

La Puissance Paternelle: The Clément Affair, A Socio-Anthropological Reading¹

Richard M. Tristano, Ph.D.²

Some forty years ago Brother Bonaventure Miner wrote a brief essay, "La Salle and the Social Order of Louis XIV," in which he wrote, "In the context of these political and social factors, it is clear enough that Saint La Salle moved with the times. He did not seriously question the social order, much less try to work against it. Even the briefest perusal of his life indicates his acceptance, if not his actual endorsement, of the forces that were set in motion by the king and his ministers."³ Brother Bonaventure adds that De La Salle also recognized that an increasing number of families paid the price for this new social order, which particularly had economic effects on the children of the artisans living in the cities and towns.

This is a good starting point not because it is right or wrong, but because it is incomplete and will allow the presentation of a "better-put" question: what was De La Salle's relationship with the social order? De La Salle was indeed a man of his time connected to the Reformation, both Catholic and Calvinist, and to the importance of childhood and Christian education, episcopal catechisms, Augustinian ideas on human nature, and the temporally defined rules he imposed on himself. While he officially disassociated himself from Jansenism he shared certain Jansenist affinities, and had close personal relationships with some Jansenists. Emphasizing De La Salle's connections with unorthodox influences is important because they have been understudied. However, he was a profoundly Catholic thinker, thoroughly integrated into an increasingly devout French culture. He endorsed and participated in the royal policy to convert the French Protestants, and he respected the authority of the pope to intervene in the Gallican church.

De La Salle's Mental World

This is already a more complex depiction of John Baptist de La Salle than the traditional portrait of a super-orthodox saint. He was indeed a man of his times, but the times were contentious with increasing novelties. An earlier contemporary, Galileo Galilei, comes to mind, a dedicated Catholic but an innovator who reinvented the relationship between religion and science. Paradox was not hard to come by. One mechanism for reconciling the paradoxical aspects of De La Salle's mental world was the boundary between his personal and public life. So, as Brother Bonaventure suggested, De La Salle generally supported the status quo publicly, or perhaps more accurately, he was not engaged in public political discourse, but in more personal ways he undermined some of the central tenets of the *ancien régime*. Of course, the distinction between private and public is artificial and limited, stories were told and information leaked out from the community about De La Salle's private life and sometimes became an issue, as in the Marseille episode. To use a medieval metaphor, he was not bombarding the ramparts of the regime with missiles but tunneling under the edifice itself. This is the other De La Salle, the "social revolutionary." There were some who perceived this clearly enough and it cost him dearly. This "revolutionary" side of De La Salle is socio-anthropological because not only does De La Salle

traverse social class but cultures as well. Indeed, it was his cultural transformation that was the most personal, even harrowing, challenge for him and was the basis for the most radical part of his thought. The method by which he accomplished this transformation was fundamentally mental, an act of sheer will, and must be understood as part of his mental world.

The Clément Affair

The place to begin is Blain's account of the Clément affair which is particularly valuable because he had access to a memorandum De La Salle wrote in his legal defense.⁴ The Abbé Jean-Charles Clément, age twenty-three, approached De La Salle in December 1707 with a proposal to collaborate on a project to raise homeless boys and teach them a trade. When the Founder explained that this was not within the scope of the Institute, the Abbé accepted De La Salle's alternative suggestion to establish a school to train rural schoolmasters. With a friend of De La Salle's, Louis Rogier, acting as intermediary, De La Salle agreed to provide a down payment of 5200 *Livres* to buy a property to house the school in October 1708. In February 1711, while journeying to the south to visit the still newly-established schools there, De La Salle received letters from Paris informing him of a lawsuit initiated by the Abbé's father, Julien Clément. De La Salle was quickly found guilty of suborning a minor, forfeited his down payment, and was liable to be arrested. De La Salle fled Paris and returned to his tour of the southern schools. These are the barebones facts of the case.

Blain makes it clear that the younger Clément had every good intention and proceeded properly, obtaining the permission of the archbishop of Paris for the project and an exemption from billeting troops from the king. He attributes his ultimate bad faith to the pressure put on him by his father. This is an essential point but one that tends to go unnoticed because Blain treats the affair as a sort of morality play. Clément *père* was evil, Clément *fils* was "either very weak or very clever," and De La Salle was long suffering. Blain uses all sorts of imagery linking Jesus' trial to De La Salle's in terms like "the case of a man whom God wished to crucify" and "just as Jesus was in the hands of Pilate." "When the verdict went against him because no one took his part in spite of his innocence, he accepted it in the way that Jesus Christ accepted the judgment of Pilate: silently and with patient equanimity."⁵ Blain claims not to understand how all this could have happened: "What is incomprehensible is how a twenty-two or twenty-three-year-old ecclesiastic could agree to join forces with his father and declare himself the adversary of De La Salle in a petition so injurious to the reputation of this holy man." Yet it is unlikely that Blain was so socially naïve, for he scatters some strong clues in his account that could have provided the means to comprehend and explain the affair.

"Certainly, the son could have opposed the fury of his father by pointing out to him that every age is appropriate for doing good works." Really? Does Blain really not understand the laws and traditions governing paternal authority in contemporary France? He almost certainly did but sublimated them to his moral interpretation, to enhance De La Salle's suffering. He notes, for instance, that De La Salle's "interests and honor were at stake." By interests he surely means the money that was in danger of being forfeited, but he also recognizes that French society was an honor-based one. Similarly, he notes that all offers to settle were refused, that this was not an issue of money. They wanted "the holy man to pay for forfeiting his honor and his liberty," "those people wished to ruin the holy man," and they treated him "with extreme discourtesy." In

the end, Blain creates a bit of a quandary. An earnest young man who turns on De La Salle, an angry and vengeful father, a friend who joins the other side, a determination to humiliate and to destroy the reputation of De La Salle. These are the elements around which Blain could have explained the Clément affair but which he failed to pursue. In many ways, this is the classic example of the difference between a hagiographical and a socio-anthropological reading of De La Salle's life.

Blain's error was focusing on the son when it is the father who merits scrutiny, for they were by no means equal.⁶ That father, Julien Clément (1648-1728), was one of several physicians attached to the court and who, through service to the king, was ennobled.⁷ Clément was ambitious enough to marry the daughter of his teacher, Jacques Lefèvre, a renowned obstetrician. A second marriage to the daughter of a minor noblemen, produced four children, including our Jean-Charles, who became abbot of the royal abbey of Saint Calais.⁸

The key to Julien Clément's advancement was his service to Louis XIV. Led blindfolded to a secret room, he delivered one of Madame de Montespan children, sired by the king.⁹ Eventually, he presided over the births of the first child of the Dauphine, Marie-Adelaide of Savoy, went three times to Spain to deliver the children of the Dauphine's sister, Marie-Louise Gabriella of Savoy, queen of Spain and wife of Philip V of Spain, Louis's grandson. He attended for nearly seventy hours the birth of the Duke of Burgundy on 6 August 1682, the first grandson of Louis XIV. He also delivered the son of the latter, namely the Duke of Anjou on 15 February 1710, the third great-grandson of Louis XIV and his successor as Louis XV. This delivery was a breeched birth. The *Memoires* of the Duke de Saint Simon refer to the advanced pregnancy of the Duchess of Burgundy who wished to accompany the royal party to Fontainebleau. Clément was consulted and declared that the journey would place her in danger and king forbade her to go.¹⁰ The king trusted him with the supreme responsibility of preserving the dynasty.

Named first head valet of the duchess of Burgundy on 22 January 1707, Louis XIV issued a letter of ennoblement in August 1711, putting a condition that he not abandon the practice of his art, "so that the princesses of the blood, whose happy fertility had given so many princes and princesses to the royal family, were not deprived of effective help to increase the number, and that the most qualified women, as well as those of any other state can also benefit from the opportunity." The letter is written in intimate terms of "our dear and beloved Clément" and included the proviso in order "to give a more authentic testimony of his esteem" a full coat of arms with the playful motto "si regnare cupis, regnet clemencia tecum" (if you would reign, let clemency reign with you).¹¹ Clément's rise was quite extraordinary.

We know that a summons for De La Salle to appear in court was filed on 23 January 1712, five months after Clément's ennoblement.¹² Given the time it takes to plan, draw up, file, and execute the necessary documents, this was probably as immediately after ennoblement as possible. There can be little doubt that the prosecution of De La Salle was connected to Julien Clément's new social status. What motivated Julien Clément to take this step more than three years after the founding of the partnership between De La Salle and his son, that seemed to have been entirely amicable?

In 1700, France was still a society of orders, three to be precise: the clergy, the nobility, and everyone else, an idea traceable to the twelfth century.¹³ The last were the *Laboratores*, the order identified by their function to work, while the clergy (*Oratores*) prayed and the nobility (*Bellatores*) fought. Of course, much had changed over six hundred years, the third estate had considerably diversified from its peasant origins. The nobility too had diversified, the old nobility of the sword no longer constituted a feudal army and it was being challenged by the “Robe,” a nobility of legal magistrates who sat in the *parlements* and could hand down their offices to their sons. Each of these orders shared a culture, a common lifestyle, similar sources of wealth, parallel interests, and distinguishing features such as the right to wear a sword or robe that gave them their common names. Both the clergy and nobility were privileged, largely tax-exempt, certain high government offices were their preserve, and they enjoyed special prestige recognized by just about everyone. Each order was subdivided into sub-orders. So, the clergy was divided between seculars and regulars, bishops and priests, abbots and monks, canons and parish priests. Since only the third estate worked, the nobility relied on its fiefs and the income the land produced. The upper clergy relied on benefices. These were income attached to ecclesiastical offices. As with everything else in the *ancien régime*, there were gradations from benefices that provided enormous wealth to canonries that provided a comfortable lifestyle. Many benefices were controlled by patrons, again on many levels, and they could be handed down and bought. De La Salle basically inherited a canonry at the Rheims cathedral from his great-cousin Dozet at age fifteen.¹⁴ And it is here that we can find Jean-Charles Clément who near the end of 1709 acquired the Abbey of Saint Calais, its income, the title of archpriest, and a great number of seigneurial jurisdictions.¹⁵

The Duke of Saint Simon, whose gigantic memoirs illuminate the age of Louis XIV, was among the great sword nobility. He was a reactionary who resented the changes that Louis XIV had introduced to weaken his order. He wanted to restore the old military character of the feudal nobility. He begrudged the ascent of the robe nobility with all its venality (ennobling offices could be purchased), the preeminence the king gave to his royal bastards, and mechanical ennoblement (the practice of nobility as a reward for talent). This notion that social advancement should be based on talent rather than privilege of birth was a modern idea to be taken up by the French Revolution, and here we find Julien Clément, the social climber.¹⁶

But the three estates were far from the only corporations – indeed French society was imbued with all sorts of corporate bodies. The working class was organized in guilds, corporate bodies organized around crafts such as saddle makers, bakers, printers, and goldsmiths. Professionals also had their own corporations including universities, apothecaries, and surgeons, to which Julien Clément would have belonged. The hierarchy in the craft guilds was made up of apprentices, journeymen, and masters. Guilds were legal entities, licensed by the king and municipal governments. They had privileges to create their own statutes, to construct rules for entry, to govern themselves, to collect dues and disburse funds. These corporations were jealous of anyone who infringed on their prerogatives. Blacksmiths and farriers, tailors and second-hand clothes dealers, *rôtisseurs*, who sold roast meats, and butchers, all those whose domains overlapped, contested those prerogatives.¹⁷

Turning more closely to Lasallian history, two of those guilds, the teachers of the Little Schools and the Writing Masters brought a series of legal cases against De La Salle and the Brothers from 1704 to 1706.¹⁸ On 4 February 1704 the Writing Masters brought suit accusing De La Salle of accepting students into his schools whose parents could afford to pay fees. The court summoned De La Salle, found him guilty, seized teaching materials, and subsequently restricted acceptance to only the genuinely poor. On 14 February, the teachers of the Little Schools secured a ruling that forbade the Brothers to teach and fined De La Salle. These kinds of legal actions continued over the next two years and De La Salle tended to lose them.

The source of opposition to the Christian Schools came from the elites as well. They feared that teaching the poor to read and write would cause them to stop doing the menial labor for which they were intended and had the potential to disrupt the entire social order. Famously, Louis-Rene de La Chalotais decried how too many laborers and artisans send their children to colleges to study useless things. “The Brothers of the Christian Doctrine, who are called *Ignorantins*, have appeared to complete the ruin of everything. They teach reading and writing to people who ought to learn only to draw and to handle the plane and the file, but who no longer wish to do so.”¹⁹

The problem was that the Christian Schools did not fit perfectly into any of the existing categories of schools.²⁰ They were like the Charity schools in that they taught gratuitously to the poor. But the Lasallian School did not restrict itself only to the indigent poor but also admitted those who could afford to pay tuition. The Brothers taught a curriculum that was more in line with the Little Schools, but with a new pedagogy, the simultaneous method, and in French. They staffed schools in small groups, usually three, each one teaching a class with multiple rows of students, while the Little School teachers taught alone, in Latin, and each student individually. The Writing Masters’ guild had been sanctioned by the king in 1570, awarding them the right to teach writing and maintaining standards of penmanship. They initiated legal proceeding against De La Salle up to 1712. Finally, De La Salle and the Brothers came into conflict with some pastors and bishops because they insisted on autonomy from both parish and diocesan authorities.

In sum, this review of the corporate nature of French society provides crucial context to better understand the motivations of Julien Clément to initiate legal proceedings against De La Salle. As a newly ennobled royal surgeon, one with clear social ambitions, Clément had to create a noble lifestyle for himself and his family. To be noble is to live as a noble and that meant not working. But Julien Clément was commanded to continue to work as an obstetrician, because his services to the royal family were so valued. This reminder of his bourgeois origins, in addition to the newness of his title made his noble status extremely vulnerable. At Versailles, Clément’s new wealth derived from his role as royal obstetrician engendered this obscene couplet,

Just as many men deposit good morsels in the female cavity,
So does Clément extracts riches from them.²¹

Here was his son, in the process of accumulating benefices, engaged in a common enterprise with a priest who had a sustained record of challenging the status quo while losing legal challenges. De La Salle was superior of a society with no legal standing, a cleric acting as superior to laymen. This violated the traditional division between clergy and laity. Lay teachers

in parish schools was a new idea, recalling that the issue was at the center of the dispute over the novitiate in Marseille. The evidence of De La Salle's social subversion was piling up. Julien Clément risked associating his name with someone who many considered to be of ill-repute, and a threat to social norms. But there were two even more important motivations for Clément's actions.

La Puissance Paternelle

Of all the corporate bodies that constituted the *ancien régime*, the most important was the family. Birth was at its center. *Lignage*, the succession of kinfolk from a common stock, was more the focus of family life the higher in the social hierarchy you went.²² For the great nobility, lineage was essential to identity and status claims. *Livres de raison* consisted of three sections. The first recorded the origin and antiquity of the *Lignage*, its genealogy, dates of births and marriages. The second contained everything concerning the patrimony, its income and management. The third counselled family solidarity, respect, honor, to one's parents, the unity that should be maintained between brothers.²³ These were the essential and defining features of the family: the lineage, the patrimony, and the honor of the family name, and they were trickling down to the bourgeoisie during Louis XIV's reign. Family solidarity was one's most important social asset, the one institution you could count on; relatives of blood helped each other. Marriages were essential links to other families, sources of income through the dowry, and the principal method for building relationships and support systems outside the family. Spiritual kinship was established through baptism and godparenting, while the more powerful families gathered around themselves clients engaged in reciprocal relationships. Property was all-important as the means to sustain one's name and honor and to provide an appropriate lifestyle. Real property, containing the family home, may not have produced the highest return of income but it was the most secure and honorable asset and a public manifestation of status. Primogeniture and other techniques were tools meant to preserve the family's fortune, to prevent it from being divided and reduced over time. For Julien Clément, it was his second son, Alexandre Julien, who provided heirs that perpetuated the lineage. Jean-Charles, as third son, was destined for the church and therefore the abbé who approached De La Salle at around the age of twenty. A daughter, Louise-Antonette, became a Carmelite nun, sparing the family the cost of a large dowry.

De La Salle's own household was thoroughly bourgeois. Louis de La Salle's marriage to Nicole Möet, the daughter of a petty noble family, was an advantageous match. The De La Salle house, known as the *Hôtel de la Cloche*, or House of the Bell, was as substantial as the De La Salle family. De La Salle, his parents and siblings, shared the mansion with his paternal grandparents and a paternal uncle. This was a *ménage* of the old type, the extended family of three generations living under the same roof. Over the course of the eighteenth century it would yield more and more to the nuclear family of parents and children.²⁴ The family's wealth and social expectations allowed John Baptist to attend the Collège des Bons-Enfants, which set him on the path to attend university. De La Salle's life, like that of most Frenchmen, was set at birth, any inspiration to alter that path was viewed with deep suspicion.

One of the most important social developments within the family was the increasing power of the *paterfamilias*, the father of the family, and paternal power, *la puissance paternelle*. This was

the monarchical principle that influenced all sorts of social relations from the power of the king as father of the nation, to the supremacy of the father who presided over the household, wife, children, and servants. The authority of both king and father was established by God and protected by Roman civil law. All this was premised on the assumption that human inequality was natural and that human nature was deeply flawed by original sin. “By expanding the authority of fathers over wives, children, and servants, the monarchy and magistrates constructed political patriarchy in its classic form and translated the rhetorical assimilation of fatherhood and kingship into something resembling legal reality.”²⁵

The *paterfamilias* possessed legal rights over his wife and children. He controlled their property, he could have his sons under the age of twenty-five detained by the police and his wife imprisoned for adultery. Children could not marry or take religious vows without paternal permission.²⁶ Serious insult of a parent was treated as a public crime. Paternal control over contracts, especially those concerning property, were particularly strict.

... fathers nevertheless preserved or recovered, in the France of that time, most of the rights granted them by the ancient Roman laws. Their ‘paternal power’ covered the person and the property of their children, grandchildren and other descendants. These ‘children of the family’ were unable to bind themselves by contracts – chiefly those involving loans and marriage – and even with the agreement of their father, they could not make wills. This was because all their property belonged to the father. The latter enjoyed full ownership of all property that they held of him, for he could always undo whatever he had done; similarly, he was the full owner of the profits that they derived from such property; he possessed in addition, the usufruct of their other goods, from whatever source they had come...²⁷

This suggests that in the eyes of the law, the contractual arrangements between Jean-Charles, a minor, and De La Salle were subject to the authority of the father, Julien. In addition, there is evidence that Jean-Charles was intimidated by his father to become a cleric against his will. In a document in the Christian Brothers’ Generalate archive, there is reference to Julien Clément’s strategy to force his younger son to *enter into Holy Orders and that he did so without a priestly vocation*.²⁸ Such was the power of *paterfamilias* over a minor son.

These legal privileges were buttressed by religion. Jean Delumeau and Daniel Roche have argued for a massive movement to Christianize ways of thinking and collective behaviors (*christianiser mentalités et les comportements collectifs*). The Renaissance brought with it a revival of classical culture, Roman law, and greater emphasis on the father as the guarantor of stability. He ruled by divine right; fathers were gods on earth. The spiritual basis for their power was the Fourth Commandment and Paul’s *Letter to the Ephesians* (5:22-33). The Council of Trent under Protestant attack reinforced all of the sacraments and sought to buttress the stability of the family through the sacrament of marriage. It condemned clandestine marriages, imposed new regulations requiring the priest to act as witness, and the announcement of the banns to the community. The seventeenth century was the golden age of the paternal monarchy, spanning the trinity, the king and the *paterfamilias*. The father’s authority was uncontested, he engendered, nourished, raised up, instructed and it was he who transmitted heritage from father to son. “The ideal relationship of father and son was the fundamental hierarchical relationship and the model

for all others.”²⁹ While God is our real father, the father of the family was the image of God on earth. As one writer suggested, it is the good God who has the power to beget and rule, “the father of all fathers,” who “governs the world with as much ease as if it were just a house.” Saint Joseph was increasingly depicted as the ideal father and head of the family, the model of the faithful father in popular culture and whose intercession was increasingly sought. In turn, the Holy Family, as the epitome of the Christian family, became a standard topic for sermons.³⁰ When Blain expressed his surprise that the abbé followed his father’s wishes and turned against De La Salle, implying that the son could defy his father, he ignored the reality of “paternal power,” because he crafted a spiritual narrative instead of a historical one. And when De La Salle entered into a legal agreement with a minor and one who was a member of a family about to make a strategic leap into the privileged noble estate, he placed himself in the midst of these powerful social forces.

But there was something personal in Julien Clément’s legal action against De La Salle, the second factor that explains his legal action. It was something that tapped into the epicenter of the *ancien régime*, something that infuriated the surgeon and triggered bitter contempt for the priest. De La Salle was class traitor. Fernand Braudel, Febvre’s student, put it this way:

The bourgeoisie turned class traitor all the more readily since the money which distinguished rich from poor was in the sixteenth century already appearing to be an attribute of nobility ... If the social order seems to have been modified, the change was sometimes more apparent than real. The bourgeoisie was not always pushed out, brutally liquidated. It turned class traitor ... The chief ambition of these pseudo-bourgeois was to reach the ranks of the aristocracy, to be absorbed into it, or at the very least to marry their richly-dowered daughters to a nobleman ... But in 1615 the same spectacle could be seen in France ... It was the same everywhere in the seventeenth century, for the class barrier was always being crossed and social censure was ever on the watch.³¹

Julien Clément epitomized the ambition of the “pseudo-bourgeois.” Jean Francois Sacombe (1750-1822) in his poem *Luciniade*, attacked contemporary obstetrical practices. There he lampooned the physician for his greed,

Clément owed his vogue and his credit at random
He enriched art less than art enriched him.
Obstetrician of harlots, despite Lucine,
Clément made a fortune where ... he ruined many loves.³²

De La Salle’s conversion was social and cultural as well as religious. He not only challenged the social order, he inverted it. Indeed, his treason was the mirror image, the very opposite of what Braudel describes. While the typical bourgeois class traitor earned the resentment of the aristocrat as a nouveau interloper, it at least affirmed the desirability and status of aristocracy. On the other hand, De La Salle’s downward movement cast aspersions on both the validity of the bourgeoisie and their aristocratic aspirations. Julien Clément’s climb from the nephew of a barber to a noble first valet of the Duchess of Burgundy was invalidated; he despised De La Salle because he represented the negation of who he was and who he strived to become. The most immediate threat, though, was the partnership between his son and the Founder that risked

having his family contaminated by this social rebel, this criminal. He wanted to expose De La Salle to public ridicule because he represented a radical rejection of the *ancien régime* and this was one of the reasons for Clément's swift legal victory. The court had an interest in upholding the social order that De La Salle threatened. The most revealing phrase in the court's judgment was its reference to " ... Priest and so-called or pretended superior of the Brothers of the Christian Schools from the city of Rheims" (... *contre le sieur de la Salle prêtre se disant supérieur général des frères de l'école chrestienne de la ville de Reims* ...). This was both a legal claim, that the Institute had no legal basis in French law, and a socio-cultural assertion, that De La Salle was a mere priest from the city of Rheims. He had neither the legitimacy nor social respectability.³³

This was a priest who once hailed from a solid bourgeois family, the canon of one of the most famous cathedrals of France, but who had renounced both, for its shallow focus on earthly accoutrements. He was a threat to the status quo. This is why De La Salle's conviction for suborning a minor was so apt in the eyes of the court and of Clément. The judgment marked De La Salle as a threat to the family, to the traditional roles of father and son, to the very foundation of the social order. Moreover, this was a subversive priest, a troublemaker who violated the natural boundaries that divided the rich from the poor, who challenged so many of the corporate structures of the *ancien régime*, and flouted the law protecting the corporate legal rights of the Writing Masters. He needed to be taught a lesson. This is likely the reason why De La Salle was not arrested when he returned to Paris three years later, his humiliation was complete, they had driven him from the capital to the wilds of the Midi, the deed was done.

De La Salle's "Social Revolution"

We now have the tools to offer an alternative reading to one of Blain's most effective and important narratives, De La Salle's conversion experience. The traditional interpretation of this defining moment in De La Salle's life has been treated as something spiritual, which it indeed was. But it was simultaneously also a turning point which thrust De La Salle into a whole new social and cultural world that bit by bit not only transformed him and the Institute he founded but challenged the *ancien régime* and made him a target of Clément's vicious insecurity.³⁴

The traditional narrative also describes De La Salle's conversion as a rather gradual and passive process of discerning God's plan for him. But within this story lies another that is equally personal but more social and cultural, more rapid and traumatic, and in which De La Salle plays a much more active role. As he was being guided to abandoning his birthright, his prebend as a canon, and his bourgeois social status, and toward the foundation of schools for the poor, De La Salle had to learn about the poor and to establish contact with them. This was difficult because as the son of a prominent family, he was sheltered from contact with the lower classes. But mere knowledge was insufficient, "He needed to *become* [emphasis added] one of the poor so that he might enrich them." This was a conscious act of downward social mobility, and it was immediately followed by a greatly increased determination to overcome his senses. De La Salle was realizing that his effort to become one of the poor was both a psychological and physical challenge. He gave his valet (a bourgeois remnant) orders to wake him in his battle against the physical need for sleep. During Holy Week he attempted to eat nothing but a broth made from herbs, but he was unable to retain anything he ate. This is De La Salle's first bout with vomiting,

a physical sign of the repugnance triggered by his social and cultural devolution into the class of the urban poor.³⁵

The psychological and physical feeling he needed to overcome was repugnance. One of his first feelings of repugnance occurred in the form of people, the first teachers in Rheims. As he recalled in the beginning, “I considered the men whom I was obliged to employ in the schools at the beginning as being inferior to my valet, the mere thought that I would have to live with them would have been insupportable to me.”³⁶ His next bout of repugnance also concerned the teachers and it came through his revulsion with their lives of disorder. “His human reactions and natural inclinations revolted at the very thought.” De La Salle was battling himself, though here the revulsion was more psychological than physical. Increasingly active, this effort to subject the senses to the will is one of the important connections to his mental world and the principal source of his mortification.³⁷ When he finally introduced the teachers into his home, most of his family were horrified and their response took on the language of Clément *père*, with reference to honor, blood, and heraldry. “They accused him of staining the honor of the family and of blotting the escutcheon by associating with people of such low standing. They said that he was not living up to his blood ... that it was ridiculous not to make any distinction between them and his own brothers.”³⁸ Here again we see reference to *lignage* and family.

His decision to leave his house, whose meaning refers to both a domicile and a consanguinity, is quite literally a liminal moment. It leads to the beginning of his conscious pauperization. The teachers challenged him by pointing out the social gap that still divided them. If the enterprise they have embarked upon fails, they may well starve while De La Salle has income from his canonry and patrimony to fall back on. His response to this challenge was to resign his benefice within which he included another act of social revolt. De La Salle decided to turn over his canonry not to his brother Jean-Louis but to a priest of low birth named Faubert. De La Salle inverted the acquisitiveness of the Abbé Clément to secure the income of the abbey of Saint Calais and the precedence of birth and family. This decision anticipated the French Revolution’s promotion of social merit in lieu of family ties. His decision offended Archbishop Charles-Maurice Le Tellier, the son and brother of two of Louis XIV’s most powerful ministers, who were the very epitome of privilege in the *ancien régime*. The canons, the vicar general, his family, indeed all of the privileged class tried to persuade De La Salle not to shun his brother, to no avail. Later, the bishop righted De La Salle’s wrong by making his brother a canon explaining that “I am offering you this gift to make reparation for the foolishness of Monsieur de La Salle, who gave his benefice to someone other than his own brother.”³⁹ Eventually, De La Salle left Rheims for Paris for several reasons, but the most urgent may have been his status as *persona non-grata*. He had severed himself from Rheims’ society.

The next and most radical step was to give away his patrimony during the famine of 1683-1684, “the most unusual, heroic, and unworldly action he ever performed.” It is at this point that De La Salle *becomes* poor, poorer than those to whom he gave away his wealth and actually begs door to door. This singular act is the real point of origin for the Brothers of the Christian Schools, especially as an extension of the Founder’s personality. It is soon thereafter that De La Salle makes the first effort at composing a rule and designing a distinctive habit. These are both further manifestations of “Lasallian order,” so important to De La Salle’s mental world. The extravagance of the habit symbolized the rejection of the world. The most amazing thing about

the habit is the reaction it evoked from artisans and the poor. “People pointed the finger of scorn at them. They were escorted with raucous cries amidst scenes of near riot ... they were spattered with mud and pursued by those who threw stones at them until they reached the door of their house ... What kind of people are these? They asked in mockery. Where do they come from?”⁴⁰

Brother Bourlette, who Blain calls a “martyr of penance,” thanks to his extreme mortification, was reviled by the very street children the Brothers dedicated themselves to teach. His parents were desolated when he joined the Brothers. They felt disgraced and hoped to wipe away the stain to the family’s honor. Albeit, on a very different social level, their reaction was similar to Julien Clément’s, it was an affront to their family’s honor. De La Salle transferred Bourlette several times but his parents hunted him down and pleaded with him to leave the Brothers without succeeding. The people especially singled out De La Salle,

“[He] was personally insulted more often and more outrageously than any of his followers ...”. They railed at him over the state he had given up, over that which he had embraced, over his eccentric manner of living, over the supposed extravagance of his behavior and his dress. The imaginary dishonor he was bringing down on the chapter of which he had been a member and on his family, one of the most highly respected in the city, the supposed wrong he had done to his brother by not leaving him a benefice by which his birth seemed to give him a right – all were crimes which people had not forgotten.⁴¹

The Brothers were perceived even by the poor as social subversives and De La Salle as a class traitor. In language reminiscent of the Marseilles episode but more socially explosive, De La Salle acted eccentrically, extravagantly, dishonorably, he gave up his God-given status and committed a wrong against his own brother. The people were stunned and offended by his violations of the most accepted and revered codes of social behavior. Who in their right mind would freely embrace the misery of poverty?

Finally, De La Salle’s social subversion was extended to canon law and to the church hierarchy as well. This came in the form of the election of Brother Henri L’Heureux as superior. “A simple Brother placed over a priest, a doctor, a former canon? The Founder, father, director, confessor of the little Community at the feet of one of his children, one of his penitents, seemed to them a disorder that called for a remedy, a monstrosity in the area of government.”⁴² The ecclesiastical authorities nullified the election and restored De La Salle as superior.

This is the social part of De La Salle’s subversion. If he had no desire to challenge the status quo but to act only out of a desire to emulate Jesus and to pursue the apostolic life, this was not the perception of family, friends, the rich, the poor, civil and ecclesiastical authorities. They saw De La Salle and the first Brothers as social nonconformists, cranks, threats to the family and the social fabric, even to the sanctity of the Church’s hierarchy. Alongside this social struggle against the world was a much more personal, cultural clash in which De La Salle subjected himself to serious physical and psychological trauma.

Crossing Cultures: The Personal Trauma of John Baptist de La Salle

Parallel to De La Salle's social subversion was an even more personal and dramatic undermining of cultural norms. Food was one of the most important markers of social and cultural distinction in early modern French culture. Peasants ate the most rudimentary diet of black bread and soups, with meat on very rare occasions. Urban dwellers ate white bread and a more sophisticated diet, while aristocrats gorged themselves on meat. Taste, which food to eat, and how much of it was desired, were social products. In addition, good manners distinguished the rural folk from the urban, and the rich from the poor.⁴³ But most of all, the poor in the *ancien régime* were never very far from the threat of famine and starvation.⁴⁴

The term "repugnance" (*répugnance*), appears frequently in Blain's biography.⁴⁵ Rachel Herz associates repugnance with disgust, and refers the term "disgustable" to that which disgusts. Food is culturally defined, learned and conditioned, but also individualized: what disgusts one person may delight another, while one food, insects for example, might be all but taboo in one culture and considered a delicacy in another. Whether or not to eat meat can become a moral issue for the vegan.⁴⁶ Disgust also has a social function, it maintains boundaries, frames the social order, and weeds out undesirable behaviors. As a child, De La Salle had acquired a highly refined sense of repugnance and overcoming his bourgeois sense of disgust to the poor and their food was his greatest physical and psychological challenge.

As noted, De La Salle's willful impoverishment was a response to the Brothers' challenge to his wealth and their poverty. Blain makes it clear that De La Salle's decision was not principally an economic decision so much as a moral one. The Founder was determined to live like the Brothers, because he wanted to establish fraternal bonds with them. De La Salle was violating here one of the deepest divisions in the stratified society of the Sun King's France and it presented him with deep social, cultural, and psychological hurdles to overcome.⁴⁷ This is reminiscent of the resignation of his canonry on behalf of a poor fellow priest instead of his own brother, the substitution of a spiritual brotherhood for a consanguineous one. Food is a vehicle for anticipatory socialization, by "consciously or unconsciously adopting the ways, tastes, and manners of a social group to membership of which one aspires."⁴⁸ This was exactly De La Salle's goal. In learning how to eat the Brothers' food, De La Salle was attempting to establish the most intimate of relationships with them, and his principal motivation was love. But it was also a conscious decision, an act of will, not of birth, that despite the best efforts of the Brothers to dissuade him, he was resolute to complete. Blain describes De La Salle's state in vivid terms. "He was never in greater distress than when it was time to eat. Nature, alarmed at the mere thought of what it would have to endure, caused him to shudder when they brought on the soup. There ensued for him a grievous struggle, an agonizing conflict, for on such occasions nature and grace lock in strenuous battle, and the latter does not emerge victorious over the former save at the cost of a galling ordeal."⁴⁹ Blain's theologized but perceptive depiction of De La Salle's mental state is expressed in more contemporary terms by Norbert Elias, who describes a process of embarrassment, of deep personal conflict: "... within his own personality; he himself recognizes himself as inferior. He fears the loss of the love or respect of others, to which he attaches or has attached value."⁵⁰ Nowhere can you find a greater contrast with Julien Cléments' ethic than here. De La Salle's descent to the culinary world of the poor was an inversion of the royal physician's rise to noble status, confirmed, not accidentally, in culinary terms, when

according to Count Bussy-Rabutin, Louis XIV personally served the physician with jam and bread.⁵¹ With this gesture, the king signaled the possibility of a personal relationship with himself and his family, if he proved to be a competent deliverer of royal babies. One can well imagine the Clément family feasting in their mansion, celebrating their noble status, while De La Salle was turning his body into a mechanism of sacrifice.

He did violence to his feelings and ate, but he could not keep the food down. His vomiting began when he saw and smelled the soup; when he tried to eat it, the heaving became so violent that he brought up blood ... To win a total victory over himself, he forces himself to swallow again what he had thrown up, and this repeatedly. Before him I do not know of anyone who had ever given such an example of mortification. This torture, which lasted all through this first meal, continued for several more days.⁵²

Not only has De La Salle reduced dining into a penitential act, he has turned it into a ritual of horrific mortification, an instrument of torture inflicted on himself. Norbert Elias has identified this phenomenon as “shame-fear.” “Shame takes on its particular coloration from the fact that the person feeling it has done or is about to do something through which he comes into contradiction with people to whom he is bound in one form or another, and with himself, with the sector of his consciousness by which he controls himself.”⁵³ De La Salle was in the midst of an extreme social and cultural transmutation. He had successfully freed himself from the social opinion of the dominant classes when he begged in his native Rheims, when he designed the Brothers’ extravagant habit that brought such derision, and when he passed over his brother, handing over his canonry to a poor stranger. The anger, rejection and humiliation suffered at their hands did little to disturb him. But his failure to conquer his own repugnance, first associating with the early Brothers, and then actually sharing their food created shame-fear. He feared the loss of the Brothers’ love and respect because of his failure to keep their food down which led him to shame himself in their eyes by consuming his own regurgitation. These are signs of the most profound trauma he experienced in this painful process of radically changing his social status and his cultural moorings, an inversion of the upper mobility so prominent and admired in French elite culture, personified by the Cléments.

Eventually, De La Salle developed a strategy, fasting strictly for days, he created such hunger that he came to find the food previously found so repulsive, to be palatable. Hunger is biological, one of the most powerful human survival drives. Appetite is psychological, a state of mind, a desire to eat. When one feels hungry, an internal process begins that regulates what, when, and how much to eat or if one should not eat at all.⁵⁴ De La Salle was attempting to adjust his appetite by amplifying his hunger to the point that almost anything would have tasted good. His victory, to use Blain’s metaphor, came in the “Absinthe story,” recounted by all three early biographers. So complete was De La Salle’s triumph over his repugnance that he could no longer tell the difference between what was appetizing and what was foul-tasting. “One day the Brother-cook made a stew of only absinthe leaves, thinking it was a palatable herb. All the Brothers immediately laid down their spoons upon their first taste. Not so De La Salle, who ate his entire portion and was surprised when the Brothers expressed their alarm that he had been poisoned by the foul concoction.”⁵⁵ His victory was complete. He could now eat almost anything, even that which the very poor would reject, it was his greatest triumph of the will.

Of course, De La Salle's battle with food had a deep religious basis as well. Food has very strong religious connotations and most religions have rules and rituals regulating consumption and enforcing abstinence and food taboos. Fasting was an essential part of medieval religion. In theory people were supposed to fast on ember days, three days a week (Wednesday, Friday, Saturday) four times a year; on major saints' feast days; and during Lent. Gluttony was one of the seven deadly sins and Saint Augustine famously denounced the pleasure found in the enjoyment of food. Stephen Mennell tells the story of Dr. Johnson whose table manners were repulsive. He perspired and so focused on eating that he never uttered a word as he wolfed down large quantities of food. His behavior scandalized because it betrayed the self-command expected of a philosopher. On the other hand, John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, regulated his appetite by choosing whatever was less pleasing to his taste, implementing a rule of self-denial. It was religious motivation that drove Wesley's and De La Salle's behavior. For De La Salle, fasting had both spiritual and social significance. Fasting was still a central practice of Tridentine Catholicism. It was an act of denial for the bourgeoisie, who had enough food to give up. For the poor, gluttony was hardly a threat and fasting could not be easily distinguished from the simple lack of food.⁵⁶ For De La Salle, food denial was meritorious, for the poor it was a fact of life.

In the complexity of human society, it is difficult to distinguish between the social and the religious, and in the intricacies of the human mind the ability to culturally transform oneself is never total, for memories always linger. In the midst of such radical acts of willful denial, it is astonishing that De La Salle wrote *The Rules of Christian Decorum and Civility*. For the *Rules* embody the very bourgeois ethic that he strove so hard to liberate himself from, indeed, they represent the converse of his personal journey. While he was adopting the culinary culture of the poor, he was aspiring to cultivate in the poor French boys he taught the art of good manners, to lift them up a bit into the behavior of the upper classes. If Brother Bonaventure's conclusion that De La Salle supported the social order has merit, this is it. For in the text one can find precise rules for where to sit in a carriage according to rank, and quite complicated rules for walking according to a precise social order. Civility dictates that the middle place be given to the most distinguished member of the group, followed by the right-hand position, and lastly the left-hand position. "If the individuals are of about equal rank, they can yield the middle place to one another alternately, each time they turn, the one who was in the center simply stepping aside and letting his place be taken by one of those walking with him."⁵⁷ This is truly a social pirouette of the *ancien régime*.

How do we explain this paradox? Most simply, it was the product of the boundaries, the rules, that he imposed on himself and those he enforced on others. He charged himself with very severe mortifications while reducing those he placed on the Brothers. He was much more forgiving of others than of his self, imposing harsh penalties on himself while readily forgiving the failure of his subordinates. He so perfectly preserved bourgeois manners in *The Rules of Christian Decorum and Civility* that in his classic study, *The Civilizing Process*, Norbert Elias uses the *Rules* as one of the great landmarks of that civilizing process.⁵⁸ De La Salle was one of the key figures in the development of *civilité*, and in the transition from courtly to bourgeois culture. This is another Lasallian paradox, while De La Salle had the capacity to transform downward his own behavior and status at great personal cost, he affirmed the advantages of the rules of

politeness for promoting the social advancement of his students in the world he so completely rejected.

This paradox is discernable in the text. On the one hand, the diner has the obligation to obey intricate manners by placing anything that cannot be eaten, bones, shells, and the like very carefully at the edge of one's plate. Yet there are also echoes of De La Salle's personal struggle, especially when the issue of repugnance is raised. For it should never be allowed to be noticed a distaste for anything being served. Such aversions are often purely imaginary, De La Salle opines, and are easily corrected.

Undoubtedly, an easy way to do this would be to go hungry for a few days, for hunger makes everything seem appetizing. It often happens that things a person cannot force himself to eat when he is not hungry seem truly delicious to him when he is. Pay attention also not to cultivate your appetites; as far as possible, accustom yourself to eating any kind of food. To do this, have food you do not particularly like served often, especially when you have not eaten for some time.⁵⁹

Here, De La Salle exhibits a clear understanding of the difference between hunger and appetite. What he advises is really the cultivation of self for the good of the community, in the form of civility. There can be no better example of the impact of De La Salle's mental world, in particular his own personal experience, on his writings than this. Once again, his mental world shows signs of intellectual fragmentation, a capacity to sustain the paradox of simultaneous strategies of downward and upward social mobility.

Conclusion

Returning to Brother Bonaventure's assertion that De La Salle did not seriously question the social order, that he in fact endorsed it. How viable is this contention? Was De La Salle a social revolutionary? Technically no. He was no Robespierre, he had no intention to change the social structure and took no action to do so. Perhaps we can call him a social subversive in the sense of consciously undermining the accepted principles of contemporary society. These included economic acquisitiveness, the primacy and inequality of birth, and the disorder of a sinful world. Is it too fanciful to assert, as Blain does, that the first assembly of the Lasallian community (probably 1686) reflected that of the first Christians at Antioch? Perhaps, but what is certain is that in both cases the assembly triggered a process of self-awareness as community. It is instructive that De La Salle suggested three topics for discussion at that assembly. The first was a rule or rather some more informal guidelines to be tested. This was the introduction of regularity, the subjection of the community to a common canon. In the words of Cicero (*De finibus*) it is "... only by ... observing the Rule or Canon that has fallen as it were from heaven so that all men may know it – only by making that Canon the test of all our judgments – that we can hope always to stand fast in our belief..."⁶⁰ Cicero identifies the need for some mechanism to promote steadfastness to some ideal, in Christian terms a charism. The second topic was a distinctive habit, some instrument to proclaim public distinctiveness, especially to mark those who wear it as constituting a community bound by a rejection of worldly values. Third, and it would seem most strange, is food. "In a word, everything served at table was to conform with the spirit of poverty which the Community professed." Here De La Salle was striving for a cultural

component, the behaviors and beliefs of a group. This directly enlightens what at first seems to be the bizarre behavior of De La Salle as he learned to eat the Brothers' food. What the three have in common is community, the collective, defined by rule, habit, and food, but as Blain puts it, "his followers did not yet make up a true *Society* (emphasis added). All of them dressed differently ... they had no binding commitments." What is most interesting about this new "society" is how typical it is of the *ancien régime*. De La Salle is doing nothing less than creating an order, not in the technical ecclesiastical sense but one that parallels the three legal and social orders of French society. The same De La Salle who challenged so many social and cultural mores, was creating a new order, defined essentially by function, gratuitous teaching, with distinguishing patterns of behavior, distinctive clothing, and characteristic eating habits. Thus, he simultaneously endorsed the social order while subverting it, undermining the dominant culture while creating an alternative and rejectionist one.⁶¹

This seeming paradox is altogether Lasallian. If we return to Duby's definition of *mentalité* as the study of "parts of cultural context which are largely assumed, unquestioned, uncriticized," we can see that just what De La Salle consciously questioned and criticized is not so clear. That he intentionally questioned his wealth, rejected his bourgeois sensibilities, cannot be doubted. That he elicited the venomous reaction of entrenched elites cannot be denied, though that that was his intention can. He purposely rejected the world in radically enough ways to elicit the intervention of friends and supporters to reduce the level of his mortification practices. Yet, he wrote one of the most influential bourgeois civilizing treatises, in order to help students prosper in the very world he rejected. He challenged so many traditional collectives, the guilds, the patriarchal family, *lignage*, while imposing such harsh discipline on himself to create a new brotherhood. Duby wanted to find out what went on in people's heads without severing it from their bodies, and De La Salle was not severing heads from body either, but remaking their relationship in such a radical way that in the conflict between the two, as body had to catch up to head, even physical reactions such as chronic vomiting could occur. If the time in which he lived was filled with intellectual diversity and bitter contention, then his trial and conviction for suborning a minor is ample proof of that nasty strife. And if the *mentalité* of his time was the confused amalgam of inherited ideas identified by Duby, then De La Salle's paradoxical behavior can be well understood. Perhaps the best description of De La Salle is non-conforming ascetic. Recalling the extreme mortification practices he imposed on himself, reminds us of still another source of his behavior, the ascetic tradition traceable to the Desert Fathers.⁶²

In his mental world, De La Salle imposed rules on himself to order that new world he had created. It is little wonder that his social realm was as eclectic and paradoxical as his mental world. Here was the steadfast subject of the king, subordinate of the pope, who undermined the royal principles of birth – who alienated the deliverer of royal babies; who challenged the royally sanctioned corporation of Writing Masters; the faithful son of the Church who created a new type of school, who resisted the traditional authority of bishop and pastor in order to preserve the community's autonomy. Blain and the other biographers describe De La Salle as persecuted by the Cléments and abandoned by the treachery of his friend, Louis Rogier. In truth, the court ruled correctly, according to the laws and the customs of the kingdom, in conformity with those inherited assumptions of nobility, family, minority, and the rights of fathers. Louis Rogier saw the handwriting on the wall and the high stakes of social revolt in De La Salle's actions and he switched sides. As *paterfamilias*, Julien Clément had complete control over his minor son and

his property while he possessed all the influence that elites enjoyed in the France of Louis XIV. As such, he inevitably prevailed over that priest, the "... so-called superior of the Brothers of the Christian Schools: condemned by the court." In the topsy-turvy world of socio-anthropological subversion, this judicial defeat was one of De La Salle's greatest victories.

¹ This article was previously published in *Digital Journal of Lasallian Research*, Opening Perspectives Collection, no. 1 (Rome: Brothers of the Christian Schools, 2018), on pages 68-86, as a chapter of *John Baptist de La Salle and the Brothers of the Christian Schools: A Contextual Approach France 1525-1725*. Reprinted with permission.

² Richard M. Tristano, a professor emeritus at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, is an alumnus of Manhattan College. He earned his doctorate in history at New York University.

³ Bonaventure Miner, FSC, "La Salle and the Social Order of Louis XIV," *A Seminar on Power and Authority* (Lockport, IL: Christian Brothers Conference, 1976), pages 41-46, especially pages 44-45.

⁴ The account of the Clément Affair can be found in Jean-Baptiste Blain. *The Life of John Baptist De La Salle Founder of the Brothers of the Christian Schools* 3 vols. ed. Luke Salm, FSC, trans. Richard Arandez, FSC, (Landover, MD: Lasallian Publications, 2000), pages 588-601.

⁵ Jean-Baptiste Blain, *The Mind and Heart of John Baptist de La Salle*, ed. Augustien Loes, FSC, trans. Edwin Bannon, FSC (Landover, MD: Lasallian Publications, 2002), page 350.

⁶ On the Clément Affair, Richard M. Tristano, "Crossing Cultures: The Mental World and Social Subversion of Saint John Baptist De La Salle," *Catholic Historical Review* 103 (Spring 2017): pages 246-270, which I summarize here.

⁷ François de Vaux de Foletier, "Anoblissements de médecins et chirurgiens de Louis XIV à Louis XVI,"

<http://www.biusante.parisdescartes.fr/sfhm/hsm/HSMx1982x016x003/HSMx1982x016x003x0163.pdf> (accessed 7 August 2015).

⁸ The earliest reference to Julien Clément seems to be François Quesnay and Jean-Louis Girodat, *Recherches critiques et historiques sur l'origine, sur les divers états et sur les progrès de la chirurgie en France* (Paris : Charles Osmont, 1744), pages 615-616. See also the lively but distracted Auguste Cabanès, *Curious Bypaths of History: Being Medico-Historical Studies and Observations* (Paris: C. Carrington, 1898), pages 59-74.

⁹ Frantz Funck-Brentano, *Les lettres de cachet à Paris étude suivie d'une liste des prisonniers de la Bastille (1659-1789)* (Paris : Imprimerie Nationale, 1903), page 155. The racy and probably fictional account of the Count of Bussy-Rabutin records Clément's hunger sated by the king himself, who prepared the physician some jam and bread, [Roger de Rabutin], Count de Bussy-Rabutin, *Histoire amoureuse des Gaules*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Adolphe Delahays, 1858, 2: 54-55).

¹⁰ "Le lendemain de cette visite de l'église des Invalides, Clément, soutenu de Fagon, declara au Roi que Mme la duchesse de Bourgogne ne pouvoit aller à Fontainebleau sans se mettre en plus évident hasard." Duc de Saint-Simon, *Memoires, texte etabli et annote par Gonzague Truc* (Paris: Gallimard, 1954-1961), 2: 653, n.15.

¹¹ "Nommé d'abord premier valet de chambre de la Duchesse de Bourgogne le 22 janvier 1707, Louis XIV lui donne par la suite des lettres de noblesse en août 1711, en y mettant pour condition que l'anobli n'abandonnera la pratique de son art, « afin que les princesses de son sang, dont l'heureuse fécondité avait donné tant de princes et de princesses à sa royale famille,

ne fussent pas privées d'un secours si efficace, pour en augmenter le nombre, et que les dames les plus qualifiées, ainsi que celles de tout autre état, en puissent aussi profiter dans l'occasion». [https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julien_Cl%C3%A9ment_\(m%C3%A9decin\)](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julien_Cl%C3%A9ment_(m%C3%A9decin)) (accessed 25 April 2016).

¹² Armand Ravelet, *Histoire du Vénérable Jean-Baptiste de La Salle*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Victor Palmé, 1874), page 400.

¹³ Roland Mousnier, *The Institutions of France under the Absolute Monarchy 1598-1789* trans. Brian Pearce, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), pages 3-48; 112-146.

¹⁴ Alfred Calcutt, FSC, *De La Salle: A City Saint and the Liberation of the Poor Through Education: a Figure for Our Times from the Age of Louis XIV*. 2nd ed. CD-ROM version (Essex, UK: Matthew James Publishing Company Limited, 2004), page 38.

¹⁵ Jean Guibert, *Histoire de S. Jean-Baptiste de La Salle : ancien chanoine de l'église métropolitaine de Reims, fondateur de l'Institut des Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes* (Paris : Librairie Ch. Poussielgue, 1900), page 474. "Dans les derniers mois de 1709, le jeune Clément avait obtenu la riche abbaye de Saint-Calais, dont le titulaire, Charles-François de Méroville, avait remplacé Paul Godet des Marais, son oncle, sur le siège épiscopal de Chartres. Devenu archiprêtre de Saint-Calais et chanoine titulaire du Mans, ayant juridiction seigneuriale sur un grand nombre de prieurés et de cures..."

¹⁶ Mousnier, *Institutions*, pages 20-23.

¹⁷ Mousnier, *Institutions*, pages 463-472.

¹⁸ Henri Bedel, *An Introduction to the History of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools: The Origins, 1651-1726* (Rome: Brothers of the Christian Schools, 1996), 128-132. Calcutt, *A City Saint*, 2nd ed., pages 518-526.

¹⁹ Louis-Rene de la Chalotais, "Essay on National Education," in F. de la Fontainerie, *French Liberalism and Education in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1932), pages 59-60. On the question of how the Christian Schools affected social change, see Calcutt, *A City Saint*, 2nd ed., pages 677-678. I thank Paul Grass, FSC for pointing out this section to me.

²⁰ Léon Lauraire, *The Conduct of Schools: A Contextual Approach*, trans. Leonard Marsh, FSC (Rome: Maison Saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle, 2008), 208-218.

²¹ Quas bona pars hominum mulieri condit in antro, /ex illa Clemens eruit unus opes.

²² I do not mean to enter into the intricacies of terms such as *Lignage*, *race*, household, and house. For a discussion of these terms see Jean-Louis Flandrin, *Families in Former Times, Kinship, Household and Sexuality in Early Modern France*, trans. Richard Southern, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pages 1-10.

²³ Mousnier, *Institutions*, pages 50-51.

²⁴ Mousnier, *Institutions*, pages 81-83.

²⁵ Jeffrey Merrick, "Fathers and Kings: Patriarchalism and Absolutism in Eighteenth-Century French Politics," in *Family, Gender, and Law in Early Modern France*, eds. Suzanne Desan and Jeffrey Merrick (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), page 103.

²⁶ Merrick, "Fathers and Kings," page 104.

²⁷ Flandrin, *Families in Former Times*, page 130.

²⁸ Archivio dei Fratelli Scuole Cristiane, Casa Generalizia, Memoire Autographe, « Le Sieur Jean-Charles Clément, Memoire à son Eminence le Cardinal Fleury, » 9.19-20. « La vénération du sieur Clément pour l'état sacre du sacerdoce étoit trop grande parer que cette frêle de vénération fut capable de l'y faire entrer sans vocation. » "The veneration of Mr. Clement for the sacred state of the priesthood was too great to say that this frail veneration was capable of bringing him into it without a vocation.") « Dans cette vue il n'y a sorte de stratagème dont il ne

se son servir pour forcer le Sieur Clément à entrer dans les ordres sacrés. » (In this view, there is no kind of strategy which cannot serve to force Mr. Clément to enter into Holy Orders.)

²⁹ Mousnier, *Institutions*, page 94.

³⁰ Jean Delumeau and Daniel Roche eds. *Histoire des pères et de la paternité* (Paris : Larousse, 1990), pages 130-154.

³¹ Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), 2: 726; 729; 733. Yves Poutet puts it somewhat more benignly, using the terms such as “The Great Breaks of 1681-1688, and “the break with bourgeois habits.” I rather prefer the more violent language of “traitor” because it more accurately describes the personal violence evoked by these breaks. Yves Poutet, *Le XVIIIe [i.e. Dix-septième] siècle et les origines lasalliennes, recherches sur la genèse de l’œuvre scolaire et religieuse de Jean-Baptiste de La Salle (1651-1719)* (Rennes: Impr. réunies, 1970), 1:715-717.

³² « Clément dut au hasard sa vogue et son credit/Il enrichit moins l’art que l’art ne l’enrichit. /Accoucheur de catins, en dépit de Lucine,/Clément fit fortune où maint amant se ruine. » Cited in M. Dumont, “Nicolas Puzos : un accoucheur du XVIIIe siècle. » *Journal de gynécologie, obstétrique et biologie de la reproduction*, 17 No. 4 (1988): 432-433. See also G. J. Witkowski, G.J and G. Steinhell. *Accoucheurs et sage-femmes célèbres* (Paris, Steinheil Éditeur, 1891), pages 142-143.

³³ Cited in Armand Ravelet, *Histoire du Vénérable Jean-Baptiste de La Salle*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Victor Palmé, 1874), 403-405. It was also, in a different context, a canonical judgment. Brother Pedro Gil, FSC has pointed out the radically new nature of the Brothers’ Institute. The confusion over just what sort of canonical society De La Salle had founded may have contributed to suspicion of it by the authorities. Pedro Gil, “Proposals Made by Father Barré to La Salle and a New Definition of Consecrated Life in Modern Times: A Lasallian Example to Think It Over in The French Context of the Spirituality of the XVIIIth Century,” *Digital Journal of Lasallian Research* (13) 2016: 1-28.

³⁴ Poutet refers to “internal tensions and mystical forces,” a “mystical conquest,” and a “contemplative life of exceptional intensity.” He also provides an interesting psychological profile of De La Salle. Yves Poutet, *Les origines lasalliennes*, pages 738-747.

³⁵ Blain, *Life of De La Salle*, pages 43-45.

³⁶ Blain, *Life of De La Salle*, page 80.

³⁷ Blain, *Life of De La Salle*, pages 82; 87. Poutet refers to the “renunciation of self-will” as De La Salle was attempting to subject himself to the will of God. This is true, but this “renunciation” is rather “willful” in the sense that it required a conscious decision on De La Salle’s part. Yves Poutet, *Les origines lasalliennes*, pages 724-728.

³⁸ Blain, *Life of De La Salle*, page 89.

³⁹ Blain, *Life of De La Salle*, page 131.

⁴⁰ Blain, *Life of De La Salle*, page 188.

⁴¹ Blain, *Life of De La Salle*, on harassing the Brothers, 188-189, on singling out De La Salle, 189, and on Brother Bourlette, pages 202-207.

⁴² Blain, *Life of De La Salle*, page 223. Note the father/children language that Blain uses.

⁴³ Tristano, “Crossing Cultures,” pages 264-268. Massimo Montanari, *Food is Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 61. Marvin Harris, *Good to Eat, Riddles of Food and Culture* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985), page 72.

⁴⁴ For example, the famines of 1693-1694 and 1709-1710, that significantly affected De La Salle's life. Jean-Louis Flandrin, "Introduction, The Early Modern Period," in eds. Jean-Louis Flandrin and Massimo Montanari, *trans.* Clarissa Botsford et al., *Food, a Culinary History* (New York: Penguin, 2000), pages 351-352.

⁴⁵ See also the use of the term in Bernard, *Two Early Biographies*, pages 282-283, 325-326; Maillefer's *The Life of Saint John Baptist de La Salle* both in *John Baptist de La Salle: Two Early Biographies* ed. Paul Grass, FSC, *trans.* William J. Quinn, FSC, rev. and notes, Donald Mouton, FSC, (Landover, MD: Lasallian Publications, 1996), 62.

⁴⁶ Rachel Herz, *That's Disgusting, Unraveling the Mysteries of Repulsion* (New York: Norton, 2012), pages 232, 46, 21.

⁴⁷ Krystal D'Costa, "What's Stopping Us from Eating Insects?" *Scientific American*, July 24, 2013, <http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/anthropology-in-practice/whats-stopping-us-from-eating-insects/> (accessed 3 May 2016).

⁴⁸ Stephen Mennell, *All Manners of Food*, 2nd ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996), page 75.

⁴⁹ Blain, pages 165-166.

⁵⁰ Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, rev. ed., eds. Eric Dunning et al., *trans.* Edmund Jephcott, (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000), page 415.

⁵¹ Count de Bussy-Rabutin, *Histoire amoureuse des Gauls*, pages 54-55, "Le roi, sans attendre qu'une des deux femmes qui étoient dans la chambre s'entremît de le servir, s'en fut en même temps lui-même à une armoire où il prit un pot de confiture qu'il lui apporta ; et, lui étant allé chercher du pain d'un autre côté, il le lui donna de même, lui disant de n'épargner ni l'un ni l'autre, et qu'il y en avoit encore au logis." "The king, without waiting for the fact that one of the two women who were in the room had agreed to serve him, went himself to a cupboard, where he took a jar of jam, which he brought with him and, having gone to look for the bread from another side, he gave it to him in the same manner, telling him to spare neither the one nor the other, and that there were still more at home." This story may well be the product of Bussy-Rabutin's imagination, but it captures the truthfulness of the intimacy of Clément's relationship with the king as deliverer of royal babies.

⁵² Blain, page 166.

⁵³ Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, page 415.

⁵⁴ Mennell, *All Manners of Food*, pages 20-21.

⁵⁵ Blain, *Life of De La Salle*, pages 310.

⁵⁶ Mennell, *All Manners of Food*, on Dr. Johnson, page 32; on Wesley, page 106, on fasting and the poor, *Ibid.*, pages 27-30. On fasting and the Council of Trent, Session 14, Canon 13, "If any one saith, that satisfaction for sins, as to their temporal punishment, is nowise made to God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, by the punishments inflicted by Him, and patiently borne, or by those enjoined by the priest, nor even by those voluntarily undertaken, as by fastings, prayers, almsdeeds, or by other works also of piety; and that, therefore, the best penance is merely a new life; let him be anathema." <https://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/trentall.html>, (accessed 29 May 2017).

⁵⁷ John Baptist de La Salle, *The Rules of Christian Decorum and Civility* ed. Gregory Wright, FSC, *trans.* Richard Arnandez, FSC, (Romeoville, IL, Lasallian Publication, 1990), page 87, on where to sit in a carriage, page 137.

⁵⁸ Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, especially chaps. 5-8.

⁵⁹ *Christian Civility*, pages 64-65.

⁶⁰ Cicero, *De finibus*, Book 1, 19: 63.

⁶¹ All references, Blain, *Life of De La Salle*, pages 172-176.

⁶² Tristano, "Crossing Cultures," pages 261-263.