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Carolyn Chappell Lougee, *Facing the Revocation: Huguenot Families, Faith, and the King's Will*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. xiii + 466pp. Illustrations, tables, maps, notes, bibliography, and index. \$55.00 U.S. (cl). ISBN 9780190241315.

Review by Susan Broomhall, The University of Western Australia.

This is a work described on its dust jacket as a “sweeping family saga,” and that it certainly is. Carolyn Chappell Lougee’s important new contribution primarily traces the experience of Marie de La Rochefoucauld and her husband, Josias de Robillard, dame and seigneur de Champagné at the Revocation, as they travel from the Charentes region of France to the northern Netherlands, England, and eventually to Ireland. They sit at the center of a vast and complex story of a family completely reconstructed by the dynamic political and religious momentum that surged into and swept outwards from the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Lougee looks back across multiple generations to understand the specific familial, economic, spiritual, and political matrices of that historical moment when Marie and Josias made their decisions to stay and go, with whom, and how. She equally looks forward through subsequent generations of the family’s children to the consequences of those decisions as they were felt in new lands and territories across Europe, from Ireland to Prussia.

A central aim of this work, powerfully achieved, is to counter any simplistic notion that those who chose exile were the most fervent Huguenots, that those who remained were traitors to their faith or, by contrast, the most loyal to their monarch, or that the letter of the law of the Revocation was applied with equal force by all the king’s agents to all those whose faith it had criminalized. This work, in all its complexity, demonstrates precisely the many particular and individual factors that comprised the choices made by those facing the Revocation. As such, it is a challenging book to present in review because it is hard to do justice to Lougee’s enormous effort to articulate the nuances of each individual’s circumstances. Ultimately, this book is all about those details, the particularities of one person’s decision-making processes and their outcomes.

We begin in Part One with “The Champagné in Saintonge.” Lougee sets the scene on our Huguenot family with a series of chapters that thoroughly establish the complex legal and financial transactions of land and inheritance of a family “in distaff,” that is, with no male heir. Such a circumstance led to convoluted practices to hold property and family identities intact among female descendants within the confines of the local interpretation of *coutumes* and Roman law. But these would be unraveled by a newly-converted Catholic aunt whose life course had taken some unexpected turns, including as victim of a marriage hoax. She had apparently done little—judging from those willing to provide testimony critical of her—to endear herself to those in her locality, and decided to challenge the terms of her mother’s will, thereby divesting a number of her nieces of much of their inheritance. Siblings and generations attempted to respond to this legal challenge at the same time as they struggled to understand the implications for each of them of Louis XIV’s new political manifesto and its relatively aggressive application in the Charentes. The decisions that these women and their husbands made over

the following years to convert, to resist, to leave, as Lougee masterfully explores, had no one simple point of origin.

In Part Two, “Escaping from France,” Lougee guides us through the Robillard de Champagné family’s preparations and opportunities to leave France. This evidence provides an excellent reminder of the myriad challenges that faced those who chose the path of exile, including, for some, failure. It would be hard for the modern reader not to see parallels in the gut-wrenching decisions people made to leave possessions, loved ones, even children, and to determine, among unscrupulous dealers of the asylum trade then as now, to trust individuals who held in their hands the fate of refugees. Once again, the case of the Robillard de Champagné elucidates how multiple factors—supportive familial networks (which often included sympathetic converted relatives), sufficient funds and preferably some movable assets, good health, and the fate of children—had to align.

Surely securing the necessary element of surprise, Marie de La Rochefoucauld chose exile just five weeks after the birth of her twelfth child, leaving behind a daughter whom she would never see again. Josias, who had resisted conversion, then abjured, and afterwards found that he could not accept the Catholic faith, nonetheless remained behind, at first seeking passage for himself and his newborn daughter. However, it would not be possible to keep the Robillard de Champagné intact and, with spies in The Hague reporting every step of his escape plans to Versailles, Josias seized his moment to flee, leaving little Thérèse in the hands of her uncle, another recent and suspect convert to Catholicism.

In Part Three, Lougee turns, via little Thérèse, to the fate of “Those Who Stayed.” Here she explores the wide range of positions taken by those for whom exile was not, or could not be an option—from ready compliance and its royal rewards to resistance and eventual acceptance to continued refusal expressed in obfuscation and ambiguities that lasted decades. The degree of persistence demonstrated by both Huguenots and the royal agents who pursued them was central to the fate of the former. While some among the extended family of Marie and Josias received rich rewards from conversion, including direct intervention and financial support from Louis XIV and his second wife, Madame de Maintenon, others adopted a less clear-cut approach to Catholicism, continuing to marry within networks of the newly converted, or managing the rituals of baptism and marriage among a range of parishes that obscured much of their personal faith practices. And of course, as with the nominal protagonist in this section, Thérèse, Lougee demonstrates how those in the younger generation could be more readily brought to compliance than their parents and would bring their dynasties into the Catholic fold simply over the course of time. Despite varied legal challenges, Thérèse was quickly placed in a convent from which her guardian uncle would never secure her release. She died aged just twelve, the last of the Robillard de Champagné family in France.

Part Four moves to the experiences of the Robillard de Champagné “Resettling Abroad.” Lougee examines how the family established and re-established networks among kin, those of shared social standing, and faith cohorts in the French-speaking churches of the northern Netherlands. The production of escape accounts, memoirs, letters to children, and other self-narratives positioned their authors’ identities in relation to new and anticipated readerships. Comparison of those produced by Marie and her eldest daughter Susanne of the same escape event reveals the distinctive perspectives and feelings of individuals with different life experiences, status, and profoundly altered opportunities as a result of the Revocation. She identifies the contrasting trajectories and interpretive power of their accounts in the wider narrative-making strategies within branches of the families that went on to flourish in Ireland and Prussia. Lougee also investigates how exiles looked to secure financial viability via appointments (in Josias’s case in William III’s army and to Ireland where he died among the many of the Duke of Schomberg’s men encamped at Dundalk) and in a new economy of intangibles that was practical for religious exiles who had lost most of their landed assets and were often highly mobile across the continent. Her study of Marie’s finances reveals a woman who was forced by exile and long widowhood to develop skills as a shrewd financial manager, acquiring the confidence to invest in

increasingly innovative market options and even to act as an investment banker to a largely female clientele.

Lougee concludes by reiterating that this is a work fundamentally about stories, multiple, sometimes competing, at other times changing, stories that played a role in particular narratives in specific historical moments. She emphasizes the importance of reading these alongside other forms of historical evidence from the archives. Certainly the legal and judicial sources of this family's activities and the persecutions to which they were subject under laws that were applied by turns selectively, intermittently, or with exemplary intent, present different insights and help to create a more nuanced understanding of the many motivations that explain decisions at the Revocation. Lougee rightly argues that a close study of the Robillard de Champagné elucidates the complexities of identities for contemporaries between faith, family, aristocratic status, and personal interpretations of the relationship, not to mention the long tradition of required loyalty and obedience of the nobility to the king, that all fed into their decisions to abjure, endure, or escape. The family may be exceptional in the wealth of material that survives but broadly representative of the decisions and experiences faced by many Huguenots. Moreover, as Lougee points out, close study of this kind provides vital evidence of women's activities within families often obscured in male-authored sources created by both Catholic and Huguenot church leaders.

This is a work that wears its scholarship lightly. Readers may recognize some topics covered here from Lougee's previously published work, and the over-arching questions and contributions offered by the analysis are framed by deep familiarity with scholarly literature. In this presentation, however, priority goes to the primary sources and the narrative flow of the Robillard de Champagné story(ies). Almost fifty pages of notes demonstrate the scholarly underpinning of the work, but there is little explicit engagement with contemporary scholars throughout the text and certainly a number of areas where the study could interact, extend, or provide alternative views to emerging scholarship on the memorialization and emotional structuring of exile, women's roles in transnational families, and the role of objects as possessions and assets in making memory and meaning in traumatic events. The decision to prioritize the story over a foregrounded analysis both advances the historiography and in some senses obscures the very advances it makes to it.

The challenges of this narrative approach to the Robillard de Champagné story are also seen in the way in which sources are brought in to inform the story before they are critically analyzed. A case in point is the narratives of exile produced by Josias, Marie, and Susanne. These are used as important sources of evidence for the family's activities from the beginning of the book, but are analyzed as divergent and competing productions and interpretations of the family's identity only in the second-to-last chapter of the work. In keeping with the narrative flow, at times Lougee alludes to events that will be discussed in full at a later chapter, which are hard for the reader to integrate into the present argument without the author's thorough knowledge of the full family history.

Lougee's afterword shows just what a labor of love, persistence, patience, and passion is embedded in this scholarly journey. It speaks to the dead ends, the wins, the many archival personnel and familial proprietors with whom the author negotiated over many years in order to bring this work to fruition. Helping her readers to follow the complex family narrative are maps, thirty-eight black-and-white illustrations, a "List of Principal Personages and Additional Persons," an appendix of seven genealogical tables, and a glossary. It is very much a book to be read in its entirety rather than dipped into. Its cumulative presentation and large cast of characters would make it a challenge to assign a single chapter as class reading, but it is well worth pursuing in its entirety. It is a significant scholarly contribution that holds rich rewards for readers, and a compelling account of the experiences of one family among so many confronting a pivotal moment in early modern French history.

Susan Broomhall
The University of Western Australia
susan.broomhall@uwa.edu.au

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