they do not follow the decrees of the divine Master.”

is Durand's metaphor for humbly submitting to God's chastisement. Durand uses this phrase three times, all to Anne.⁸⁴⁶ In Letter 25 she explains that they ought likewise to "kiss the hand" of God, to acknowledge that the severity of God's chastisement is directly proportional to his love:

Ton retardement fut occasionné par un mauvais coup à une de tes jambes, me dis-tu, et le mien par une fort mauvaise fluxion aux yeux, qui m'a aussi fait beaucoup souffrir. Dieu juge à propos de nous affliger par bien des endroits. C'est un effet de son amour puisqu'il châtie avec plus de sévérité ceux qu'il aime avec plus de tendresse. Ainsi, ma chère enfant, baisons la main qui nous frappe et nous soumettons à cette volonté divine.⁸⁴⁷

For Durand, the greater the suffering, the greater is the tenderness of God's love. Did imprisonment ever cause Durand to question this doctrine? In Letters 29 (1759) and 32 (1760) she continues to refer to the *bonté* (goodness) of God and even, in Letter 36 (1762), to the "bonté infinie" of God. In her final six letters, written from Le Bouchet between 1772 to 1775, she reassures her addressees of her prayers for them, that they would find blessing and happiness from a gracious God both in this world and the next. Until the end Durand appeared to trust that Divine Providence would give to his own what was best.⁸⁴⁸

If the suffering of God's people derives ultimately from God and his love, Durand believes nonetheless that it comes proximately by the hands of human evil and cruelty. In Letters 29 and 36 she refers to her "cruelle prison" and in Letter 35 to "cruels parents" (cruel relatives). Letter 29 refers also to the "cruauté de l'ennemi" and the Huguenot galériens as

⁸⁴⁶ Letters 15, 16, 19.

⁸⁴⁷ "You told me you were delayed by a bad sore on one of your legs. My delay was caused by a severe eye inflammation, which caused me a lot of pain. God judges that it is good to afflict us in these kinds of ways. It is motivated by his love, since he chastises with the most severity those whom he loves most tenderly. In this way, my dear child, we kiss the hand which strikes us, and submit to this divine will."

⁸⁴⁸ In a will prepared in prison in October 1760 Durand commends her soul to God's "divine bonté", though such expressions could be merely formal in such documents. Bost, "Prisonniers d'Aigues-Mortes," 145.

“pauvres victimes du caprice et de la cruelle persécution” (poor victims of caprice and cruel persecution). Similarly, Antoine Court describes the Tour de Constance as “ce monument éternel de persécution la plus cruelle” (that eternal monument of the cruellest persecution).⁸⁴⁹ This idea was by no means new. Marot’s Psalm 143, for example, describes the attack on God’s people – whether spiritual or literal – as the manifestation of human cruelty:

L’ennemi qui me fait la guerre
 M’a défait, m’a couché par terre,
 Et par un cruel traitement
 En ce lieu sombre il me resserre
 Comme en un triste monument.⁸⁵⁰

Calvin explains that when the wicked treat others with cruelty, this in no way undermines God’s justice and mercy, for God is able to achieve his good purposes through the hands of the wicked.⁸⁵¹

Since Christ suffered at the hands of the wicked for his faithfulness to God, Durand views the Huguenots’ suffering for their faithfulness to God as evidence of solidarity with Christ. In Letter 4 she describes how those imprisoned for their faith are God’s “élus qui combattent sous les étendards de la croix” (elect who fight under the standards of the cross). And in Letter 5 she refers to “ceux qui souffrent sous la croix du Christ” (those who suffer under the cross of Christ). Here Durand picks up on certain New Testament references to crucifixion as a trope for suffering in solidarity with Christ.⁸⁵² Calvin said that it is necessary

⁸⁴⁹ de Falguerolles, “Tour de Constance,” 186.

⁸⁵⁰ “The enemy who wages war against me/ Defeated me, knocked me to the ground,/ And by cruel treatment/ Has assigned me to this sombre place/ Like some sad mausoleum.” Marot and Beza, *Psaumes*, CXLIII.

⁸⁵¹ In *Institution* 1.17.8 Calvin quotes Genesis 50:20, the *locus classicus* of this doctrine, within a lengthy discussion. “As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive” (ESV).

⁸⁵² E.g., Matthew 16:24 (ESV) “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”

“asçavoir où Christ appelle tous les siens, c’est qu’un chacun porte sa croix.”⁸⁵³ Drelincourt too taught that suffering connects the Christian with the Christ of faith: “D’où vient donc que les Plus regenerés & les plus gens de bien sont sujets à tant d’afflictions? Comme il falloit que le Christ souffri, & qu’ainsi il entrât en sa gloire.”⁸⁵⁴ Durand reiterates this doctrine, that because Christ suffered, those who walk in his footsteps will suffer in solidarity with him.

There is an interesting difference between Durand’s passiology and that of her older contemporary Jean Marteilhe (1684–1777). Marteilhe was captured while fleeing France and served on the galleys from 1700 to 1713. Like Durand, he attributes Protestant suffering simultaneously to human cruelty and God’s good providence, the “sainte volonté” (holy will) of God.⁸⁵⁵ But he never describes suffering as God’s chastisement per se. Instead, according to Marteilhe, the Huguenots’ solidarity with the suffering Christ and their God-given steadfastness to refuse abjuration may impress upon others the truth of their beliefs.⁸⁵⁶ The fact that Durand does not, like Marteilhe, tie suffering to bearing witness (*martyria*) indicates something of her theological individualism. But by tracing suffering simultaneously to God’s will, God’s punishment of evil and chastisement of his people, the hands of wicked people, and solidarity with Christ, she evinces a rich passiology that is in full accord with her tradition.

Durand also explains how Huguenots should respond to suffering. Although the *galériens* and *prisonnières* could find release by abjuration, she believes they should resist this temptation and commit themselves more firmly to their faith. Writing to Gal-Pomaret in Letter 39 (1759), she offers a prayer in response to the women’s prolonged incarceration:

⁸⁵³ “To know the place to which Christ calls all his own, which is that each one bears his cross.” *Institution* 3.8.1.

⁸⁵⁴ “How is it then that the most regenerate and best of people are subject to so many afflictions? Because Christ had to suffer, and it was in this way that he entered into his glory.” Drelincourt, *Catéchisme*, 74.

⁸⁵⁵ Marteilhe, *Mémoires*, 184-85, 187.

⁸⁵⁶ Marteilhe, *Mémoires*, 193, 211.

C'est ta volonté, Dieu tout-puissant; nous nous y soumettons avec une sainte résignation. Donne-nous par ta grâce la force de tout surmonter et demeurer fermes. Priez-le, Monsieur, pour nous, qu'il fortifie notre foi et notre espérance. Aidez, s'il vous plaît, à nous soulager, jusqu'à ce que le Seigneur ait mis fin à nos peines, soit par notre liberté ou par la grande libératrice.⁸⁵⁷

Durand wills to remain firm in her faith, which means refusing abjuration at the very least. In his examination of Huguenot piety, Hubert Bost explains how a person's faith in an absolute gives rise to a willingness to die for that absolute, in which case they become its spokesperson – "C'est de ce lien que naît la conscience martyre" (It is from this bond that the martyr-conscience is born).⁸⁵⁸ Certainly, Durand exhibits such a conscience. She conforms to the *Discipline* which forbids separation from the church during persecution, and which urges prayer for perseverance through strengthened faith and hope.⁸⁵⁹ The *Liturgie* likewise includes a prayer that the persecuted will be freed from their trials, and that God will help them to remain firm unto death.⁸⁶⁰ Because perseverance is necessary for salvation, Drelincourt's *Catéchisme* warns against giving up one's faith during affliction.⁸⁶¹ This explains Marteilhe's depth of feeling upon meeting two Protestants who had abjured in order to avoid the galleys: "Nous ne cessons de détester leur lâcheté et leur apostasie."⁸⁶² He refers to "les crimes scandaleux, principalement celui de l'apostasie, qui est le plus atroce de tous ceux que l'on commet contre la divinité."⁸⁶³ For Marteilhe, even nominal adherence to

⁸⁵⁷ "It is your will, Almighty God; we submit to it with holy resignation. By your grace give us the strength to overcome everything and to remain firm. Pray to him, Monsieur, for us, that he will strengthen our faith and hope. Please help to relieve us, until the Lord has put an end to our suffering, whether by liberating us, or by the Great Liberatrice."

⁸⁵⁸ "Imposes upon its witness an attitude likely to earn persecution." Bost, "Piété huguenote," 378.

⁸⁵⁹ *Discipline* 6.3.

⁸⁶⁰ Dangirard, *Liturgie*, 10.

⁸⁶¹ Drelincourt, *Catéchisme*, 5.

⁸⁶² "We never cease to hate their cowardice and apostasy." Marteilhe, *Mémoires*, 42.

⁸⁶³ "Scandalous crimes, principally that of apostasy, which is the most atrocious of those that we may commit against divinity." Marteilhe, *Mémoires*, 45.

Catholicism is damning.⁸⁶⁴ (Calvin had argued the same in 1537 and 1544 tracts against the Nicodemites.⁸⁶⁵) In short, incarcerated Huguenots had to choose between decades of suffering in prison and then eternal salvation, or decades of freedom from prison and then eternal damnation. The longstanding abhorrence of apostasy, shared by both Protestants and Catholics, is one reason why Durand was willing to pay such a price for refusing to abjure.

Durand espouses the view that hardships should be faced with joy rather than complaint. In Letter 15 she writes to Anne, after enduring loss of appetite for fourteen months, that it is necessary to “baiser la verge qui nous frappe sans murmurer contre le Souverain Juge qui dispose de nous comme bon lui semble.”⁸⁶⁶ If suffering comes by God’s sovereign will, then endurance comes not by mere stoicism, but by understanding that God grants whatever divine wisdom thinks is right. To grumble is to deny God’s beneficence. Thus in Letter 16, also to Anne, after describing a distressing personal illness and the flooding of her prison, she writes “Je ne plaignais que toi, ma chère petite.” (I pitied only you, my little darling.) In Letter 43, after describing her lifelong suffering, she writes “Je me suis toujours tue parce que le Seigneur l’a fait.”⁸⁶⁷ Calvin taught that when someone understands that all things come by God’s will, then their hearts can “porter joyusement les choses desquelles il est ainsi contristé” (bear joyfully those things which saddened it).⁸⁶⁸ Drelincourt also urged a joyful response to persecution, “que gayement nous exposerions nos vies à la mort, & irions au suplice, comme à une pompe triomphale.”⁸⁶⁹ In Letter 32 Durand

⁸⁶⁴ Marteilhe, *Mémoires*, 119.

⁸⁶⁵ John Calvin, “On Shunning the Unlawful Rites of the Ungodly and Preserving the Purity of the Christian Religion (1537),” in *Tracts and Letters*, ed. Henry Beveridge (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2009), 3:410; John Calvin, “Excuse de Jehan Calvin, à messieurs les Nicodemites, sur la complaincte qu’ilz font de sa trop grand’ rigeuer (1544),” in *Three French Treatises*, ed. Francis M. Higman (London: Athlone Press, 1970), 143.

⁸⁶⁶ “To kiss the rod that strikes us without grumbling against the Sovereign Judge, who gives us whatever seems good to him.”

⁸⁶⁷ “I have remained silent because the Lord himself did so.”

⁸⁶⁸ *Institution* 3.8.10.

⁸⁶⁹ “That we might gladly expose our lives to death, and go to the scaffold as though in triumphal procession.” *Le Pasteur fidèle ou sermon sur les Actes des Apôtres, chap. 20, vers. 28* (Paris, 1658), 67; similarly a fictional pastor’s exhortations to a Protestant imprisoned for their faith in Charles Drelincourt, *Les Visites charitables ou les consolations chrétiennes pour toutes sortes de personnes affligées* (Paris, 1665), 362-85.

tells Rabaut that she could bear her suffering with “patience et joie”, and in Letter 35 she prays that God will grant her forbearance: “Veuille-t-il me donner la force de tout souffrir avec une sainte patience.”⁸⁷⁰ Durand echoes her tradition’s call for patience under trial.

Finally, for Durand it is important to grasp how future heavenly blessedness outweighs present suffering. She refers repeatedly to this blessedness. In Letter 2* she prays that the Lord will repay her benefactor “dans ce monde et à jamais dans son Saint Paradis. En attendant ce bonheur ineffable qui ne finira jamais.”⁸⁷¹ In Letter 4 she prays for Peschaire, asking for God to “vous combler de toutes ses grâces en terre et, un jour, de sa gloire au ciel.”⁸⁷² In Letter 16 she describes how in the death of Anne’s grandmother, who suffered much mental anguish and bodily pain in the Tour de Constance, God had removed her grandmother from the “lieu de combat pour la faire jouir du triomphe de la gloire.”⁸⁷³ In Letter 5 she prays for Guiraudet’s earthly blessing, “jusques à ce que cet Être Suprême vous introduise dans la souveraine félicité où vous serez couronnée de gloire et d’immortalité”.⁸⁷⁴ The consolation that comes from the certainty of future life is expressed Marot’s Psalm 16:

Je ne crains point qu’au tombeau tenebreux
Jamais mon corps sente la pourriture,
Non, ta bonté ne veut pas que je croye,
Que de la mort je demeure la proye.⁸⁷⁵

Such expressions of hope conclude almost all of Durand’s surviving letters, the variety of which suggest that it was no empty formula.

⁸⁷⁰ “May he will to give me the strength to suffer everything with holy patience.”

⁸⁷¹ “In this world, and forever in his Holy Paradise. While we wait for this eternal and ineffable happiness.”

⁸⁷² “To shower you with all his earthly gifts and, on a day to come, his heavenly glory.”

⁸⁷³ “Place of combat so that she will enjoy the triumph of glory.”

⁸⁷⁴ “Until that time when the Supreme Being ushers you into sovereign happiness, where you will be crowned with glory and immortality”.

⁸⁷⁵ “I do not fear that in the dark tomb/ My body will ever smell decay./ No, your kindness does not want me to believe,/ That I will remain death’s prey.” Marot and Beza, *Psaumes*, XVI. See also Confessio 16.

There are a number of well-established aspects of Christian passiology that Durand's extant letters do not refer to. She does not refer, for example, to Tertullian's famous dictum, that "The blood of Christians is seed", that persecution grows the church.⁸⁷⁶ Though she alludes in Letter 22 to suffering for the sake of Christ, she does not, like Marteilhe, describe persecution as a means of confirming Christian truth.⁸⁷⁷ Nor does she adopt a position like that of the prominent nineteenth-century Calvinist pastor Adolphe Monod, who emphasised suffering as a means by which God blesses those around the sufferer.⁸⁷⁸ In reference to the four axes of theology set out by Donzé, Durand does not describe suffering in terms of *martyria* or *koinônia*. Her emphasis is firmly, and rather narrowly and negatively, upon suffering as divine punishment and chastisement. Suffering must nonetheless be met with perseverance and without complaining, which would contradict *leitourgia*. That Durand, along with many thousands of her peers, chose prolonged and severe suffering – and even death – over abjuration, indicates how well her tradition's passiology had been assimilated by her community at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and how it inspired notable tenacity and patience.⁸⁷⁹

Durand's Theology of Charity

Charity – care for the suffering and oppressed – was a matter of life and death for the prisoners of Aigues-Mortes. It is no surprise then that all of Durand's surviving letters, excluding those sent to her niece, are either thankful receipts for charity received, or petitions for charitable advocacy or material aid. But in fact it is in her letters to Anne that Marie

⁸⁷⁶ *Apology*, 50.

⁸⁷⁷ Drelincourt, *Triomphe de l'église*, Dédicatoire épître.

⁸⁷⁸ Adolphe Monod, *Les Adieux d'Adolphe Monod à ses amis et à l'église, octobre 1855 à mars 1856* (Paris, 1857).

⁸⁷⁹ Le Musée du Désert displays the names of Protestants condemned after the Revocation, including 2,700 condemned to the galleys, 130 women incarcerated in La Tour de Constance, and 155 pastors executed after the Revocation.

Durand conveys most clearly what she means by charity. In these letters she repeatedly offers prayers for her niece, describes clothes that she is making for her, discusses ways of sending money to her, and expresses deep affection. Durand assures her niece in Letter 12 that “je t’aime plus que moi-même” (I love you more than myself) and that she willingly deprives herself of necessities for her sake: “Je me priverais même de mon nécessaire pour t’aider fournir le tien.”⁸⁸⁰ For Durand, the heart of charity is sacrificing one’s own good for the sake of the other. In the following I describe the importance that she assigns to charity, and the reasons she sets out for why Christians ought to extend charity to the poor and suffering.

For Durand, charity is important because it is commanded by God. Letter 4 contains one of Durand’s more sustained pleas for charitable help. After a decade of imprisonment, reflecting on Scripture’s abundant commands to aid the poor and suffering, she sees the prisoners as exactly the people who ought to receive such charity. In fact, Durand suggests in Letter 4 that the persecution of the Huguenots in her home region was divine judgment for disobeying God’s commands to care for those in her position: “Il recommande d’avoir soin des prisonniers, et ils n’en font aucun cas. La charité est le véritable principe de notre religion et ils n’en exercent pas la fonction.”⁸⁸¹ Calvin defined charity within the context of stewardship. No one owns their property absolutely; instead God, the absolute owner, entrusts his property to the care of others for charitable distribution: “Tout ce que nous avons de bon, nous avoir esté baillé en garde de Dieu: et ce à telle condition qu’il soit dispensé au profit des autres.”⁸⁸² Although Durand urges loving generosity out of obedience to God’s commands, she does not contend, as Calvin does, that all of one’s property belongs to the poor. This difference is one of degree more than substance.

⁸⁸⁰ “I would go without my own essentials so that you should have yours.”

⁸⁸¹ “He commands us to take care of prisoners, but they disregard this. Charity is the true principle of our religion and they do not carry out this duty.”

⁸⁸² “All the good that we have, has been entrusted to us by God, on condition that it be dispensed to the profit of others.” *Institution* 3.7.5

Because it is commanded by God, charity is for Durand a *sine qua non* of Christian faith. In Letter 4 she describes charity as “le véritable principe de notre religion” (the true principle of our religion).⁸⁸³ But it was a standard that she did not see the church upholding. Professing Huguenots who did not exercise charity would be condemned by Christ:

En un mot, il semble que nous sommes au dernier temps, car cette divine vertu s’est bien refroidie. Les véritables chrétiens ne seront pas condamnés pour avoir abandonné la pureté de l’Évangile, puisqu’en effet ils en font une constante profession; mais ils le seront pour n’avoir pas visité Jésus-Christ dans les prisons en la personne de ses membres.⁸⁸⁴

By her use of *refroidir* (to cool) Durand likely refers to Christ’s eschatological teaching that his second coming will be preceded by an increase in wickedness, including the cooling of charity: Matthew 24:12 (BDM) “Et parce que l’iniquité sera multipliée, la charité de plusieurs se refroidira.”⁸⁸⁵ Durand’s “véritables chrétiens” are Huguenots who hold to “la pureté de l’Évangile”. French Protestants believed that they held to Christian orthodoxy – to the doctrines of the *Confessio* for example – as opposed to what they saw as Roman Catholic heterodoxy. Uncharitable Huguenots would not be condemned for wrong beliefs, for they made “constant profession” of them. But they would be condemned for failing to visit Christ “in the prisons and in the person of his members.” Here Durand refers to the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats in Matthew 25:31-46, in which Christ identifies himself with the afflicted church. To extend or withhold charity to the church is to extend or withhold charity to Christ himself. Calvin comments: “Nous le mesprisons ou luy assistons en la personne de

⁸⁸³ A comparable statement may be seen in James 1:27 (ESV) “Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction.”

⁸⁸⁴ “In a word, it seems that we are in the last days, for the divine virtue of charity has very much cooled. True Christians will not be condemned for having abandoned the purity of the Gospel, for in fact they make constant profession of it. They will however be condemned for not visiting Jesus Christ in prison, in the person of his members.”

⁸⁸⁵ “And because iniquity will multiply, the charity of many grow cold.”

ceux qui ont besoin de nostre aide.”⁸⁸⁶ The parable culminates with Christ’s judgment upon those who did not care for the hungry, unclothed, sick, and imprisoned. The prisoners in the Tour de Constance suffered all four of these privations. For Durand, those who withhold charity from them prove that they are not true Christians, no matter how orthodox their professed beliefs.

Charity for Durand is therefore a mark of solidarity with God. It arises from “l’amour [pour] le divin crucifié” (Letter 29) (love for the divine Crucified One). In Letter 41 she reminds the elders of Lédignan, “il vous allouera, comme faite à lui-même, la faveur que je vous demande.”⁸⁸⁷ And in Letter 5 Durand writes, to Guiraudet:

Mais comme vous êtes, Mademoiselle, si bien instruite dans l’école de Celui qu’une charité parfaite a porté à se donner pour notre rançon, et que le grand Paraclet, qui vous éclaire de ses vives lumières et vous enflamme de cet amour pur et de cet amour pur et de ce zèle ardent qui embrase les séraphins, cette tendresse qu’il vous plaît m’honorer, [...] me font espérer que votre naturelle bonté suppléera à mon retardement, d’autant plus qu’il ne parvient point d’une négligence.⁸⁸⁸

Guiraudet is charitable because she has been taught by the God of “perfect charity” who has “given himself for our ransom.”⁸⁸⁹ *Paraclet* transliterates παράκλητος, *paraklētos*, a dominical term for the Holy Spirit comprising his functions of advocacy, comfort, and

⁸⁸⁶ “We despise him or help him in the person of those who have need of our help.” Calvin, *Commentaires*, 1:635-36.

⁸⁸⁷ “He will compensate you, as if it had been done for himself, the favour that I ask of you.”

⁸⁸⁸ “But since, Mademoiselle, you are so well instructed in the school of the One who shows perfect charity, and who gave himself for our ransom – and because the great Paraclete, who enlightens you with his bright lights and inflames you with that same pure love and ardent zeal which sets the seraphs ablaze – this tenderness with which you are pleased to honour me [...] give me hope that your natural kindness will forgive my delay, especially since it was not due to negligence.”

⁸⁸⁹ This echoes Confessio 16: “Nous croyons que Dieu envoyant son Fils, a voulu montrer son amour et bonté inestimable envers nous, en le livrant à la mort.” “We believe that God, sending his son, wanted to show his love and inestimable love toward us, by delivering him to death.”

help.⁸⁹⁰ In a vivid metaphor, Durand refers to the Isaiah 6 vision of fiery seraphs around the throne of God, suggesting that the Holy Spirit who enflamed the seraphs had enflamed Guiraudet's heart with the same "pure love and ardent zeal," manifested in her charitable gifts. Similarly, in Letter 30 Durand appeals to Marie Leszczyńska on the grounds of her piety, her fervent attachment to God.⁸⁹¹ "Donnez l'essor à votre clémence, à votre charité, à votre piété exemplaire".⁸⁹² Charity is commanded by God and expresses devotion to, and spiritual solidarity with, the divine.

For Durand Charity likewise expresses solidarity between Christians. In Letter 4 she compares the churches of her own region unfavourably with the more generous churches of Languedoc:

Les prisonnières du Languedoc nous reprochent qu'il ne vient jamais rien de nos quartiers. Ils ont juste raison. Ils nous font part de ce qu'on leur donne. Ainsi nous sommes abandonnées de ceux qui devraient nous procurer le plus de soulagement et par conséquent regardées comme des étrangères.⁸⁹³

By neglecting Durand, her compatriots from the Vivarais are estranging her. She petitions Peschire accordingly, "J'espère que vous nous ferez éprouver votre amour en faisant éclater votre charité envers notre triste situation."⁸⁹⁴ Expressions of love must be backed up by acts of love. Likewise in Letter 41 (1767), one of Durand's last extant letters from prison, she appeals to the elders of Lédignan for help on the basis of Christian solidarity: "Nous sommes votre chair en membres du Corps de Christ. Nous avons l'honneur de porter sa livrée en

⁸⁹⁰ John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7. BDAG, 766.

⁸⁹¹ *DCLF* 3:1719.

⁸⁹² "Give flight to your clemency, your charity, and your exemplary piety."

⁸⁹³ "The prisoners from Languedoc criticise us, because no one from our region ever sends us anything. They are absolutely right. They share with us what they receive. We have been abandoned by those who should give us the most support and are considered by them as strangers."

⁸⁹⁴ "I hope that you will prove your love to us by letting your acts of charity pour out upon our forlorn circumstances."

souffrant pour sa juste cause.”⁸⁹⁵ Protestants interpreted “the body of Christ” as a spiritual rather than organisational unity.⁸⁹⁶ No matter how diverse and scattered the church it remains nonetheless a single organism whose members, being spiritually joined to Christ, are joined to one another.⁸⁹⁷ Charity was a necessary expression of this unity.

Durand also believes that charity is rewarded by God. She iterates this in Letter 4 as she calls on the Huguenots of the Vivarais to recover their compassion:

Je les exhorte par les compassions de Dieu de rallumer leur zèle de charité envers les pauvres souffreteux; qu’ils apprennent que le Seigneur Jésus promet de récompenser jusqu’à un verre d’eau froide donné à ses enfants, à plus forte raison récompensera-t-il ceux qui sustenteront ses élus qui combattent sous les étendards de la croix. Leurs aumônes monteront en mémoire devant Dieu comme firent celles de Corneille. Enfin s’ils sèment libéralement, ils moissonneront libéralement, comme s’exprime l’apôtre.⁸⁹⁸

These sentences contain a number of biblical allusions. Durand refers to Jesus’ promise in Matthew 10:42 (BDM), “Et quiconque aura donné à boire seulement un verre d’eau froide à l’un de ces petits en qualité de disciple, je vous dis en vérité, qu’il ne perdra point sa récompense.”⁸⁹⁹ She refers also to the Roman centurion Cornelius in Acts 10, whose generous alms singled him out for an apostolic and divine visitation. And she quotes from 2

⁸⁹⁵ “We are your flesh, members of the Body of Christ. We are honoured to wear [Christ’s] livery while suffering for his just cause.”

⁸⁹⁶ Calvin argues that the church is not an earthly institution constituted by a physical infrastructure and hierarchy, but a spiritual institution constituted by the teaching of Christ’s word. *Institution* 3.20.39; 4.2.3-4.

⁸⁹⁷ Thus Calvin comments on Ephesians 4:4-5 that because Christians have “one Lord” they are united in one body and soul. *Commentaires*, 3:793.

⁸⁹⁸ “I exhort them by the compassion of God to reignite their charitable zeal for the poor and suffering, and to remember that the Lord Jesus promises to repay even the gift of a glass of cold water to his children. How much more will he reward those who sustain his elect, who fight under the standard of the cross? Their alms will rise as a memorial before God, just as the alms of Cornelius did. In short, if they sow plentifully, they will reap plentifully, just as the Apostle says.”

⁸⁹⁹ “And whoever will give just a glass of cold water to one of these little ones because they are a disciple, I tell you the truth, they will not lose their reward.”

Corinthians 9:6 (BDM), which likens charitable giving to sowing: “Celui qui sème chichement, recueillera aussi chichement: et que celui qui sème libéralement, recueillera aussi libéralement.”⁹⁰⁰ Likewise, to the elders of Lédignan she writes, “Vous ne sauriez nous donner un grain qui ne vous soit récompensé.”⁹⁰¹ Calvin denied that almsgiving earned salvation, which comes by faith alone. Like Durand, however, he did not discount God’s rewards to those who give to the suffering: “Car toute la charité que nous faisons à nos frères, est comme mise en garde entre les mains de Dieu. Luy doncques, comme il est fidèle gardien, nous rendra une fois le tout avec très-ample usure.”⁹⁰² Durand, like Calvin, does not reduce charitable giving to a mercenary “give and you will get” transaction. The promise of reward takes its place as one motive for charity among others.

Durand believes that charity is motivated by compassion. In Letter 29 (1758) she ascribes to Coulet “le cœur le plus noble et le plus susceptible d’attendrissement et de générosité que des autres vertus héroïques dans lesquelles la charité la plus ardente fait son siège.”⁹⁰³ Seven times Durand makes appeals in which she refers to “les entrailles” of divine mercy or compassion (Letters 17, 18, 21, 29 [twice] 30, 38) . This alludes to the New Testament term *σπλάγχνα*, *splanchna*, (bowels) as a metaphor for “deep compassion.”⁹⁰⁴ In what is clearly an important trope for Durand she urges her addressees to emulate the deep compassion of the divine. Similarly, in Letter 30 she describes a visit from a royal official and pins her hopes for help on his evident expressions of compassionate kindness and humanity: “Il nous donna beaucoup de marques de sa bienveillance et eut pour nous toutes

⁹⁰⁰ “The one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows liberally will also reap liberally.”

⁹⁰¹ “You would know that you cannot give us even a single grain of wheat that will not be repaid to you.”

⁹⁰² *Institution* 3.18.6 “For all the charity that we give to our brothers, is as it were guarded in God’s hands. He, therefore, because he is a faithful guardian, will return the whole of it to us with very generous interest.” See also 3.4.25.

⁹⁰³ “The noblest heart, the most sensitive tenderness and generosity, and other heroic virtues from which the most ardent charity is derived.”

⁹⁰⁴ BDAG, 938.

les douceurs de la véritable humanité; [...] Notre triste sort lui arracha des larmes et il nous laissa entrevoir quelque espérance d’être délivrées.”⁹⁰⁵ In all, Durand appeals in ten of her extant letters to her readers’ compassion as the grounds for support for the Huguenot prisoners and *galériens*.⁹⁰⁶

Calvin likewise identified compassion as the first step to charity, “qu’ils ayent pitié de sa fortune comme s’ils la sentoient et soustenoyent.”⁹⁰⁷ Antoine Court also, in a 1756 eulogy for a Genevan professor, described compassion as the source of his generosity to the afflicted: “Son cœur, son tendre cœur prenait part aux maux du misérable et son âme bienfaisante ne pensait qu’aux moyens de les soulager.”⁹⁰⁸ Martin Dinges describes how seventeenth-century Huguenot diaconal boards collected and distributed funds for poor relief in conscious competition with Catholic charities – it was generally understood that alms could lead to conversions.⁹⁰⁹ Compassion was not always the sole motive for charity. In any case Norman Fiering’s study of the eighteenth-century rise of “irresistible compassion” locates sympathy beyond religious teaching, to “plain feeling”, and Shane Greentree describes the “common moral standard” in eighteenth-century England of evaluating others “by the sincerity or insincerity of their compassion.”⁹¹⁰ When Durand grounds charity in pity and a tender heart she refers to a principle that was well understood in early modern Europe, but which was not always consistently adhered to by her own church.

⁹⁰⁵ “He gave us many signs of goodwill and showed us human kindness at its best. [...] Our sad fate brought tears to his eyes. He gave us some hope of being delivered.”

⁹⁰⁶ Letters 4, 5, 8, 19, 21, 29, 30, 36, 41, 46.

⁹⁰⁷ “That they pity their fate as if they themselves feel and suffer it.” *Institution* 3.7.7.

⁹⁰⁸ “His heart, his tender heart extended itself to the ills of the wretched, and his benevolent soul thought only of the means of supporting them.” Cited in Rabaut, *Lettres*, 1:143-44.

⁹⁰⁹ Martin Dinges, “Huguenot Poor Relief and Health Care in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,” in *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World, 1559-1685*, ed. Raymond A. Mentzer and Andrew Spicer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 160-65, 174.

⁹¹⁰ Norman S. Fiering, “Irresistible Compassion: An Aspect of Eighteenth-Century Sympathy and Humanitarianism,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 37, no. 2 (1976): 209; Shane Greentree, “The ‘Equal Eye’ of Compassion: Reading sympathy in Catharine Macaulay’s history of England,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 53, no. 3 (2019): 300.

Durand knew that church leaders were responsible for organising charitable aid. In Letter 35 she pleads with Rabaut, in his capacity as a pastor, to arrange for help. Rabaut certainly exercised that responsibility. In 1781 he wrote to a synod concerning pensions allocated to pastors' widows and laments that they were the cause of disputes.⁹¹¹ It was Rabaut who arranged support for Durand from the Walloon Church in Amsterdam. Writing to the Church in 1772, thanking them for their pension for Durand, he expresses embarrassment for how little the French churches were doing: "Je rougis pour nos églises [...]. La plupart portent la lésine et l'ingratitude jusqu'à laisser en souffrance les veuves de leurs pasteurs."⁹¹² At his arraignment, Pierre Durand explained that church elders were to "prendre soin des quêtes et des distributions qui se font pour les pauvres."⁹¹³ Confessio 39 mandates that local churches appoint deacons to ensure that "les pauvres et tous autres affligés soient secourus en leurs nécessités."⁹¹⁴ The *Discipline* likewise mandates that deacons receive and distribute alms to the poor, prisoners, and the sick – Marie Durand was all three.⁹¹⁵ It also mandates records of distribution to ensure accountability, and a number of Durand's letters are de facto records of receipt and distribution.⁹¹⁶ Durand's expectation of help from the church authorities was consistent with her tradition and she was not backward in urging church leaders to contend for the prisoners. As she writes to Rabaut in Letter 35: "Vous avez fait le plus; ne vous laissez point de faire le moins."⁹¹⁷

In the context of early modern Christianity, charitable care for the poor crosses all sectarian divisions. Barbara Diefendorf, for example, documents the extensive rise of

⁹¹¹ Rabaut, *Lettres*, 2:279.

⁹¹² "I blush for our churches [...]. Most of them carry their miserliness and ingratitude so far as to leave the widows of their pastors to suffer." Rabaut, *Lettres*, 2:142.

⁹¹³ "Take care of the collections and distributions made for the poor." Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Pierre Durand*, 21.

⁹¹⁴ "The poor and other afflicted people be cared for with their necessities."

⁹¹⁵ *Discipline* 3.4, 4.1. Calvin wrote that deacons in particular bore responsibility for the poor. *Institution* 4.3.9.

⁹¹⁶ *Discipline* 4.2, 3. Letters 1-3, 9-10, 13-14, 24, 31, 33-34, 40-42.

⁹¹⁷ "You have done the most; never tire of doing the least."

Catholic charitable institutions in the seventeenth century.⁹¹⁸ On the other hand, Durand's letters are evidence of some disappointing failures in her own Protestant community to care for their own. In any case, Durand's writings on charity go beyond establishing her consistency with the Huguenot tradition of poor relief, which Dinges explains "fulfilled the basic idea of Christian love and [...] solidarity with the weak."⁹¹⁹ She appeals to her addressees for charitable help on the grounds of a range of motivations: charity is a necessary sign of true faith in Christ and of the solidarity of Christians with one another and with the divine; God rewards charity and punishes the neglect of it; charity arises from deep compassion for the suffering; and church leaders are responsible for organising charity. Durand adroitly appeals to her readers with the motives that would have the greatest influence on them. She appeals, for example, to Rabaut on the grounds of his pastoral responsibilities and to Leszczyńska on the grounds of piety. She shames churches in her region, who should have expressed solidarity with her, by describing the charity that she had received from outside of her region. She understands the Protestant doctrine that salvation comes by faith alone, but that charity is an essential sign of such saving faith. She points to the promises of reward for charity. Durand's writings about charity in effect embrace all four of the axes of practical theology described by Donzé. For Durand, charity is *martyria*, a witness to one's faith; *leitourgia*, an act of pious worship; *koinônia*, a manifestation of fellowship; and *diakonia*, the expression of diaconal care. The comprehensiveness with which Durand handles the doctrine of charity is a measure of her theological sophistication.

Further, Durand writes not as a pastor urging the church to extend charitable help to the needy, but as a layperson, and as one who is herself in urgent need of aid. This gives her writings on charity an immediacy that is lacking in the teachings of Calvin and other

⁹¹⁸ Barbara B. Diefendorf, *From Penitence to Charity: Pious Women and the Catholic Reformation in Paris* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 202-38.

⁹¹⁹ Dinges, "Huguenot poor relief," 173.

Protestant leaders who worked in relative material security. Durand does not speculate on the effects of deprivation upon the mind and body; she describes them firsthand. The complexity and immediacy of Durand's writings about charity, and the context within which they were written, gives them a special significance in French Protestant practical theology and perhaps Christian practical theology more generally.

Durand's Theology of Civil Governance

Given how much Durand's family suffered at the hands of the civil authorities, it is no surprise that she refers time and again to matters pertaining to civil governance. Two competing theories within the French Reformed tradition provide context for the position she develops: what David Whitford calls the "Petrine Exception" of qualified obedience and passive resistance on the one hand; and magisterial violent resistance on the other.⁹²⁰ Durand, as I show, adopts the Petrine Exception. Once we appreciate this orientation in her thought, we can arrive at a better understanding of her relation to the *résister* inscription, which memorialists have so often used to encapsulate her response to imprisonment.

Calvin and the Petrine Exception

In response to sixteenth-century state oppression of Protestantism in France, and elsewhere, Calvin devoted the lengthy final chapter of his *Institutes* – thirty-two sub-sections over some thirty-five pages – to explain how the church ought to interact with both benign and hostile political authorities. His pole star was Romans 13:1-2:

⁹²⁰ David M. Whitford, "Robbing Paul to Pay Peter: The Reception of Paul in 16th Century Political Theology," in *A Companion to Paul in the Reformation*, ed. R. Ward Holder (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 598.

Toute personne soit sujete aux puissances supérieures. Car il n’y a point de puissance sinon de par Dieu: et les puissances qui sont, sont ordonnées de Dieu. Parquoy qui résiste à la puissance, résiste à l’ordonnance de Dieu. Et ceux qui y résistent, receveront jugement sur eux-mesmes.⁹²¹

From this, Calvin distinguishes a “double régime” upon the earth, one spiritual, the other civil.⁹²² In his discussion of these two powers during the ancien régime, Di Donato describes how the distinction between them was collapsed by the *ordo juris* (legal order) and suggests that in this period judge-priests ruled under a judicial theocracy.⁹²³ Calvin himself does not always maintain a clear distinction between the two powers and teaches that civil authorities are directly responsible for civic justice and indirectly responsible for the *cura religionis*, for protecting public worship, doctrine, and morality.⁹²⁴ Thus the Confessio, section 39, states: “[Dieu] a mis le glaive en la main des magistrats pour réprimer les péchés commis non-seulement contre la seconde table des commandements de Dieu, mais aussi contre la première.”⁹²⁵ In Calvin’s view then, although church leaders have sole authority over spiritual matters, civil leaders must uphold and protect their work.

Calvin discusses at some length what the Protestant believer should do when faced by wicked civil authorities. This is a common problem, Calvin suggests, since most civil governors will be more or less corrupt: “La pluspart des Princes s’esloignent de la droicte voye.”⁹²⁶ This raises the problem of submitting to wicked governors. In addressing this issue, Geoffrey Treasure suggests that Huguenots only held civil authorities who protected the

⁹²¹ “Let everyone be subject to the ruling authorities. For no authority exists except by God, and the authorities that exist were established by God. Therefore, whoever resists authority, resists the ordinance of God. And those who resist will incur judgment upon themselves.” Quoted in Calvin, *Commentaires*, 3:228.

⁹²² *Institution* 3.19.15.

⁹²³ Di Donato, “Hiérarchie des normes,” 245.

⁹²⁴ *Institution* 4.20.2, 4, 9; Tuininga, *Calvin’s Political Theology*, 280-81.

⁹²⁵ “God has put the sword into the hands of magistrates to suppress sins against the first as well as against the second tables of the commandments of God.”

⁹²⁶ “The majority of princes depart from the right way.” *Institution* 4.20.24.

“true” religion to be legitimate.⁹²⁷ But Calvin, following Romans 13, is more nuanced. Wicked authorities, he suggests, are illegitimate in the sense that they disobey God, yet legitimate in accordance with the Pauline assertion that “there is no authority except from God”. This legitimacy extends even to those authorities who deny God’s laws. Under God, even wicked rulers accomplish his ultimate purpose, for they unwittingly chastise church and society for their complacency or apostasy. Calvin puts this in confronting terms:

Un mauvais Roy est une ire de Dieu sur la terre: [...] nous ne dirons rien plus d’un Roy que d’un larron qui desrobe nos biens, ou d’un adultère qui rompt nostre mariage, ou d’un homicide qui cherche à nous meurtrir. [...] Ceux qui s’y portent injustement et violement, sont eslevez de [dieu] pour punir l’iniquité du peuple.⁹²⁸

Thus for Calvin, Christians must in general honour and obey good and wicked kings alike.⁹²⁹ Calvin’s important qualification to this general rule is that a person must disobey laws that entail disobeying God.⁹³⁰ He explicates this doctrine in the very last words of the *Institutes*, citing Paul’s view that Christ redeems us: “Afin que ne nous adonnions serfs aux mauvaises cupiditez des hommes, et beaucoup moins à leur impiété.”⁹³¹ Calvin drew this qualification from, among other sections of Scripture, Acts 5:29 and Peter’s refusal to obey the authorities’ command to desist evangelising, a duty which Christ had commanded. At the point of this conflict of divine and human authority Peter responded with the principle that: “We must obey God rather than men” (ESV). Diarmaid MacCulloch describes Calvin’s interpretation of this passage as “a piece of self-deception” on the grounds that Calvin argued for Protestant

⁹²⁷ Treasure, *The Huguenots*, 82.

⁹²⁸ “A wicked King is God’s wrath upon the earth [...] we would say nothing more of a King than of a robber who seizes our possessions, or an adulterer who breaks up our marriage, or a murderer who seeks to kill us. [...] Those behave unjustly and violently are raised up by [God] to punish the iniquity of the people.” *Institution* 4.20.25.

⁹²⁹ *Institution* 4.20.25.

⁹³⁰ *Institution* 4.20.28-32.

⁹³¹ “So that we do not submit as serfs to the wicked desires of men, much less to their impiety.” *Institution* 4.20.32.

freedom from Catholic restrictions to their faith, but denied that same freedom to Anabaptists from their fellow Protestants' restrictions.⁹³² This was nevertheless the policy handed down by Calvin to oppressed Protestants, the so-called Petrine Exception: that the church must obey the civil authorities except when its laws contradict the commands of God. Two centuries later, Rabaut echoes this principle when he describes Huguenot prisoners and *galériens* as “infracteurs de ces lois pénales que nous ne pouvons observer sans violer de plus augustes lois.”⁹³³ As well as forbidding obedience to civil laws that break God's commands, the Petrine Exception also forbids violently resisting wicked authorities. This was the general policy of Calvin, who argued that such resistance caused the church to miss out on God's support.⁹³⁴ In 1561 he thus assured Charles IX that Protestants were loyal and would not oppose his rule:

Sire, que jamais nous ayons esté consentans à nulles entreprises qui fussent pour mettre piques et divisions entre vos subjectz ou troubler la tranquillité de vostre estat, ou exposer vos pays en dangier, que quant il y a eu quelque bruit, nous avons donné ordre et deffendu, sus peine rigoureuse, que nul des nostres ne bougeast.⁹³⁵

Similarly, in 1556 Calvin urged the church in Angers, where two Protestant ministers had recently been burned alive, to eschew violent resistance: “vous n'estes point arméz de luy, pour résister à ceux qui sont establis de luy pour gouverner.”⁹³⁶ Calvin did not always mandate passive resistance, however, and in one place in the *Institutes* he urges civil

⁹³² MacCulloch, *All Things Made New*, 59-60.

⁹³³ “Offenders of those penal laws that we cannot keep without violating the most august laws.” Borrel, *Biographie de Paul Rabaut*, 74.

⁹³⁴ *Lettres de Jean Calvin: recueillies pour la première fois et publiées d'après les manuscrits originaux par Jules Bonnet*, ed. Jules Bonnet, 2 vols. (Paris, 1854), 2:393.

⁹³⁵ Calvin, *Lettres de Jean Calvin*, 2:377 “Sire, we have never consented to any projects which could pique and divide your subjects, or trouble the tranquillity of your state, or expose your lands to danger. When there had been some trouble, we rigorously ordered and forbade our people to stir.”

⁹³⁶ “You are not armed by him to resist those who are established by him to govern.” Calvin, *Lettres de Jean Calvin*, 2:90-94.

magistrates to protect their people from “l’intempérance ou cruauté des Rois”.⁹³⁷ Beza, as I will show, developed this idea.⁹³⁸ The Petrine Exception was nonetheless Calvin’s prevailing policy: the church must obey the authorities as far as possible, disobey them only when their commands contradict Scripture, and then patiently suffer the prescribed civil punishment.⁹³⁹

Beza and Magisterial Armed Resistance

The recurrent atrocities of the French Religious Wars, and especially the Saint Bartholomew’s Day Massacre, caused many Protestants to call into question the doctrine of passive resistance.⁹⁴⁰ Andrew Pettegree describes a welter of latter sixteenth-century works by the so-called Monarchomachs which challenged Calvin’s general doctrine.⁹⁴¹ Two of the most influential were Beza’s *Traité de l’autorité du magistrat en la punition des hérétiques* (1560), and his *Droit des magistrats* (1574), both of which concern the duties of magistrates. During the ancien régime the term *magistrat* encompassed judges and law makers of all ranks, whose powers under the divine-right king were inconsistent and unstable.⁹⁴² As well as applying the king’s laws, magistrates were also expected to protest against whatever injustices – measured by the standard of divine and natural law – that the

⁹³⁷ *Institution* 4.20.31.

⁹³⁸ Robert Kingdon, “The First Expression of Theodore Beza’s Political Ideas,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 46 (1951): 94-95. Kingdon argues that Calvin’s statements here may have been a “literary source” for Beza.

⁹³⁹ Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 1518-19n54; William R. Stevenson Jr., “Calvin and Political Issues,” in *The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 183-85.

⁹⁴⁰ Allen Tulchin surveys the period’s vicious cycle of violence in “Ending the French Wars of Religion,” *The American Historical Review* 120, no. 5 (2015): 1696-1703.

⁹⁴¹ Andrew Pettegree, “French Books at the Frankfurt Fair,” in *The Impact of the European Reformation: Princes, Clergy, and People*, ed. Bridget Heal and Ole Peter Grell, St. Andrews Studies in Reformation History (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007), 258-59.

⁹⁴² Di Donato, “Hiérarchie des normes,” sec. 19-20; Diane C. Margolf, “The French Wars of Religion,” in *John Calvin in Context*, ed. R. Ward Holder (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 52. Margolf describes these as “lesser magistrates”, magistrates of a lower rank than “kings and princes.”

king might commit.⁹⁴³ Beza agrees with Calvin that magistrates are responsible for public order and to maintain piety and right doctrine.⁹⁴⁴ Like Calvin, Beza argues that people should obey the sovereign, except when the sovereign commands things that are immoral or irreligious.⁹⁴⁵ People should challenge the authorities only if “leur conscience est en doute”.⁹⁴⁶ In such cases, however, it may not be enough to simply disobey iniquitous laws, for there are times when a person must mitigate the harm of such laws. Beza gives the example of the Hebrew midwives in Exodus 1, who not only disobeyed Pharaoh’s order to drown the infant Hebrew males, but who also helped them by finding them shelter.⁹⁴⁷ While Beza suggests that the proper response to an unjust law is a legal appeal against it, a person may also, he believes, take the decision to suffer legal but unjust punishment for God’s glory, since “la gloire des Chrestiens gist à souffrir injure de tous & ne la faire à aucun.”⁹⁴⁸ So far, Beza is more or less within the limits of the Petrine Exception.

Beza pushes beyond the Petrine Exception when he tackles the question that lies at the heart of *Droit des magistrats*: “La question [...] est de savoir, si les sujets ont quelque juste moien, & selon Dieu de reprimer, mesmes par la voie des armes, si besoin est, la tyrannie toute notoire d’un souverain magistrat.”⁹⁴⁹ Beza condemns “faux chrestiens” who are not willing to suffer long and hard under unjust rule, and sedition and disorderly spontaneous uprisings as “monstres horribles”. He urges instead that prayer be the primary and ordinary

⁹⁴³ François Saint-Bonnet, “Un Droit constitutionnel avant le droit constitutionnel,” *Droits* 32, no. 7 (2000): 12-13.

⁹⁴⁴ Theodore Beza, *Traité de l’authorité du magistrat en la punition des hérétiques, & du moyē d’y proceder [...]* ([Geneva], 1560), 33-34, 43-44.

⁹⁴⁵ “Provided that he does not command irreligious or iniquitous things.” Beza, *Droit des magistrats*, 3.

⁹⁴⁶ Beza, *Droit des magistrats*, 7.

⁹⁴⁷ Beza, *Droit des magistrats*, 8.

⁹⁴⁸ “It is the glory of Christians to suffer injury from all but not to injure anyone.” Beza, *Droit des magistrats*, 11.

⁹⁴⁹ “The question then is to know, if subjects have some mid-ranked justice, under God, to repress, even if needs be by the means of arms, the manifest tyranny of a sovereign magistrate.” For “mid-ranked justice” see Littré, s.v. “justice” sec. 13, and “moyen” sec. 4. Beza also refers to “malice confermée” (persistent malice). Beza, *Droit des magistrats*, 12-13, 113.

remedy against tyranny.⁹⁵⁰ But just as a nation ought to defend itself against invasion, there are times, according to Beza, when unjust and cruel authorities must be actively resisted.⁹⁵¹

John Witte explains that Beza's development of a "Calvinist resistance theory", following the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre, aimed to defend "the fundamental rights of the individual and community to discharge the fundamental religious duties imposed on them by God."⁹⁵² Yet Beza specifies that private citizens have no right on their own to resist tyranny with force. They must endure tyranny patiently and look to the help of the magistrates who alone have the right to organise and exercise force. Beza sums up his position in respect to wicked kings in the following terms: if such kings

destruisent notoirement la souverainete, contrevenans malicieusement & opiniastrement à raison & Justice, & notammant à ce qu'ils auront jure à la souveraineté, ils peuvent & doivent estre ramenez à leur devoir, voire mesmes poursuivis & contraints par la voie des armes, (si autrement faire ne se peut) par ceux, qui sous telles conditions les auront eslevez en leur throsne.⁹⁵³

For Beza, however, the magistrates' responsibility to defend their people against godless sovereigns extends also to the repression of heretics.⁹⁵⁴ Beza, then, does not oppose state religious coercion in principle, but only the restriction on what for him was "true Religion".

For the Huguenots living under royal oppression Beza's instructions were clear enough: honour the king, do not engage in private armed resistance, embrace patience and prayer in

⁹⁵⁰ Beza, *Droit des magistrats*, 16-17.

⁹⁵¹ Beza, *Droit des magistrats*, 19.

⁹⁵² Witte, *Reformation of Rights*, 86-87.

⁹⁵³ "[If they] manifestly destroy that sovereignty, maliciously and stubbornly contravening reason and Justice, and especially that sovereignty which they have sworn to uphold, they can and must be brought to their duty, even to be pursued and constrained by armed force, (if it cannot otherwise be done,) by those who under such conditions have raised them to their throne." Beza, *Droit des magistrats*, 101-2.

⁹⁵⁴ Beza, *Droit des magistrats*, 121.

suffering, and look to the magistrates to exercise their God-given duty to defend against religious oppression and to suppress heretical movements.

The anonymous 1579 Latin tract *Vindiciae contra tyrannos* also attempted to argue, from Scripture, natural law, and historical precedent, for armed resistance. It was written in 1574–75, probably by the Protestant diplomat Philippe Duplessis-Mornay (1549–1623), and a French translation was published in 1581.⁹⁵⁵ Stefania Tutino describes the work as “one of the most famous (and infamous) formulations of the Huguenot theory of resistance.”⁹⁵⁶ It is premised on the idea that: “In constituting a prince, there is a covenant between him and the people [...] to the effect that as long as he commands well, it should obey him well.”⁹⁵⁷ However, “Whoever perfidiously and persistently breaks this contract, is truly a tyrant by practice. So the officers of the kingdom are bound by their office both to judge him according to the laws and, if he resists, to restrain him by force if they cannot do so by other means.”⁹⁵⁸ The Monarchomachs’ arguments for violent resistance were by no means exclusively Protestant and conservative Guisean Catholics adopted similar ideas.⁹⁵⁹

In practice, the French Protestant response to iniquitous rule followed either the Petrine Exception or Beza’s doctrine of magisterial resistance.⁹⁶⁰ From the start of the French religious wars in 1562 until the accession in 1589 of Henri de Navarre – who had been raised a Protestant – Huguenot armed resistance, consistent with Beza’s doctrine, was widespread, something which Diane Margolf partly attributes to Calvin’s ambiguity on the matter.⁹⁶¹ By

⁹⁵⁵ Arlette and Bergin, *Saint Bartholomew’s Day Massacre*, 201.

⁹⁵⁶ Stefania Tutino, “Huguenots, Jesuits and Tyrants: Notes on the *Vindiciae contra Tyrannos* in Early Modern England,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 11, no. 3 (2007): 175.

⁹⁵⁷ Stephanus Junius Brutus and [Philippe Duplessis-Mornay], *Vindiciae, contra tyrannos: Or, Concerning the Legitimate Power of a Prince over the People, and of the People over a Prince*, trans. George Garnett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 172.

⁹⁵⁸ *Vindiciae*, 172.

⁹⁵⁹ Andrei Sălăvăstru, “Sacred Covenant and Huguenot Ideology of Resistance: The Biblical Image of the Contractual Monarchy in *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos*,” *Religions* 11 (2020): 4; Roberts, “Huguenot Petitioning,” 63.

⁹⁶⁰ William A. Dunning, “The Monarchomachs,” *Political Science Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (1904): 280-1.

⁹⁶¹ Margolf, “The French Wars of Religion,” 51.

1598 and the Edict of Nantes, Huguenots tended to espouse the non-violent resistance of the Petrine Exception. Tulchin pinpoints Henri's accession as the turning point for both Protestants and Catholics: "Catholic political theorists suddenly reversed their positions and began to write in favour of the right of resistance to tyrants; Protestants began to preach obedience to kings."⁹⁶² In the seventeenth century French Protestants generally adhered to the policy of non-violent resistance – with the notable exception of the south-western Rohan Wars (1620–29) – despite growing state power and the erosion of the Edict of Nantes. Resentment following the strictures of the 1685 Revocation erupted in the Camisard Rebellion, the last gasp of organised Huguenot armed resistance. From 1715, Huguenot pastors under Antoine Court's leadership consistently urged passive resistance and demanded obedience to all state laws except those which contradicted Scripture.⁹⁶³ This was mandated in 1721 at a provincial synod in the Vivarais. Among nineteen rules made for Huguenot church leaders the third reads: "Que tous les pasteurs et proposans jurent par la foi qu'ils ont au nom de Jésus-Christ d'obéir au roi de France en toutes choses, sauf aux ordonnances qui pourroient être préjudiciables à la foi et à l'Eglise."⁹⁶⁴ Court de Gébelin's 1756 *Lettre d'un patriote* argues that one of the great tragedies of the Revocation was that the thousands of skilled Huguenot artisans, soldiers, and sailors forced to flee to France's rival neighbours had been entirely loyal to their King and country.⁹⁶⁵ In 1760, Antoine Court identifies "fanatisme" as the cause of the Camisard Rebellion and praises instead the rise of a new generation of Huguenot leaders who preach against violent resistance and, who "ont toujours conservé beaucoup d'attachement pour leur patrie; et pour leur prince une fidélité

⁹⁶² Tulchin, "Ending the French Wars of Religion," 1706.

⁹⁶³ Joutard, "Antoine Court," 76-77.

⁹⁶⁴ "Let all pastors and trainee preachers swear by the faith that they have in the name of Jesus Christ to obey the king of France in everything, except those ordinances which could be prejudicial to the faith and to the church." Cited in Hugues, *Antoine Court*, 1:26-27n2.

⁹⁶⁵ Court de Gébelin quotes such Reformers as Calvin, Zwingli, Oecolampadius, Bucer, and Bullinger, who taught loyalty to even imperfect rulers. (Luther and Beza are notable Continental omissions). He also assures the King that the Huguenots pray for his long life and prosperity. *Lettre d'un patriote*, 56-57, 91.

inviolable.”⁹⁶⁶ Though Court’s *Histoire* does not explicate the Petrine Exemption per se, its ideas and sentiments are entirely consistent with it. Pierre Durand followed the principles of the Petrine Exception in 1732 when he declined to resist his arrest with his loaded pistol, quoting Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane: “Remets ton épée à sa place” (Return your sword to its place).⁹⁶⁷

Marie Durand and the Petrine Exception

Like Antoine Court and her brother Pierre, Marie Durand and the majority of her fellow prisoners abided by the Petrine Exception. They refused to disobey God by abjuring their faith and submitted to the punishment of indefinite harsh imprisonment. Although Camisard leader Abraham Mazel escaped the Tour de Constance in 1705 with seventeen others, there is no evidence that the female prisoners attempted or even contemplated escape.⁹⁶⁸ Despite her vivid descriptions of the cruelty and injustice of her incarceration Durand never describes the authorities which had placed her there as enemies, nor does she express any desire for revenge or for their downfall. On the contrary, Durand’s letters demonstrate a spirit of non-violence, dismay at suggestions of Huguenot disloyalty (Letter 30), love for France and a desire for peace in the kingdom (Letters 19, 29), and even warm affection for the King. Six times she refers to Louis XV as the “Bien-aimé”, his national sobriquet.⁹⁶⁹ In Letter 29 she talks about preparations for the defence of Aigues-Mortes against a possible English attack: “comme tout bon et fidèle sujet de notre légitime prince doit faire. [...] Et soyons toujours tous fidèles et zélés pour la défense de notre auguste et bien-aimé souverain, dussions-nous

⁹⁶⁶ “Always preserved great attachment to their homeland; and for their prince an inviolable fidelity.” Court, *Histoire des troubles*, 1:71, 3:309.

⁹⁶⁷ Gamonnet, *Étienne Durand*, 118. The pistol may have been carried to repel wolves.

⁹⁶⁸ Court, *Histoire des troubles*, 3:192.

⁹⁶⁹ Letters 29, 30, 32 (three times), and 38.

perdre tout notre sang pour son service.”⁹⁷⁰ In Letter 32 (1760), addressed to Rabaut, Durand repeatedly affirms her loyalty to Louis XV. She expresses alarm at the report of an assassination attempt upon the King, and explains that this was not welcome news to her fellow prisoners: “On ne veut pas ici qu’on parle de cette époque.”⁹⁷¹ She prays that God will invest the King with his “esprit de jugement” and will make him more precious than “l’or d’Ophir” (the gold of Ophir), a biblical trope for an especially fine grade of gold.⁹⁷² She speaks approvingly of a prophecy of Nostradamus which she supposes speaks “favorablement de notre bien-aimé monarque”. She disapproves of an engineer who was thought to have betrayed the plans for the fortifications of Montpellier and Aigues-Mortes to enemy forces.

Though Durand no doubt expected her letters to be read by her guardians, she only ever speaks respectfully of her prison commandants and gives evidence of a good relationship between them and the prisoners. In Letter 35 she describes the commandant’s petitions for their release and his assurances of their freedom. In Letter 39 she describes the new commandant as having as much kindness as his predecessor, and how good it is to have a commandant who is so concerned for the prisoners’ future. In Letter 39 (1766), just two years before her release, we find her charming request to Gal-Pomaret for a small bag of chickpeas: “Je voudrais lui en faire présent pour pouvoir le prier de récrire au prince avant son départ de Paris, parce qu’il pourrait parler de nous à Sa Majesté. Il nous a promis de se rendre encore aux États pour tâcher de nous arracher de ce triste lieu.”⁹⁷³ In Letter 22 she asks Anne to bring “deux paires de mitaines à jour de soie blanche à petit dessin et beau, une

⁹⁷⁰ “As is required of every good and faithful subject of our just prince. [...] Let us always be utterly faithful and zealous to defend our august and beloved sovereign; we must shed all of our blood in his service.”

⁹⁷¹ “No one here even wants to talk about such things.”

⁹⁷² See for example Job 28:16 and Isaiah 13:12.

⁹⁷³ “I would like to make a present of it to the commandant, to beg that he will write again to the Prince before he leaves Paris, that he might speak to His Majesty on our behalf. He promised us that he would go again to the authorities to try to uproot us from this sad place.”

paire large et l'autre plus étroite.”⁹⁷⁴ These are to be gifts for the commandants' wives and no ulterior motive is stated. Even if the gloves, like the chickpeas, were intended to win her guardians' favour, both gifts demonstrate nonetheless a respectful relationship between prisoners and prison authorities and Durand's use of winsome and legitimate means to work for their freedom. This is seen also in her respectful petitions to members of the court (Letters 8, 29, 30) urging them to act in the prisoners' favour. Durand's quotation in Letter 29 of 1 Peter 3:17 sums up her position: “Il vaut infiniment mieux souffrir en faisant bien si telle est la volonté du Seigneur, qu'en faisant mal.”⁹⁷⁵ Gamonnet is right to comment, “On ne trouve dans aucune de ses lettres l'ombre d'un sentiment de révolte.”⁹⁷⁶ Marie Durand exemplifies the passive resistance of the Petrine Exception.

The Interpretation of “Résister”

In the light of Marie Durand's idea of *liberté de conscience* and her practical theology of civil governance, the meaning of the *résister* inscription in the Tour de Constance, which has so often been linked to her, may now be explored in greater depth.⁹⁷⁷ Many uncertainties surround it. First, although the graffito is popularly attributed to Durand, there is no evidence that she inscribed it. Second, the third letter is ambiguous, as seen in this photo:

⁹⁷⁴ “Two pairs of white silk day gloves in a fine and pretty pattern: one large pair, and the other slimmer.”

⁹⁷⁵ “It is infinitely better to suffer for doing good, if such is the will of the Lord, than for doing evil.”

⁹⁷⁶ Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 5.

⁹⁷⁷ Note e.g. such titles as Céline Borello's 2018 *Résister: Lettres de la tour de Constance*; Marie-France Silver's 2000 *Résister: la correspondance des prisonnières protestantes de la tour de Constance*, and Bernard Kurt's 1985 documentary *Résister ou les captives d'Aigues Mortes*.



Figure 32. RESISTER graffito in the Tour de Constance.
 Edited from a photo taken from the website tourdeconstance.com,
 with permission © Gilles Despains 2015.

Sometimes the graffito is transcribed with an uncial G, “REGISTER”.⁹⁷⁸ This has been explained as the French infinitive *résister*, “to resist,” spelled phonetically, in the way it would have been pronounced by those from the Vivarais.⁹⁷⁹ The Tour de Constance, however, was used as a prison from 1621 for male and female prisoners from across southern France. No one knows when the word was inscribed, who and how many inscribed it, and where they came from. It is not known, therefore, whether the word was spelled phonetically according to the *vivaro-alpin* dialect of Durand’s region, or any other Occitan dialect.⁹⁸⁰ Simon-Jules Honnorat’s *Dictionnaire provençal-français* cites “RESISTAR” as the Occitan equivalent of the French *résister*.⁹⁸¹ This suggests that if the inscriber intended to write an infinitive of an Occitan dialect then the graffito would have read RESISTAR, or possibly REGISTAR with phonetic spelling. (I find no evidence that *registar* is an Occitan word). It is more likely that the third letter is a misshapen uncial S, and that the engraving reads RESISTER; thus Jacques Pujol explains that “La graphie ‘Register’ provient d’une graphie

⁹⁷⁸ E.g., Fabre and Benoît, *Marie Durand*, 127.

⁹⁷⁹ Krumenacker, “Marie Durand,” 81n7.

⁹⁸⁰ Didier Grange describes the *vivaro-alpin* dialect, spoken at times in the Vivarais, as one of the six dialects of the Occitan language. *Lexique descriptif occitan-français du vivaro-alpin au nord du Velay et du Vivarais* (Self-published, 2008), 4.

⁹⁸¹ Simon-Jules Honnorat, *Dictionnaire provençal-français, ou Dictionnaire de langue d’oc ancienne et moderne*, 3 vols. (Digne, 1846), 3:1066.

maladroite de la lettre S.”⁹⁸² In any case there is little doubt then that the word is, or is equivalent to, the French *résister*.

The curators of Le Musée du Vivarais associate *résister* with Huguenot resistance against royal prohibitions of their faith: “‘RESISTER’ a été le maître mot de ces familles vivaroises qui ont lutté pour pouvoir vivre librement leur foi. Bravant les interdits, la lecture clandestine de la Bible nourrissait leur espérance et les confortait dans le désir de transmettre la Parole.”⁹⁸³ Patrick Cabanel takes a similar view, suggesting that the word became “le symbole” of a French Protestant resistance that was by nature “désarmée, féminine, impuissante, mais qui a eu raison de l’intransigeance de la monarchie.”⁹⁸⁴ Charles Rist, however, associates *résister* with human rights in general, claiming that for Durand it meant “garder intact en face de la destinée, le plus précieux des trésors: la conscience intime de son droit et l’espérance – mieux que cela, l’inébranlable certitude – de voir ce droit triompher un jour.”⁹⁸⁵ Others suggest a spiritual interpretation of *résister*. Falguerolles, for example, denies that *résister* means resisting state or religious authorities. Given that Christ submitted to Pilate’s unjust judicial sentence he deduces that *résister* must have a spiritual meaning, to resist temptation and abjuration. He cites the counterexample of Peter, who denied Christ three times.⁹⁸⁶ Frossard also interprets the word in light of the New Testament:

Cette inscription donne à la tour de Constance sa vraie devise; elle donne surtout à ses prisonnières leur valeur historique, héroïque et chrétienne: c’est le cri de la conscience

⁹⁸² “The spelling ‘Register’ derives from the clumsy writing of the letter S.” Poujol, “Documents et pistes,” 448n16.

⁹⁸³ “‘RESIST’ was the catchcry of those Vivarais families who fought to be able to freely live out their faith. Braving the royal interdictions, secret Bible reading nourished their hope and strengthened their desire to transmit the Word.” Sighted November 6, 2018. This meaning is echoed in a definition of *résister* presented in *DCLF* 4:217-18, “Résister à l’oppression.”

⁹⁸⁴ “Disarmed, feminine, powerless, but which had gotten the better of the monarchy’s intransigence.” Cabanel, *Histoire des protestants*, 887.

⁹⁸⁵ “To keep intact in the face of destiny the most precious treasure: the intimate awareness of her right, and the hope – more than that, the unquenchable certitude – of one day seeing that right triumph.” Rist, “Allocution,” 49.

⁹⁸⁶ de Falguerolles, “Tour de Constance,” 182-83 (capitalisation original).

opprimée, comme ce fut le mot d'ordre que trois apôtres nous transmirent de la part du Sauveur du monde contre les assauts de Satan.⁹⁸⁷

Both Falguerolles and Frossard cite 1 Peter 5:8-9 as an example: “Soyes sobres, veillez. Votre adversaire le Diable rôde autour de vous comme un lion rugissant, cherchant qui il pourra dévorer. RESISTEZ lui en demeurant fermes dans la foi, sachant que vos frères, répandus dans le monde, souffrent les mêmes afflictions que vous.”⁹⁸⁸ Here *résister* means to resist the temptations of the devil and to show solidarity with other believers who are oppressed for their faith. Different interpretations of *résister* reflect the various secular or spiritual agendas of the interpreters.

In fact there is no surviving record of what the *résister* graffito meant to Durand. There are, however, two instances of the verb in her extant letters. First, in Letter 35 (1762), to Rabaut, in her thirty-third year of incarceration, she describes herself in the third person as she “qui résiste encore à l’hiver de la persécution.”⁹⁸⁹ From at least the seventeenth century, *persécution* could refer to either religious persecution or to persistent bad treatment in general.⁹⁹⁰ However in Letter 29 Durand directly links the suffering of the *galériens* – the “pauvres persécutés” – to a reference to 1 Peter 3:17, which refers in context to the suffering of specifically religious persecution.⁹⁹¹ She makes the same kind of link in Letter 43, where she compares her own “tribulations et persécutions” to the sufferings of Christ. Durand makes no correlation in her extant letters between persecution and merely political tyranny, it always refers to religious persecution. By describing herself in Letter 35 as someone “who

⁹⁸⁷ “This engraving gives to the Tour de Constance its true motto; it gives above all to its prisoners their historical significance, heroic and Christian: it is the cry of the oppressed conscience, the watchword that three apostles passed on from the Saviour of the world against Satan’s assaults.” Frossard, “Tour de Constance,” 180.

⁹⁸⁸ “Be sober, wake up. Your enemy the devil prowls around you like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. RESIST him, standing firm in the faith, knowing that your brothers, scattered throughout the world, suffer the same afflictions as you.” de Falguerolles, “Tour de Constance,” 183 (capitalisation original).

⁹⁸⁹ “Who resists this winter of persecution.”

⁹⁹⁰ *DCLF* 3:1584; *Littre* s.v. “persécution.”

⁹⁹¹ 1 Peter 3:17 (ESV) “For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.”

resists this winter of persecution” she refers to herself as someone who suffers for her faith and who resists specifically religious persecution. The fact that this phrase occurs in the same letter in which she refers to her longing for “liberté entière” – freedom without abjuration – tends to confirm this interpretation that she resists for self-consciously religious and spiritual rather than political reasons. The other use of the verb *résister* occurs in Letter 20, where she writes to Anne, regarding unsuitable marriage proposals: “Résiste toujours, ma chère fille, à ces tentations, et regarde les personnes qui te feront de telles propositions comme tes plus cruels ennemis.”⁹⁹² Again, *résister* has here a religious and ethical meaning; Anne must resist “temptations” to act wrongly. If, as I have argued, Durand aligns with the Petrine Exception, then the *résister* graffito should certainly not be associated with Durand for the cause of violent uprising. Nor, contra Rist, should it be linked with any purely secular or political idea of liberation. If the inscription is to be associated with Durand at all then it ought – in respect to Durand’s own writings – be understood spiritually, as resisting temptation and abjuration, those things which threaten salvation.

Durand’s Practical Theology: Conclusions

To date, Marie Durand’s primary contribution to our idea of French Protestantism has been one of example. She is the heroic *prisonnière* of the Tour de Constance who chose decades in a dungeon rather than abjuration and freedom. Borello thus describes how she has become “une figure légendaire, enveloppée du nimbe de la résistance, que l’on brandit chaque fois que l’occasion s’en présente.”⁹⁹³ This analysis of Durand’s practical theology has shown that she is more than a legendary heroine of resistance for whatever cause one would like her to

⁹⁹² “Always resist these temptations, my darling daughter, and consider those who make such proposals to be your cruellest enemies.”

⁹⁹³ “A legendary figure, wrapped in the aura of resistance, which is vaunted every time the occasion presents itself.” Durand and Gamonnet (ed.), *Lettres*, 5.

have stood for. Broomhall describes how late sixteenth-century women “documented their own experience of violence – as victims certainly, but also as sophisticated rhetoricians, observers, fundraising strategists and, most significantly, resilient survivors.”⁹⁹⁴ In the light of Durand’s practical theology, such a statement seems highly applicable to her.

Durand’s letters are entirely occasional. By no means did she intend to write practical theology for the edification of the church. Her letters explicate what she had received and understood from her theological heritage: how this heritage helped her make sense of her circumstances and what it taught her about suffering, charity, and civil governance.

According to McKee, we can see in the work of the lay theologian Katharina Schütz Zell (1498–1562) an example of “how the gospel was creatively appropriated and expressed in the lives of intelligent and dedicated lay Christians”. Durand’s writings are another such example.⁹⁹⁵ If, according to Parmentier’s definition, practical theology analyses the practice of Christianity in light of its setting, the conditions of the Tour de Constance must be factored into any assessment of the value of Durand’s writings. Though she might not have expressed her theology with the depth and genius of Calvin, she expressed them *in extremis*, and practised them with courage in difficult circumstances.

Durand makes a notable contribution to each of the three areas of practical theology with which she engages. First, from a place of real and prolonged suffering, she brings to the fore those aspects of her theological tradition that give a sense of peace and purpose in suffering: her emphasis on God’s sovereignty and fatherly love shows that suffering is not absolutely undeserved, that it is part of a greater purpose, and that it can be a vehicle of good. She demonstrates how a person can, as a result, face suffering with equanimity, with selfless

⁹⁹⁴ Broomhall, *Women and Religion*, 142.

⁹⁹⁵ Elsie Anne McKee, “Katharina Schütz Zell,” in *Reformation Theologians*, ed. Carter Lindberg (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), 235.

concern for others (such as she expressed for Anne Durand), and even with prayerful goodwill for her oppressors. Second, Durand's pleas and arguments for practical Christian charity are significant coming from a woman whose life depended on such charity. From a place of dire need her words continue to highlight today the responsibilities of the community toward those who suffer: to share resources with them, to advocate for them, to visit and be present with them. Third, Durand's expressions of respect, devotion, obedience, and even love for her governing authorities, coming from a person who suffered cruelly at their hands, take on a certain poignant authority. Durand presents an extraordinary example of the Petrine Exception, but also of non-violent resistance in general. Whilst refusing to disobey God by abjuring, she also accepts the harsh punishment that comes with breaking the law. She refers candidly to the cruelty of her punishment and does what she can to mitigate its harshness and to bring about release. Yet she expresses no ill-will toward the state but continues to honour the king in her words and prayers. If there is little that is doctrinally audacious in the substance of Durand's social theology, she expresses her convictions as a practitioner in hard circumstances who paid a heavy price to maintain them. This should be seen as an important part of her enduring legacy.

Conclusion

How does one weigh the value of a life lived? What counts as a life well spent, or a life lost? The milestones of Durand's biography – imprisoned at the age of nineteen, released at the age of fifty-seven, dying impoverished at the age of sixty-five – suggest a life wasted by the cruelty and injustice of tyrannical authorities. Yet, a three-part legacy around Marie Durand has emerged, a legacy in which her fellow prisoners – condemned for their religion as she was, and all but forgotten except for their prison records – have shared. One part of that legacy concerns the course of Durand's life, which was shaped by the society into which she was born and which in turn helped to shape that society. Another part consists of her forty-eight surviving letters. A third part centres on Durand's name itself and all that it has come to stand for. This third part, the name "Marie Durand", has become the most visible and widely known aspect of the prisoner's legacy, a name which is most often linked to freedom of conscience and the *résister* inscription in the Tour de Constance. Durand is the "heroine of conscience," a figurehead of principled resistance for those oppressed by tyrannical regimes.

Given that Durand lived during the metaphysical and political watershed of the Enlightenment, when power and authority structures came under intense scrutiny, her memorialisation as a heroine of conscience is not surprising. In France, while she languished in Aigues-Mortes, the works of Montesquieu, the *Encyclopédistes*, Diderot, Rousseau, Beccaria, and Voltaire were coming into print and discussion. By the 1760s, the apogee of Voltaire's campaign for toleration, Durand's fourth decade of imprisonment was in progress. Her life was emmeshed in conflicts of the age: Catholicism versus Protestantism, supernaturalism versus rationalism, the ancien régime versus new ideas of liberty and equality. It is not hard to see why the heirs of the Enlightenment came to associate Durand with these profound social and intellectual changes. Yet the Enlightenment was a polyphonic

movement that took on different and even conflicting directions and emphases across and within different nations, and different political, religious, and cultural communities. Durand's legacy as a heroine of conscience has proven to be correspondingly multifaceted and complex, and conflicting priorities have emerged. This thesis aimed to categorise Durand's memorialisations, and then to reassess her legacy in light of her own heritage, life, and epistolary network – and above all her own thoughts as they arise from her letters. I have drawn five conclusions from my reassessment, which I present here with their implications for further French Protestant historical and theological research.

Implications of the Research

Marie Durand, Letter Writer

The memorialisation of Marie Durand is not just varied in time, language, and medium. The thesis shows that it is also tribal, equivocal, and attached to conflicting causes. Durand is commemorated by religious entities as an exemplary Protestant (whether evangelical or French Reformed); by secular entities as an Enlightenment heroine; and, analogously to Voltaire's championing of Jean Calas, proximately as a Protestant martyr, but ultimately as a figurehead for Enlightenment freedom. What links the disparate memorialisers is their general neglect of Durand's own words as recorded in her letters. The plaque on her house, the Musée du Vivarais, is an emblem of this neglect. Marie is the "sister of Pierre" and *résister* is the single word that sums up her legacy. Granted, a plaque cannot say much. Yet most often her memorialisers have said little more. Marie Durand, an intelligent and forceful correspondent who wrote for the survival of her fellow prisoners, who advocated for their freedom, who lovingly mothered her orphaned niece in distant Geneva, who expressed her hopes and fears for the future of her religious community and France, who had definite ideas

about freedom of conscience, and who has made a valuable occasional contribution to practical theology, has been widely misrepresented as silent figurehead – frequently of causes which were foreign to her own social and intellectual world.

That is why Marie Durand’s letters were central to my research. I commenced by translating her letters: to discover her life firsthand, to enter into her thoughts, to hear her voice. The subsequent study of Durand’s life and epistolary network was undertaken primarily as a means of better interpreting and understanding her letters. The form of Durand’s communication is important. Natalie Zemon Davis explains how early modern women, generally excluded from government (with the exception of royalty), church leadership, law-making, the military, and the academy, might agitate for political change via elite social influence, pamphlet writing, public protest, and written petition.⁹⁹⁶ As a prisoner, Durand was restricted to the last of these already limited means of political influence. The recovery of Durand from silent figurehead to letter writer and petitioner respects her use of the only means of influence left available to her. Silver, Swiderski, Beik, Nelson, Eurich, and Broomhall urge that the writings of early modern females be brought to light and heard. Durand’s case reminds us of how, in the search for inspiring figureheads, the writings of even a widely recognised and admired early modern female can be obscured and ignored – or sidelined by reductionist slogans.

Marie Durand, French Reformed Christian

It is not easy to define Protestantism. It has historical, political, practical, theological, and social dimensions which look quite different at different times. When it comes to categorising

⁹⁹⁶ Natalie Zemon Davis, “La Femme ‘au politique’,” in *Histoire des femmes en occident, XVI^e-XVIII^e siècles*, ed. Natalie Zemon Davis and Arlette Farge (Paris: Plon, 1991), 176-88.

a person as Protestant, Reformed, or Calvinist, all of these dimensions must be taken into consideration. The French Reform movement took root in a region with a long history of linguistic, political, and religious independence from the governing powers north of the Loire Valley. Calvin's *Institutes*, the doctrines of which were encapsulated in the *Confessio Gallicana*, gave this community a distinct theology. The *Discipline* and *Liturgie* defined its polity and worship. Marot's psalmody shaped its sentiments and expression. Waves of oppression and violence, such as the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre, instilled in French Protestants a sense that they were the victims of intolerance and injustice. Books like Crespin's *Livre des martyrs* taught them to take pride in and to emulate their forebears' brave resistance to religious persecution. The seventeenth century brought Catholic reforms, the consolidation of divine-right absolutism, the rise of the rationalists and empiricists, and a steady erosion of Protestant freedom which culminated with the *dragonnades* and the Revocation. These things changed and fragmented the French Protestant community. Its theology and epistemology became less tied to the past and more diverse. A spirit of ecumenism softened its attitude towards Catholicism. Growing religious restrictions and persecution led many to compromise with Catholic religious forms. These changes meant that the Protestant response to the Revocation varied enormously. Some took flight, some abjured, some went underground, and some took up arms. The almost entire loss of the pastorate after the Revocation opened the church to new forms of leadership, teaching, and expression. The sheer diversity of French Protestantism at the turn of the eighteenth century meant that it was always going to be difficult to categorise Marie Durand's religion. Durand's memorialists have not always taken this complexity into account.

The thesis shows that although Durand's father was willing to make some compromise with Catholic religious forms, Marie was born nonetheless into a pious Huguenot home devoted to Scripture and sixteenth-century Protestant orthodoxy. Her entire

birth family suffered incarceration or death because of their allegiance to their French Reformed heritage, and Marie herself chose harsh and lengthy punishment over abjuration and release. She would not be out of place in Crespin's martyrology as one who bravely suffered for the cause of the Reformation in France. Above all, it is my study of Marie Durand's own words which confirms the analyses of Borello and Silver, among others, who find her thought entirely consistent with her sixteenth-century French Reformed heritage. Although she has frequently been described as an "Enlightenment heroine," Durand identified with and proved her commitment to her French Reformed heritage in her actions and words. Pierre Nora warns against the politicisation of history, of reading one's own concerns and causes into the figures and writings of the past. The line that divides history from propaganda is too easily blurred. The study of Durand's memorialisation reinforces how important and yet how difficult it is to look to historical figures not as what we may prefer them to be, but as they are.

My study underlines nonetheless the complexity of Protestant-Catholic and Protestant-state relations. Étienne Durand worked among and was respected by both Protestants and Catholics. He went to a priest for the formalisation of his marriage and the baptism of his children. Étienne was not an uncompromising Calvinist in the mould of Crespin's martyrs. He acted toward peaceful coexistence. He shows how not all Huguenots of his generation went the way of armed resistance like the Camisards, or the way of shunning all Catholic religious forms like Pierre Durand and Antoine Court. Marie Durand herself contracted and formalised her marriage with Mathieu Serres before a priest. Although Durand resisted abjuration, she expressed continual respect for the authorities in her Catholic state. We cannot make facile generalisations about French Protestantism at the turn of the eighteenth century or presuppose its degree of opposition to or engagement with Catholics

and Catholic religious forms. Post-Revocation Catholic-Protestant relations must be carefully nuanced and described on a person-by-person and year-by-year basis.

The thesis also indicates the extent of the impact of the Revocation on the lives of regional Protestant families. Louis XIV was led (or chose) to believe that the *dragonnades* were the final nails in the coffin of an all but extinct movement. Yet the Revocation precipitated the flight of some 160,000 Protestants, the breakup of families, enormous material loss, and severe hardship for the hundreds of thousands who remained. The strictures of the Revocation extended to the remote southern village of Le Bouchet, causing the arrest and disappearance of Marie's mother Claudine, fourteen years in prison for her elderly father Étienne, the exile and later execution of her brother Pierre, and Marie's own long imprisonment. The rippling effects of the edict signed amidst the insular opulence of the Palace of Fontainebleau blighted the lives of real people in the remotest corners of France for a hundred years. The life of Marie Durand is an important case study of this tragedy.

My biographical sketch of Durand also serves to concretise the inhuman conditions suffered by eighteenth-century female prisoners. It is one thing to say: "Marie Durand was imprisoned for thirty-eight years." It is another thing to examine the contemporary eye-witness accounts of the Tour de Constance: those of Clement and Boissy d'Anglas, and the firsthand descriptions of Isabeau Menet and Durand herself. These accounts reveal the true horror of what many scores of women and children suffered in early modern France for their religious beliefs. My study also presents an example of the impact of foreign wars upon a remote prison community. The Seven Years' War (1756–63), as Lasserre noted, may have helped to lighten the impact of the Revocation as troops were reallocated from internal policing to frontier service. At the same time, in Letter 29 (1759) Durand expresses real fears of an English landing and subsequent violation. In Durand we see the unexpected collateral effects of distant wars and policy decisions upon remote prison communities.

Marie Durand's Eighteenth-century Epistolary Network

The study of Durand's epistolary network shows how she corresponded with an informal international network that existed in parallel with, and complemented, the high-level *réseau protestant d'entraide* which operated under the patronage of Antoine Court and Benjamin Du Plan. The Réseau connected the needs of the Huguenots in the Désert to charitable committees in Geneva, the Hague, and London serving under the patronage of the highest governing powers of those places. Durand's letters are an example of a sufferer in the Désert appealing directly to power – as she did to Paulmy d'Argenson, Savine de Coulet, and Marie Leszczyńska. Her letters also reveal a grassroots support network within France itself, and the important role of women in that network. Thus Durand writes to individual women like Justine Peschire (Letter 4) and the widow Guiraudet (Letter 5), and to benefactresses in Amsterdam (Letter 33). When Durand writes to the Dutch Republic she appeals not to the charitable committee under royal patronage in the Hague but to the men and women of the Walloon Church in Amsterdam. She writes not to the esteemed *Compagnie des pasteurs* in Geneva but to lay leaders like Chiron and Garrigues. Durand's letters reveal a second-tier international support network to that of the Réseau. In all, Durand's letters demonstrate the complex layers of the Huguenot European epistolary and aid network, which traverses international borders, social classes, leadership structures, genders, Christian confessions, and philosophical commitments.

Together with the Chapter 5 analysis of Durand's practical theology of suffering and charity, the Chapter 3 comparative analysis of Durand's epistolary network with the Réseau dispels a two-fold misconception held by the Refuge about those suffering in the *église du Désert* – a misconception held by certain of Durand's memorialists up to the present day.

Although Durand suffered socioreligious persecution, she saw herself neither as a heroine in the mould of the early church and Reformation martyrs, nor as a helpless orphan dependent upon the succour and direction of her patrons in the Refuge. She did not suffer “heroically,” disdaining the pain of her incarceration and calling others to emulate her steadfastness. But nor did she write as a helpless victim. She is frank about her pain and grief, her limitations, and the injustice of her incarceration. She endures suffering patiently, without ostentation. Yet she writes with intelligence, a profound grasp of Scripture, and with authority. She employs forceful arguments to urge her social and ecclesiastical superiors to “do their duty.”

A More Nuanced Understanding of Freedom of Conscience

My analysis of Durand’s memorialisation reveals how foundationally different concepts of freedom of conscience can be masked by superficial similarities. Both Protestant and (what I have termed) Voltairean memorialisations of Durand give prominence to her Protestant religious heritage, beliefs, and praxis. Yet Protestant memorialists (such as Bridel, Strasser, Ronner, Marmelstein, Danclos, Carr, Delorme, Mayor, Borrel, Benoît, and the portraitists) tend to link her to theocentric causes, and Protestant and secular Voltairean memorialists (such as d’Anglas, Coquerel, Henry and Weiss, Fabre, Bastide, Rist, and Falguerolles) tend to link her ultimately to anthropocentric freedoms. Given the fundamental divergence of these ideas it is unlikely that both could be consistent with Durand’s own heritage, community, and the convictions which she expresses in her letters.

Chapter 4 showed how Durand employed a rich vocabulary of freedom to express her yearning not merely for physical *liberté* from her dungeon, but for *liberté de conscience* and *liberté entière*. These expressions refer to physical freedom without abjuration – the freedom to worship God as a Protestant without the threat of punishment. Durand’s familial and

epistolary connection to a French Reformed community grounded in sixteenth-century Calvinism is circumstantial evidence of her theocentricity. Durand's letters themselves provide categorical evidence – her commitment for example to Scripture, Christian salvation, and the *gloria dei* – that she herself held to the Reformed-theocentric idea of freedom of conscience. This demonstrates how important it is to look beneath the surface of the French eighteenth-century struggle for freedom of conscience. It is too easy to assume a shared understanding of the idea between two parties, and if one is looking for heroines and heroes for one's cause then a shared understanding may be tempting. First, we must assess an individual's historical and intellectual roots and the ideas of their peers and community; we must recognise and weigh the impact of the social and intellectual movements going on around them; and we must above all carefully read their own words within their situational, cultural, religious, philosophical, and historical milieu.

Further, this reading of Durand has demonstrated how our understanding of freedom of conscience may be refined by embracing its historical complexities and complex formulations. Why do some hold to the anthropocentric and others to the theocentric idea? Are they compatible, complementary, essentially the same, or mutually exclusive? Should one idea presuppose the other, or be subordinated to the other as a secondary aim? The pursuit of freedom of conscience can only be enhanced by understanding the nuances that arise in the eighteenth century and the pursuit of freedom by and for Protestants, Jews, Jansenists, Catholics, Socinians, clerics, laypersons, philosophes, deists, agnostics, and atheists, among other overlapping subgroups, and by examining the contribution of socioreligious minorities like Marie Durand who lived and thought outside of the seminary, state, and academy. This, furthermore, will help bridge the gap exposed by Collins's review of twenty-first century works on the history of religious tolerance: between the philosophical analysis of the idea, and politico-historical works which examine the cultural, political,

religious, and social contributions.⁹⁹⁷ If I have critiqued the Voltairean memorialisation of Durand for its subordination of her own convictions to the ends of anthropocentric freedom of conscience – an idea which was alien to her – it is clear nonetheless that the principled and costly resistance to abjuration exercised by Durand and her persecuted peers did make a significant social contribution to the cause. Studies like this help to break down any caricature of tolerance as merely the victory of the philosophes on the one hand, or merely the victory of the martyrs on the other hand, whilst contributing to a more fine-grained understanding of its intellectual, historical, and social development.

This study also addresses the problem of equivocation in the discourse around religious freedom. Contemporary debates over human rights – whether freedom of expression, freedom of religion, or freedom of conscience – may presuppose shared definitions of these terms. Yet, two parties may agitate for “freedom of conscience” with quite a different understanding of what this means and why it is important. Some, as was arguably the case with Rabaut, Gal-Pomaret, and Chiron, may themselves hold confusedly inconsistent allegiances. This problem goes beyond the historical and philosophical leap made by Charles Rist in 1945, who drew a straight line between Durand and the anthropocentric Atlantic Charter. It may intrude into any public policy discussion about freedom of conscience, especially in its aspect of freedom of religion. Domingo writes that “secular legal systems should not limit the practice of religion beyond the limits of public order and public morality. It is not their business. This is the basis of religious freedom.”⁹⁹⁸ But the problem of equivocating theocentric and anthropocentric freedom of conscience points to the difficulty of understanding and reaching consensus with what contending sides mean by “public morality,” and “religious freedom.” Where one wants freedom of conscience

⁹⁹⁷ Collins, “Redeeming the Enlightenment,” 630-31.

⁹⁹⁸ Domingo, “Restoring Freedom of Conscience,” 191.

in order to pursue the *gloria dei*, the other aims ultimately for human happiness and flourishing. Such different aims help to explain why one person's pursuit of freedom of conscience (in the area of employment for example) may unintentionally trammel the conscience of the other. By endeavouring to understand a person's construal of, and aims for, freedom of conscience, the disagreement may not be resolved, but the dialogue may be improved. With greater understanding may come a more respectful and productive discourse.

The examination of the theocentricity or anthropocentricity of freedom of conscience raises the prospect of other "centrisms" altogether. We might speak, for example, of an "ecocentric freedom of conscience," the freedom to act in accord with one's convictions that the flourishing of the natural world should take precedence over the flourishing of humanity or the worship of a deity. Such a person may find the freedoms expressed in the United States Declaration of Independence or the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights in need of serious critique or replacement. My analysis demonstrates that arguments for "freedom" can only be weighed by first asking: "Freedom for what, ultimately?"

The Value of Durand's Theology

Chapter 5 demonstrated the contribution of Marie Durand's letters to the discipline of practical theology. I studied Durand's writings in relation to the practical-theological subjects of suffering, charity, and civil governance, comparing them with her French Reformed heritage.

Durand's doctrine of suffering helps to explain the surprising equanimity of her letters. Though she describes the cruelty and injustice of incarcerating women who were only seeking to give both Caesar and God their dues, she does not give vent to bitterness or outrage, as we might anticipate. In Durand's letters we hear nothing like Rabaut Saint-

Étienne's strident denunciation of intolerance before the Assemblée nationale in August 1789. She sees a bigger picture, that suffering comes ultimately from the benevolent and just hand of God. True, Durand never sugar-coats her suffering and speaks freely and often of her physical pain and the torment of unjust imprisonment and social isolation. Sometimes she expresses restrained self-pity. Yet her suffering does not, unlike the Camisards of her own homeland just a generation before, lead her to "a call to arms." In fact, her passiology intersects with and bolsters her doctrine of civil governance. Though the King is misguided, she still respects and expresses affection for the *bien-aimé* and deplures attempts on his life and foreign attacks on France – even by Protestant powers who might have effected the release of Protestant prisoners of conscience. Though the prisoners suffer under the King's hand, he labours under "the lie of Protestant disloyalty" and has in the end been anointed by God, who appoints all governing authorities. Ultimately all people, whether Christians or atheists, kings or prisoners, experience only what a just and wise Providence has decreed is for the best.

The thesis points to the sophistication of Durand's theology. She holds together apparently conflicting ideas in tension. If God is angry with the church, he will also "have pity upon his desolate Zion." If God uses suffering to bless the prisoners, that does not prevent Durand from praying that God will bless her addressees with earthly wealth, longevity, and absence of suffering. And if the prisoners' suffering comes from God, this does not mean that the church ought to leave their imprisoned brethren in their suffering – that supporting them would somehow undermine God's intention. The church and its leaders were still responsible for extending charitable care to them. Nor does God's good intention for their suffering mitigate the human cruelty which may be the proximate cause of it. The French state did not, like God, intend to lovingly chastise the prisoners or to confirm them and grow them in their faith. They harshly punished the women for their conscientiously held

religious beliefs; they were cruel, misguided at best. Yet although the state acted cruelly, the church should pray for, respect, and even love the King. Durand's theological sophistication is a significant phenomenon arising from Chapter 5. Though not a trained theologian she inherited, thought through, synthesised, and articulated a complex theology. She held the doctrines of suffering, charity, and civil governance in nuanced tension and expressed them clearly and at times forcefully.

Durand's letters prove how valuable the writings of laypersons can be. The *Tour de Constance* is not built of ivory. Durand writes about suffering as someone who experienced physical pain, sickness, hunger, extreme isolation and boredom, and who endured certain calculated attacks on her dignity – the shaving of the prisoners' heads was done for no other reason. When Durand wrote about love, it was not for her the capstone of human flourishing. Loving charity is a practical matter of life and death and Durand sought personally to extend charity to her niece Anne, as far as her conditions permitted. No matter what sentiments the wider church held towards the prisoners – whether admiration, respect, horror, sympathy, or warm affection – if those sentiments did not translate into concrete gifts of food, fuel, and money, then the prisoners would perish and the wider church would face God's condemnation for dereliction of their duty. Durand wrote about civil governance not as a theoretician but as someone whose life and family had been destroyed by the policies of the state. She paid a high price for holding to her convictions about civil rulers: that there was a God-given limit to what the state ought to legislate for its citizens, and that it was better to suffer than to transgress that limit. In Durand's letters we find something unusual and valuable, the writings of an articulate product and committed practitioner of her theological tradition. She commends her theology to her reader not by the breadth of her learning and reading (she had little access to books and formal education), nor to the eminence of her position or associations (she was an isolated prisoner), but by living out what she believed in

the most testing of conditions. Durand's letters cause us to ask whether we are looking enough at the occasional theological writings of literate laypersons.

The thesis also lays to rest the idea that Durand's contribution to eighteenth-century thought can be reduced to the single word *résister*: that she ought to be remembered primarily for resisting oppression for the sake of freedom of conscience. There is simply no evidence that Durand inscribed the word, or that it was not inscribed by male criminals or political or religious prisoners held in the Tour de Constance between 1621 and 1717. Moreover, if the word *résister* is to be attached to the Huguenot prisoners, then they most likely attached spiritual significance to the word: that a Christian must resist temptation and apostasy. Focussing on the single word *résister* trivialises and obscures Durand's real contribution.

Yves Krumenacker questioned whether Marie Durand should be memorialised as a heroine of conscience, indeed whether she should be lauded at all. As far as Krumenacker is concerned, she was imprisoned simply as "the sister of Pierre," that she was the victim of circumstances. She is significant only inasmuch as she exemplified non-violent resistance. Thus, the interrogative title of his literature review: *Marie Durand, une héroïne protestante?* I conclude by answering Krumenacker's rhetorical question with a qualified affirmative. Although she was indeed a victim of circumstance, she has also left a rare and important legacy: forty-eight letters that testify to the conditions of the imprisonment of Huguenot women, that enhance our understanding of the *réseau protestant d'entraide*, and make an important lay contribution to French-Protestant theology.

Limitations and Future Directions

As I draw my thesis to a close the limitations of the research process which I found it necessary to pursue are manifest. Before studying the life and writings of Marie Durand – a

minor but important figure in eighteenth-century France – it was necessary first to assess her legacy. Who is this person? Does she warrant years of research? How has she been remembered and what has she meant to people in the two-and-a-half centuries since her death? Is there a position that Durand's memorialisers have taken about her that may be challenged or confirmed by studying her life and letters? Answering these questions meant cataloguing and analysing her memorialisation: How has history viewed, judged, and presented her? It was my study of Durand's memorialisation that brought to light conflicting ideological legacies – some secular, some religious, some an amalgamation – and a recognition that these could not all be true to the woman's own life and writings. Questions arose: Who was the historical Marie Durand? What were her historical, geographical, political, cultural, religious, and educational roots? How did her life unfold? What did she say and think?

A survey of Durand's heritage and life meant locating her within her social and religious heritage, the French Reformed movement and the main events that shaped the Huguenot community until the time of Durand's birth. It meant establishing the key events of her life: her birth, the circumstances of her upbringing and home life, the afflictions of her family, her marriage, arrest, and imprisonment, her life in the Tour de Constance and her eventual release, and the last events of her life. It meant analysing her epistolary network to understand whom she wrote to and why. These foundational studies provided the necessary context for interpreting Durand's writings themselves.

The research was thus broad-based and interdisciplinary. It ranged through a catalogue of memorialisation built upon the framework of memory theory; through a biographical survey of Durand herself, located within a historical survey of French Protestantism; through an analysis of Durand's epistolary network; before culminating with a theological analysis of Durand's own writings. My research traversed the disciplines of

translation and exegesis, memory theory, history, Enlightenment philosophy, and theology. Although Marie Durand's legacy could only have been assessed in this broad-ranging way, the prospect and desirability of three in-depth studies yet remains.

First, there is need for a critical edition of Marie Durand's letters. At present, Durand's letters can only be accessed through the modernised French editions of Gamonnet and Borello. The surviving originals are dispersed throughout France, Switzerland, and the Netherlands and cannot be conveniently accessed. A critical edition of Durand's letters would greatly enhance further research into her life and thought, and the life and thought of eighteenth-century Huguenots in general. This would begin with a fresh search for undiscovered letters via public appeal, and a fresh search of the relevant archives. From an edited publication of the French originals, an annotated English translation of Marie Durand's letters would then provide broader access to her writings, and to her contribution to eighteenth-century Huguenot life and thought. A scholarly introduction and commentary to Durand's letters would also profit future research. Each letter would be introduced, describing the date, origin, purpose, and recipient. A commentary would engage with the French original to explain the nuances of vocabulary and grammar and references to places, events, people, and customs. Corrections, lacunae, solecisms, and other textual phenomena would be noted. Weights and measures would be explained, as well as specialist vocabulary (sewing and clothing terms, for example.) Such a work might also address what may at present only be inferred: how free Durand was to write and receive letters at the Tour de Constance, where she sourced her writing materials, and what access she had to books. A critical edition of Durand's letters would focus the attention of Marie Durand research onto her own thoughts and words.

Second, there is scholarly space for a full-scale biography of Marie Durand. Existing biographies have been built more-or-less on the nineteenth-century work of Benoît. A new

biography would begin with a fresh exploration of the relevant governmental archives in Aigues-Mortes, Nîmes, and Privas; the *papiers Court* in Geneva; the archives of the Walloon Church in Amsterdam; the Bibliothèque protestante in Paris; the Musée du Vivarais and the Musée du Désert; and other repositories. Such a biography would benefit by renewed study of the lives of those who most impacted Durand: Claudine, Étienne, and Pierre Durand, Antoine Court, Paul Rabaut and his sons, Étienne Chiron, Paulmy d'Argenson, and Savine de Coulet. It would also benefit from renewed research into the Walloon Church in Amsterdam, the Protestant Church in Nîmes, the Refuge in Geneva, and other individuals and churches with whom Durand interacted. A newly researched biography of Marie Durand would make a valuable contribution to eighteenth-century French historical scholarship.

Third, a monograph devoted to Marie Durand's theological thought would make an important contribution to theological discourse. This could be researched within the disciplines of historical and practical theology. Historically, how does Durand's theology fit within the French Reformed tradition? Can general and particular influences be traced? What is the range of her theological thought and can the emphases and lacunae be explained? How does her theology fit it in with the development of French Protestant theology in the nineteenth century and beyond? Practically, how might readers today benefit from her understanding of physical and mental suffering, isolation, charity, love, friendship, affection, civil governance, prayer, corporate worship, work, imprisonment, punishment, and the role of the local church eldership and diaconate? Durand addresses all these subjects. My thesis provides a bibliography and starting point for all three of the projects that I have described.

In addition, Marie Durand's life and letters might be studied without the theological focus that I have given to this research. For example, Durand could be studied within the context of the French Revolution, which erupted thirteen years after her death. How might Durand's life, experience, and words contribute to our understanding of the causes of the

Revolution, and the aftermath of the Revolution and the nineteenth-century oscillations between empire, monarchy, and republic? How might her life and words contribute to our understanding of censorship in nineteenth-century France, and the eventual policies of *laïcité* (secularism) in the twentieth century? Durand might also be studied within the realm of sociology. For example, what does she teach us about the status and influence of rural women in early modern France? Or what does Durand teach us about female leadership: for Durand was a leader not just among her fellow prisoners but sought to influence those who held the strings of civil and ecclesiastical power with letters of considerable tact, force, and authority.

In support of such future research into the life and thought of Marie Durand I have observed firsthand that her story arouses considerable surprise and interest among those who hear it for the first time. The account of a nineteen-year-old woman imprisoned for thirty-eight years for her beliefs, who refused to find release by abjuring those beliefs, and who wrote letters from her prison, is an enthralling one. Marie Durand was a strong woman with firm principles and a compelling voice. Though in Letter 30 she likened Marie Leszczyńska to Queen Esther, she herself echoed the biblical heroine: a young woman from a despised minority who showed courage, wisdom, self-sacrifice, and integrity at a critical time. She shares traits with Antigone, Joan of Arc, Florence Nightingale, Anne Frank, and other courageous, compelling, and inspiring women of literature and history – those who rose above their circumstances and victimisers to effect change. Many may benefit and be inspired by the fruits of further research into her life and letters.

If Marie Durand's memorialisers have tended to misconstrue and minimise her small but important contribution to early modern letters and French Protestant theology, they have not erred in bringing to notice a remarkable eighteenth-century woman. The life of Marie Durand, the Protestant prisoner of faith who suffered for thirty-eight years in the Tour de

Constance, was not lived in vain. Her suffering did not count for nothing. She has left a notable and remarkable legacy, a legacy whose riches are yet to be fully brought to light.

Selected Manuscripts

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Savine de Coulet letter to Marie Durand, "24^e l'an 1765".

Pierre Durand pastoral records, 1728–1729.

Geneva, Bibliothèque de Genève, Collection Antoine Court

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Letter to Court, November 1748, citing Matthieu Serres' age, no. 7, IX, vol. 2, folio 673.

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Marie Durand Letters 9, 10, 14, 24, 31, 33, 45, 40-45, 47, 48, folio 1199-1200.

Letter, Rabaut to Walloon Church, Amsterdam, September 23, 1776, folio 1199-1200.

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Appendix: An English Translation of Marie Durand's Letters

I have translated the following forty-eight letters from Étienne Gamonnet's *Lettres de Marie Durand 1711–1776* (Sète, 2011) and have numbered them accordingly. Not all these letters were indisputably written by Durand herself. I explained my use of asterisks to indicate uncertainty in the Introduction. The translation enables references to Durand's letters in the thesis to be located and read in their context.

Translation notes:

- Paragraphing and left-right justification follows Gamonnet's edition.
- Following Gamonnet I italicise addresses, which commonly appeared on the outside of each folded letter.
- I usually leave *Madame, monsieur, mademoiselle* and other terms of address untranslated.
- I leave *Tour de Constance*, the Tower of Constance, untranslated.
- Units of currency and measurement are not translated, except that I translate *livre* – when it refers to money – with *pound*, in order to distinguish it from *livre* as a measure of mass. I likewise replace the abbreviation *L[ivre]* (sometimes *l*) with “lbs” when it refers to mass to avoid confusion with the metric L[itre].
- Everything other than what I place between square brackets is original, including ellipses.

Letter 1 – Unknown Benefactors**

To our benefactors

January 11, 1734

Our dearest Brothers and Sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ,

We received from Loubierre's own hands a container of oil, a gift from your heart, which we have shared between us,

and we join together in praying that the Lord will fully protect you, and that he might be pleased to reward your gift with health and prosperity, both in this world and forever in heaven,

and we have the honour of being, with profound respect and submission, your humble and obedient servants,

The Prisoners of the Tour de Constance.

January 11, 1734.

Letter 2* – Unknown Benefactor

To a Benefactor

August 22, 1738

Monsieur,

Mademoiselle de Couste, who came with Mademoiselle Boureille, was so kind as to bring us your gift of eighteen livres, which we have shared among us.

We are honoured, Monsieur, to offer our humble thanks for your pleasant charitable gift which came at just the right time. We pray to the Lord that he may be pleased to reward you for this both in this world, and forever in his Holy Paradise. While we wait for this eternal and ineffable happiness, may he be pleased to prolong your years with health and prosperity. We pray the same for all your dear family, whom we have the honour of greeting.

May it please the God of mercy and all consolation to pour out his most precious blessings upon you, and indeed upon all that is yours, while you wait to receive the full harvest and that sacred oil which will never run dry, from the Sun of Justice who brings healing upon his wings.

Which we have the honour of wishing you, Monsieur, having the honour to address you with profound respect and submission, Monsieur,

Your most humble and obedient servants,
the Prisoners of the Tour de Constance,

Lavassas, La Durand,
signed by all.

August 22, 1738.

Letter 3* – Unknown Benefactor

February 23, 1740

An account of what was sent to the Tour de Constance the 19th February 1740:

155 Ca[nnes] of cloth in 31 parcels of 5 ca[nnes] each
 400 lbs salted lard in 32 pieces
 220 lbs of Levant rice
 100 lbs white soap
 320 lbs olive oil in 16 containers
 16 lbs pepper in 32 packets
 2 lbs spices in 32 packets
 2 lbs cotton thread in 32 packets
 2 lbs sewing thread
 31 pairs of cloth slippers
 12 Ca[nnes] 5 pans of re-fulled strips of cloth for the children.

We declare and profess to have received all that which is recorded in the above list, that we, held in the said Tour de Constance, have shared among us by common consent, thirty-one prisoners, and we returned a signed receipt with those who delivered these goods.

Made at the said Tour at Aigues-Mortes, this 23rd February one thousand seven hundred and forty.

Maurit de Chabanel, Michel de Julliant
 Aberlinque de Pasquier, Jaquete Paule, Anne Soleirol,
 Jaquete Vigne, Sause, La Fortune, Jobte, Vassase,

Marie Durand,
 for those who do not know how to sign their name,
 Gabiade de Pasquier, Gaussainte de Crose, Mauranne,
 Vidale de Durand, The widow of Rouvier, Savannière,
 Ladraitte, Goutette, Bourette, Frisole, Marie, Paironne,
 Mademoisselle Rigoulet, Fialaisse.

Letter 4 – Justine Peschaire de Vallon

To Mademoiselle Justine Peschaire de Vallon

The Tour de Constance, May 21, 1740

Mademoiselle,

While I do not have the honour of knowing you, except by your excellent reputation, I take the liberty of writing to assure you of my humble respects, to wish you perfect health, and that you be favoured with all kinds of blessing and prosperity.

The courier said that you asked him to tell you if we need anything. We are very much obliged to you for your concern; but allow me to inform you that because we are so far from home we are forced to rely completely on the assistance of our brethren.

Nine of us are from the Vivarais are prisoners in this miserable place. Yet in the ten years that I have been here the people of the Vivarais have not sent a thing. People from other places have not behaved in this way; they provide the women from their own region with what they need, and as much as they can manage for us.

Please allow me to say that I am not surprised if God makes his rod felt in such a terrible manner among those of the faith in our wretched region; for they do not follow the decrees of the divine Master. He commands us to take care of prisoners, but they disregard this. Charity is the true principle of our religion and they do not carry out this duty. In a word, it seems that we are in the last days, for the divine virtue of charity has very much cooled. True Christians will not be condemned for having abandoned the purity of the Gospel, for in fact they make constant profession of it. They will however be condemned for not visiting Jesus Christ in prison, in the person of his members. I exhort them by the compassion of God to reignite their charitable zeal for the poor and suffering, and to remember that the Lord Jesus promises to repay even the gift of a glass of cold water to his children. How much more will he reward those who sustain his elect, who fight under the standard of the cross? Their alms will rise as a memorial before God, just as the alms of Cornelius did. In short, if they sow plentifully, they will reap plentifully, just as the Apostle says.

It is my duty to remind you of your own duty, especially since the prisoners from Languedoc criticise us, because no one from our region ever sends us anything. They are absolutely right. They share with us what they receive. We have been abandoned by those who should give us the most support and are considered by them as strangers.

Mademoiselle, if you would be so good as to send us something we would be greatly in your debt. You could do this for both me and Mademoiselle de Rouvier, mother-in-law of my late brother and a prisoner here with me. She offers you her respects, as does the wife of monsieur Daniel Durand, and the wife of Jean Degoutet.

You may pass on our letter to any of the faithful who may wish to contribute to this good work; I beg you to assure them of my profound respects. I hope that you will prove your love to us by letting your acts of charity pour out upon our forlorn circumstances.

I conclude by entreating the Supreme Being to shower you with all his earthly gifts and, on a day to come, his heavenly glory. These are the prayers offered by one who has the honour of being, with great respect and veneration,

Mademoiselle,

your most humble and obedient servant,

La Durand.

Letter 5 – The Widow Guiraudet

*To Mademoiselle the widow of the late Monsieur Guiraudet
delivered by hand to Alais*

The Tour de Constance, February 27, 1746

Mademoiselle,

If I thought that your sentiments were enthralled by the spirit of the world, I would be frightened of having offended them by my protracted silence, and I would have held back from writing to you. I would not dare to justify myself on any grounds other than on that of your generosity, since I deserve your harshest censures and deserve to be forgotten forever. I do not deserve even your smallest mercies because, having received such indispensable favour from you, you must surely think me criminally negligent for forgetting to acknowledge such beneficence. But since, Mademoiselle, you are so well instructed in the school of the One who shows perfect charity, and who gave himself for our ransom – and because the great Paraclete, who enlightens you with his bright lights and inflames you with that same pure love and ardent zeal which sets the seraphs ablaze – this tenderness with which you are pleased to honour me, like that of a good mother for her children, this exemplary piety which reigns in your heart, and for which you are admired not only by the faithful, but even by those who look at us with horror – this tenor of a consistently pure life, always constant and reliable – all these great virtues with which you are invested give me hope that your natural kindness will forgive my delay, especially since it was not due to negligence. I spoke about this to the venerable Mademoiselle de Noguier, and I am certain that your compassion will be moved by this. I am infinitely obliged to you for your charitable kindness toward me. I ask that you might graciously extend your wonderful protection over me, which I will try to maintain by my submissive devotion. Uphold, please, my trembling hands as long as the will of He who distributes good and ill chooses to inflict me with such ills and afflictions.

In return, I can offer only my feeble but nonetheless sincere prayers. May God grant you his special blessings, and pour out upon your worthy person and on all those who are dear to you an abundance of the sweet effects of his life-giving grace, and allow you to enjoy all of nature's good gifts and the treasures of grace, until that time when the Supreme Being ushers you into sovereign happiness, where you will be crowned with glory and immortality, in return for the sublime charity which you bestow upon those who suffer under the cross of Christ.

These are the sincere petitions and wishes that I make in all my prayers for the protection and long and happy prosperity of your venerable person, and for all those who are dear to you. Believe me to be, Mademoiselle, with profound submission and inviolable respect,

Mademoiselle,

your very humble and obedient servant,

La Durand.

All my suffering sisters assure you of their respectful submission and commend themselves, like me, to your good prayers and pious care.

Letter 6 – Anne Durand

*To Monsieur Chiron, at the Taconnerie, in Geneva,
please forward to Mademoiselle Durand,
in Onex, Geneva, with the package*

The Tour de Constance, June 22, 1751

You are no doubt surprised, my darling daughter, that I have been so slow to reply to you. I wanted to sew you six blouses, and this was the cause of the delay. Be assured that I love you as much as if you were my own child, and so long as you maintain your virtue you will find in me all the tenderness of a true mother. I have plans for you that you cannot imagine, and I hope, with the help of God, to make you happy one day. Pray to the Lord that he will bless the efforts of those who work for my freedom, as I shall have you come to me. And I will do my utmost to ensure that you do not lack anything.

Your letter gave me enormous pleasure because I feared that you might be dead. They tell me that the Lord restored you to full health. I give him thanks and pray that he will keep you in such good health.

You will receive six new white cotton blouses trimmed with muslin which is not the finest, but which will wear well. You will also receive a skirt of satin poplin and a dress made of two filoselle silks, two pairs of cotton stockings, and two woollen camisoles. If they fit you, let me know so that I can make you some more winter woollens. In addition you will receive a taffeta vest embroidered with silk lace. That is all I can send this time. Everything has been carefully wrapped in towelling and oil cloth.

I will give you all the help I can, my darling child. If I can get some money for my possessions, I assure you that it will all be for you; with all my heart I would go without to help you. But, my darling daughter, I must first pay my debts. May God provide in the meantime.

I will arrange to send you a dress, a petticoat and vest, and stockings for winter. Let me know whether the one I sent you fits, or whether you would like a simpler style, or whatever your preference may be. I will go without many things for this; but it doesn't matter. I will do this for you, my darling child. I will also make sure to get you some blouses by my way of spinning.

I found out that you sent those gentlemen the bill of exchange that you had with Rey. Urge them to pay you, and keep this bill. If you sent me what is owed you, I would return it to you with interest – with the interest and whatever else I could add. That would ease your mind. At the very least I would preserve your funds for you. But if you listen to your relatives you won't do so, for I know that they are not at all inclined to help you. Don't think that this would be to pay my debts; I plan to pay these from the sale of my possessions. But I would like to preserve this money for you, because with this sum and what I could give you, you could set yourself up quite well. As I said, while waiting for the interest, or as much as I can give you, you could live off your small pension or your little job. I swear to you on my conscience that I do not wish to take advantage of what is yours. After that, do as you like; but as I hope that God will give me this grace and deliver me, I will not abandon you in a foreign country. I do not want you to spend what is yours without benefit to yourself.

I have a favour to ask you: write to M. Peirot or to M. Blachon to get M. Riou de Jarja to forgive me the loan of 400 livres that my late father borrowed in your favour. The said Riou only gave your dear late father one hundred livres; and he wants me to pay him the full 400. He made it clear that the 300 livres will be for you. But you cannot trust the conscience of a person you don't know; you have seen this in Rey's case. Besides, he offers very poor justifications, especially considering how badly this damages my affairs, because my debts would have been paid earlier if not for this. In which case I could have helped you sooner. So I ask you to write to these gentlemen to compel this man [Riou] to forgive the loan; and ask you to make no claim on this sum, and not to make me pay for something that your dear father never received. Ask them again not to forgive the loan in the name of the administrator of my property, but in my own name. I hope you will do this for me, and I swear on my conscience that you will have no reason to regret this, since I only have your interests at heart.

When you write back, let me know how much it would cost for the thread to make a piece of lace, and for your labours; one of my friends, a woman of distinction, asked for this. I will send you the money for the thread; as for the style, she wants to choose this, but I said that we had to know how much this would cost. We want to make quite fine lace, two fingers wide. Work this out and write it down for me. This could have quite favourable consequences for me; friends are always kind.

Hold on to the bill carefully, so that it doesn't fall into the hands of your aunt, or of your uncle Brunel, or else you won't get a cent. As I have said, they are not on your side at all, not even your grandmother. For your own good don't repeat what I've told you; use it for your own benefit. You only have me to support you. I will ask your grandmother, which would be the best way, if payment isn't made.

They tell me that you have married. I don't believe this at all, and I will not advise you about this again. God will provide. Be sure to maintain your virtue and I will never abandon you. Be absolutely certain of this my darling child, that I have made it my solemn and lifelong commitment to be your good and sincere aunt,

La Durand.

All my companions pay you a thousand compliments. They feel great compassion for you. Pass on my regards to all your friends. Your grandmother sends you her regards. She is very thin and is always the same. Reply as soon as you receive the package and take note of everything I have told you.

Don't think your Grandmother cares even a cent for you. She is very ungrateful but pretends as though she isn't. Show her respect, as you always do in your letters to me. And even urge her to get your uncle to pay you. Make her really understand how badly off you are. Tell her to give me every [...], whatever she can. Burn my letter.

Letter 7 – Anne Durand*to Mademoiselle**Mademoiselle Durand, at Onex, near Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, April 27, 1752

Time must drag on for you my darling daughter, and no doubt you think I have forgotten you entirely. Banish the thought if that's the case. It does me a great injustice, for I would sooner forget myself. Please believe that I have engraved your name in my heart.

Always behave prudently, my darling daughter. Let the love of God, and your fear of him, rule your behaviour. Be assiduous in your work, for those who do not work must not eat, says Saint Paul. Besides, idleness is the mother of every vice.

I was not yet able to do what I promised you, but with God's help I will do it. I will even go without for your sake.

About what is owed you, matters have been put right. They are to give you a hundred pistoles. I spoke to your uncle Brunel; he says he will give me your money, if this is what you want, and I will invest it for you so that you receive the interest. If you agree with this plan you can be sure that I would not deprive you even of a mite; on the contrary I will use what I have to help you more as far as I am able. If you want, you can write to your uncle or someone else; but take care that you don't make a bad decision. Since God wanted very much to favour you with this little sum, don't lose it by a foolish decision. So I leave you free to handle things in whatever way will seem best to you, just so long as you will benefit. Act carefully in this matter.

While writing this to you I was troubled by the idea that if I post these letters they may not get to you. A woman has promised to bring you this letter.

I haven't been able to send you the money for the scarves. Believe me, if I can I will. Reply first to my letter, for I ache to know your news. You can write to me by return post.

Your grandmother is still the same. She sends her regards. All my poor companions send their best wishes. I say this again, my darling child: love virtue, be gentle, patient, humble, and genial to all you know. Moderate that vivacity which sometimes harms the body and the hope of salvation. I swear to you that I will always love you more than myself. Pay careful attention to all that I tell you.

Adieu, my darling child. I wish you better health along with heaven's gracious gifts and all kinds of favours; and I will never cease to hold for you the same feelings of tenderness and friendship.

Your good and affectionate aunt,

La Durand.

Pay close attention to all I tell you and reply as soon as possible. Let me know how you are. I was delighted to hear that you are in no hurry to marry. Don't change your mind. God will by his grace change our present circumstances and with his help we may yet be together.

Adieu, my darling child, adieu. Love me always.

Letter 8* – Marc-René de Voyer de Paulmy d'Argenson

*Petition from the female prisoners of Aigues-Mortes
(to the Marquis Paulmy d'Argenson)
(17 September 1752)*

Monseigneur,

Complaints are inseparable from the state of suffering and misfortune; to make them a crime for the unfortunate would be the height of injustice. We are very far, Monseigneur, from attributing such a judgment to Your Excellency; we know how great an offence this would be against the nobility of your sentiments. The principles of justice, which you make the standard of your conduct, the breadth of your genius, and your enlightened mind, possessed of the greatest understanding of those prejudices which most afflict men, mean that we do not fear that you might be offended by the liberty that we now take in explaining our wretched condition and asking for your help. Allow us, Monseigneur, to fall at Your Excellency's feet, and humbly beg that you will be touched by compassion for these poor captives, twenty-five of us, who have suffered, some for ten years, others for twenty, and some for more than thirty years. You know the cause, Monseigneur. It deserves sympathy, not reproach. Our only crime is to follow the principles of a religion that commands us to render to Caesar that which belongs to Caesar and to God that which belongs to God. Even if we had been truly guilty, the length and magnitude of our suffering would have atoned for the worst of crimes.

In this piteous state we plead for your powerful protection. You are, Monseigneur, the great liberator who breaks the chains of the wretched seeking asylum under Your Excellency's care. Your virtue has given you intimate access to the inner sanctum of our Monarch's heart. Our freedom is in your hands. Your Excellency was struck by the horror of our miserable abode and our harsh slavery; your great soul, as susceptible to tenderness as it is to the other heroic virtues, allows us to glimpse its compassion for our misfortune, and your generosity permits us to place hope in your intercession. Monseigneur, free these wretched creatures who have sighed for so many years in such a ghastly tower. Return them to their homelands and families, who in losing them lost everything. We have great hopes of being freed soon, and in this sweet hope we will pray our most ardent prayers to heaven for Your Excellency. May your length of days surpass the remotest limits of human life! May health, prosperity, and the highest degree of glory be your inseparable companions! Finally, Monseigneur, may you pass on all the virtues through your illustrious blood to your distant progeny. This is the sincere wish, Monseigneur, of those who will undertake it as their duty for the rest of their lives and who are, with sentiments of the most submissive veneration,

Monseigneur, Your Excellency,
Your humble and obedient servants,

The Prisoners.

From the Tour de Constance, this 17th day of September 1752

Letter 9 – The Walloon Church of Amsterdam*To some benefactors*

The Tour de Constance, December 15, 1752

Messieurs and dear brothers and sisters,
 Most worthy protectors and protectresses
 from those suffering for Jesus Christ, our Lord,

We received eighteen livres each, there are twenty-five of us. We are honoured to humbly thank you, and pray to the Lord that it will please him to return to you the reward in this age, filling you in this life with the riches of nature, and crowning you with glory in the supreme happiness. These are the prayers of those who make it a particular duty to live with Christian and respectful devotion,

Our most worthy and dear protectors and protectresses,
 your humble and obedient servants,

The prisoners,
 first Contesse, Crose, Béraud, Frisole, Mlle Rouvier,
 Vidale, Sauzette, Goutette, Savanière, Bourette,
 Marselle, Pagèze, Martine, Mathieu, Soleyrolle,
 Cassafière, Annette, Brémonne, Bastide, Vedelle,
 Cabanisse, Isabeau, Goutèze, Françon, and

La Durand.

Our numbers increased by six this year.

Letter 10 – The Walloon Church of Amsterdam*To a benefactor in Amsterdam*

The Tour de Constance, November 6, 1753

Monsieur,

We received the sum of four hundred and fifty pounds which we shared between twenty-five, giving eighteen livres each.

We have the honour of very humbly thanking you, and we pray the most ardent prayers for your safety and happy prosperity. May you enjoy these things beyond human life and, after that, eternal life.

These are the prayers of those who make this a particular duty, and also of being, with respect, Monsieur, your humble and obedient servants,

The Prisoners,

La Durand.

[Not in Durand's hand]

Also received six livres for two children

3 quintals vegetable at 15 pounds:45 pounds.

4 quintals rice at 13 pounds:52 pounds.

.....97 pounds.

Letter 11 – Étienne Chiron

*To Monsieur; with a package,
Monsieur Chiron, at Taconnerie, Geneva.*

The Tour de Constance, December 9, 1753

Monsieur,

Having assured you of my unbreakable attachment, and madame your worthy wife, and having wished you both the most robust health and the excellent favours of the most long and joyful prosperity, you will receive, Monsieur, a carefully wrapped package containing a dress of green and white satin lined with green cloth, a skirt stitched from white muslin, a woollen serge skirt, a woollen serge tunic, white woollen fabric, two pairs of white cotton stockings, a pair of scarlet wool stockings, and a very light bodice, which you will be good enough to pass on entirely to my little one. I made her tunic a little larger than I would for myself. All the rest were worn by me, so she does not have to worry.

Please pass on to her my tender regards and keep urging her to be good, and I will continue to have tender feelings for her. Please be good enough, Monsieur, to continue to grant her the honour of your protection, your charitable goodwill, and the care of your uncommon piety. I ask the same grace of Madame your dear wife, to whom I have the honour of offering my most respectful affection.

I dare to presume on your natural goodness, and I am with greatest reverence,
Monsieur,
your humble and obedient servant,

La Durand.

Letter 12 – Anne Durand

To Monsieur,

*Monsieur Chiron, at Taconnerie,
kindly forward,
to Mademoiselle Durand, in Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, December 21, 1753

You will not have to keep complaining about your Aunt, my darling girl, for she writes to you often now.

I wrote to Monsieur Chiron a few days ago, although he didn't trouble himself to add a word to me in your letter. Perhaps he was displeased with the one I was honoured to write him. Whatever the case may be, pass on my very best compliments to both him and Madame his wife. I wish them the best of health and the most exquisite blessings from heaven above and the earth below. I am keenly aware of the kindness that they have shown to you. I urge you to obey them and never to fail them.

I sent you, with my letter to Monsieur Chiron, a green and white satin dress, a skirt stitched from white muslin, quite suited to you, a skirt and a tunic of white woollen fabric, a pair of scarlet wool stockings, two pairs of cotton stockings, and a light bodice that you can alter as you see fit. As long as you behave virtuously, I will send you what I can from time to time. I promised you that I would go without my own essentials so that you should have yours, and I repeat this again.

I didn't send you the twelve livres because I was sick and needed them for myself. But you will not lose by this; I am spinning, and if God preserves me I will make you six blouses next year. Please know, my darling child, that I love you more than myself, that I will never abandon you, and that I will always look upon you as my beloved daughter. But I want you to listen carefully to my advice. Always be modest in your manners and in your conversation. Also, be moderate and submissive; show patience and kindness toward everyone, good and bad alike. Remember what Saint James says: "If anyone thinks he is religious but does not bridle his tongue, that person's religion is empty." There are only the violent who seize heaven. Those who are violent in their speech are not the kind of violent people whom God wants, not even those who endure great suffering. Those whom he wants are the ones who treat themselves with violence, who are moderate, sweet, and peaceful in all their speech. You must always concede to others, even to a child of two. If you do this, my darling daughter, everyone will praise you and God will bless you. I really do know how hard this is, but it is infinitely better to suffer and to be seen as virtuous, modest, gentle, and moderate. Tell me if anyone ever told you that I was an immodest woman, a violent woman, or a hot-tempered woman; I would put this right. I behave well towards everybody, and I suffer everything according to the example set by my Saviour.

I have a little girl here with me, aged twelve, the daughter of a martyr. Her mother and I eat together. Everyone admires this child for her modesty and virtue, and I very often hear it said, "Ah, what a good child! This is thanks to Mademoiselle Durand!" I can truly say that she loves me as much as her own mother because of the instruction that I give her. I want very much to be able to do the same for you. I would sometimes gently admonish you, my angel, and you would jump up and cling to my neck and kiss me like this poor little girl. I

would hide your little faults and correct you. I think that God by his mercy will accord us this grace. In this way accept your trials with patience and allow others to reprimand you, so that no one can say: "You hate correction," as one of the prophets says. Read the Scriptures often and instruct yourself for your salvation. Do not take my correction with the wrong spirit, my darling child. Imitate the virtues of your dear father, who made himself loved by all those who knew him.

I would like a present from you, my darling angel, namely an embroidered scarf decorated with lace, if you can do it, and I will repay the cost of it and more. I would like to see your work. But do not put yourself out, my darling child, my all. I will not love you any less, rest assured, my angel, and know that I am your good, affectionate, and sincere aunt,

La Durand.

The little girl I mentioned, her mother, and all my companions send you a thousand hugs. We talk about you a hundred times a day, the little girl especially; she loves you very much. Your grandmother hugs you; she looks after me. Reply and let me know first whether you have received your package, and then tell me straight away if you are happy. I received the letter that you wrote to me from that man from Lassalle. Write to me as you said you would. Farewell, my darling little girl.

Letter 13 – Unknown Benefactors

To our benefactors,

The Tour de Constance, March 6, 1754

Our dearest Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ, our Lord,

We received the twenty pounds which you were good enough to send us. We are honoured to thank you for them, and we pray to the Lord that it might please him to repay you, in this age, by fulfilling you with all nature's favours and all the treasures of grace. May God protect you against the attacks of..., and guard you under the shadow of his wings; and after you have served according to the counsel of the Being of our existence, he will usher you into his eternal happiness where you can savour the fruits of righteousness, of that which is owed to your perseverance and your widespread gifts. These are the prayers and wishes of those who make this their particular duty, and of being, with the most Christian friendship, our very dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, our Lord,

Your humble and obedient servants,

The Prisoners.

La Durand.

Letter 14 – The Walloon Church of Amsterdam

*To the benefactors,
Walloon Church of Amsterdam
October 23, 1754*

The Tour de Constance, October 23, 1754

Our very dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ, our Lord,

We received eighteen pounds for each of the twenty-six of us here; as well as four quintals of rice, two quintals of beans, and a quintal of lentils, plus nine pounds for the three children.

We are honoured to humbly thank you, and we pray to the Lord that it will please him to repay you in this life by fulfilling you with all nature's favours, and treasures of grace, until you are crowned by glory in the supreme happiness.

These are the sincere prayers and wishes of those who have the honour of being, with respect, our very dear brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, our Lord,
your humble and obedient servants,

The Prisoners.

La Durand.

[On the obverse of this letter is a list of goods made in a different hand.]

Letter 15 – Anne Durand

To Monsieur,

*Monsieur Chiron, at Taconnerie,
kindly forward,
to Mademoiselle Durand in Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, December 19, 1754

You no doubt think, my darling child, that I am dead, or that I have forgotten you completely. But if you have thought this, undeceive yourself, for I would sooner forget myself. I have engraved you forever on my heart with a diamond stylus and nothing could ever efface you from it. Be assured of this my darling daughter.

I confess that you are right to feel upset. It is very cruel of me to have let almost a year pass by without sending you some firm sign of my unbreakable affection for you, my poor little girl. You are too sensible not to have understood that there were good reasons why I didn't write to you. The first is that when I received your last letter, I saw that you had only received one pair of cotton stockings when I had in fact ordered you two; and if someone stole from you the finest pair, they are worth at least three pounds. I sent your letter to Nîmes to try to retrieve them, and had trouble retrieving the letter. As for the stockings, they replied to me with very bad excuses. So, the stockings were lost.

Six months later, my whole body was so overwhelmed with violent pain that I had almost no rest. So at the time I received your last letter, dated October 20, I found myself doubly burdened for I was also helping your grandmother through a severe illness. She gave me no rest either night or day. It would have been impossible to go on like this without the help of my friend and some of my other companions. Believe me, my darling daughter, I was exhausted. I have not felt like eating for about fourteen months now. We must submit to the will of the divine Master and kiss the rod that strikes us without grumbling against the Sovereign Judge, who gives us whatever seems good to him.

Finally, my darling daughter, you are right to tell me that I am your only support, for no matter what I do they have only ever repaid me with ingratitude. For the past nine years there is not a single care that I have not taken upon myself in order to help your grandmother. But not only did your Aunt Brunel not thank me for my efforts, she never even acknowledged me for it. Yet I can truly say, and my companions will confirm this, that no one has served her better, for both her bodily needs and the consolations of her soul. She passed from this world to the Father of Spirits on the twenty-seventh of last month. She had suffered terribly. God has been very gracious to take her from this place of combat so that she will enjoy the triumph of glory.

You tell me, my darling daughter, that we must not count on other people. I know it, my darling child. You keep to yourself and don't see too many people. You give me great pleasure. Console yourself in the Holy Scripture. It seems to me that there is bitterness in your heart. You do me a favour when you tell me all your worries and difficulties.

The skirt that I sent you belonged to my darling mother. I was charmed to hear that it suits your taste. Tell me how many blouses you have. Know for certain that I will look after you like a true mother. I love you as much as if I had given birth to you myself. Yes, my

darling daughter, I swear this to you, keep up your friendship for me, and believe me always to be your good, your tender, and your steadfast Aunt,

La Durand.

I am not able to make you a mourning dress, so hide your grandmother's death. Please reply soon and let me know how you are. I will write to Monsieur Chiron another time. Pass on my tender compliments to Madame his wife. My friend and her daughter and all my companions give you a thousand hugs.

Your earliest reply, my little darling.

Letter 16 – Anne Durand

To Monsieur,

*Monsieur Chiron, at Taconnerie,
kindly forward,
to Mademoiselle Durand in Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, March 3, 1755

So, you were sick, my darling child, and you suffer still the cruel diseases of gout and rheumatism. What you have had to suffer, my darling daughter, for I know how much one suffers from these pains. I too have suffered from them, for this year I felt the bitterness of them, in my head most of all. I cried out in agony for eight days. After that, a foul liquid ran from head into my stomach with such a vile taste that I felt every moment that I was dying. This was during the spell of bitter cold, our prison overflowed with water, and I could not find any relief. But right now I am better, thanks to the Lord.

I was in the middle of this when I received your letters. I would only complain to you, my little darling. I kept saying to my friend: “If only I had my poor child here with me!” She replied, “My God yes; we would look after her.” She talks to me so often about you that we have made a plan never to be apart. She says: “If God almighty grants us our beloved freedom you could bring your dear daughter and we could care for our two children together.” We have been together for twelve years. Her name is Goutès. Her daughter is in her fourteenth year, but she really is the bravest child that you could ever meet. She [Goutès] lost her husband in the galleys a long time ago. They embrace you, mother and daughter, with tender affection.

Getting back to your illness, consult the doctors. If the sea or sand baths of Balaruc could help you, I would do whatever I could for you to come and take them, and my friend’s daughter would go with you to help you. If I could offer you some support, for both your illness and to help meet your needs, Alas! from the bottom of my heart I would do it, for I love you more than myself my darling daughter. I would like to be able to relieve you from your pain, even if I had to suffer in your place. Know this for certain my dear angel. But as you tell me, we must submit to the will of God and kiss his rod with humble submission.

You have received much help from the good souls in your town. I am very aware of all their kindness. May God protect them all and grant them long and happy prosperity. I very humbly thank Monsieur Chiron and Madame his wife and the people with whom you live. Pay my deepest compliments to them all. I sincerely pray for the protection of them all. I would like with all my heart to be able to show them my gratitude. I would fondly fulfil this duty.

All my companions pay you a thousand compliments. They feel very sorry for you. We suffered terribly this winter. We were without any supplies, except a little green wood. The worst of it was the snow on our terrace, without any help from anyone. During the whole winter we received only forty-five sols each. The people of this region were terribly afflicted, and we felt the severity of it. Judge our condition! Yet, my darling daughter, we must always speak as models of patience: “Though you slay me, Lord, I will always hope in you!” Let us trust in him, and he will not abandon us.

Farewell, my darling child. Believe me always to be, with the most tender and steadfast love, your good aunt,

La Durand.

Pass on my deepest compliments to Madame Martin. She was my best friend. My companions assure her of their respects. Reply upon receipt of this letter, in the name of God. I agonise over your health.

Letter 17 – Anne Durand

To Monsieur,

*Monsieur Chiron, at Taconnerie,
kindly forward,
to Mademoiselle Durand in Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, June 12, 1755

No doubt you yearned, my darling daughter, to receive a reply to your letter of March 21, since you love me; at least I like to think that you do. But you might say: “Why do you claim this, my dear aunt. I have never seen you. You want me to love you? Perhaps you are not at all worthy of being loved!” But I turn from my playful dialogue to something more serious.

Your letter consoled me a great deal when you told me that you were much better. I praise the Author of my being for this, and I always plead with him with all the power of my soul that he brings you into stronger health.

Do not be cross, my darling child, that I was so slow to reply to you. I always wait until I can give you some news which might please and console you. Our money problems drag on but I hope that God will provide and grant some resolution to our woes, bringing them to an end. Ask that sovereign Arbiter of events, in all your prayers, that he may by his infinite power put an end to all our trials. If in his great mercy he really wanted to grant us this grace, you would soon be in my arms.

My health is quite good; blessed be the name of the Lord! I pray ardently to him that my letter finds you in perfect condition, and that it might please him to crown you with nature’s blessings and the treasures of grace, to fill you with every Christian virtue, so that you glorify his holy name and build up your neighbour. Always pursue the principle of virtue. Let the fear of the Lord, and his word, govern your behaviour; and, as the Gospel says, deal violently with your own faults, so that no one will be able to find anything to say against you. This is all the favour that I ask of you, my darling daughter.

Tell me straight out how many blouses you have, and whether they are in good or bad condition. If you do not want to fall out with me on this, let me know in your next letter. I utterly forbid you to view me as an Aunt. Look to me instead as a tender mother, for that is how I feel about you.

There is in your city a certain Monsieur Garrigues, a merchant. This gentleman comes from this region. He has a niece called Gaussainte living with him. Make sure to visit them, and assure this young lady that her mother is well and embraces her. She offers her respects to her uncle Monsieur Garrigues. I haven’t actually seen her mother myself but found this out from others. While paying my compliments to Monsieur Garrigues tell him from me that I saw his grandnephew Gaussaint more than a year ago, brother of the niece who is with him. I examined the child and found in him a real aptitude for study. I learned since from others that the little boy longs to be with his dear uncle, but wouldn’t dare go to him without his invitation. Yet, this would be the greatest act of piety that the gentleman could do for his family. I plead with him, for the sake of the child’s salvation, and by the bowels of Christ’s mercy who commands us to raise up new p[astors?] ... In faith I pray that you will speak up about his feelings and that you will let me know how it goes, and I will pass this on to the child, and his mother.

My friend and her little girl give you a million hugs, as do all my companions. Pass on my humble regards to Madame Martin, to Monsieur and Madame Chiron, and to all your guardians... I sincerely pray for their wellbeing, and the same for your, my darling daughter. I am your good Aunt,

La Durand.

Reply as soon as you can, for I am on tenterhooks about you.

Letter 18 – Anne Durand

To Monsieur,

*Monsieur Chiron, at Taconnerie,
kindly forward,
to Mademoiselle Durand in Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, October 9, 1755

I admit, my darling daughter, that it is high time I answered you, and I would not have failed to do so at the Beaucaire Fair if Monsieur Coconas had not been sick at that time, because my little present was ready. The said gentleman is my apothecary, and we are close friends. He seemed as annoyed about this as I was. He even wanted to send my package with one of his friends; but as he wasn't going to the Fair himself, I feared that it would get lost, and I didn't want to take that chance. That is the reason for the delay. Since I've made so many things, I won't send the blouses yet as I'll be able to add a few little extra items. And I have other reasons which may be advantageous, at least we have this divine hope. Hidden forces are opposed to it. Yet do not bear me ill will, my brave little one, for I only wanted the best, and I love you as much as a person is capable of loving. If you could love me the same, you would write me two letters for every one of mine, for though I'm concerned about the money you pay [on receipt], as a mark of your affection toward me, do not be concerned about what I pay. Do this, my darling daughter, and you will gratify me without end.

Since your last letter I have suffered a violent facial inflammation. My eyes still don't feel right. But all of this will go away, if it pleases God. Protect yourself as best as you can from that cruel disease which struck you and let me know the state of your health as soon as you can, for I greatly long to know.

My friend sends you tender embraces, and her daughter does the same. The little girl made the best of the blouses for you. They are very fond of you. The same little girl bought the materials and did a very good job. All my companions pay you a thousand compliments and wish you perfect health, and that God will bring you near to me. My friend and I often talk about you. Always be virtuous, my darling child. Let the love of God and fear of him always guide your conduct. Console yourself in his divine Word.

Adieu my angel. Love me and know that you are engraved on my heart with a diamond stylus, and that I will all my life be your sincere and affectionate aunt,

La Durand.

Monsieur Garrigues's grandnephew was sick, but he is better now. He wanted to learn the trade of making silk or woollen stockings. They wanted fifty ecus for this and ten for the contract. His mother isn't able to meet this expense except by selling some goods, which isn't easy in this region. Otherwise, the child only desires to learn, and I assure you that they said how unfortunate it was that the young sapling was not cultivated. The child was sick from grief to not be able to join his dear uncle. He humbly thanks him for his tender affection and he begs him, in the name of the bowels of mercy of Jesus Christ, to set apart for him the portion from the Eternal One of the goods that this Author of every perfect gift gives to him, and to allow him to see his face. He kisses him with the utmost tenderness and respect. His

mother also presents her most humble respects; and kisses his daughter too. She is very happy that her dear uncle is content with this. She exhorts him to always do the same. She came to see me. She too gives you her compliments. Little Gaussaint kisses his sister.

Make sure that monsieur Garrigues sees these few words that I write in your letter in favour of his grand-nephew. You will take note of his response, the feelings that he has for the child. Then you will advise his niece and write and tell me about the kinds of thoughts he has, for the little boy wants to follow in his footsteps.

He kisses his sister. Give my best regards to monsieur Chiron and to madame his wife, and to all your friends and protectors. Madame de Saint-Sens sends you her regards.

Write to me as soon as you can, I beg you.

Letter 19 – Anne Durand

To Monsieur,

*Monsieur Chiron, at Taconnerie,
kindly forward,
to Mademoiselle Durand in Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, November 25, 1755

I would have replied to both your letters as soon as I received them – one arrived three days after the other, my little darling – had not certain news been going around about some of our poor afflicted captives. I wanted to ascertain whether this news could be substantiated before replying to you.

They began to free some prisoners from the citadels of Montpellier and Nîmes; but they were not convicted.

What augurs well for us is that eight convicts were recently freed from their chains, and they assure us that we, wretched Maras, will share in this happiness. But it is just a rumour. Yet the freeing of these convicts gives us great hope, even more so since our free brothers urge each other on to invoke God's holy name in numerous and frequent public assemblies, and no one says a word.

So do not trouble yourself, my darling angel. Time seems to us to pass slowly, and in effect it does, because we are naturally impatient, and our flesh always murmurs. So we mortify our sinful passions, my darling daughter. Let us be the violent ones who ravish heaven. We seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and everything else will be added to us. Let us forsake our ways and return to the Lord, for in his very great anger he remembers to have compassion. He will have pity upon his desolate Zion and will return it to its renowned state on the earth. Let us pray for his peace, for God promised that those who love him will prosper. Ah! My darling Miette, let us entrust ourselves to the care of the Father of mercy and call upon him with every fibre of our being, and he will have pity on us. He will allow us to see calm and peaceful days. We will know the sweet satisfaction of being together in one another's arms. It would fulfil my desires and give me perfect happiness in this world to see near to me the child whom I cherish, whom I love more than myself.

You find my letters to your fancy, my little darling! It is your affection for me which causes you not to see the mistakes, for I scarcely give attention to style or expression when I am writing to you and, to tell you the truth, I never redraft any of my letters, except when I am writing to the lords and ladies. But alas! What praise you give to me! What eulogies! You embarrass me! It is true that I am lucky enough to be loved, and that no one hates me except from a spirit of jealousy, which often accompanies too great a love. But I do not deserve this praise; it is the grace of my God, who comes to sweeten my bitter lot. Always put your trust in our divine Saviour and he will never abandon you!

You are sick, my darling child! I am so sorry for you! May the Lord will, by his pure grace, to give you the soundest health and to bring you back into my arms soon! God will grant this favour at the time that we least expect it.

My health would be quite good, but like you I have lost my appetite. Your sad circumstances do not help. If I could give you all the support you need, then I would again be

content with my lot. We must submit nevertheless to the will of the Lord and kiss the rod which strikes us.

I can tell you that your uncle Brunel won your court case.

All my companions send you a thousand best wishes, especially Madame de Saint-Sens. Pass on my own, very earnestly, to Monsieur and Madame Chiron, and to all your friends. Adieu, my darling angel; Adieu, my all. Think of me not as a good aunt, but as a tender mother. Love me always as I love you and know for sure that nothing but death will end my love.

I am, truly, your Aunt,

La Durand.

I haven't sent your blouses yet. I want to see first what is going to happen to us because, if I am freed, I will have you brought here. My friend sends you tender kisses. Reply to me, my darling love, as soon as you get my letter, for I long to hear your news.

Pass on my compliments to the little Gaussaint girl. Tell her that her mother and brother are well and embrace her. I don't need to tell you to be careful. I knew already all that you told me in your last letter about the deceptions of men. But I wouldn't have said anything to you. Be prudent and virtuous and don't afflict yourself anymore. I don't yet know the name of the gentleman who took care of your previous affairs, nor where he comes from. Farewell, my darling, my tender Miette.

Letter 20 – Anne Durand

To Monsieur,

*Monsieur Chiron, at Taconnerie,
kindly forward,
to Mademoiselle Durand in Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, February 9, 1756

Could you think, my little darling, that I would forget you? But you would be very wrong to give yourself such ideas, for I would sooner forget myself. You can rest assured that I always picture you in my mind. So, suspend your judgment about my silence.

Before writing to you, I wrote to Monsieur Peirot about your situation, and I think I made good use of the ink. I didn't speak to him about your money because I don't think that this is the right time for you to draw on it. I wait in the hope that God will grant us a more opportune time for this and other things. So, I ask you to keep calm about this. Yet if, while waiting, you have need of some support, write and tell me and I will give to you from my own funds until the last penny. You can be sure of this, my poor child.

I will also tell you that I thought I heard some news about our freedom, as the Estates are meeting, and I wanted to share this with you. But nothing has transpired yet. Yet we hold great hopes. May God, by his divine grace, will to confirm them; we must wait for his almighty power. In this way, my darling angel, do not allow yourself to be overcome by worry. That tender Father will not abandon us; he will make us taste more calm and peaceful days yet.

About that person whom you told me about, you have done very well to reject his offers. They would have turned out to be very damaging to you. Always resist these temptations, my darling daughter, and consider those who make such proposals to be your cruellest enemies. Look only to the Word of God, and fear him, and let that rule your conduct. Sooner than we think, our Great and Universal Master will grant me the consolation of returning you to me. We ask him for his help with a firm faith, and he will give it to us. Always hold on to that principle of virtue which is so vital for a Christian girl in your condition, so that no one can condemn your behaviour. When we trust in the world, it always lets us down. Nor should we count upon those who say that they are our friends, seeing no one is genuine.

Make sure you write back to me straight away, for I am very impatient to hear your news and will not be able to rest easy until I have it. Let me know the state of your health, and count on the genuineness of my love for you because it is unbreakable. For the rest of my life I will not just be a good aunt, but one of the tenderest of mothers.

La Durand.

My friend and all my companions send you a thousand hugs. Give my deepest regards to Monsieur and Madame Chiron, and to all those worthy and venerable persons who are gracious enough to me to hold me in their thoughts. They all have a part in my most ardent and sincere prayers.

Letter 21 – Anne Durand

To Monsieur,

*Monsieur Chiron, at Taconnerie,
kindly forward,
to Mademoiselle Durand in Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, May 17, 1756

The time has finally come, my darling child, to reply to your last letter. You must be telling yourself that you have a very cruel aunt, that she must without doubt be unmoved by your condition. Perhaps you regret having informed me about these things. But, my poor child, you would be very mistaken for your sad situation is the only cause of the long interruption.

As soon as I received your letter, I wrote to Monsieur Peirot and to one of my friends. The latter was so very kind as to travel here to hear about your situation. I begged him urgently to get Monsieur Peirot to send you an account of your funds. He promised me that he would not delay in giving you satisfaction. I don't think he'll break his word. I also asked another gentleman among my friends of this region, who assured me that he would write to an important person to give you some help. I do not know if my earnest pleadings will succeed. I will be grateful if you let me know and put my mind at rest.

I was also making some blouses for you, which I added to those that I had already made and that I sent to you three weeks ago by way of Nîmes. I paid for the delivery. It weighs sixteen and a quarter pounds. It contained nine blouses, eight decorated and one for sleeping, a woollen vest, a long skirt and vest, and three pairs of cotton stockings, everything carefully wrapped in cloth. If I had been able to send you some money I would gladly have done so, my little darling, but it was impossible. Reply as soon as you receive this as I am anxious to hear your news and please let me know how your health is.

Don't torment yourself, my darling angel. Entrust yourself to our great God; he will put an end to our afflictions at a time when we least expect it. He strikes us with his rods, but he remembers to have compassion for us. And so we submit to his holy will. Be very, very certain, my darling Miette, of my tender and unending friendship. I assure you of this upon my life. Whatever may happen, you will always find me ready to prove the sincerity of my love for you.

Farewell, my dear child. I kiss you with all my heart and soul. Believe me always to be your good, affectionate, and inviolable aunt,

La Durand.

All my companions send you a thousand compliments; my friend especially, she gives you a thousand hugs. She sends you a pair of cotton stockings marked with her name; but I made them all.

Pay my regards to Monsieur Chiron and Madame his wife, and all your friends.

Regarding the little Gaussaint boy, it is impossible for the child to learn an occupation in this region. His mother does not have the means and she cannot sell her goods because

Protestants cannot get permission to do so. That's why Monsieur Garrigue should have pity on this child; God commands this of him, as does his apostle. The poor child begs his dear uncle, by the compassion of the divine Crucified One, who permits him to see his face and to obey him as a father. He looks to his uncle in that same way. He promises to obey him in everything that he may desire of him and assures him of his tender and respectful submission. I pray this gentleman to not be angry that I concern myself with the child. He deserves it because he is a brave little boy; his uncle would be very gratified to have him with him. Do your best and you will be doing a work that pleases God. His mother begs me to pass on her respects to Monsieur her uncle. She is aware of all his kind acts and begs him by the bowels of divine mercy to go on doing them. She tenderly kisses her daughter and exhorts her to be very obedient to her dear uncle. She carries herself marvellously, according to what I hear.

Reply to me about all the things I have asked you.

Letter 22 – Anne Durand

To Monsieur,

*Monsieur Chiron, at Taconnerie,
kindly forward,
to Mademoiselle Durand in Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, June 27, 1756

Your letter, my darling little girl, put my mind completely at rest. I was afraid that your illness had grown worse. If it had not been for the business with little Gaussaint, I would have written to Monsieur Chiron to get news of you.

You tremble with joy, my darling child, for the possibility that you will come soon to see me. Well, my little Miette, arrange your affairs as best as you possibly can, and then fly to my arms. You will find all the care that a well-born child can find within the arms of a good and tender mother. But before leaving, get for yourself a certificate which testifies to your virtuous conduct and your salvation, from the excellent masters of the city and the Venerable Pastors. And in this case, you will be able to come and take the baths without any risk, and to remain for as long as you please. Those generous and celebrated benefactors will not refuse this favour to the child of a martyr, and to a wretched captive for twenty-six years for the sake of the divine Crucified One. I dare to hope for this sweet consolation from their incomparable piety. I spoke to two clever doctors who assure me that sand baths will heal you. So I will gladly have you take them; but you must arrange to be here next month. In this way, my dear child, arrange your affairs carefully so as not to miss this good weather. You can stay with me as long as you like.

If possible, bring two pairs of white silk day gloves in a fine and pretty pattern: one large pair, and the other slimmer. They are for the wives of our two commandants. Also bring whatever you need to do your work, as I will be able to give you as much work as you want, in lace or other styles.

Pay close attention to all that I tell you. If you could find a carriage returning to Nîmes, you would do well to take it; and if heaven favours your voyage, as I pray, you will get out at Mademoiselle Durand's at Belle-Croix in Nîmes. From there, write to me by post and I will send for you. For your health's sake do not neglect this trip. Your sickness and condition upset me more than my prison. Do not forget any of your personal effects because you will need them. So, be very careful to bring everything. Bring any old stockings that you have, and I will repair them.

It was charming of you to send me news about my dear Madame Martin. She is someone I love dearly. Give her a million hugs from me. Assure her that in my most earnest prayers I always sought to recognise the kindness that she extended to me. I was deeply moved by the loss of her husband. I wish her all heaven's favours and beg her always to love me. My companions pay her their respects, above all my friend Goutez du Vigan.

Pay my tender compliments to Monsieur and Madame Chiron and to all your friends. I thank them all for all their kindness to you. Tell the little Gaussaint girl that her mother is doing well. I will write to her this week.

When you are in Nîmes, ask to see Mademoiselle Fabrot, Mademoiselle Guiraud, and Mademoiselle Catin-Touraing.

Always be virtuous, my darling daughter, and rush to console me with the joy and satisfaction of being able to kiss you. My friend, who kisses you tenderly, longs very much to see you. Farewell, my darling angel; live your life prudently and fulfil the desires of her who will her whole life be, with the most sincere and tender friendship, your good and affectionate Aunt,

La Durand.

... Monsieur Antoine Paris, in Nîmes, and his wife, who is the one who helped get your package to you. Be careful not to speak too much with the people in that town. Ask them for work and support. It would be a good idea if you brought a little thread for lace-making. At least bring your spindles and other work things, for there aren't any of those things in the region. In everything, conduct yourself with prudence and virtue and come as soon as you can, for I am desperate to see you.

I wrote in my letter for you to make sure you get a certificate, for it is vital to take no risk. If they refuse this to you, make sure you have a letter saying that you are sick and need certain necessary remedies to be healed. And if it would help for me to write, reply promptly and tell me to whom I must address myself. If you have a bed curtain bring it with all the other things you need. Be sure not to...

Letter 23 – Anne Durand

To Monsieur,

*Monsieur Chiron, at Taconnerie,
kindly forward,
to Mademoiselle Durand in Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, August 5, 1756

Your letters came to me, my little darling. My joy was tested, because I had raised my hopes to have had you by now between my arms. The Wise Man said very well that “hope deferred makes the heart yearn”, for I assure you that I will always be anxious until I am satisfied by your presence here. O my God! When will this happy moment come? As soon as you can arrange your affairs do not delay your journey. Satisfy a heart which, after all that I owe to my Creator, only beats for you. I don’t suppose that you will spend time at our home, or even that you will pass by there. Be sure to take a carriage which takes the Nîmes road and get out at the house I mentioned. Let me know as soon as you arrive, and I will send for you. I can see that I write the same things to you over and again. The great longing that I have to kiss you makes me forget.

I wrote to Monsieur Peirot. I begged him to pay you in full your one hundred pistoles. Why don’t you ask him as well? This at least might put you ahead. You can see that you can’t do anything much with a hundred écus, my poor child. Moreover, you could probably get hold of everything more easily at your home than in this place. Do your best to come here soon.

The little parcel must be returned to the hands to which it belonged. You’ll have to be satisfied with whatever remains to you. Let me know about this, whether or not he was satisfied.

Bring two fine combs if you can, one for me and one for my friend. She kisses you tenderly and longs to see you.

A clever surgeon here has a cure for your illness. He told me that he promised to himself to heal you, by the grace of God. He has healed this malady many times in this town, and in every season. He wanted to give me the recipe for the medicines; but I said that you could make them here and he said that that would be better still. He comes from Paris, where he worked a long time.

I didn’t speak to Monsieur Peirot about your journey. It is better that he doesn’t know about it. When you have arrived at the house which I told you about, you can give the details of your condition to that lady and to Mademoiselle Fabrot. These are people of rare piety. You should also ask them to get some work for you; they will try hard to help you. Send me your news as soon as you can and tell me something about the rumours about our situation, which you told me about. Make sure you arrange your affairs, my little darling. Write letter after letter until they are sorted out. Do this for an Aunt who is very fond of you, and who holds you in her inmost being while waiting until she can hold you in her arms.

Farewell, my angel. My heart and soul embrace you and I am, in my own plain way, your good, your affectionate aunt,

La Durand.

Pay my affectionate compliments to Monsieur and Madame Chiron and to all your friends, and above all to Madame Martin. I would like to write to Monsieur Chiron, but I fear that I have delayed it so long that he won't want to accept it.

I would be enormously pleased to know whether you are in a pension or a bedsit; whether or not you have furnished accommodation.

Letter 24 – The Walloon Church of Amsterdam

The Tour de Constance, February 2, 1757

Very Dear and Illustrious Benefactors,

We received eighteen pounds for each of the twenty-four of us; likewise the rice, beans, and lentils that you were so kind as to send to us.

We have the honour of humbly thanking you for these things, and pray that it will please the Lord to repay you in this life, filling you with all nature's riches and all the treasures of grace, until, having served in the counsel of God with piety, peace, and prosperity beyond the usual bounds of human life, you are admitted to the contemplation of the face of our adorable Saviour, who is the fulfilment of joy.

These are the ardent prayers that we make in your favour, and that of your dear families. Be assured, dear protectors, of their sincerity and of the respect with which we have the honour of being,

Very illustrious and dear benefactors,
Your most humble and obedient servants,

The Prisoners,

La Durand.

Letter 25 – Anne Durand

To Monsieur,

*Monsieur Chiron, at Taconnerie,
kindly forward,
to Mademoiselle Durand in Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, April 26, 1757

Just as you took a long time to reply to me, my darling daughter, so have I. You told me you were delayed by a bad sore on one of your legs. My delay was caused by a severe eye inflammation, which caused me a lot of pain. God judges that it is good to afflict us in these kinds of ways. It is motivated by his love, since he chastises with the most severity those whom he loves most tenderly. In this way, my dear child, we kiss the hand which strikes us, and submit to this divine will.

So, you received some help. This made me feel a lot more at peace about you for I was very worried for what was going on with you. I plead with you now to make good use of your money, for I took a lot of trouble to get it to you.

If it is possible for you to get hold of a psalmody in large letters for me with the fifty-four hymns and musical notation, I would be delighted – can you say whether you are in a position to manage this. If you let me know, I'll take some steps to get one; and the same with *The Christian Jubilee* and *The Roman Jubilee*, by Monsieur Renoult. If you are so kind as to help me, you will have no reason to regret it; I will be extremely grateful.

My health is quite good at present, thank God. I hope that my letter finds you in perfect health. I long to know what decisions you need to make about your journey, since I am no less anxious than you to have you so far apart from me. Be ever more reserved and virtuous. You will gratify me very much if you do this, my little darling.

A friend of my friend sent her a beautiful pair of cotton stockings. My friend's daughter stole them from her mother to give to you. This made us laugh, though both are very keen for you to have them. You will have them one day if God is kind enough to preserve you and to allow me to see you. My friend and her daughter embrace you tenderly, as do my other companions. Do not neglect to reply to me, for I ache to hear your news. So, my little darling, write to me on receipt of my letter and let me know your thoughts and how you are.

Farewell, my darling Miette, rest assured that my friendship and my tenderness for you will only cease with my life, and that I will always be your good and affectionate aunt,

La Durand.

Tell the little Gaussaint girl and her brother that their Aunt Paulinier de Sommières has to go to Geneva to see their uncle. Let the two children be as polite to her as they possibly can, but they should say nothing either good or bad about her to their uncle, for it is a feeling of jealousy toward them which compels her to make this journey. Tell her again that they must not neglect their uncle in any way, but that they should be affectionate, obedient, and submissive. The aunt is forever spreading a rumour around here that the little Gaussaint girl had gone to her Uncle's against his will and that this has caused him some misfortune. Let them profit by this little note, but not speak a word of it to anyone; except if she tells you that

she did in fact cause some misfortune, in which case you should tell me. And if their uncle offers them the choice of returning home, let them answer with loving justifications, saying that that they want to serve him and would even die for him. This is my advice to them; let them follow it without saying a word.

I have had news from their mother. She is well. She asks me to send her kisses to them . Send me news about them so that I can pass it on to her [*sic*] mother.

Letter 26 – Anne Durand

To Mademoiselle,

*Mademoiselle Durand, at Monsieur Chiron's,
Taconnerie, in Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, August 22, 1757

Your two letters arrived in due course, my little darling. From the first I saw that you were in quite good health and this delighted me. You seemed to say that I would receive some more positive news in less than six weeks, which led me to anticipate a joy that I have thought I should have had a very long time ago. And yet, far from having this sweet pleasure, I received your second letter telling me that you have lost your voice and that you have toothache. I pity you with all my heart, for it is a cruel pain. May God will to give you all the support you need.

Summer is quickly running away. Soon it will be autumn; and then winter follows. Yet I leave you free to decide. The long anticipation which you encouraged in me some time ago convinces me that you fear something, that something is holding you back. On my side, I always want to open my innermost being to you, and only death could tear you from my heart and my most tender affections. And as for our finances, I am told they are going quite well. I would never make you do anything reckless. Act prudently.

I love you the same as always, my darling child. At least send me your news, which I love to hear, as I imagine that you have fallen sick or died whenever I don't hear from you. So, write to me often. My health is very good, praise be to God! I pray to him with all my heart that my letter finds you in perfect health, and that it may please that Tender Father to preserve you and to place you under his divine protection. Always be virtuous, and hang on to the little that you have so that you can use it when you need to.

My friend, who embraces you most tenderly, deeply regrets your toothache. She knows what it is like. I will not fail with respect to the Gaussaint children. I wrote to their mother. She bears up well and kisses them a million times. Harvest work has no doubt kept her so busy that she hasn't yet been able to write; but they can be certain of their mother's affection. Always be quick to send me your news, I repeat, as it puts my mind at ease. Always be assured of my most tender and constant affection, with which I am your good and affectionate and tender aunt,

La Durand.

All my companions send you a thousand regards. If you have any news, share it with me. I implore you once more to be prudent, above all regarding what you must send to me.

Letter 27 – Anne Durand

To Monsieur,

*Monsieur Chiron, at Taconnerie,
kindly forward,
to Mademoiselle Durand in Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, November 10, 1757

What are you thinking, my little darling, to keep me in such cruel silence? Do you think I can be at peace when I do not hear any news from you? You are mistaken. I feel the deepest concern. Sometimes I think that you are sick, and sometimes that some catastrophe has befallen you and that you have perished. I wrote to you quite a while ago. If laziness slows your response, you have severely wronged an aunt who, in her bitter sorrow, lives and breathes only for you. If you are sick, then ask Monsieur Chiron to inform me of your condition. If you have even a speck of friendship left for an aunt who loves you infinitely more than herself, let her hear your news from someone from whom she can receive that that without inconveniencing you. If your aunt was forced to stop writing to you, she will never cease to love you; and it would only be death which quenches her love for you in this life. Be certain of this, my darling daughter.

There is no need to worry about my health, it is quite good, praise be to the good God. Nothing upsets it but your silence. Break it, my darling child. There could not be any sweeter satisfaction for me. Please tell me what has impeded the plan that you made; I already spoke to you about this in my last letter. Keep me from this pain, I pray this of you, and I assure you that I will be obliged to you for all eternity.

My friend sends you her tender compliments and wishes you the soundest health. My other companions do the same. Be sure to send first a reply to my letter, to keep me from the pain I am in. I like to think that your friendship would grant me this favour, and to give me your thoughts on all that I asked you in my previous letter, and of what concerns you. Could you doubt my sincerity, my poor child? That would be very wrong of you since I am a thousand times more attached to you than to myself. Be assured of this, and that I will be always, yes always, your good, your affectionate, your tender aunt,

La Durand.

Tell the little Gaussaint girl and her brother that her mother kisses them very tenderly, and that she presents the most tender respects to Monsieur her dear uncle. She is in marvellous health and gives her very sincere prayers for their protection. I make the most ardent prayers for yours, my darling angel.

[In the autograph the text after the first third of the third page is missing ...]

Letter 28 – Anne Durand

To Mademoiselle,

*To Mademoiselle Durand, at Monsieur Guetin's,
at Taconnerie, in Geneva*

The Tour de Constance, July 13, 1758.

You have asked me to write you a long letter, my darling daughter. So you take some pleasure in reading them. I feel, in this request, that you love me a little. But when you tell me that you want to come and throw yourself into my arms, your confession convinces me of your sincere affection. Well! My darling child, come as soon as you possibly can, and be assured that you will find in me the tenderest of mothers. I don't think that you need these great reassurances on top of those that I have given you in all my letters. Come and experience it here and you will be certain of my love. And your coming here will convince me of your love.

If your circumstances permit you should come during the Beaucaire Fair because then you could travel with others and reduce your expenses; or come after, in a coach that has brought someone back after the fair. Do not allow participation in communion to slow your coming. You will have occasions to participate any time you like in this place. So don't wait until the month of September, because the weather is very uncertain then. If you come by a coach returning to Beaucaire, you could find one at a good price and you could take the sand baths. I have consulted several doctors. They told me that the baths would be very beneficial for your illnesses.

So make sure that you bear not just letters of recommendation, but also a communion certificate if you can. You will come to Mademoiselle Durand's, at Belle Croix in Nîmes, and from there I will make arrangements to bring you here. About finding work, you will have as much as you want, making lace or doing various kinds of embroidery. And you should arrange to bring patterns for both types of work.

In any case I will share with you all that I have, and all of my tender affection. You will not be a burden to me. On the contrary, you will in a thousand ways lighten my chain, which I have carried for twenty-eight years now, and will sweeten my bitter lot. I beg you to fly to your wretched captive aunt, who has sighed at the thought of this sweet satisfaction for so many years. I will always languish until I hold you in my arms. You have nothing to fear in this place. Conditions have changed a lot. You should have received a letter from me which I wrote to you eighteen days ago. The letter and the twelve pounds which that young man asked of you – his mother had remitted the money to me, and I had written the letter enclosed in one that I wrote to you – you must ask for this from the postmaster. They are the ones he tells you he had sent back. They have not arrived here. Be careful. The father of the young man, manager of the office here, is writing today to his associate in your city. He thinks the money is for me because his spouse does not want him to know that she sent it to her son. As a father he is firm with his children. Please make sure to retrieve the letters and return them quickly to the young man.

My friend gives you a thousand hugs, as do all my companions. They yearn to see you. As for me, I burn for this every day. Satisfy my deep desire and apply this balm to the

wounds of one who will be, her whole life, your good, affectionate, and tender aunt, whatever happens.

La Durand.

Letter 29 – Savine de Coulet*To a friend*

The Tour de Constance, March 29, 1759.

Mademoiselle and very dear friend,

It was impossible for me to satisfy your admirable request, which is motivated by a true spirit of charity. The gentleman, to whom I wrote to get the list that you requested from me, couldn't send it as soon as he wanted to. I only received it the day before yesterday. He is so busy with current dealings that he is not his own master. He couldn't fulfill all my demands and this is my fault, because not having specified to him the precise rank and high condition of the noble and excellent person, whether duchess, or countess, or marquise, he was uncertain as to what tone he should take in writing, which caused him to reproach me a little for having revealed only the name. The problem rebounds on me because I now have to write a second letter on top of the one I had already written, to repair the fault that I made in respect of those glorious confessors, in order to understand and depict, as far as my limited ability could allow me, the rigour of their pains, their suffering, and their hard servitude. I will satisfy you yet with the name of the commissioner. I assure you that I had to overcome some difficulties to unearth it, but finally I discovered it; his name is M. de Fitte, the royal commissioner for the prisons in this province. He lives in Montpellier. From reliable information which I have received we are convinced that he is an honest man. He convinces us of this by his expressions of tenderness and the profound sorrow he expressed for our great misery.

Our poor confessors did not receive any such visit, as far as they were aware, but they tell me that it was possible that he might have been among them without them knowing it. I can't believe this because these gentlemen were commissioned by His Majesty to take their names and to gather other information, such as the reason for their detention, their age, and by what judgment they were condemned, and also to determine whether or not they are being treated too harshly by those who oversee them; and because many oversee our poor brothers who groan in those deplorable galleys, it is certain that if someone had appointed a commissioner over them, he would have asked the same questions of them that he asked of us, for none would dare violate the orders of the King. All of this leaves me to guess that these poor victims of caprice and cruel persecution have been entirely forgotten. I pray you, my dear friend, to do the impossible for these poor unfortunates; their position is utterly deplorable. It would draw tears from the hardest stone; they wear the heaviest chains, sleep every night on the ground, exposed to harsh weather and storms, extremely malnourished, forced to do agonising work, all of which is overwhelming for these poor persecuted men who have done no harm to anyone.

The Apostle's words describe their situation well: "It is infinitely better to suffer for doing good, if such is the will of the Lord, than for doing evil."

I beg you, by the bowels of compassion of him who suffered the most ignominious death for our ransom, to neglect nothing to procure freedom for these poor afflicted men. They deserve the most compassionate charity. I hope that you will do your best and that you will turn all the wheels of zealous piety; the love that you have for the divine Crucified One will guide you and, having as a protector the noblest heart, the most sensitive tenderness and

generosity, and other heroic virtues from which the most ardent charity is derived, you can only succeed.

May the Almighty Being pour out the most excellent blessings upon this illustrious and noble . . . , to crown her with glory, honour, riches, and grandeur in this world, and beyond this life, and that in the end she might be admitted into eternal happiness.

I pray my sincerest prayers for you and all your dear family. May God will to fulfil you with good things from his house, grant you his divine protection, satisfy you with the gifts of his good Spirit, and give you all the lights you need, with his grace, to make you experience the soundest health, the most tranquil peace, and the happiest success. Be persuaded, my dearest one, that my prayers are in accord with the sentiment of my heart and that I will, my whole life, grant myself the honour of calling myself, with special consideration and the most ardent friendship,

Mademoiselle and very dear friend, your very humble and obedient servant,

La Durand.

I didn't want to say anything about what has happened in this town, my good friend, because of those who are watching over us. We are prisoners under the rule of our superiors. You understand me. It now seems likely that all of our fears may come true, that we will find ourselves overtaken by a great calamity. I must tell you that they are afraid, with good reason, of being invaded by the English. Defensive preparations are being made, as is required of every good and faithful subject of our just prince. It is obvious that our commandant will shut himself up in our cruel prison with his garrison and, in this case, they talk about evacuating the women and children of Aigues-Mortes and locking us up in a house somewhere in town. Judge for yourself our awful plight, being exposed in this way to the cruelty of an enemy who spares neither sex nor condition. We would be vulnerable from all sides, as you well understand. They are working on the enclosure of our tower, on the circular part in particular. At the moment they are fitting stakes that run along the wall adjacent to the sea, where they must erect fortifications from Le Grau-du-Roi to Agde. They say there is a great English fleet at Toulon with many barges. Let us pray to the sovereign arbiter of all events that he appease his anger towards this poor kingdom and that he return his sword to its scabbard, and that by his great mercy he has compassion for this state and its poor children. Let us always be utterly faithful and zealous to defend our august and beloved sovereign; we must shed all of our blood in his service. It seems to me that our pastors should make solemn and ardent prayers for this pressing time. Still, I would not like my letter to be shown to anyone. But you are, my dear friend, so wise and so prudent; you don't need any lessons when it comes to fighting for such an important cause. They are certain that His Majesty must return to Lyons with their majesties Don Carlos, Don Philippe, and the King of Sardinia. Consider our afflictions and our deplorable and distressing situation; solicit help for us, press our business . . . to get us out from this frightful and terrible predicament.

This idea alone makes us tremble; that you will work for us but also for a great and good Master who will repay you in this world and for all eternity. He is the only support to which we have recourse, hoping that in his great and fatherly goodness that his divine and powerful protection will secure us from this terrible flail. We plead with you with all our soul's strength, and in the name of the bowels of divine mercy, to pray to God for us. Ask him to strengthen us by his grace, that he will console us and grant us all the light that we need. My friend and all my companions give you a thousand compliments, and the same to your dear

husband and to all your dear family. I give these most eagerly; we gather you all up into our most ardent prayers.

It would appear, my dear friend, that God has given me the privilege of informing you of the best of all news: yesterday, the twenty-eighth of this month, one of our friends came here and assured us that he had seen letters advising that our august monarch has granted freedom of conscience. More than ten letters arrived in Montpellier which make this great news certain; a Roman Catholic gentleman assured one of our Protestants that he had some orders “under wraps,” and that they would surprise everyone when they come to light. Do not let anyone see my letter, you would compromise me drastically.

Beg Madame to pardon the mistakes and errors of my letter. I am of humble birth, that is all I need to say for the lack of polish and ability. Do not delay forwarding this to her with the list of our poor brothers. The time is favourable, do not miss it. I have been busy for more than a fortnight, so I did not have the time to rewrite the illustrious Madame’s letter. The person charged with carrying this letter wants to go. I leave everything now in your wise hands.

If you were here, I would tell you something to make you happy. My ink is bad but, being a prisoner, this is not my fault. The illustrious woman, filled with all piety, will pardon me.

Letter 30 – Madame Leszczyńska, the Queen of France

To a lady

March 29, 1759.

Madame,

Your Majesty's kindness is not the least of your rare virtues. We had the good fortune to experience it since, by your great charity and favour, we were honoured to receive a pleasant visit from M. de Fitte, the royal commissioner, from Montpellier. He gave us many signs of goodwill and showed us human kindness at its best. He recorded our names and the reason for our detention. Our sad fate brought tears to his eyes. He gave us some hope of being delivered. However, Madame, six months have now passed, and we do not see our locks breaking, we still suffer endlessly in the most awful prison, we are still subject to terrible pain and disease due to the extreme damp and horrible gloom that are constant in this fortress. We are unable to gaze at the sun's natural rays, a true symbol of the Sun of Justice. We are continually enshrouded by darkness and suffocating smoke. It is the horror of horrors; dare I say a foretaste of hell. We live here a life more forlorn and more bitter even than death. Some, Madame, have been here for twenty years, others for more than thirty years, simply for following the divine principles of a religion which commands us to "give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God."

I know, Madame, that our misery moves you deeply; but what would happen if Your Majesty came somehow to see our affliction firsthand? Your noble heart, just as susceptible to tenderness and generosity as to your other heroic virtues, would be unable to survive.⁹⁹⁹ In this state we throw ourselves at Your Highness's feet. We appeal with the deepest respect to your noble compassion, to have pity upon our troubles, our sighs, our tears, and our groans, which although being so long-drawn-out do not cease to sting so much more with every passing day.

We look to you, Madame, as the hope of Israel, like that wise and pious Esther who brought so much good to the people of God. By comparing you to this great queen, Madame, we acknowledge that as much as the Gospel is lifted above the Law, so too your incomparable virtue rises above that princess. The power of grace which reigns in Your Majesty's heart will beyond doubt produce even more marvellous effects than it did in hers. The zeal of divine love with which your great soul is invested will overcome all obstacles which might block the way for us to win our freedom, and we will be able to say one day: "Here is the blessed Mary of our days who gives birth again to the Saviour of the World." Yes, Madame, you will cause him to be reborn, this great Saviour, by breaking down the wretched captives' bolted doors, and by smashing the fetters of those poor convicts held in the galleys, exposed to the rigour of the weather, dragging continually a crushing chain, lying on planks, suffering frightful torments; their groans are their only remaining consolation.

Here is, Madame, our pitiable fate, and that of those wretched unfortunates. I paint a very restrained picture, fearing to weary Your Majesty too much.

Madame, permit us to beg you, in the name of the bowels of divine mercy, to have pity on us one and all. You can do this. Access to the throne is less a privilege of your birth than a

⁹⁹⁹ Emphasis original.

reward for the services of your noble and illustrious house. The heart of our monarch is a sanctuary and your virtues have opened a way to its secret paths. Our freedom is in your hands, Madame. Excellent and noble protector of oppressed innocence, give flight to your clemency, your charity, and your exemplary piety. Set the wretched victims free. After God and the King you are, Madame, the person in the world for whom we have the most admiration and respect, and in whom we place our greatest confidence.

With your qualities being as distinguished as your position and your great virtues, which you deploy to the honour and advantage of the crown and nation, we, in the strangest kind of sepulchre, dare to presume that among the many works of charity that Your Highness has done and will do in future, there was and will be none more likely to bring renown upon your noble and excellent house and bestow on it the blessings of heaven and earth than the one we ask Your Majesty today with tears and sighs and by all that is most moving and powerful in nature and religion.

If we are so happy, Madame, as to receive favour from you and through your powerful intercession with the august and beloved Prince who sits on the throne in dignity and felicity, all our faculties will revive; our spirits, our hearts, and our mouths will open; our tongues, our hands, and our feet will be set free to bless you, to exalt your kindness and disseminate to the present age and distant posterity the memory of our deliverance and our mystical resurrection, for which we will be indebted to you. Though your great and illustrious name overwhelms us we will never cease praying to God, who is the sovereign dispenser of all favours, to grant you the most excellent health, and to crown you with prosperity and glory beyond this human life, until the adorable arbiter of mortals crowns you with happiness for the utmost eternity. And, Madame, while offering that which only expresses a part of the distinguished sentiments that we dedicate and consecrate to your illustrious person, we have the honour of being, with the most respectful veneration, Madame,

Your Highness's humble and obedient servants,

The Prisoners,

La Durand.

The Tour de Constance, March 29, 1759.

Letter 31 – The Walloon Church of Amsterdam

December 1759

Very honoured and very dear Protectors and Protectresses,

We received three hundred and seventy-eight pounds, which came to eighteen pounds for each of the twenty-one prisoners who are here; plus four quintals of rice, a quintal and a half of beans, and a quintal of lentils.

We are honoured to humbly thank you, and we pray that it will please the Lord to repay you in this life by filling you with his blessing: his grace on earth, and all kinds of glory in eternity. But while waiting for these infinite blessings may God always extend his good protection over you, bless your families, and favour you with excellent health and very long and happy prosperity.

These are just a part of our prayers, dear protectors. Be assured of their sincerity, and of the respect with which I have the honour of being, very honoured and very dear protectors and protectresses,

Your most humble and obedient servant,

La Durand.

All my poor companions are aware of your charity and pay their deepest respects.

Letter 32 –Paul Rabaut

To Pasteur Paul Rabaut, February 4, 1760

Monsieur Paul p[astor]... of J[esus].-C[hrist]., by hand, to his residence,

Monsieur and very dear pastor in J.-C.,

I am most gratified that you were pleased to receive my letter. It is a great delight for me that my pastor, whom I respect, whom I love so cordially, condescends to pay attention to what a captive member of his flock says to him. This favour consoles me and helps me to bear my troubles with patience and joy.

The news that I had the honour of passing on to you has been confirmed as true, since Monsieur de Roqualte received the evening before yesterday an order from Monsieur de Thomond to send him a list of our names. They will be the same as those which I have sent you a number of times. And because Monsieur the Major is not in town, Monsieur de Roqualte asked me to make the list and asked the *procureur du roi* to check it and send it tomorrow to Monsieur de Thomond who must leave shortly for Paris. I worked on this yesterday, after prayers. The news I'm sharing has come from the C. d. St. F. [Comte de St. Florentin]. They say that the Kingdom would be in upheaval if our beloved monarch did not arrange this before he leaves. Perhaps the clergy will not get all that they want. His Majesty gave the order to hand over all the gold and silver ornaments of the churches, without exception, so that the Archbishop of Paris himself double-checked with His Majesty what exactly he was demanding from the churches. He replied: "Everything." That grand prelate tried to negotiate some moderation. His Majesty replied that they might just as well prostrate themselves before a piece of wood as before gold and silver, so that everything, including the bell, was brought to the Treasury. Two Roman Catholics told me about this personally, swearing that they saw this with their own eyes at Montpellier. I hear that they have again dared to attack the sacred person of our beloved monarch, and that they found a note on his table on which was written: "If we missed you this time, we won't miss the next." His Majesty, being informed of this, wanted to have the note. But someone had taken it, and so this person was arrested. This happened very recently. At the moment no one here even wants to talk about such things.

Today Monsieur de Roqualte said, and these are his own words, that he pitied us with all his heart, that they would remove honest people from here and replace them with harlots, moreover that he would give ten louis for this to be done.

This is, Monsieur and very dear pastor, all the news that I can give you. The first is especially certain because they assured me of it; and the second confirms it to me, whereas no provincial commander had ever inquired about our condition. May God grant that this turns out favourably, and for your sake and mine that he will confound the lie and make the truth triumph.

It seems to me, Monsieur and very dear pastor, that these events accord quite well with Holy Scripture, and that the deliverance of our holy Zion approaches. May the good God hasten this happy moment by bringing our dear monarch closer to his own spirit of judgment. May it please God to bestow this spirit upon him and make him more precious than gold, even the gold of Ophir.

I almost forgot to tell you that one of the senior engineers fled the kingdom about a fortnight ago. He took with him a map of this town and of Montpellier. His flight has caused fear and dismay all round. They accuse him of having stolen the plans of the fortifications which they have erected in this region. Regarding the man himself, I suspend my judgment; not to gratify myself but because there is a young man from here who went with him and his relatives haven't heard anything from him. Please let me know if the latter arrived in your town. In any case the former must be a real hypocrite, for although I tried hard I couldn't get him to admit anything. I am very angry about the trouble and effort this has caused you, and I am especially more obliged to you because you did this for me. In any case, I believed I was doing my duty. He will be paid in some way. If you find a reliable courier would you be good enough to send the parcel to my niece. If not, hold onto it for her.

I am infinitely obliged to you, Monsieur and very dear pastor, for the pious exhortation that you had the goodness to send me. I will do my best to make good use of it. Please maintain the protection you have given me, and your precious pastoral friendship which I prize infinitely more than all the world's treasure. I beg you to pray to God for me, and you can be sure that I will never forget you, nor your dear family, and if my prayers are answered you will see them crowned by the grace and glory of God's house, which will be crowned entirely with eternal happiness until the end of the ages.

I am honoured to be, Monsieur and very dear pastor, with deepest gratitude and respectful veneration, Monsieur and dear pastor,
your most humble and obedient servant,

La Durand.

The Tour de Constance, February 4, 1760.

All my companions thank you and pay their respects. Please pay my own to all those who are ... to you. Please be so kind as to burn my letter. If you have some good news, I beg you to share it with me.

[In the margin]

I do not ask you if a petition should be sent to His Majesty. You are very wise and prudent.

[Fragment of a letter attached to that of 4 February 1760]

Since I wrote my letter, my dear pastor, I have found out that the letter in question says that our beloved monarch wants to be informed about everything concerning the goods which are in the hands of the stewards, and wants to return them to those to whom they belong; that those who are in foreign countries with a certificate of residence will not find any opposition to taking possession again of their goods. There is more to this: those who are unable to come and retake possession of their property can draw income from their property. This is what they assured me. There must also of course be many things that haven't been mentioned, for important people in this region have suddenly changed their tune about us.

About the young man that I told you about, he disappeared four days after the person in question fled. His parents put out a story that he left with a sick German nobleman, in order

to treat him. Someone who is very close to him told me that they had reasons for spreading this news. I completely understand that they acted in this way in order to protect his property, which is quite valuable. And the other told me that he had discovered the error this person had fallen into, and was well in with them. I know they were close friends. I was a fool, and should have asked who this person was. But I know that they didn't hear any news in the three weeks after he left and that he last wrote to them from near the town which you told me about. They are very worried for him. It is true that he was a clever boy and full of spirit. His family is very attached to their religion, but they are honest people. The person who is so attached to him has a lot of spirit, but is blind. About the one who told me this news: I know his secret, but he does not know mine.

I would like, Monsieur and dear pastor, that you might have the goodness to get hold of the book of Michael Nostradamus for me. You will tell me that I am a crazy visionary. But no, my very dear pastor. I glimpsed therein a spark of tolerance towards our ravaged Zion, since the death of the Emperor, father of the Queen of Hungary; and there is a place that speaks favourably of our beloved monarch. Here, in his own words: "From the old wheelwright to the phoenix, will come the first and last of that son to shine in France, and from each beloved, a long reign with all its honours, more than any of his predecessors, upon whom he will restore memorable glory." He speaks of many other things which seem to be favourable to us, about this time above all. It was easily twenty-five years ago that I read him. The book is still in the village, but they hide it.

It is true, my dear pastor, that we respond very badly to the kindness of God. But he will do it for the love of the glory of his great name, as he assures us in his divine Word. According to his great charity may he will to sanctify us and to make us worthy of his love and almighty benevolence.

I am keenly aware of your kindness toward my niece. I pour out my gratitude before my God for you, and for your kind family. May God fill them with his grace and hold you in his care.

Burn everything, please.

Letter 33 – Benefactresses in Amsterdam

The Tour de Constance, December 3, 1760

Mesdames and dear Benefactresses,

We received three hundred and seventy-eight pounds. There are twenty-one of us so that made eighteen pounds each. We also received four quintals of beautiful Levant rice, a quintal and sixty-eight pounds of beans, and two quintals and five pounds of peas, all of it the best quality.

We are honoured to humbly thank you, and we never cease pressing our most ardent prayers upon heaven to ask the God of charity that he will fully repay you for all you have sent, and that he will pour out his special blessings upon you and your dear families and your property; that he will continue to grant you protection, perfect health, and blissful prosperity into the distant future; and finally that this God of mercy will receive you into his eternal tabernacles, where you will be perfectly rewarded for your outstanding charity.

Mesdames, faultless souls, these are the prayers that we pray for you. Be assured of their sincerity, and of the feelings of respect and gratitude with which we have the honour of being,

Mesdames and dear benefactresses,
Your most humble and obedient servants,

The Prisoners,

La Durand.

The worthy gentleman who was so kind as to carry your charitable work purchased us two quintals and five pounds of peas in the place of lentils, which left us more funds for our provisions.

Letter 34 – The Walloon Church of Amsterdam

*To the benefactors
The Walloon Church of Amsterdam
December 21, 1761*

The Tour de Constance, December 21, 1761.

Very Illustrious protectors and protectresses,

We received eighteen pounds each, nineteen prisoners that we are.

We are honoured to humbly thank you for them and pray to the Lord that he will justly reward you in this life by filling you with all his most effective blessings, and in eternity, eternal life.

The wood that we received is excellent. We are very aware of your godly charity. It will be justly recognised on the day of the Lord. Be assured that for as long as we live, we will keep praying to God to bless you and your dear families. Be well persuaded of this, charitable benefactors and benefactresses.

We make this our special duty and are, with profound respect,
Illustrious charitable protectors and protectresses,
Your humble and obedient servants,

The Prisoners,

La Durand.

Letter 35 – Paul Rabaut

To Monsieur,

*Monsieur Paul, minister of Saint-Évangile,
delivered by hand, to his house, the 15th day of April 1762*

Monsieur and highly honoured pastor,

No one is as sharply pierced by poignant grief as I am by everything that concerns you. It looked as though the sky was going to explode with wrath upon that precious vessel of heaven, and upon all the truly faithful. Just as sometimes one disease serves to cure more serious diseases, I hope that this worthy and excellent vase, displaying so many delightful flowers of the finest perfume, will reap the benefit of all these widespread sublime fruits, and that glory will be heaped upon glory, to the honour which is owed to such a celebrated Joshua. May the all-powerful God always place you under his divine protection and cover you with the cloud of ancient Israel and hide you under his wings. He will do this because of his incomparable compassion for his elect, and for the glory of his people.

I can tell you that I think our freedom is assured, Monsieur. This is what gives me reason for this certainty: on the seventh of this month Monsieur the Major, who has always told us firmly that we will never see freedom, except under conditions which conflict with our conscience, told one of my companions, who is also his domestic, that he was sure that we would enjoy entire liberty, that Monsieur the commandant of P... laboured with all his might for this, and that he had letters of advice about this. She asked him if his lordship would come soon. He replied: "Though he isn't on the way, it will not be long to wait." He told her again that he has done all that he could have done for us. He forbade her to speak about this. We are sure that this will come about, if it pleases God, since he said these things and it is his policy never to give us hope unless he is certain of it. I heard moreover, from a very good Catholic, that they will free our brothers, the thirty-eight convicts, in the month of May. The said lord employs all his strength for the good of our desolate Zion, and no one has ever seen it flourish as much as it will soon. He is a man of the highest quality and probity. Catholic, but not a bigot. He forbade me from talking to anyone about this. To whom will we give the glory of such great marvels if not to you, my dear and illustrious pastor? Yes, it will burst out one day and surround you. But that which must crown all your works, which will consume you entirely, will be much more glorious. You have done the most; never tire of doing the least. I beg this of you by the compassion of God.

I had the honour of informing you that because of the illnesses that they suffered last year many of my companions were forced into debt, and I was included in that number. I tell you honestly that I owed twenty-seven écus. I do not owe quite as much as that today. You were gracious enough to promise me that you would bring us some help, from the gift you had procured for us. In the name of God do not delay with this, for if God grants us our freedom, we'd be obliged to sell our tattered clothes to repay those who lent to us. I wait upon your pastoral care for this charitable favour.

Will you not be touched by my pitiable state? I know that you are too full of compassion to not look upon my misery with pity. My niece has just written to me that a full quarter of

my house is crumbling on its foundations, that recent winds threatened to blow it over, that a room was falling down bit by bit, that all the roofing was entirely rotten, that the floorboards had been removed, that there was no protection from the elements, and that she had no funds, not a cent. You know, Monsieur, that she used up the little money that she received from her mother in order to recover my funds from the hands of cruel relatives. Now both of us find that our hands are tied. Charitable pastor and worthy protector, may I find some help from your godly care, to shelter the heads of two wretched women. If my house, which was razed, be completely lost, it is for the glory of God; but she who resists this winter of persecution could perhaps live in it with another and work on my property. Perhaps God, by his great and unbreakable mercy, will bless me so that in time I could pay back the help I might receive. I deserve the greatest compassion. I am without friends. Please sympathise with me, I beg this of you, and have pity upon my sad condition. What a deplorable situation, to be forced to ask for help from those who owe us nothing. My God! I have no one who can help me other than you, who is close to godly and generous souls. Observe, Monsieur, that I only came into possession of my goods twenty-one days ago and that for twenty months I supported and nourished my niece as best I could; for sixteen months I shall only get a few chestnuts, and very few of them at that because they cut down my trees. But God has decided that I be afflicted in this way from all sides. May he will to give me the strength to suffer everything with holy patience. I commend myself to your fervent prayers, I have great need of them.

Be assured, Monsieur and very dear Pastor, that you and all who are dearest to you have a large part in my prayers, and they will for as long as I live. I make it my special duty to be, with feelings of profound respect and sincere gratitude,

Monsieur and dear and highly honoured pastor,
Your most humble and obedient servant,

La Durand.

The Tour de Constance, April 15, 1762.

Out of regard for the two gentlemen who told me the news cited above, have the goodness to burn my letter. Our consolation is in the name of God.

My deepest respects to all those who are dear to you.

Letter 36 – Paul Rabaut

To Monsieur,

To the Pastor Paul Rabaut, August 21, 1762

Monsieur and Very Dear Pastor,

Excellent, sublime, and precious vessel of my purest and sincerest desires; allow me, please, this last phrase, you whom I honour, whom I respect; may I be permitted to love you until my life's last breath.

I took a long time to reply to you, but this is not my fault. I was trying to unearth some news to share with you; I hope that time will make clearer the little I did discover. Firstly I can tell you that a young disabled man from my region who works with a cobbler in this town was said to have heard that a C[atholic] told his master that the P[ope] had written to their Provin[cial] priest saying that soon France would be entirely Protestant. The son of one of my friends from my region told me that he had met a gentleman – whom we think came from Paris and was sent to Soyons for something – who asked him for the address of the Protestant temple. Having taken him there, the visitor asked what they had done with the stones of the temple. They explained what happened to it and on the day after his departure the local priest told him, an honest Catholic man, that Protestants would have entire freedom of conscience before the end of this year. The Catholic said this to the son of my friend and assured him on his conscience of the truth of this.

Some time before that he met another person, from the same place we believe, who had gone to the tax distribution in Saint-Péray in the month of May. He took away the local priest's right to marry, baptise and bury, and ten écus of his pension. I do not know if he did the same to others of this province.

It was only a little while ago that a man from this town told one of my companions in private that the King had completely suppressed the livings of eight cardinals because they refused to sign something that the King wanted them to sign, and that they were left with only private means. "Their refusal has something to do with Protestants," said the man. The rumour of general peace is in the air here. But the same man told my same companion that this had nothing to do with peace but was simply a gift that His Majesty wanted to give to Protestants.

Around three or four weeks ago Monsieur le M[ajor] received a letter from Paris, which struck him like a lightning bolt and made him turn pale. His butler, seeing him so anxious, undertook to remind him that a man of spirit like him shouldn't be shaken in this way, however distressing his letter was. He replied, "In time you will understand."

Finally, the gentleman in question told us just now that that our situation is going much better than that of Pa..., and that soon we should have our entire freedom, and Monsieur de Fitz-James is working on our behalf. I forgot to tell you that regarding what I have just said about the King's gift – according to them they will have to publish it on the first of the next month.

May God will, according to his great compassion, to extend his good and powerful hand to accomplish his work. The throng began to give thanks to God, saying, "Hallelujah!" May the great assembly soon make its voice heard, like that of mighty thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! The Lord enters into his reign!"

What a sweet satisfaction it is for me, Monsieur and very dear pastor, to see you crowned with all your beautiful works and labours. Those who accused you will give you the glory which you deserve. God will do this according to his infinite kindness and will make you taste the sweet pleasure of receiving the favourable judgment of all those who hold to the sentiments of true religion and Christianity.

I am writing also to Monsieur Tansard and to Madame La Coste, please be good enough to pass on and press my letter upon Madame La Coste. I would have written sooner, but Monsieur Tansard sent us a hundred and sixty pounds, and some days later our ladies from your town arrived, and as I never ask for anything except to meet our urgent needs, I wanted to let some time pass in order to be able to give you an exact account of them. Monsieur Tansard urged me to take nine pounds for my private use, which I took to repay what my companions owed me; otherwise I would have refused it – the money is to be shared among all. I would be very pleased if you would remit to me the thirty-nine pounds that is still owed to me, for I still owe twenty-eight pounds, and I would pay it in full. I paid back fifty-three pounds. God knows how I have lived my life: for the entire summer I went without a dress, an apron, shoes and other necessities. But as long as I can clear my debts before leaving my cruel prison, I will be happy even if I don't have a cent.

I am never spared from new afflictions. They seized one hundred and eighty pounds of my property, namely the farmer's crop which does not belong to me since I have only had possession of my property since the 25th of March last year. I have received no income this year. Judge my condition. My niece is the cause of all my miseries. But God wills all that happens to me. I praise him in everything. In the name of God, do whatever you can to impress on Madame La Coste that the rest of that money be sent to us. As many of us as there are, we will succeed in clearing our debts so that if God grants us our freedom we will be more at peace. Otherwise, we would have to leave a portion of our old rags.

I put my entire hope in your pastoral and charitable kindness. I keep praying ardent prayers with all the strength of my soul to our great God, that he will maintain his divine protection in order to bless your worthy person and your dear and kind family, to whom I give my most respectful affections, and to hold you all under the [shelter] of his wings.

I have the honour of being, with every sentiment of veneration and respect,

Monsieur and honoured and dear pastor,

Your humble and obedient servant,

La Durand.

The Tour de Constance, August 21, 1762.

Today, the 22nd, this pa.... told me that all the parlements were together attempting to break up the convents, and that they conveyed to the King that this would put many millions in his coffers and would alleviate his people from many taxes, that his kingdom would soon be the most opulent, and that the King and Monseigneur le Dauphin were strongly inclined to this idea. They are all alarmed. They could catch them in a hat like mice.

I suffer so much pain in my eyes that I can scarcely see. My health is always affected by some pain. Pray to God for me. Grievs afflict me from every side.

Letter 37 – The Merchant Bonnet

To Monsieur;

*Monsieur Bonnet, Cloth Merchant;
Near the Wheat Market, in Valence, 1763.*

Monsieur,

Allow me to take advantage of this blank sheet of paper to ask you to consider interceding on our behalf with our friends, to stir them up to look sympathetically upon our great suffering, to extend some charitable help to us.

I have been suffering in this frightful prison for thirty-three years. I can say without any doubt that I have never been in such a sad state as I am now. This is not surprising given that my health has deteriorated so much from what it was a year ago. Our companions from this region get some support from their relatives. But Goutète and I, who are from distant parts, get nothing except from common charity, and this has cooled in the extreme.

I ask you a favour, Monsieur: urge our protectors to send us some help – and if they want to send charitable gifts to assist us, I beg them to especially look after their compatriots.

If you would be so kind as to write on my behalf to Madame Boissy, to urge her to use her pious influence to procure from her region some help for us, and to remember my suffering. I am sure that she will do her best.

I pin all my hopes on your piety, Monsieur. If you have the kindness to do what I am asking of you, assure them all of my deepest respects. I have never revealed my miseries to anyone; but my sad condition compels me to do this today. I ask a thousand pardons of you, Monsieur, for the liberty that I take, and pray that you will believe me to be, with all the feelings of veneration and respect,

Monsieur,
your humble and obedient servant,

La Durand.

Take no notice of the faults of my letter. I can barely see to write. My respects, please, to those who are dear to you.

Letter 38 – Paul Rabaut

*To Monsieur;
Monsieur Paul, M... of Saint É.,
by hand, to his abode,
[August 26, 1764]*

Monsieur and Dear and Honoured Pastor,

It is to you that we turn. It is from your pastoral goodness that I seek a remedy to try to halt the poison which spreads against us, as it has on every other occasion.

Several days ago someone told us that our freedom of conscience was granted, and that as a result we would have ours, provided that no one opposed this. They also said that they might claim that most of us are very old, and that they should therefore keep us in prison. This person did not come up with this reason himself, he got it from someone else that “they are too o[ld]”, and that it is out of self-interest alone that they harm us, as it always has been. There may be some truth in this since, when our freedom was announced so publicly, they hurriedly returned to the source of our misfortunes, which they did again the day before I learned that they were acting against us on the grounds of our age.

I have been told that Monsieur le Duc de Fitz-James will arrive in the region next month with ten thousand men. The nobleman did all he could to get us out of here, two years ago, and although unable to release us all from this ghastly place, he released two who were held here by order of the authorities. One woman had been here twenty-five years, the other three years and six months. The times being now more favourable, I beg you to send him a petition for the King, and one to him, to beg him to act in our favour before His Majesty. Perhaps he might receive orders to free us from Louis the Beloved, our august monarch. Try hard, my highly honoured and dear pastor, to break the bonds with which they determine to hold us. If we do not find favour from that side, we will not get any of it from here. This fanciful piece of news sickened us. It left us in the most dejected state. I say fanciful although the Franciscan prison chaplain and the most distinguished people of this town still assure us that it was true, but that someone opposes it.

The person who brought us this very positive news, the clerk of this town, told one of my companions who told him that such news was false: “It will come to be true; we are working toward this.” He did not say “I,” but that “We are working.” The person who spoke to us about freedom of conscience told us that they would release us; but because it is necessary, he said, to pay back the goods which they held back from us – back pay from income from our property as well as the property which is held by the regime – you can guess the consequences from these two factors. I cannot confide on paper the name of the person from whom I learned what I told you above. It is always the same person who hurts us. He is a great schemer and very self-seeking. May God confound his plots and accomplish his own work!

In the name of the bowels of divine mercy, do all you possibly can to uproot us from our dreadful sepulchre. I fully believe in your pious and charitable kindness toward us. But, Monsieur and dear pastor, we have great need of all your help! May the great God, good and full of pity, lend you his powerful help in everything, bless your worthy person and your kind family, protect you all and bring about the great and most desirable work of peace by your precious hands, and grant me the grace of the thing that would most satisfy me in all the

world which is, after the peace of the Church, that of having the sweet advantage of seeing the one whom I love, whom I honour, whom I respect; the one to whom I give myself all the honour of calling myself, with the sentiments of the most respectful veneration,

Monsieur and highly honoured pastor,
your most humble and obedient servant,

La Durand.

The Tour de Constance, August 26, 1764.

Give my respectful salutations to all those who are dear to you. May you, and the sacred talent that you received from heaven, live in them until the end of the ages.

All my companions assure you of their profound respect and join their prayers to mine for your special care, and for all of your worthy companions.

Burn my letter please.

Have the charity to pray to the Good God for us, especially for our sick. Our health is badly affected in almost every way.

Letter 39 – Jean Gal-Pomaret

To Monsieur;

*Monsieur Pomaret, M... of Saint Év.,
by hand, to his abode,*

The Tour de Constance, June 16, 1766.

Monsieur and Honoured Pastor,

Still prisoners, very often in wretched conditions. It always gets worse. It seems that the glorious freedom with which our great God blesses our people, by abundant announcements of his will from the angels at his right hand, and his divine Word, should animate them to charity. Not at all. It grows colder among a great number of our benefactors. If it were not for certain good souls who imitate you, we would die of want! It seems to me that they ought to think about our sad condition. Alas! Our sins must be very great if we remain in captivity during such a favourable time for our holy faith. It is your will, Almighty God; we submit to it with holy resignation. By your grace give us the strength to overcome everything and to remain firm. Pray to him, Monsieur, for us, that he will strengthen our faith and hope. Please help to relieve us, until the Lord has put an end to our suffering, whether by liberating us, or by the Great Liberatrice.

Allow me from here, Monsieur and honoured pastor, to assure you of our sincere appreciation for all that you have provided to meet our needs, both relieving us in our wretched state and for working for the freedom for which we now sigh. We always look towards our precious Jerusalem. You know that you will be repaid everything, most honoured and charitable pastor. May we be numbered among those who will be your joy and crown on the Day of the Lord. While waiting for these unspeakably good things, may the Supreme Being continue to give you his powerful protection, excellent health, and treasures of grace. My companions join with me in praying for your protection. They humbly thank you for all your charitable kindness and have the honour of paying you their deepest respects. They beg you to go on providing your pastoral protection and charitable goodwill to us. We try to deserve this, and I not least, Monsieur, by the humble and deepest respect with which I have the honour of being,

Monsieur and honoured pastor,
your humble and obedient servant,

La Durand.

The Tour de Constance, June 16, 1766

You no doubt know, Monsieur, that we have a new commandant. We are not disadvantaged, for he is as kind as the late M. de Roqualte; but he surpasses him in one thing: he has done all he can with the Prince and the Princess to obtain our freedom. He went to see the authorities in Montpellier. Since then he wrote again to them in Paris and has shown us the letters. This is very good for us, that a commandant is so deeply interested in our freedom.

If you are able to obtain a small bag of chickpeas for me, and if you approve of this, I would like to make a present of it to the commandant, to beg that he will write again to the Prince before he leaves Paris, that he might speak to His Majesty on our behalf. He promised us that he would go again to the authorities to try to uproot us from this sad place. He supports and favours us as far as it depends on him.

I beg you, Monsieur, to pay my profound respects to all our illustrious friends and benefactors. If you can, and judge it appropriate to grant me the favour that I ask of you, do it as soon as possible and relieve us from our misery. Pray to the Good God that he will deliver us.

Letter 40 – The Walloon Church of Amsterdam

To benefactors

[Not in Durand's hand]

Letter from Marie Durand to the consistory
The Walloon Church of Amsterdam
From the Tour de Constance, February 12, 1767

[In Durand's hand]

Very Illustrious and Generous Benefactors and Benefactresses,

We received twelve gold louis: three some time ago, and nine today.

We have the honour of humbly thanking you, and pray to the Lord that he will reward you by pouring out upon you his most precious blessings in this life; and for all eternity with the felicity and the glory which will be the full reward for all of your charitable gifts.

We have the honour of being, with sentiments of the sincerest gratitude and profound respect,

very illustrious benefactors and benefactresses,
Your humble and obedient servants,

The Prisoners,

Durand.

The Tour de Constance
February 12, 1767

Letter 41 – The Elders of Lédignan

From the Tour de Constance, June 22, 1767.

*To Messieurs,
Messieurs the elders of Lédignan,
by hand, to Lédignan*

In these dreadful conditions, the false rumour that we have been given our freedom has so greatly reduced the charity given to us, that I am obliged for the first time to write to you to beg that you will be touched by compassion for our very sad plight. We see ourselves as almost beyond hope for any support from anywhere. Have pity on us and support the trembling hands that we hold out to you. Even if you throw us just a few of your crumbs, we'd be most obliged.

We are your flesh and blood, members of the Body of Christ. We are honoured to wear his livery while suffering for his just cause. You would know that you cannot give us even a single grain of wheat that will not be repaid to you. You will be lending to the Lord, who will return this benefit back to you, and you will receive this praise on the Day of the Lord: to be called by him, "Blessed of the Father." On that great day he will compensate you, as if it had been done for himself, the favour that I ask of you. I hope for this grace from your charitable piety. I hope that you will pay head to our piteous cry, and that those suffering for so many years for the cause of the holy Gospel will find susceptible and tender hearts among you.

There remains for me nothing more than to go on praying my most ardent and sincere prayers for you and your dear families. May God always protect you and pour out upon you all of his most effective blessings from heaven on high, and from the earth below, and to grant you the gift of divine peace now, and the happiness of glory for all eternity. These are some of the prayers which I make for you and for all our brothers in Christ.

Be certain, I pray you Messieurs, of their sincerity and of the sentiments of respect with which I have the honour of being,

Messieurs,

Your humble and obedient servant,

Durand.

The Tour de Constance, June 22, 1767.

[Postscript]

The Tour de Constance, June 22, 1767.

If you would have the goodness to convey my respectful salutations to Monsieur your worthy pastor, although I do not have the honour of knowing him, I would be most obliged to you. I beg him to grant us a share in his fervent prayers and pastoral care. My companions assure you of their respect and ask you for the same favours. Help us as soon as possible, I beg you, in the name of the bowels of mercy of the God of charity.

Letter 43 – The Walloon Church of Amsterdam

To benefactors

To the consistory of the Walloon Church of Amsterdam
From Bouchet de Pranles, August 7, 1772

Honoured Messieurs and Generous Benefactors,

I will not give a detailed description of my suffering. Others have no doubt related this to you. I will just affirm that my life has been a succession of tribulations and persecutions which have reduced me to the most wretched state. I have remained silent because the Lord himself did so.

You sweetened my bitter lot, Messieurs and generous benefactors, by your charitable beneficence, that the worthy M[onsieur] R[abaut]... p[astro], passed on to me. What do I owe you, Messieurs? I owe you my life! I am very aware of such a great benefit. I don't have the words to express to you my feelings of such sincere gratitude. My heart burns for such great favour. My tears are a faithful witness to my sentiments. They stop my pen from writing. Would I have dared to hope for a pension of two hundred livres if you were not clothed with the greatest virtue, which makes those who have the honour to possess it resemble the Son of God?

Yes, Messieurs, once again I owe you my life, since you are so good as to sustain me. I want to use whatever days may remain to me to ask my God to fill you with his most precious graces from heaven on high, and with all his blessings from the earth below, beyond the span of human life; and that in the end you will be accepted into eternal happiness, where you will receive the full reward for all of your gifts.

I have the honour of being, with sentiments of a most respectfully sincere gratitude,
Honoured Messieurs and Generous Benefactors,
Your humble and obedient servant,

Durand.

Bouchet de Pranles, August 7, 1772.

Allow me, Messieurs and honoured benefactors, to beg you to keep up your protection for me. I dare to assure all those who are close to you of my respectful obedience.

Letter 44 – The Walloon Church of Amsterdam

Received at the consistory of the Walloon Church of Amsterdam

August 7, 1772

I received 200 livres that monsieur Paul Rabaut, pastor, had the goodness to send me.
I very humbly thank him for his goodness and all those who extended such a gift to me.
I offer the most ardent prayers for the protection and long and happy prosperity of all, and
am with veneration and most sincere gratitude,

Monsieur,
your humble and obedient servant,

Durand.

Bouchet de Pranles, August 7, 1772.

Letter 45 – The Walloon Church of Amsterdam

To a benefactor from the Walloon Church of Amsterdam

July 25, 1773

Monsieur,

I received the two hundred livres that monsieur Paul Rabaut, pastor of the town of Nîmes, sent me, provided by the generous and illustrious gentlemen of the consistory of Amsterdam. I am highly conscious of the kindness all have shown me. I beg them to be so good as to accept my very meek and humble thanks, and my sincerest prayers for their utmost protection and happy prosperity. May the Author of all good things continually pour out upon them and their families his grace and most efficacious blessings.

Please keep up for me your gracious protection and the help of your prayers, I have great need of them. I put my hope in the kindness of all. I dare to assure you with sincerity and truth that I do not forget you in any of my prayers. Be assured of this.

I have the honour of being, with sentiments of sincere gratitude and respectful veneration,
Monsieur,
your humble and obedient servant,

Durand.

Bouchet de Pranles
July 25, 1773

Letter 46 – Paul Rabaut

To Monsieur;

Monsieur Paul, by hand, at his residence

Monsieur and Honoured Pastor and Generous Benefactor,

After assuring you of the sincerity of my respect and gratitude for all the kindness that you have shown me, I must tell you that I have been informed that you have not received a receipt for the forty pounds that you sent to poor Chambon. I confirm, Monsieur, that this sum was given to him, and twelve pounds to me, for which I was honoured to give you my receipt. But the poor man is in great need. So please be so kind as to pass onto him what he is owed since then, for he is in need. You can, I am informed, use the gentleman who will deliver my letter to Monsieur Regard to deliver the sum to him. I beg you to remember the poor old man. Your rare kindness is the grounds for my hope. He pays a thousand compliments to you and to his benefactors.

I would have sent you my letter of thanks to my generous friends in foreign countries, but I have only this single sheet of bad paper.

I do not know if Madame Boissy is still in your good country. I have had no news from her. I beg you to honour me with your news my dear pastor. News is indispensable to me in my sad and pitiable condition. I have no other consolation in my bitter remorse than Scripture and your precious letters, but they are so rare. Lavish them a little more upon me, I implore you by the bowels of Christ's mercy. Have compassion for a creature who has no consolation except for twice-yearly communion, to which she drags herself as best she can. Goutète and I talk about you every day. I cheer up a little then. Continue to offer me your pastoral protection, which I will try to make myself worthy of. Pray to the Lord, that he will strengthen me.

Be assured, dear and honoured pastor, that I do not forget you or your kind family in my prayers. May these be fully granted! You will be crowned with so many different favours. Be assured, Monsieur and dear pastor, of my sincerity and gratitude and the respectful feelings with which I have the honour of being,

Monsieur and highly honoured pastor and generous benefactor,
Your humble and obedient servant,

Durand.

Bouchet de Pranles, December 26, 1773.

Please be kind enough to pass on my respectful greetings to your worthy wife and to all your kind family, whom I cherish infinitely. If you see Madame Durand of Belle-Croix, my dearest cousin, I would be grateful if you could assure her of my deepest respects. I do not forget her.

Overlook, please, my scribble. My niece is very weak. Goutète assures you of her deepest respects.

Letter 47 – The Walloon Church of Amsterdam*To the benefactors of Amsterdam*

Walloon Church of Amsterdam
 July 26, 1774

Bouchet de Pranles, July 26, 1774

I confirm that I have received, by way of the kindness of Monsieur Paul R[about], p[astor], from the town of Nîmes, the sum of two hundred pounds, namely the pension that my generous and charitable benefactors of the sacred consistory of Amsterdam are good enough to grant to me.

Conscious of such great favour, I humbly thank them all and beg them to be absolutely certain that if my prayers are granted, graces, favours, and benedictions from heaven on high and from the earth below will pour out upon their worthy persons, on their precious families and on all they own; and finally, having enjoyed the happiest days, beyond the normal span of human life, they might all be lifted to the heavenly feast of happiness and glory.

I beg you to maintain to me the grace and charity of your pious protection. In this sweet hope I have the honour of being, with feelings of sincere gratitude and deep respect,
 Messieurs, generous benefactors,
 your humble and obedient servant,

Durand.

Overlook, please, my scribble. I am convalescing from a long and severe illness.

Letter 48 – The Walloon Church of Amsterdam

To the benefactors

Walloon Church of Amsterdam, October 15, 1775

*Messieurs the generous deacons,
elders of the sacred consistory of Amsterdam*

Bouchet de Pranles, October 15, 1775

Messieurs, highly Honoured and Generous Benefactors,

I have received the two hundred livres that you, in your pious and charitable benevolence, have been so kind as to send to me. I am always highly mindful of this. I lack the words to express the feelings of a heart which only goes on beating thanks to your godly generosity.

God knows the ardent prayers that I pray to him in your favour, and that of your beloved families. If they are fulfilled, you will have nothing to desire either in this life, or for eternity, since you will all be crowned with all the favours of nature and treasures of grace in this life, and by glory and happiness in eternity.

I have the honour of being, with the liveliest sentiments of sincere and respectful gratitude,

Messieurs, honoured and generous benefactors,
your humble and obedient servant,

Durand.

In fulfilling my temporal needs, do not refuse me those of a spiritual nature, which I desperately require.

Allow me to beg you, Messieurs and dear benefactors, to pass on my respectful greetings to all those who are dear to you.

[In Paul Rabaut's handwriting:]

Bouchet de Pranles,
October 15, 1775,
Paul Rabaut.

