1-3-1985

Politics and Scholarship in Seventeenth-Century France: The Library of Nicolas Fouquet and the College Royal

E. Stewart Saunders
Purdue University, ssaunder@purdue.edu

Nicolas Fouquet, superintendent of finance for Louis XIV, created in the 1650s a library second only to Cardinal Mazarin's in its size, scope, and scholarly content. Inherited from his father in 1640 and built at first around Fouquet's personal interests in history and belles-lettres, it was greatly expanded in the late 1650s to accommodate the needs of the scholars and men of letters attached to Fouquet and to add luster to his political career as the successor to Mazarin. Fouquet, however, never succeeded Mazarln as first minister but was imprisoned by Louis XIV as a result of a power struggle with Jean-Baptiste Colbert. The College Royal petitioned Colbert, the new finance minister for Louis XIV, to give them Fouquet's library, but Colbert for political reasons ignored their request. He chose instead to add the important titles of Fouquet's library to the Royal Library, where they served the more exclusive needs of the scholars attached to him.

Nicolas Fouquet (1615-1680) created the second most important library in seventeenth-century France.[1] By the standards of the time it was one of the most complete research collections in all of Europe; yet its creation and dissolution were so rapid that it has merited but a footnote in the history of libraries and scholarship. The significance of its history lies not in its influence on the direction and pace of European scholarship, but rather in its illumination of the effect of politics and wealth on academic pursuits.

Fouquet built the library to aid the research of those scholars who were attached to him for purposes of political advocacy and patronage. By all appearances he intended that it should play a role in his rise to the position of first minister in Louis XIV's government. The library disintegrated when Fouquet's own political empire collapsed in the wake of a power struggle with Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619-1683), his principal rival. The College Royal attempted to obtain the library from Colbert when Fouquet's property was confiscated by the king in 1665, but the College failed to do so, due to its isolation from Colbert's cultural and intellectual clientele. Left without any form of protection, either by a figure of wealth and power or by an institution, the library was sold and dispersed. Some parts of it were acquired by Colbert and merged with the Royal Library. Here the library served the more exclusive needs of those scholars attached to Colbert's own "party" of clients.

Private collections formed the backbone of scholarship in seventeenth century Europe. The Reformation and the declining reputation of scholasticism in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had contributed to the decline of the major institutional libraries of the universities and abbeys. Toward the end of the seventeenth century, the state was only beginning to supplant private individuals and church-dominated institutions as the major patron of cultural and scholarly institutions.[2] Between these two periods of strong institutional support for scholarship, men of learning were forced to master the art of tactical maneuver in a game wherein the stakes were the political careers of wealthy patrons.

This rather fluid "structure" for research influenced the direction and scope of scholarly interests and established the scholar's place in society. The scholar no longer needed to be a cleric to find employment or to have access to books; rather, he found both through the patronage of the great and the wealthy.[3] This sitution, however, made the life of the scholar and the fate of his scholarship conspicuously unstable. Great men came and went; their fortunes flourished and faded; their

interests shifted from books to politics and back again. Strong institutions were not at hand to provide security and to complement the needs of the scholar.

The state was slowly laying the foundations for substantial institutional support. It was creating academies and research facilities to compete with the older educational institutions for the laurels of scholarship. The king's ministers were absorbing the great private book collections into the Royal Library. In the case of the creation and dissolution of Fouquet's library, one sees how the instability of the system of private patronage created a dilemma for the scholar and produced a situation in which the state could assume a leading role in cultural affairs.

The Fouquet-Colbert Rivalry

The assassination of Henry IV in 1610 left a power vacuum into which flowed the noble and the ambitious. For fifty years they tried to outmaneuver a weakened monarchy, but the two Bourbon kings of this period, Louis XIII and Louis XIV during his minority, were able to maintain royal authority. To enforce the royal will they relied on two strong first ministers, Cardinal Armand Jean du Plessis de Richelieu (1585-1642) and Cardinal Jules Mazarin (1602-1661). Yet for the services of these two great ministers the monarchy paid a price, for in many ways they eclipsed the power and splendor of the king himself. Richelieu maintained a private household with retainers, gave audiences, courted artists and intellectuals, and created a dynasty on the wealth of the state.[4] Mazarin followed Richelieu in this quest for power and magnificence. He dominated the King's Council, subordinated domestic policy to his foreign policy, and firmly established the system of provincial intendants on which royal power rested. His collections of art were among the most splendid in Europe, and his private library far exceeded anything owned by the king himself or anyone else in France.

Nicolas Fouquet fully expected to become Louis XIV's new first minister on Mazarin's death. As superintendent of finance he was, after Mazarin, the most influential and powerful minister in the King's Council. Since the mid-1650s, he had begun to intensify his political activities and shape his career in the image of Richelieu and Mazarin.[5] He began building a coterie of supporters, not only among financiers and courtiers, but among men of letters and erudition. He created a facade of wealth and magnificence, and, not least of all, he built a great library in much the same vein as had Richelieu and Mazarin.

Opposing Fouquet's ambitions was Jean-Baptiste Colbert. Colbert was a member of the financial community and the financial manager for Cardinal Mazarin's personal estate. Since Fouquet was the principal obstacle to his own political career, Colbert organized the attack on Fouquet's reputation and built his own party of clients. Colbert's major strategy was to impugn Fouquet's honesty as minister of finance,[6] but he also initiated attempts to solicit favorable opinion for himself within the intellectual community. The growth and extinction of Fouquet's great library can best be understood within the context of the rivalry between Fouquet and Colbert to succeed to the mantle of Cardinal Mazarin.

Nicolas Fouquet grew up in a judicial family. That he had a genuine interest in letters and learning is not surprising. His father, Francois Fouquet, a councillor in the service of Cardinal Richelieu, had collected a good library on geography and history, as well as law.[7] The judicial class, a group of professionally trained judges and court councillors, had developed a passion for books and historical scholarship.

Every study of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century French libraries has demonstrated that this particular group had collected by far the most numerous and largest scholarly libraries of any group in the realm.[8] Why this occurred is a subject for further inquiry, but the influence of the legal class in promoting the revival of Roman law and an appreciation of classical history and tradition cannot be ignored.[9] The magistracy had also become a major source of financial support for those with scholarly inclinations. Scholarly publishing and teaching in lay colleges had supported humanistic scholars in the sixteenth century, but these sources of livelihood were becoming scarce.[10] The magistracy, on the other hand, was expanding, and offered much leisure for learned avocations. Fouquet inherited his position in the judicial profession, but still found its tastes and standards to his liking. He was also influenced by his formal education at Clermont College. The curriculum at this Jesuit Institution emphasized reading and writing in the best of Latin models, and applauded those who were clever and "precious" in the expression of sentiment and thought.[ll]

During his youth and early years as a royal councillor, Fouquet displayed the predilection for books typical of his class and education. He joined these interests with a political career in the royal service. In 1633, at the age of 18, he received a commission from Richelieu to inventory the charters of the Bishopric of Metz to determine whether the duke of Lorraine had encroached on royal lands, a task requiring a knowledge of thirteenth-century notorial handwriting.[11] Three years later he became a barrister in the Parlement of Paris, where he met a number of senior colleagues who were avid collectors of books. Among the jurists with strong library collections were Talon de Thou, Jerome Bignon, Guillaume Lamoignon, Mathiau Mole, and Amelot de Beaulieu.[13]

Fouquet owed his career in government to Richelieu; therefore, he became a spokesman for the royal cause within the Parlement of Paris during the Fronde Parlementaire (1643-1652). For instance, when Cardinal Mazarin had to flee Paris in 1649, much of his estate was seized and sold, but a number of influential councillors managed to save his library. In December 1651, however, in a fit of spite against Mazarin, the Parlement of Paris decided to sell his library. Fouquet supported Mazarin, presenting to Parlement in February 1652 a lettre de cachet from the king forbidding its sale for reasons of its great public utility (Mazarin had opened it to the public). Fouquet failed, however, and Mazarin's library was sold.[14] In 1653 Mazarin, after reassuming the reigns of government, rewarded Fouquet for his support by appointing him intendant of finance.

Fouquet's love of books and literature was certainly more disinterested in the 1640s and early 1650s than it was to be in the latter years of the decade. He attended the literary salon of Mme de Plessis Belliere and dabbled in writing epigrams and light-hearted verse. Fouquet was careful to avoid associations with literary groups with strong political overtones such as the group around Mme de Guenegaud and those with Jansenist sympathies. Although he formed friendships with a number of professional poets and writers, he made no concerted attempt to pension them or to recruit them to any form of allegiance in the early years of his career. Paeans to all his virtues were frequent, as would be the case for any man of high office. The Jesuits were particularly mindful to solicit his favor with frequent literary tributes, because he was considered someone who could protect their interests in government circles.[15] Yet his early approach to cultural matters was relaxed and not particularly

organized toward political objectives.

All of this changed after 1655. In October of that year Jean-Baptiste Colbert sought to obtain support of the intellectual community by commissioning Pierre Costar and Gilles Menage to prepare a list of scholars and men of letters who deserved financial support. His strategy was to use the Royal Treasury to support these intellectuals, thereby obtaining their personal allegiance. In this manner a government minister could create a party of supporters at no expense to himself and be rewarded with the favorable opinion of an important segment of the politically active community. Colbert himself lacked the power to grant pensions, but he hoped to use his influence with Mazarin, who did have the power to use public monies. Mazarin was not as generous as Richelieu had been in providing pensions of this nature, and Colbert was apparendy unsuccessful in augmenting the group of pensioned scholars and men of letters beholden to him. To make matters worse, Colbert obtained for his brother, Nicolas, the position of librarian of the Royal Library. This alienated Menage, who had expected to obtain this position for himself. An angry Menage forsook Colbert's tutelage, joining the entourage of Fouquet.[16]

These events were at least partially responsible for the more overly political motives that began to emerge in Fouquet's fondness for books and letters. The ambition to succeed Mazarin was no doubt already gestating; what was now germinating was a sense of the practical benefits to be derived from the support that the intellectual class had to offer. To organize this support effectively, in 1657 Fouquet appointed Paul Pellison as his liaison with this group. Pellison served as a sort of secretary of state for cultural affairs, finding pensions and negotiating other favors for men of letters who were favorably disposed toward Nicolas Fouquet. Pensions granted prior to 1657 were small affairs compared with those granted there- after. Since Pellison was on close terms with Mlle de Scudery, he recruited a number of scholars from her circle. Among his first recruits was Menage, who, following his departure from Colbert, was all too happy to align himself with Fouquet. The two worked together adding others to Fouquet's "camp." Among those who joined their circle were Jean de La Fontaine, Jean-Francois Felibier, Charles Perrault, Philippe Quinault, Jean-Ogier de Gombauld, Tannegui Le Febvre, and Marin Cureau de la Chambre.[17]

The lists of pensioners on the rolls of the government treasury provide no clues to help determine who benefited from Fouquet's support and who was included due to Colbert's influence; neither had the direct power to grant pensions; they could only make recommendations to Mazarin. One can determine those under Colbert's influence through the Colbert-Mazarin correspondence. Fouquet' s clients are more easily identified. As superintendent of finance he had assigned them to reliable government accounts. The power of his support is indicated by the fact that only one of the literary figures holding the honorific function of councillor of state (i.e., Jean Chapelain) was in Colbert's camp, the rest being clients of Fouquet.[18]

Fouquet's Library

As Fouquet's circle of scholars and writers grew, and as his need to project an image comparable to those of Richelieu and Mazarin became apparent to him, the advantage of building a large scholarly research library assumed a place of greater concern. Pere Deschampneufs, an instructor at Clermont College, had helped maintain Fouquet's library ever since Nicolas had inherited it from his father in

1640.[19] In the period prior to 1655, the collection grew in a leisurely manner, shaped by Fouquet's personal tastes and needs. A number of ex libris titles were scattered through the collection;[20] these do not seem to represent acquisitions of entire libraries, but rather chance purchases from bookstalls offering the remains of an estate. Deschampneufs appears to have done nothing more than record new acquisitions in an alphabetically arranged catalog, for he complained of insufficient time to prepare a new classified catalog or to maintain the collection in any other fashion.[21] He probably gave the library only a small portion of his time.

After 1655, however, the growth and organization of the collections assumed a more systematic and purposeful character, and Fouquet's vision for its use underwent a change. New methods of acquisition were adopted. They were similar to those employed by Gabriel Naude in building Mazarin's library. During the 1640s and early 1650s Naude had made wholesale purchases to fill out the Mazarin library. Typically Naude entered a bookstall and bought the entire stock, paying by the shelf-foot.[22] Similarly, in 1655 Fouquet purchased the entire library of Charles de Montchal, an erudite theologian and archbishop of Toulouse.[23] The collection was especially strong in Greek and Latin manuscripts. Within a year or two he also acquired the medical library of Rene Moreau. Before his death in 1656, Moreau had been a member of the Paris Faculty of Medicine and professor of medicine at the College Royal. Guy Patin, Moreau's friend and faculty colleague, had hoped to buy it, but he lost out to Fouquet, who managed the purchase from the bookdealers who settled the Moreau estate.[24] Fouquet was also willing to go into debt for the sake of his library. Over a period of several years the royal printer, Sebastian Cramoisy, sold books to Fouquet on credit, and in 1661 Fouquet owed him the substantial sum of 10,000 livres.[25]

Perhaps moved by the need to process a rapidly growing collection or to obtain more expert advice in building the collection, Fouquet in 1658 invited Pierre Carcavi to assume major responsibilities in the library.[26] Carcavi had once been a magistrate himself and had built a splendid personal library. Financial setbacks, however, had forced him to give up his career, sell his collection, and enter the service of others.[27] He corresponded with scholars, mathematicians, and scientists, and he kept abreast of the intellectual ferment of the day, including the news of books and publishing. He was also a noted mathematician. In 1658 he left the service of the duke of Liancourt, joining Deschampneufs at Fouquet's residence in St. Mande. Whether Carcavi or Deschampneufs had greater responsibility for the collections is uncertain, but it was Carcavi who journeyed to Italy in 1661, conducting several missions for Fouquet,[28] of which buying book collections was probably the top priority.

In 1657 Fouquet expressed his intentions to provide free public access to his library.[29] Cardinal Mazarin had opened his own collection to the public in 1644, creating quite a sensation in the scholarly community. Reports indicated that 80 to 100 people a week used Mazarin's library, bringing its owner considerable acclaim.[30] Since the dissolution of the Mazarin library in 1652, however, there had been no genuine public library in Paris, except for the limited collections at the Abbey of St. Victor. Although Mazarin had rebuilt his collections after 1654, he had not made them public.[31] Perhaps needing more time to make his library comparable to Mazarin's or simply waiting for Mazarin to pass from the scene, Fouquet delayed the formal arrangements for public use until it was finally precluded altogether by

his arrest in 1661.

With the aid of Deschampneufs and Carcavi, Fouquet had created one of the truly first-rate scholarly libraries of the seventeenth century. By all appearances he intended it to displace the Mazarin library as the foremost research collection of France. The collection was housed in several large rooms at Fouquet's residence in St. Mande, an area on the east side of Paris. St. Mande was close to Mazarin's residence and, therefore, close to the Marais, then a fashionable residential neighborhood. It was about two to three miles from the university quarter, but closer than the Abbey of St. Victor, which housed the only true public collection of the 1650s and 1660s. Most of Fouquet's folio volumes were shelved in cabinets lining the walls of the main gallery on the first floor,[32] arranged by broad subject categories and set off with numerous paintings and statues.[33] This gallery served as the reception area for those seeking an audience with Fouquet.[34] Visitors could not have failed to be impressed by the magnificence of the setting or the quality of his collection. The other rooms of the residence, including the three housing quarto, octavo, and a few folio volumes, were mundane by comparison to the gallery.[35]

The Library Collection

Despite the obvious attempt to impress with the grandeur of the gallery, the library itself was a working scholarly collection designed to reflect the interest of the typical seventeenth century erudit. Jesuit antiquarian Philippe Labbe ascribed its purpose as one of scholarship rather than ostentatious display.[36] Two Spanish Cordeliers, having browsed among the Talmudic and Koranic materials of the collection, declared to a certain M. Renard, councillor in the Parlement of Paris, that even the King of Spain did not have such a fine collection.[37] When Fouquet was arrested by Louis XIV in 1661, Pere Deschampneufs rendered a report on the library. He estimated that the collection contained about 27,000 volumes, based on the catalog in which he entered new acquisitions. About 7,000 volumes were folio, between 7,000 and 8,000 volumes quarto, and 12,000 volumes octavo or smaller. The 27,000 volumes included about 1,050 manuscripts. From 1661 to 1665 the library was locked and sealed. During this period there were rumors that volumes were disappearing from the library, and Deschcampneufs was called to an accounting. He was able to demonstrate that many people had access to the collection during those four years and that the security of the residence at St. Mande could not stop an accomplished thief.[38] A detailed inventory undertaken by Fouquet's creditors in 1665 confirmed the existence of only 19,814 volumes.[39] The inventory revealed that most of the folios and quartos could still be accounted for, but that about half of the octavos and smaller volumes had disappeared, suggesting the old adage that thieves prefer small packages. A number of the small volumes had probably not been marked with Fouquet's emblem, rendering their whereabouts undetectable.

The scope and riches of the collection are perhaps best understood through an analysis of the number of titles and volumes in each subject area. The inventory of 1665 lists all of the folio volumes by title and groups them in the subject areas by which they were arranged in the cabinets. Table 1 is based on the number of folio titles and volumes in each subject and shows only proportions and relative strengths, since they represent but 31 percent of the total collection inventoried in 1665.[40] The quarto and smaller volumes, excluded from the table, were not classified by subject or listed by title, but were counted in the inventory.

Table 1. Summary of the Inventory of Folio Volumes in the Library of Nicolas Fouquet, July-August 1665

SUBJECT	NO. TITLES	NO. VOLUMES
I Religion and theology		
1. Bibles	74	155
2. Interpretations of Bible	127	193
3. Church councils	29	78
4. Bulls	11	16
5. Greek Fathers	81	133
6. Latin Fathers	70	124
7. Church history	90	178
8. History of regular orders	80	112
9. Theology	63	144
10. Controversial works (Jansenist works, etc.)	18	24
11. Heretical works (Calvin, etc.)	81	115
	––	––
	724	1,272
II Secular history		
1. Geography, chronology	130	187
2. Greek history	92	120
3. History of Italy	254	296
4. History of France	248	336
5. History of Germanies	172	216
6. History of Low Countries	90	98
7. History of Spain	148	197
8. History of Britain	33	52
9. Ottoman history	26	28
10. History of East and West Indies	30	50
11. Antiquaries and general	62	95
12. Maps and atlases	–	28
	––	––
	1,285	1,703
III Sciences and philosophy		
1. Medicine	274	319
2. Anatomy	24	24

SUBJECT	NO.TITLE	NO.VOLUME
3. Natural history (fauna and flora)	102	126
4. Mathematics (algebra, geometry, music, mechanics, architecture, military engineering etc.)	338	351
5. Philosophy	141	173
	879	993
IV Literature and humanities		
1. Greek orators	50	62
2. Latin poets	54	59
3. French poets	15	17
4. Dictionaries	58	71
5. Unclassified	213	273
	390	482
V Law		
1. Canon law	98	143
2. Civil law	133	265
3. Customary law	23	25
4. Statutes	106	114
	360	547
VI Special areas		
1. "Livres de figure"	72	74
2. Hebrew manuscripts	50	66
3. Arabic manuscripts	20	20
4. Manuscripts on History	43	49
5. Modern manuscripts	299	405
6. Greek and Latin	388	394
7. Unclassified folios	163	251
	1,035	1,259
TOTALS	4,673	6,256

Clearly Fouquet's library was more substantive than those collections of the period that were bound in red Moroccan leather and tooled in gold to grace a fashionable cabinet and give an aura of literary preciosity. In addition, the substance went far beyond the literary and historical preoccupations of other learned amateurs in the legal profession. It was a universal collection, designed not for one man, but for the scholarly public. To some extent the collections were shaped by Fouquet's personal taste, but in a larger sense they grew out of the research needs of those whom Fouquet had patronized and supported. The large collection on secular history illustrates this nicely. It was the gem of the library. The acquisition by the Royal Library in 1667 of over a thousand volumes from Fouquet's collection on Italian history provides tacit recognition of the value and rarity of the titles in secular history. History was one of Fouquet's passions, as one might expect from a member of the legal profession, and a strong historical collection appears quite natural for the private library of a man of his standing and background. A collection of this extent, however, was primarily for the professional scholar, not the amateur. Pere Antoine Vatier, Philippe Labbe, Barthelemy d'Herbelot, Tannegui Le Febvre, and a number of Jesuit scholars used it,[41] as well as the collections on theology and church history, to prepare their scholarly works.

The other collections in the library reflected the same intent to support the research of the scholarly public. The numerous volumes on medicine clearly formed a professional collection. Fouquet had taken an interest in medical questions ever since his physician, Guenault, had healed him with the use of compounds of antimony, a method not approved by conservative practitioners. Fouquet's circle also included the young physiologist and medical doctor Jean Pecquet, who had discovered the lymphatic system of the body and who sided with the followers of William Harvey in the dispute over the circulation of the blood. During the latter part of the 1650s, Guenault and Pecquet found themselves embroiled in medical disputes with the Paris Faculty of Medicine, especially with Guy Patin and Jean Riolan, who represented the traditional medical science of the period.[42] At the height of these disputes Fouquet purchased the medical library of Rene Moreau.

The extensive collection on pure and applied mathematics, quite unusual for a personal collection of this period, is perhaps attributable to the presence of Pierre Carcavi. Carcavi's network of foreign correspondents helped locate obscure scientific treatises unavailable in Paris. The natural history collection, on the other hand, typified a gentleman's cabinet of that day. These latter works were handsomely and expensively illustrated, acquired for their beauty and curiosity as much as for their scientific content. Given Fouquet's love of belles lettres and the role it played in the salon culture of the day, the rather minor collection of French poets is a bit puzzling. Actually, a large number of French authors are represented in the catch-all category of "unclassified humanities," which also contains works by the Englishmen William Shakespeare and Ben Johnson. Incidentally, holdings of English authors were somewhat rare in continental libraries of the seventeenth century.[43]

A large group of scholars used the library extensively in the later 1650s. We know the names of only a few of these, but the clientele no doubt extended well beyond those who had managed to obtain government pensions through the good

graces of Fouquet.[44] In fact, U. V. Chatelain, perhaps the best authority on Fouquet's relations with the literary and scholarly world, concludes that his chief contribution to the advancement of culture and knowledge was not the pensions that he obtained for scholars, but the liberal terms that he allowed scholars in the use of his library.[45] As noted above, Fouquet had spoken as early as 1657 of the importance of giving free public access to his collections. He apparently never established set days and hours when the public could use the library, but this general policy survived his political demise. When the College Royal in 1665 sought possession of Fouquet's library, they too offered to make it available to the public.[46] Apparently, Fouquet had studied Mazarin's career in some detail, realized the value of a positive liaison with the scholarly community, and was prepared to emulate Mazarin by making available to scholars all the riches of a scholarly library.

Fouquet's Decline

The strategy of establishing a court of followers and creating an image of power and magnificence had worked for Richelieu and Mazarin, but it did not work for Fouquet. In imitating them, he only aroused the suspicion and jealousy of Louis XIV. Mazarin died in 1661, and the Council awaited Louis's decision on a new first minister, fully expecting it to be Fouquet. Young Louis XIV announced, however, that he would be his own first minister; Fouquet was perhaps unaware of the changing political situation. Colbert had gained the ear of Louis XIV and produced evidence that Fouquet was making himself wealthy by embezzling state funds. Attempting to establish himself with the king, in October 1661 Fouquet invited Louis and the court to a splendid week-long celebration at his newly constructed country estate, Vaux-le-Vicomte. Named the Fete de Vaux, this event has come to be regarded as one of the most magnificent entertainments of all times. Unfortunately for Fouquet, Louis was mortified by this display of wealth; his minister of finance had entertained in a fashion which he himself would not have equaled. The following week, Fouquet was arrested and charged with embezzlement.[47] A state tribunal was appointed to conduct the trial. His property, including the library, was impounded while he awaited the verdict.

A number of Fouquet's friends stepped forth in his defense, especially those of the community of letters whom he had patronized. They included La Fontaine, Mille de Scudery, Moliere, Pellison, and others.[48] Colbert, as the principal agent behind the prosecution, worked hard to demonstrate Fouquet's guilt. The tribunal was caught in the middle, mindful on the one hand of the sentiment of the king and Colbert for a verdict of guilt and a sentence of death, and on the other hand of Fouquet's apparent popularity, especially with those who had benefitted from his generosity. The trial lasted for three years, and in December 1664 Fouquet was found guilty by the Chamber of Justice. He was sentenced to life in prision, and his estate was declared the property of the king.[49] Fouquet spent the rest of his life in prison, where he died in 1680.

Colbert and the College Royal

When the decree to seize Fouquet's property was issued, the professors of the College Royal petitioned Fouquet's rival and successor as the new finance minister,

Jean-Baptiste Colbert, to give Fouquet's library to their college.[50] Louis XIV was the patron and financial support for the College Royal, and Colbert, as the most influential minister in the king's new government, was the natural recipient of such a request. The college had a legitimate need as well as a long-standing historical claim to receive a library from the king, but Colbert refused its request. To understand how Colbert could treat the request of a royal institution so lightly, we must locate the College Royal within the structure of seventeenth-century scholarship. Briefly, the College Royal was one of the older academic institutions from the sixteenth century, which had been losing its influence. Although the king of France was its nominal patron, the professors did not gamble in the political sweepstakes of the day, nor did they have a genuine patron whose interests they served, and certainly they did not serve Jean-Baptiste Colbert. The petition itself provides a fuller understanding of the situation. It is presented below with a few elisions and followed by an examination of the arguments presented by the professors of the College Royal and by a discussion of the political motivations and strategies evidenced by Colbert. First the petition.[51]

> Monsieur Colbert has in recent years demonstrated a deep respect for books and for those who engage in scholarly pursuits under the auspices of the king, and most especially for the professors of the College Royal .... His past favors and marks of respect show that he will spare nothing to help the professors in the perfection of knowledge and the instruction of the public .... It is the desire of the professors of the College Royal to provide a brief memoir on their condition and on the state of libraries in Paris.
>
> Although books are the principal instruments of knowledge, the professors of the College Royal have none at their disposal because their salaries do not provide the means for purchasing them. The upper gallery of the College Royal was constructed in order to house a library and would indeed be an admirable location for one should someone undertake to install one here. Nothing would be of greater honor to His Majesty or of greater public utility than to place the library of Monsieur Fouquet, which has been recently acquired by the king, in this upper gallery.
>
> This is a matter of great concern, because there is no public library in Paris but many scholars, most of whom do not have the means for buying books. It would be unwise to open to the public the Royal Library, which is presently in the rooms of the Cordeliers, because of its many valuable manuscripts. The library of the Sorbonne has a large collection of books, many of which are unfortunately in a loft, but which are also inaccessible to all but the doctors of that institution .... As for the library at Saint Victor, which was willed to the Abbey by a Councillor of the Court, it is of small consequence, whether due to the smallness of the collections or the unwillingness of the librarians to make the books available ....
>
> Should His Majesty be so good as to oblige his professors by bestowing upon them this library and by extending his liberality to his other subjects by granting them access to this library, His Majesty

could name several of the professors of the college to be responsible
for the collections and to give an account every six months.

The professors of the College Royal were of course pressing their own
interests, but they were also resurrecting past plans to place a library in the college.
The program of the college certainly justified access to a good research library, and
two kings of France, Francis I and Henry IV, had previously attempted to create
just such a library for the College Royal. Founded in 1537 by Francis I, the College
Royal was conceived as a vehicle to bring the light of humanistic studies to an
educated laity increasingly disenchanted with the sophistries of the scholasticism
stubbornly defended by the universities. To enact this program, Francis I had
established twelve chairs, later to become eighteen chairs, endowed by the king;
half were professors of either medicine or mathematics, and half were professors of
ancient and oriental literatures and languages.[52] The approach of the humanists was
essentially to reinterpret the traditional literature of antiquity through a knowledge
of the original languages. It also attempted to recover the manuscripts of the lost
literature of antiquity. In short, the humanists sought knowledge through the study
of texts rather than through the elaboration of syllogisms, a method prominent in
the universities. It is not surprising, then, that Guillaume Pellicier wrote to Antoine
Rincom at Constantinople in 1540 urging him to watch for Greek manuscripts,
since His Majesty wished to build a good collection for the College Royal.[53] When
plans to construct a permanent building for the college were being drafted at the
beginning of the seventeenth century, designers included an upper gallery for a li-
brary. In 1609 Henry IV made the decision to place the Royal Library in this upper
gallery once it was completed.[54] At that time the Royal Library was housed at
Clermont College, but in 1614 it was removed to the quarters of the Cordeliers on
rue de la Harpe. The upper gallery of the College Royal was finally completed in
1634, but did not become the home of the Royal Library, which remained at the
house of the Cordeliers.

The professors' claim that there was no public library for the many scholars of
Paris initially sounds a bit self-serving. Was not Paris the center of European
learning at that time, the shrine to which many scholars traveled for study and
inspiration? Although Henri-Jean Martin believes that scholars in the early
seventeenth century had easy access to the private collections in Paris, the
professors of the College Royal felt in 1665 that these collections were closed to
them.[55] They also took pains to discount the utility of the collections at the
Sorbonne and at the Abbey of St. Victor, the two libraries nominally open for
public use. Closer examination of the library situation in 1665 suggests that the
claims of these professors were not exaggerated. A regulation dating from 1483
specified that no one from outside the Sorbonne could be admitted to that
institution's library. When Cardinal Richelieu died in 1642, he bequeathed his
personal collection to the Sorbonne on the condition that it stay in the Hotel
Richelieu and that it be open to the public. In 1660, however, the Sorbonne won a
case before the Parlement of Paris that allowed the removal of Richelieu's library to
the Sorbonne. Once within the walls of the Sorbonne, the collection was placed in
special storage for lack of room and public access was discontinued. The library of
the Abbey of St. Victor had always been open to the public. Both Rabelais and
Giordano Bruno had used its collections. The councillor of the king mentioned by

the professors of the College was Henri du Bouchet, who in 1652 had willed his collection of 7,000 volumes to St. Victor on the condition that it be open to the public three days a week.[56] The Abbey honored this condition, but the professors felt either that this collection was too small or that the guards were not permitting visitors access to all the volumes in the collection. In addition, the Abbey was not in close proximity to the university quarter of Paris.

After the Chamber of Justice sentenced Fouquet and declared his possessions the property of the king, the immediate expectation was that Louis XIV or Colbert would be in a position to dispose of the library as they deemed suitable. One month later, however, on 12 January 1665, the Chamber of Justice advised all creditors to present their claims against the property of Nicolas Fouquet; all his possessions, including the library, were inventoried.[57] In May 1665 the procurer general of the Parlement of Paris advised Olivier Lefevre d'Ormesson, chief judge of the Chamber of Justice, that Fouquet's creditors should not expect to receive anything. Since the king's own claims were so numerous, it was anticipated that Louis would probably acquire all of Fouquet's property.[58] This did not materialize. Litigation must have been lengthy, for it was not until 1667 that Colbert actually obtained any part of Fouquet's library, and then he had to settle with Fouquet's creditors.[59] However, rather than endowing the College Royal with the portion of the library that he had acquired, Colbert merged it into the Royal Library. Moreover, Colbert made no attempt to obtain the balance of Fouquet's library for the College, even though it essentially became his to purchase.[60]

The lengthy litigation to settle the claims on Fouquet's property and the necessity of dividing it with Fouquet's creditors no doubt limited Colbert's options for the disposal of the library collections. To have acquired it in toto for the College Royal would have required Colbert to use his "credit" with the king to gain support for the request and to force the issue with Fouquet's creditors. The decree of the Chamber of Justice certainly gave him the authority to rescue the collection. The fact that he chose not to do so reflects the irrelevance of the College in the power struggle between himself and Fouquet. Fouquet's trial lasted three years, and its outcome was uncertain. In order to defeat Fouquet, Colbert had not only to produce evidence of his guilt by using the financial records of the ministry, but to dismantle Fouquet's network of supporters and to strengthen his own.

Colbert's approach to this task was to detach from the service of Fouquet those who were not too reticent to join the Colbert "camp" and to prosecute those who remained loyal to Fouquet. The financiers who had been part of Fouquet's circle were assessed enormous fines and sent to prison. Yet a recent study has demonstrated that a number of these "dishonest and heinous" financiers entered Colbert's service, having had their fines dismissed and their prison sentences commuted. They quickly obtained positions in government as clients of Colbert.[61]

Colbert used the same tactics to weaken Fouquet's support in the cultural and intellectual community and further to enhance his own position. After Fouquet's arrest in 1661, Colbert assumed responsibility for state finances. None of the men of letters who had been receiving royal pensions were paid by the Royal Treasury in 1662,[61] a not so subtle reminder that continued loyalty to Fouquet was no longer profitable and that Colbert was now the rising star with favors to dispense. Perhaps the first man of letters to defect from Fouquet' s circle was Charles Perrault.[63] He became secretary of the petite acadimie, established by Colbert in 1663 to obtain

advice on cultural and intellectual matters. Another member of the petite academie, Jean Chapelain, a long-time trusted associate of Colbert and an enemy of Fouquet, prepared for Colbert a list of scholars and literary figures deserving financial support.[64]

During the next couple of years many, or perhaps most, of those who had followed Fouquet were pensioned by Colbert. Among these were Menage, Marin Cureau de la Chambre, Gombauld, Boyer, Pere Vatier, Samuel-Joseph Sorbiere, Felibier, Quinault, and Moliere. Menage presents an interesting case study. He was pensioned by Colbert in 1664, but in 1666 he did an about face and published several Latin verses favorable to Fouquet. In 1666 he lost his pension.[65] Whether he lost it because he wrote the verses or wrote the verses because of losing the pension is unclear. In contrast to those who deserted Fouquet, Pellison and La Fontaine remained loyal to him. Pellison went to prison with his patron and La Fontaine was exiled. Pecquet also stood by Fouquet and went to prison with him as his personal physician.[66]

The professors of the College Royal had not been clients of Fouquet; neither did they become clients of Jean-Baptiste Colbert. Earlier in the seventeenth century they had obtained a proprietary right to their professorial chairs. This meant that by following proper procedures they could will their positions to their descendants.[67] The practice, known as "venality of office," allowed the professors a measure of independence from government control, but it also isolated them from patronage and from the political arena. Colbert did not see fit to aid those not in his circle of clients and thus free of government discipline and regulation. In 1664 the professors of the College Royal had addressed a memoir to Colbert demanding to know why their names had been lined out of the budget at a time when he was so generous to other scholars and men of letters.[68] We do not know his reply, but we do know that during the next twenty years Colbert and his successors tried to establish control and discipline in the College by requiring the professors to sign a register when they met classes and by appointing the Abbe Gallois as an inspector in the College to report on the diligence of each professor.[69]

The Dispersion of Fouquet's Library

The fate of Fouquet's library and the fate of the attempt by the College Royal to obtain his library resulted in part from Colbert's efforts to establish a cultural and intellectual clientele to support his own position of power in the government of Louis XIV. Colbert served as superintendent of buildings after 1663, thus gaining complete control of the Royal Library. He strengthened its collections and made it available to those scholars within his own circle of clients. In 1666, probably just a year after receiving the petition from the College Royal requesting Fouquet's library, Colbert moved the Royal Library from its rooms in the Cordeliers to a house next door to his brother's residence.[70] This ensured closer control of the Royal Library and made it more accessible to Colbert's coterie.

After Fouquet's arrest in 1661, Pierre Carcavi was appointed assistant to the royal librarian, who was Colbert's brother, Nicolas. He brought with him a good knowledge of Fouquet's collection and perhaps even the catalog of the collection.[71] In 1667 he purchased about 2,700 of Fouquet's volumes for the Royal Library. A major portion of the purchase was a collection of 1,166 items on Italian history that he acquired for 10,000 livres. The Italian history ranged from ancient to modem and

covered just about every state and city of the peninsula, with especially strong collections on the Holy See and the Spanish dominions in southern Italy. The notes in the margin of the catalog indicate that Carcavi had checked it against the holdings of the Royal Library.[72] Surprisingly, numerous titles on Italian history were not represented in the collections of the Royal Library, a commentary on the quality and the rarity of Fouquet's library. Carcavi acquired from Fouquet's creditors another collection of about 1,535 volumes for a sum of 5,300 livres. In his memoir concerning these titles, Carcavi states that he selected and set aside those volumes he wished to add to the Royal Library.[73] One may infer that Carcavi was allowed first choice in the titles wanted for Colbert and the Royal Library and could have chosen whatever he deemed suitable. Except for the manuscripts acquired by Charles Maurice Le Tellier, the brother of Francois Le Tellier and Colbert's co-conspirator in prosecuting Fouquet, the balance of Fouquet's library was not sold until 1673.[74] Mme Fouquet finally yielded to the demands of the creditors and sold the remainder of the collection in that year.

Colbert organized the scholars of his circle into a number of academies. The Royal Library became the meeting place of the periodic sessions of these academies, and their members had easy access to its collections. The petite academie organized in 1663, and later renamed the Academie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, used the Royal Library for its meetings.[75] The Academie General, a rather large group organized by Colbert in 1666 and composed of historians, linguists, mathematicians, and philosophers, also met there.[76] The Academie General met resistance from other academic quarters and was soon disbanded. It was replaced by the Academie des Sciences, which from its first meeting in 1666 met in the Royal Library under the direction of Pierre Carcavi.[77] Until his death in 1683, Colbert maintained a very close and personal relationship with the academies and the Royal Library. He directed their actions, kept track of weekly developments, chose their leaders, and entertained their members with intellectual soirees at his estate in Sceaux.[78]

The Royal Library and the academies were a personal domain for those attached to Colbert's protection. The extent to which these scholars were the clients of Colbert is best seen in the fate that befell them after his death in 1683. Francois Michel Le Tellier, the marquis de Louvois, who had become Colbert's principal rival after Fouquet's imprisonment, assumed most of Colbert's functions for the Royal Library and the academies. Louvois hounded Pierre Carcavi from his post in the Royal Library. He appointed his own son, Camille Le Tellier, as head librarian of the Royal Library, though he was but nine years old, and his uncle, Charles Maurice Le Tellier, to supervise the Royal Library. Louvois changed the program and leadership of the Academie des Sciences. Christian Huygens, on close terms with the Perrault family and thereby allied to Colbert's inner circle, was excluded from the Academie des Sciences by Louvois. Claude Perrault and Jean D. Cassini, who had led the Academie under Colbert, found their roles assumed by minor members of the Academie. The G7 series of the French National Archives includes a list of the members of the Academie, bearing in Louvois's handwriting the exclamation, "C'est Colbert."

After Louvois's death in 1689, these academies began to assume the shape of state-supported institutions. As formally recognized state bodies, they gained a degree of independence from the system of patronage. For a few years starting in

1692, the Royal Library opened its doors to the public. In 1699 the Academie des Sciences obtained a formal charter, and in 1702 the Academie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres obtained a charter. These charters strictly limited the influence of patronage in the constitution of their memberships and gave strong institutional support for scholarship in the eighteenth century.[79]

Conclusion

Nicolas Fouquet transformed his private library into a large research library intended for the scholarly public. As such, it was created to attain a political goal, undoubtedly in conscious imitation of Cardinal Mazarin. The means of building the collection, its scope, and its clientele all point to this single purpose. As a private library operating in a public context, it gave Fouquet considerable leverage in calling attention to himself as a public benefactor and in securing support from the intellectual community.

Although the expansion of Fouquet's private library into a research library was a conscious act of political intent, its demise was planned by no one. Neither Colbert nor Louis XIV envisioned such a fate. Yet its demise was not accidental, for it unfolded as the very probable result of the larger political forces at play in mid-seventeenth-century France. The power and prestige of the monarchy was in the ascendant and would not tolerate the more ambitious political designs of France's leading notables. Fouquet's library was one element of his design to emulate Mazarin and Richelieu as a patron to scholars and men of letters, a design that extended the role of a strong first minister. This role, however, was precisely what was antithetical to the growing power of the monarchy. Much of the cultural and intellectual life of France in the seventeenth century was colored by the expansion of royal absolutism. It should be no surprise that a private library did not escape such a major historical movement.

Fouquet's library might well have survived intact had it passed into the possession of an educational institution. Given the historic relationship of the College Royal to the monarchy, the possibility of placing it there appears most appropriate. The final demise of Fouquet's library was no doubt precipitated by the accidental circumstances surrounding the litigation over his estate as well as by the major social and political forces shaping events in France. Yet it appears that the principal consideration in explaining its misadventure with the College Royal derives not from these local circumstances but from the relationship of the pro-fessors of the College to the grand patrons of France and to the monarchial state.

Fouquet's library and its brush with the College Royal is perhaps a commentary on the role of politics and institutions in the formulation of knowledge. The Fouquet-Colbert rivalry had both beneficial and deleterious effects on scholarship, as did the institution-building by Colbert. On the one hand, their rivalry stimulated competition to meet the needs of the intellectual community. One result was the creation of a research library that slowly came to accommodate an ever growing circle of scholars and promised to offer free public access to books and information. The political context of its creation and the failure to find an institutional setting for it in the College Royal, however, vitiated the accomplishment and left in abeyance the research of many who had come to rely on it. Conversely, the institutional security offered by Colbert and the Royal Library gave a measure of assurance to

the continued existence of those collections within it, but the inertia and conservatism of the institutional setting, not to mention the political concerns of Colbert and the King, placed strictures on access to the collections. One can only speculate about the effects of these events on scholarship, but as one observes the freewheeling intellectual atmosphere of the 1650s giving way to the more restrained and formal scholarship of the late seventeenth century, it is necessary to consider not only the changing political climate but also the shifting resource base of research.

Notes

1. Urbain V. Chatelain, *Le Surintendant Nicolas Fouquet, Protecteur de lettres, des arts et des sciences* (Paris: Didier Perrin, 1905), p. 307. Chatelain compares Fouquet's library to the library of Cardinal Mazarin, which in 1651 contained about 50,000 volumes and was considered the most complete scholarly library of that era. In 1661 Fouquet's library held about 27,000 volumes and was equally strong in all of the scholarly disciplines. In the same year the Royal Library held only 16,000 volumes, and most other outstanding collections were of comparable size. I discuss the contents and strengths of the Fouquet library below.

2. E. Stewart Saunders, "The Decline and Reform of the Academie des Sciences a Paris, 1676-1699" (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1980), pp. 221-248.

3. See Robert Mandrou's *Des humanists aux hommes de science* (Paris: Seuil, 1973) for a good account of how European intellectuals lost their financial independence after the 1560s.

4. Louis Batiffol, *Autour de Richelieu: Sa fortune, ses gardes et mousquetaires, la Sorbonne, le Chateau de Richelieu* (Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1937).

5. L. Louvet in his biographical sketch of Fouquet in the *Nouvelle Biographie Geniral* (Paris: F. Didot, 1858), 18: 344, suggests 1655 as the year when Fouquet began to form his own party of supporters. Precise dates are difficult to establish for a process of this nature, but it is the same date that I suggest as a turning point in Fouquet's utilization of scholarship for political ends.

6. Angelo Thomas Montante, "L' Affaire Foucquet: An Analysis of Its Treatment by Contemporaries, Litterateurs and Historians" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 1978), pp. 107-108.

7. Jules-Auguste Lair, *Nicolas Foucquet, Procureur General, Surintendant des Finances, Ministre d'Etat de Louis XIV,* 2 vols. (Paris: E. Plon, 1890), I: 76.

8. This had been documented by a number of excellent studies. Among them are Roger Doucet's *Les Bibliotheques parisiennes au XVI siecle* (Paris: A. and J. Picard, 1956); Henari-Jean Martin's *Livres, pouvoirs et societe a Paris au XVIle siecle (15981701).* 2 vols. (Geneve: Droz, 1969), I: 477-481; and George Huppert's *The Idea of a Perfect History: Historical Erudition and Historical Philosophy in Renaissance France* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970).

9. Mandrou, *Des humanistes aux hommes de science,* p. 97. See also William J. Bouwsma, "Lawyers and Early Modern Culture," *American Historical Review 78* (April 1973): 303-327.

10. Mandrou, *Des humanistes aux hommes de science,* pp. 93-99.

11. Chatelain, *Le Surintendtant Nicolas Foucquet,* pp. 18-21, 31-59.

12. Lair, *Nicolas Foucquet,* I: 67.

13. Chatelain, *Le Surintendant Nicolas Foucquet,* p.25.

14. Lair, *Nicolas Foucquet,* I: 185.

15. Chatelain, *Le Surintendant Nicolas Foucquet,* pp. 39-41, 65-83.

16. Ibid., pp. 114-115, 151, 182.

17. Ibid., pp. 106-132, 172.

18. Ibid., pp. 172-189.

19. Extraict de I'inventaire fait a St. Mande en 1661, BN, MSS Lat. 17172, fol. 10lr.

20. A check of a selection of titles from Fouquet's library that were later acquired by the Royal Library (listed in BN, MSS fro 9438) and that are presently listed in the *Catalogue Geniral* of the Bibliotheque Nationale show that a number have *ex libris* notations. Among them were a number that had formerly belonged to Leonor d'Estampes de Valencay.

21. Letter from Pierre Deschampneufs to [M. Chamillart, Procurer General of the Parlement de Paris] 17 June 1665, BN, MSS lat. 17172, fol. 95r-98v.

22. Jack A. Clarke, "Gabriel Naude and the Foundations of the Scholarly Library," *Library Quarterly*

39 (1969): 336-338.

23. H. Cherot, "Le Surintendant Fouquet: Ami des livres," *Etudes Religieuses, Philosophiques et Liitiraires* 1 (1891): 63-64.

24. Guy Patin to Charles Spon, 16 February 1657, in *Lettres de Gui Patin,* ed. J. H. Reveille-Parise (Paris: J. B. Bailliere, 1846), 11:275-277. Patin had never liked Fouquet, and when Fouquet acquired Moreau's library, Patin became exceedingly hostile toward him.

25. Cherot, "Le Surintendant Fouquet," p. 62.

26. Chatelain, *Le Surintendant Nicolas Foucquet,* p. 310.

27. Charles Henry, "Pierre de Carcavi, Intermediaire de Fermat, de Pascal et de Huygens, Bibliothecaire de Colbert et du Roi, Directeur de I' Academie des Sciences," *Bollettino di Bibliografia e Storia delle Scienze Matematiche e Fisiche 17* (1884): 354-356.

28. Chatelain, *Le Surintendant Nicolas Foucquet,* pp. 331-332.

29. Guy Patin to Charles Spon, 13 March 1657, in *Lettres de Gui Patin, II:* 284-288.

30. John W. Montgomery, "The Libraries of France at the Ascendancy of Mazarin: Louis Jacob's *Traicte des Plus Belles Bibliotheques* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1962), pp. 100-101.

31. Alfred L. G. Franklin, *Histoire de La Bibliothtque Mazarin depuis sa fondation jusqu'a nos jours* (Paris: H. Aubry, 1860), p. 112.

32. Inventaire, Prisee, and Estimations des Livres trouves a St. Mande ap-partenant ci devant a Monsieur Foucquet ... Juillet 1665, BN, MSS fro 9438.

33. Ibid.; also Chatelain, *Le Surintendant Nicolas Foucquet,* pp. 305-307.

34. Cherot, "Le Surintendant Fouquet," p. 64.

35. Inventaire ... Juillet 1665, BN, MSS fr. 9438.

36. Cherot, "Le Surintendant Fouquet," p. 59.

37. Ibid., p. 67.

38. Deschampneufs to Chamillart, 17 June 1665, BN, MSS lat. 17172, foJ. 95r-98v.

39. Extraict de l'inventaire ... 1661, BN, MSS lat. 17172, fol. 104v; Chatelain, *Le Surintendant Nicolas Foucquet,* p. 334; inventaire ... Juillet 1665, BN, MSS fro 9438.

40. Ibid.

41. Chatelain, *Le Surintendant Nicolas Foucquet,* pp. 300, 306-307, 331-332.

42. Ibid., pp. 313-319.

43. Martin, *Livres, Pouvoirs, et Societe,* II: 933-934; Christian Huygens, *Oeuvres completes* (Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1888-Nijhoff, 1888-1950), 11, Letters 650 (4 August 1659), 698 (13 September 1659); Saunders, "Decline and Reform of the Academie des Sciences," pp. 75-76; "Sur la premiere mention du nom de Shakespeare dans un ouvrage imprime en France," *Revue d'Histoire Littiraire de la France* 1 (15 October 1894): 463.

44. Chatelain, *Le Surintendant Nicolas Foucquet* p. 307.

45. Ibid., pp. 562-563.

46. Petition from the professors of the College Royal to Jean-Baptiste Colbert, 1665, AN, 01 1600.

47. For a detailed account of the precautions taken by Colbert and the king in arresting a figure so powerful as Fouquet, see Montante, "L'Affaire Fouquet," pp.47-65.

48. Pellison and La Fontaine were particularly strong in their defense. Pellison wrote the "Discours au Roi par un de ses fideles sujets" to influence Louis XIV; La Fontaine's "L'Elegie aux Nymphes de Vaux" was written to gain public support for Fouquet. See Chatelain, *Le Surintendant Nicolas Foucquet,* pp. 501-513, 517-519.

49. Actually the sentence of the Chamber of Justice was exile from the kingdom and the confiscation of his property, but Louis XIV commuted the sentence to life imprisonment and confiscation of property. This was one of the few times in history that the commutation of a sentence resulted in an increase in the penalty.

50. Petition from the professors of the College Royal, AN, 01 1600.

51. The following is my translation of the petition. Although it carries no date, it had to have been written after the sentence of the Chamber of Justice on 20 December 1664, declaring the king's confiscation of Fouquet's property, but before the removal of the Royal Library from the house of the Cordeliers in 1666, as the location of the latter is mentioned in the text of the petition. Several small phrases and sentences have been omitted in the text presented.

52. See Claude P. Goujet, *Memoire historique et littiraire sur le College Royal de France,* 3 vols. (Paris: A. M. Lottin, 1758), for a history of each chair.

53. Leopold V. Delisle, *Le Cabinet des Manuscrits de la Bibliotheque Imperiale* (New York: B. Franklin, 1974), I: 156.

54. Ibid., p. 197.

55. Martin, *Livres, Pouvoirs, et Societe,* I: 487-489.

56. Alfred A. Franklin, *La Sorbonne, ses origines, sa bibliotheque, les debuts de l'imprimerie a Paris, et la succession de Richelieu d' apres les documents inidits,* 2nd ed. (Paris: L. Willem, 1875), pp. 100, 151-171; idem, *Histoire de la Bibliotheque de l'Abbaye de Saint Victor a Paris d'apres des documents inedits* (Paris: A. Aubry, 1865), pp. 40-45; Francis A. Yates, *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (London: Warburg Institute, 1947), p. 17.

57 Lair, *Nicolas Fouquet,* II: 423-424.

58. Olivier Lefevre d'Ormesson, *Journal d'Olivier Lefevre d'Ormesson et extraits des memoires d'Andre Lefevre d'Ormesson,* 2 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Imperiale, 1859), II: 363.

59. Pierre Carcavi, Calcul des livres achetes tant de Mr. Arnou que des creanciers de Mr. Fouquet, BN, MSS lat. 17172 fol. l04v.

60. Ibid.; in his memoire on the topic, Carcavi indicates that he had a choice of anything he wanted from the Fouquet library.

61. Daniel Dessert and Jean-Louis Journet, "Le Lobby Colbert: Un royaume ou une affaire de famile?" *Annales Economies, Societe, Civilisations* 30 (1975): 1303-1329.

62. Chatelain, *Le Surintendant Nicolas Foucquet,* p. 182.

63. Histoire de l'Acadimie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1717),1:4. One should also note that Charles's brother, Pierre Perrault, as receiver general, had furnished Colbert with evidence against Fouquet. The Perrault family apparently saw the coming changes in the political fortunes of Colbert and Fouquet and were willing to aid Colbert.

64. George Collas, *Un poete protecteur des lettres au XVlI siecle: Jean Chapelain,*
1595-1674 (Paris: Perrin, 1912), p. 406.

65. Chatelain, *Le Surintendant Nicolas Foucquet,* pp. 528-530.

66. Ibid., pp. 497-501, 521.

67. A search of the 01 series (Maison du Roi) of the Archives Nationales turns up a large number of *survivances* for the professors of the College Royal. I cannot establish the beginning of venality in the College, nor am I certain that it extended to all chairs, but the references to the practice in the 01 series are numerous in the 1660s and later.

68. Memoire a Monseigneur Colbert pour les Professeurs du Roy au College Royal, AN, 01 1600.

69. Ordonnance qui etabli de Sr Abbe Gallois pour observer aux Professeurs du College Royal les Reglements de la Discipline dud. College, AN, 01 35 fo1. 46v-47r. This ordinance came some ten years after the practice had been established.

70. Delisle, *Cabinet des Manuscrits,* I: 264.

71. Henry, "Pierre de Carcavi," pp. 354-356. The catalog that Deschampneufs had maintained for Fouquet's library was missing at the time of the complete inventory in July-August of 1665.

72. Livres de Mr du Fresne achetes par Mr Arnou a St. Mande, BN,MSS lat. 17172 fol. 66r-94v; Calcul des livres achetes tant de Mr Arnou que des creanciers de Mr Fouquet, BN, MSS lat. 17172 fol. 104v.

73. Ibid.

74.Delisle, *Cabinet des Manuscrits,* I: 273-274; Lair, *Nicolas Fouquet,* II: 443. *75. Histoire de l'Acadimie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres,* I: 2; The *petite acadimie* held its first meetings in Colbert's personal library in 1663 and only later met in the Royal Library. Colbert did not assume official control of the Royal Library until 1664.

76. Histoire de l'Acadimie Royale des Sciences depuis son etablissement en 1666 *jusqu'a* 1686 (Paris: G. Martin, 1733), p. 6.

77. Proces-verbaux de l' Academie des Sciences, I**,** 22 December 1666, Paris, Archives de l' Academie des Sciences.

78. Saunders, "Decline and Reform of the Academie des Sciences," pp. 21-31.

79. Ibid., pp. 11-36, 111-127, 175-248.