

FR2203 Text and context

Chronology 1643–1748

(adapted from *The New Oxford Companion to Literature in French*, ed. by Peter France (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1995))

- 1643–1715 reign of Louis XIV
- 1661 death of Mazarin, beginning of the ‘personal reign’ of Louis XIV; works begin at Versailles
- 1664 Molière, *Le Tartuffe*; quarrel involving members of the Compagnie du Saint Sacrement
- 1665 Molière, *Dom Juan*
- 1666 Molière, *Le Misanthrope* (Molière’s sixteenth play)
- 1668 *Paix de l’Église*: cessation of persecution of Jansenists and of Port-Royal (resumes in 1679)
- 1669 public performances of *Le Tartuffe*
- 1670 Pascal, *Pensées* (published posthumously)
- 1672–78 war with Holland
- 1673 Molière, *Le Malade imaginaire*
- 1674 Racine, *Iphigénie*; Boileau, *L’Art poétique*
- 1677 Racine, *Phèdre*
(see *Les Caractères*, ‘Des ouvrages de l’esprit’, 54)
- 1678 [Madame de Lafayette], *La Princesse de Clèves*
- 1680 *dragonnades* against Protestants

creation of the Comédie-Française
(see *Lettres persanes*, lettre XXVIII)
- 1682 court moves to Versailles
(see *Les Caractères*, ‘De la cour’, 74; *Lettres persanes*, lettre XXXVII)
- 1683 Louis XIV marries Mme de Maintenon
- 1684–93 recurrent famines
(see *Les Caractères*, ‘De l’homme’, 128)

- 1685 revocation of the Edict of Nantes
(see *Les Caractères*, 'Du souverain ou de la république', 21; *Lettres persanes*, lettres XXIV, XXIX, LX, LXXXV)
- 1687–88 main phase of the *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*
(see *Les Caractères*, 'Des ouvrages de l'esprit', passim)
- 1688 La Bruyère, *Les Caractères*

English 'Glorious' Revolution: William of Orange replaces James II as King of England
(see *Les Caractères*, 'Des jugements', 113–19; *Athalie*, I, i; IV, iii)
- 1688–97 war of the League of Augsburg
(see *Athalie*, IV, iii)
- 1691 Racine, *Athalie*
- 1692 Quesnel, *Nouveau testament en français avec des réflexions morales sur chaque verset*
(a work which had appeared in various forms since 1672 and became a central Jansenist text)
- 1693 La Bruyère, *Discours prononcé dans l'Académie Française*
- 1694 eighth edition of *Les Caractères*

Bossuet, *Maximes et réflexions sur la comédie*
- 1697–99 quarrel over Quietism: condemned in Papal Bull *Cum alias* (1699)
- 1698 Bossuet, *Relations sur le quietisme*
- 1699 circulation of Fénelon, *Télémaque*; banishment of Fénelon from court
(see *Athalie*, IV, iii; V, viii)
- 1701–13 War of the Spanish Succession
- 1709 quarrels over Jansenism; expulsion of nuns from Port-Royal
- 1713 Peace of Utrecht

Papal Bull *Unigenitus*; condemnation of 101 sentences from Quesnel's *Réflexions morales* of 1692
(see *Lettres persanes*, lettre XXIV)
- 1714 *querelle d'Homère*
(see *Lettres persanes*, lettre XXXVI)

- 1715 death of Louis XIV; reign of Louis XV (1715–74) begins with the Regency of Philippe, duc d'Orléans (1715–23)
(see *Lettres persanes*, lettre XCII and passim)
- 1716–20 Law's *système* of public credit, ending in financial collapse
(see *Lettres persanes*, lettres CXXXVIII, CXLVI)
- 1721 [Montesquieu], *Lettres persanes*
- 1733 [Voltaire], *Letters Concerning the English Nation* published in London
- 1734 [Voltaire], *Lettres philosophiques*
- 1748 Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois*