

## Foreign Protestant Artisans in Eighteenth-Century Paris

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Since Eric Hobsbawm's innovative article on the "tramping artisan" in 1951, many studies have traced the movement of artisans within and across the borders of early modern European states, particularly in the Low Countries and the German states. Work on France, by contrast, has focussed on the Tour de France that some journeymen undertook, and on the associations of journeymen (*compagnonnages*) whose rites and organization seem to leave little place for foreign workers.<sup>1</sup> This is in contrast to recent work on engineers, architects, painters, and other groups of professionals whose peregrinations have been examined for what they reveal about the spread of enlightened ideas and values, at a social level quite different from that of the nobles and philosophers who have been studied in the past.<sup>2</sup>

The major exception to this neglect of artisans who moved across the borders of France has been studies of Huguenot emigration. The exodus of some 200,000 Protestants, following Louis XIV's Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685, is well known, as is the contribution these men and women made to the economies of Britain, the Netherlands, the Swiss cantons, and Prussia.<sup>3</sup> Work has also been done on official attempts to encourage artisans to come to introduce

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<sup>1</sup> Hobsbawm, "The Tramping Artisan." See particularly Ehmer, "Worlds of Mobility." Reith, "Circulation of Skilled Labour." For useful summaries of this work and comparisons with France, see Farr, *Artisans in Europe* and Roche, *Humeurs vagabondes*, 968-84. One of the few studies to link France with other states is Pallach, "Fonctions de la mobilité artisanale."

<sup>2</sup> Beaurepaire, ed. *La Communication en Europe*. Nègre, "Histoire de l'art." Vérin, *La gloire des ingénieurs*.

<sup>3</sup> For general overviews, Yardeni, *Le Refuge huguenot*. Augeron, Poton, and Ruymbeke, eds. *Les huguenots et l'Atlantique*. Birnstiel and Bernat, eds., *La Diaspora des Huguenots*. Magdelaine and Thadden, *Le Refuge Huguenot*.

new industries in France, from Colbert onwards.<sup>4</sup> Much less recognized, and more surprising, is the immigration of individual Protestant artisans that accelerated across the eighteenth century.<sup>5</sup> They included household names like the Swiss clockmaker Ferdinand Berthoud and Christophe-Philippe Oberkampf, the printed cotton manufacturer from Württemberg.<sup>6</sup> Yet they were only the best-known representatives of a far larger movement. Across the eighteenth century, thousands of artisans from the Swiss cantons, the German states, England, the Low Countries and even Scandinavia, went to live and work in Paris, and a large proportion of them were Protestants. They made an important contribution to the city's economy and to the invention and manufacture of products that recent work has recognized as central to the material culture of the European Enlightenment.<sup>7</sup>

We know a little about some of them. Janine Driancourt-Girod has documented the existence of thriving Lutheran communities in Paris, thanks to the records of the chapels run by the Swedish and Danish ambassadors. Many German and Scandinavian artisans worshipped there, particularly in the eighteenth century, along with Lutherans from Alsace, which was incorporated into France in the 1670s and early 1680s. The chapel of the Dutch ambassador similarly served foreign Reformed Protestants. Since the Catholic churches refused to marry Protestants, the registers of these chapels offer an excellent snapshot of the foreign Protestant population. Alain Thillay's work on the Faubourg Saint-Antoine also pointed to the number of foreign artisans there, and he commented briefly on the presence of Protestants among them. My own work on the Huguenots of Paris mentioned the surprising number who were born outside the kingdom. Of 2,100 French Reformed Protestants whose place of birth I was able to identify, just over a third were immigrants: about 25 percent in the early part of the century and close to 40 percent in the decades before the Revolution. Other work indicates the presence of a small number of English subjects, many Catholic but some undoubtedly Anglican.<sup>8</sup> Historians of art and of luxury objects have also written about many of the most highly skilled individuals, but do not always mention their religious background.<sup>9</sup> These studies are very revealing about what migrants to Paris did when they got there, but few ask what drew them to the French capital. They take it for granted that Paris attracted migrants, and see nothing strange in their moving to a country where Protestants had few rights. In this article, I ask why significant numbers of Protestant artisans went to Paris in the eighteenth century, despite the royal government's strong anti-Protestant measures, and what their migration can tell us about patterns of artisan mobility more generally.

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Ruymbeke and Sparks, eds., *Memory and Identity*. The classic study on economic impact is Scoville, "The Huguenots."

<sup>4</sup> Minard, *La fortune du Colbertisme*, esp. chap. 7. Hilaire-Pérez, *L'Invention technique*. Most recently, Bertucci, *Artisan Enlightenment*, esp. chap. 3.

<sup>5</sup> An exception is Driancourt-Girod's studies of the Paris Lutherans: *L'insolite histoire des luthériens* and *Ainsi priaient les luthériens*.

<sup>6</sup> Dequidt, *Horlogers des Lumières*, 21-4, 69-71.

<sup>7</sup> On the contribution of artisans to 'enlightened knowledge', Hilaire-Pérez, *L'Invention technique*; Belhoste, *Paris savant*; Bertucci, *Artisan Enlightenment*.

<sup>8</sup> Driancourt-Girod's work is cited above. Thillay, *Le faubourg Saint-Antoine*, 166-77. Thillay, "Les artisans étrangers," 261-82. Garrioch, *Huguenots of Paris*, 82-9. There is no study of the Anglicans, but see Harris, *Industrial Espionage*, 14-32, and Simon Macdonald, 'British Communities in Late Eighteenth-Century Paris', PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 2010. Many of the English in France were Catholic.

<sup>9</sup> Henri Vial, et al., *Les artistes décorateurs du bois*. Verlet, *Les meubles français*. Pradère, *French Furniture Makers*. Dequidt, *Horlogers des Lumières*. Breguet, et al., *Abraham-Louis Breguet*.

### Protestant Artisans in Paris

Artisans — men and women who worked in a broad range of areas of production, from luxury trades through to shoe repair — represented about one third of the foreign-born Reformed Protestants in Paris and probably more of the Lutherans, since they accounted for 32.8 percent of marriages at the Swedish chapel in 1743-63 and for 63.1 percent in 1764-93.<sup>10</sup> While it is clear that their numbers were growing, we have no way of knowing exactly how many of them there were. The most thorough quantitative work is by Jean-François Dubost, who used the sparse surviving records of lodging houses to compile a sample of 9,298 foreign visitors to Paris in the late eighteenth century. A quarter (25.56 percent) were artisans.<sup>11</sup> This source, however, vastly underestimates the numbers who came to the city to work, since such people often did not stay in lodging houses but went to live with family members or employers. At any one time, too, there were many foreigners working in Paris who had been there for years, so these figures give little guide to the overall size of the foreign-born population.

They do, however, offer some insight into the likely proportions of artisans from each place (see Table 1). The two largest cohorts were from the Austrian Netherlands and the German states, followed by the Swiss cantons, the Italian states (including Savoy) and — well behind — the United Provinces and Britain. It is hardly a surprise to find that the countries closest to Paris were best represented. The very small number from the British Isles no doubt results from the cost of the sea voyage, whereas from other places the journey could be made more cheaply, on foot if necessary. These figures indicate that the largest numbers of artisans came from Catholic areas, but that there were also many people from Protestant areas in the Swiss cantons and the German states.

Origin	Number	%
Austrian Netherlands/Liégeois	678	33.1
German states	565	23.8
Swiss cantons	391	16.5
Italian states and Savoy	221	9.3
Holland	64	2.7
England	60	2.5

**Table 1** Principal places of origin of artisans in Paris lodging houses, 1774, 1775, 1781, 1787<sup>12</sup>

It is worth comparing these proportions with Dubost's earlier analysis, undertaken jointly with Peter Sahlins, of the foreign immigrants taxed in 1697. Since this tax was levied not only on those born outside the kingdom but on people whose ancestors had come to France since 1600, it gives a cross-section of immigration across the entire seventeenth century. Although many people managed to evade the tax, once again the figures offer a sense of the proportions of people from each part of Europe — except for the Swiss, who were largely exempt because of the privileges the French monarchy accorded them. Since this sample excludes tourists and other short-term visitors, it is a better guide to the origins of foreign artisans, who made up nearly half of those taxed. Of 650 foreigners and descendants of foreigners recorded as living in Paris in

<sup>10</sup> Driancourt-Girod, *Registres*, 1: 32.

<sup>11</sup> Dubost, "Les étrangers à Paris," 244.

<sup>12</sup> Calculated from Dubost, "Les étrangers à Paris," 244.

1697, the largest number were once again from the Austrian Netherlands/Flanders (22 percent) and the German states (15 percent), with the United Provinces well behind at 8 percent. But Savoy-Piedmont provided 12 percent and the other Italian states also 12 percent, so the weight of ultramontane immigration was far greater than in the later period. Dubost and Sahlins comment that the figures reflect the end of Italian dominance in skilled craft work.<sup>13</sup> Despite the absence of the Swiss from the sample, these data suggest that foreigners from Protestant lands were far more present by the 1770s than in the 1690s.

The figures also enable us to see which trades were favoured by particular Protestant groups. In 1697, Germans were strongly present in clothing, footwear, and to some degree in wood-working. In the late eighteenth century, they were still prominent in clothing and footwear, but luxury furniture had become a major area of concentration. While woodworking, and particularly inlay work, was a well-established tradition in some of the German states, their strong presence in clothing and shoe-making remains mysterious. The Swiss, by contrast, were internationally known for clock- and watch-making, industries that flourished in the Geneva and Neuchâtel cantons, although their production was long considered to be of lower quality than English or French makes.<sup>14</sup> This clustering in particular trades is confirmed by Janine Driancourt-Girod's observations on the Lutheran population of Paris and by my own research on Reformed Protestants, as well as by studies of particular industries. Pierre Verlet found that in the eighteenth century a third of the cabinet-makers (*ébénistes*) in Paris were German.<sup>15</sup> Yet alongside those key sectors, we find immigrants from Protestant lands in most of the skilled luxury trades, as well as in less skilled areas like weaving.

The reasons why artisans — both Protestant and Catholic — were drawn to the French capital seem obvious at first glance. As Dubost points out, many older studies simply point to the dominance of French culture. François de Salverte, in what is still a standard work on eighteenth-century furniture-makers, originally published in 1927 and in its seventh edition in 1985, wrote that German cabinet-makers brought advanced technical skills to France, where “they themselves assimilated the qualities of invention and the taste of the Paris workmen”.<sup>16</sup> National stereotyping aside, artisans did go to learn. That is what some of the artisans who sought naturalization also said. A stone-setter from Baden had worked in several other places, but “the zeal he has always had to excel made him decide to go to Paris in order to take new lessons from the greatest masters”.<sup>17</sup> He may have thought flattery would assist his case for naturalization, but Paris was indeed a key centre of luxury production. The size of the market encouraged specialization in the workforce and was one of the reasons why many of the most highly-skilled producers — some of them foreign-born — were to be found there. In the luxury trades in particular, the prestige of French styles across Europe in the eighteenth century attracted artisans. Not all stayed permanently. There were many like the Swedish metal-engraver Pehr Suther, who spent four years in Paris working for different employers and improving his skills, before returning to Stockholm where he made gold and silver artefacts in a French style and supplied the

<sup>13</sup> Dubost and Sahlins, *Et si on faisait payer les étrangers?*, 215, 269. They do not give a breakdown by occupation.

<sup>14</sup> Dubost and Sahlins, *Et si on faisait payer les étrangers?*, 270, 273. Dubost, “Les étrangers à Paris,” 244, 248. Thillay, *Le faubourg Saint-Antoine*, 167-72. On German cabinetmaking, Verlet, *L'Art du meuble*, 43. On Swiss watchmaking, Smith, “Swiss Connection.”

<sup>15</sup> Verlet, *L'Art du meuble*, 35.

<sup>16</sup> Dubost, “Les étrangers à Paris,” 222. Salverte, *Les ébénistes*, xii.

<sup>17</sup> Archives nationales, Paris, O1 229, fol. 94 (July 1749).

Swedish court. Mathäus Funk, who was to become Bern's leading cabinet-maker, spent some years working in both Frankfurt and Paris.<sup>18</sup>

The French capital also attracted ambitious people who were keen to make their fortune there. Because the city was the largest and the wealthiest luxury market in Europe for most of the eighteenth century, as well as exporting products all round the world, the demand for skilled workers created economic opportunities not available elsewhere. Although the competition was sometimes cutthroat, highly-skilled artisans could become rich supplying the French aristocrats who concentrated in the city, as well as those across Europe who wished to imitate them. Across the eighteenth century, furthermore, consumer goods were reaching the middle classes and even the working population of the city.<sup>19</sup>

But markets and prestige were not the only factors. It was important that the French government actively welcomed skilled migrants, even Protestant ones. Three months after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the Royal Council issued a decree assuring non-Catholic foreigners that they were welcome in the kingdom and were free to come to live there with their families. Louis XIV's government was becoming increasingly concerned about the economic impact of Huguenot emigration, and certainly did not wish to discourage skilled workers and merchants from moving to France.<sup>20</sup> In fact, foreign Protestants were legally far better off than French ones, able to practice their religion in private, to attend services at the chapels of the Protestant ambassadors, and to enter and leave the kingdom without hindrance. In 1720 the Royal Council allocated them a cemetery in Paris, at a time when Huguenots were still officially being denied burial.<sup>21</sup> Ironically, even in the early part of the century, some foreign Protestants enjoyed more religious freedom in Paris than in their homeland. In Aix-la-Chapelle or Cologne, for example, Protestants were actively discriminated against in employment, whereas this was rarely the case in Paris, at either an official level or in daily life.<sup>22</sup> It is equally ironic that some of those who came to the French capital from the Swiss cantons were themselves Huguenot refugees or children of Huguenots: having acquired foreign citizenship, they could safely return to their homeland. There is some evidence that the number of German artisans grew steadily after 1715, following the death of Louis XIV, the great persecutor of French Protestants.<sup>23</sup>

Foreign Protestants benefited from certain advantages that were open to all new arrivals in Paris. The existence of liberties (*lieux privilégiés*) — areas where artisans could work and even open shops without having to belong to a guild — was particularly attractive. The largest and most significant of these areas was the vast Faubourg Saint-Antoine, and it is no coincidence that immigrants concentrated there. The influx of German wood-workers, in particular, helped to make it a European centre for this industry. In the late 1780s, at least eight luxury furniture workshops in the short rue Saint-Nicolas alone were owned by Germans. For the same reasons, there were many Swiss clockmakers and several Lutheran artisans in the close of the abbey of

<sup>18</sup> Uppsala University Library, MS X220, autobiography of Pehr Suther, fol. 280. Fischer, *Fonck à Berne*, 25.

<sup>19</sup> Roche, *People of Paris*. Roche, *A history of everyday things*.

<sup>20</sup> *Arrêt du Conseil d'Etat, en faveur des étrangers protestants ... du onzième janvier 1686*, cited in Driancourt-Girod, *L'insolite histoire des luthériens*, 79. Garrioch, *Huguenots of Paris*, 50-1.

<sup>21</sup> Arrêt du Conseil d'Etat du Roi, du 20 juillet 1720, cited in Read, "Les sépultures des Protestants étrangers et régnicoles," 29-31.

<sup>22</sup> Diefendorf, *Businessmen and Politics*, 25-7, 36-8. Kaplan, *Cunegonde's Kidnapping*, particularly 116-45.

<sup>23</sup> Garrioch, *Huguenots of Paris*, 83. Thamer, "German Cabinet-Makers."

Saint-Germain-des-Prés, others in the close of the Temple.<sup>24</sup> This enabled talented craftspeople to get established, and many of them went on to join the guilds. A generation of historical work has shown that most of the Paris guilds were not closed to outsiders, as an older literature had suggested. The cash-strapped French government regularly sold masterships, even to Protestants, despite royal decrees and guild rules that sometimes explicitly excluded them. The guilds themselves, as Mathieu Marraud has shown, were under such financial pressure from the government that they had a strong financial incentive to raise revenue by admitting new members, whatever their religion.<sup>25</sup>

It is clear, therefore, that the French government's religious policies were not a major disincentive to Protestant immigrants, and that its economic policies actually facilitated their integration. They had no trouble finding work, lodgings, or clients, despite the city's older reputation for Catholic intolerance. Finding an initial toehold was made easier by a highly developed hotel and lodging-house industry, although as noted earlier, far more important were connections built on common origin, on family ties, and on shared language and religion. For example, Alain Thillay points to chain migration to Paris, involving men in several different trades, from the tiny Rhineland duchy of Juliers. Other networks were trade-based: the leading furniture-maker Jean-François Oeben ran a large workshop where many German artisans worked.<sup>26</sup> In other cases, connections were made through the Lutheran community centred on the Swedish chapel. The example of the engraver Johann Georg Wille reveals that chance meetings on the road to Paris, letters home, and return visits to their place of origin provided opportunities for migrants to share their experiences and vital information about what to do (or not to do) on arrival in the city.<sup>27</sup>

Yet it was equally important that these connections, while sometimes close-knit, were not exclusive. Immigrants did not form separate communities or dominate particular areas. Foreign artisans might initially find employment with a compatriot, but they worked alongside French craftsmen. It is worth noting that two of the areas I have mentioned, the abbey close of Saint-Germain-des-Prés and the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, were also inhabited by many French Protestants, and there is evidence of growing ties between them and the German Lutherans. Many German wood-workers worked as subcontractors for the French Protestant Pierre Migeon, who had a large business in the rue Saint-Nicolas, supplying the royal family and noble families at Court.<sup>28</sup> By the second half of the century, too, intermarriage was becoming reasonably common, not only between French and Swiss Reformed Protestants, but also between them and German-speaking Lutherans. Some of these unions clearly arose from earlier ties formed in the workplace and the neighbourhood, where German artisans married the daughters or widows of French colleagues. Other alliances, bringing together immigrants and French-born men and women, or their children, almost certainly grew out of contacts made at the Swedish and Dutch ambassadors'

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<sup>24</sup> Salvete, *Les ébénistes*, 4, 44, 112, 258, 290, 291, 293, 302, 309, 315. See also Thillay, *Le faubourg Saint-Antoine*, and Thillay, "Les artisans étrangers." Garrioch, *Huguenots of Paris*, 103, 105. Driancourt-Girod, *L'insolite histoire des luthériens*, p.100-1. Thamer, "German Cabinetmakers."

<sup>25</sup> S. Kaplan, "Les corporations." Garrioch, *Making*, 73-4. Marraud, "La confrérie dans le métier." On guild openness to Protestants, Garrioch, *Huguenots of Paris*, 91-5, 176-8, 201.

<sup>26</sup> Roche, ed., *La ville promise*. Thillay, "Les artisans étrangers," 263. Salvete, *Les ébénistes*, 268. Driancourt-Girod, *L'insolite histoire des luthériens*, 99.

<sup>27</sup> Wille, *Briefwechsel*, 65-70, 103. Wille, *Memoires et journal*, 1: 35, 42, 48, 51, 56.

<sup>28</sup> Mouquin, *Pierre IV Migeon*.

chapels, particularly in cases where they lived in different parts of the city and belonged to different occupational groups.<sup>29</sup>

Yet Paris workshops also brought foreign Protestant workers into close contact with French Catholic ones. A Swiss clockmaker in the close of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, according to the local priest, had one employee working with him, “sometimes Catholic, sometimes Protestant, depending on whom he can find”.<sup>30</sup> Jean-François Oeben, originally from the Rhineland, employed and did business with both French Catholic and German Protestant workers, as did the French Protestant Migeon. The Swedish cabinet-maker Georg Haupt, in Paris to gain experience, worked for the prominent French (Catholic) furniture-maker Jean-François Leleu, who had himself previously been employed by Oeben. There is no evidence of religious conflict.<sup>31</sup>

Many immigrants — it is impossible to know in what proportion — were quickly integrated into the economic and social networks of the city. Admittedly, marriage between Catholics and Protestants was not common, but many of the German cabinet-makers became masters in the guild. And most immigrants, even if they retained their own ‘national’ identity, soon absorbed the local culture. For the Swiss, most of whom spoke French, this posed little problem. For German-speakers it took longer — about ten years on average, estimates Janine Driancourt-Girod. Those who stayed in Paris gallicised their given names, and not only when dealing with French clients. Christoph Philip Oberkampf appeared on the register of communicants at the Danish chapel at Christmas 1759, but in 1774 was married at the Swedish chapel as “Christophe Philippe”, his second wife a French Protestant. By 1770, his brother Stephan Friedrich Oberkampf was signing his name as “Etienne Frédéric”.<sup>32</sup> The brothers, and many others like them, had clearly adopted a French identity, even if they retained their German accents! As far as their clients were concerned, however, it clearly did not matter whether they were French or German, Protestant or Catholic. Even the royal family, in whose name Huguenots were being sent to the galleys, readily bought furniture and other products produced by German and Swiss as well as Huguenot artisans. But perhaps the best evidence of integration is the number of German craftsmen who involved themselves in revolutionary politics, even in 1789 when a significant number were recognized in the official lists of takers (*vainqueurs*) of the Bastille.<sup>33</sup>

### **Artisan Mobility: Patterns and Impact**

What might the movement of Protestant artisans to and from Paris reveal about artisan mobility more generally, and about the place of the French capital within it? The first point to make is that Paris was clearly part of Europe-wide circuits of skilled labour. This might seem obvious, yet its importance has rarely been recognized in the literature on French artisan mobility. Such studies concentrate on the Tour de France that many young men undertook in order to gain experience in their profession and see something of the world, and on the *compagnonnages*, the associations of journeymen that played a key role in welcoming artisans in many French towns. These groups certainly formed, as Leora Auslander has put it, “a national organization”, and although they did

<sup>29</sup> Garrioch, *Huguenots of Paris*, 129, 41-53. Thillay, *Le faubourg Saint-Antoine*, 170.

<sup>30</sup> Fréville, *Histoire*, 160.

<sup>31</sup> See the list of Oeben’s creditors in Guiffrey, “Inventaire.” On Migeon, Garrioch, *Huguenots of Paris*, 175. Salverte, *Les ébénistes*, 147, 192. Thillay also comments on the absence of hostility to foreigners: “Les artisans étrangers,” 267.

<sup>32</sup> Driancourt-Girod, *L’insolite histoire des luthériens*, 160-1.

<sup>33</sup> Salverte, *Les ébénistes*, 10, 154, 228, 243, 262, 263, 316, 317.

not operate in Paris before the late eighteenth century, and even then only in a couple of trades, the capital was clearly part of the varied itineraries of the Tour de France.<sup>34</sup> But the *compagnonnages* were not closed to men from outside the kingdom, and the Tour was not the only circuit in existence. Cynthia Truant mentions finding small numbers of artisans from other European countries engaged in the organization, mainly in Nantes, and she also describes letters sent to the members of the *compagnonnage* in Mâcon that were written by men originally from Switzerland, Brussels, and Germany. Michael Sonenscher similarly mentions members who hailed from outside France, including — primarily in Bordeaux — some men of colour from the New World.<sup>35</sup> Yet we must also remember that not all mobile journeymen belonged to the *compagnonnages*. These organizations did not exist in every trade, and they excluded married men as well as women. Although some foreign artisans did participate, it seems clear that most did not.

Beyond the Tour de France, small numbers of skilled workers clearly moved over long distances, and across the borders of states, as they had for centuries. Recent studies in the history of technology, and those of particular industries such as sugar refining, glass-making, and cotton-printing, have stressed the vital role of foreign workers in introducing new technologies and in adapting them to new contexts. Some artisans were brought by employers, but many came on their own.<sup>36</sup> The boundaries of states were extremely porous and did not interrupt flows of labour. Johann Georg Wille's detailed account of his journey to Paris in 1736 does not even mention crossing the frontier, and the only official inspection he recalled took place at the gates of the city, where the employees of the General Farm imposed duties on goods being imported.<sup>37</sup> This ease of movement meant that in 1762, Frankfurt had more journeymen from Strasbourg — a French possession since 1681 — than from any other town except Frankfurt itself. In turn, Strasbourg attracted large numbers of German workers. But foreign artisans found their way to places much further from the borders. Edward Sheppard's analysis of those admitted to the guilds in Dijon — who were therefore not passing through but actually settled there — reveals a small number of individuals from outside France: the largest cohorts were twenty-nine masters from the Austrian Netherlands and a similar number from Savoy, twenty-three from various German states, sixteen from Switzerland, and eight from Italy. Sonenscher's study of some 989 journeymen tailors passing through Rouen from mid 1778 to mid 1780 shows that 8.1 percent of them were born in the Low Countries, mainly Brussels, Antwerp, and Ghent, although like most of those from further afield they often came via Paris.<sup>38</sup>

These examples point to the existence, alongside the *compagnonnages* and in a wider range of trades, of regional networks that crossed the borders of France. Rouen belonged to a network extending into Flanders. Strasbourg was part of a zone that included most of the southern German towns and the Rhineland, while Dijon drew workers from a ring to the north and east. We know from other work that Lyon recruited from the Italian states, although less than in the

<sup>34</sup> Auslander, *Taste and Power*, 137. Garrioch and Sonenscher, "Compagnonnages." On the *compagnonnages*, see particularly Truant, *Rites of Labor*, and Roche, *Humeurs vagabondes*, 968-9, 972-84. Farr, *Hands of Honor*, 63-75. The classic first-hand account is Ménétra, *Journal of My Life*.

<sup>35</sup> Truant, *Rites of Labor*, 140, notes 68, 69. Sonenscher, *Work and Wages*, 302-3.

<sup>36</sup> Davids, *Religion*, 128, 151. Pallach, "Fonctions de la mobilité." Maitte, *Les chemins de verre*. Chassagne, *Le Coton*. Villeret, *Le goût de l'or blanc*, 131-5. On the wider context of such movements, Pérez and Verna, "La circulation des savoirs techniques."

<sup>37</sup> Wille, *Journal et mémoires*, 1: 58.

<sup>38</sup> Lerner, "Eine Statistik," 185. Le Moigne, "Population et subsistances," 22. Sonenscher, "Journeymen's Migrations," 85. Sheppard, "Social Mobility," 121.



past. Towns in the South were part of a Mediterranean circuit.<sup>39</sup> These zones, at first glance, seem to be shaped by geographical proximity. Yet other factors were present. One was language. Strasbourg was on the border between French and German areas; Rouen drew on French-speaking areas to the north; while the languages spoken in the south and south-east of the kingdom shaded into those used on the other side of the frontier. But these zones were also shaped by religion. Flanders and the Austrian Netherlands, and the areas of recruitment around the Mediterranean, were Catholic. Strasbourg, once again, was on the boundary between Lutheran and Catholic zones.

Paris was part of these networks, yet reached beyond them. Although it was further from the frontiers than the other places I have mentioned, it had far greater attractive power, drawing small but significant numbers of artisans not only from neighbouring states but from Scandinavia, America, and Russia. It also welcomed many people whose first language was not French. These skilled migrants, as I have shown, included significant numbers of Protestants, both Lutherans and Reformed Protestants, despite the French government's persecution of the Huguenots.

It is also clear, however, that the patterns of European artisan mobility were not fixed. Italian migration to Paris was in long-term decline, while artisans from Protestant areas were arriving in ever-growing numbers across the eighteenth century. This partly reflected the broad shift in economic dynamism, away from Italy and towards north-western Europe, and along with that the growth of new luxury industries, notably furniture- and watch-making. Yet many German workers in Paris were tailors and shoemakers, so that was not the sole factor. To fully explain these trends would require looking at why people left home, although work on emigration from the German Palatinate suggests that these 'push' factors — aside from wars — were fairly constant across the century, mainly population growth outstripping resources.<sup>40</sup>

Yet whatever the reasons people had for leaving, the change in migratory flows appears to reflect an erosion of religious boundaries. It is possible, of course, that this represented a return to a trend that had been interrupted by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. There are certainly examples of German, English, and Dutch artisans in seventeenth-century Paris.<sup>41</sup> It may be that the period of relative toleration initiated by the Edict of Nantes had encouraged Protestants to come to Paris, and that later in the seventeenth century, as persecution increased, their numbers declined. Yet even if an older trans-European pattern had been interrupted by the Revocation, the available evidence suggests that the overall numbers of Protestant artisans arriving in the eighteenth century were greater, and also that they represented a higher percentage of all foreign artisans. Either religious difference mattered less to these individuals, or they felt that the barriers raised against them were lower.

There is not space here to explore, in any detail, the impact that this migration may have had on Paris or on the places that those who worked there subsequently returned to. They clearly brought new skills and approaches with them, which they then adapted to the clients and markets they found in France. Janine Driancourt-Girod claims that German cabinet-makers brought the rococo to France, at least where furniture was concerned.<sup>42</sup> We know that artisans who returned

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<sup>39</sup> Sonenscher, "Journeymen's Migrations," 85. Garden, *Lyon et les lyonnais*, 45, 52. For the start of the century, Dubost and Sahlins, *Et si on faisait payer les étrangers?*, 274-6.

<sup>40</sup> Häberlein, "Palatines in Europe," 590.

<sup>41</sup> Driancourt-Girod, *L'insolite histoire des luthériens*, 66-7. Thillay, "Les artisans étrangers," 263.

<sup>42</sup> Driancourt-Girod, *L'insolite histoire des luthériens*, 101.

to Stockholm or Berlin or St Petersburg often introduced the latest French styles, as did French artisans who went to work in those places.<sup>43</sup>

However, it was not solely styles and techniques that travelled with these individuals. Much recent work on material culture has accorded it a key role in the dissemination of new social practices and cultural understandings. Roger Chartier pointed to the link between reading styles and furniture, while Leora Auslander posited the existence of “stylistic regimes” that had strong political implications. Dena Goodman has argued persuasively that the production of elegant writing boxes, desks, and other accoutrements explicitly designed for elite women helped to legitimise practices of female correspondence and thereby influenced gender identities. Among both the middle classes and the rich, scientific instruments such as thermometers and barometers, often housed in elegantly carved wooden frames, signified but also encouraged an interest in the scientific culture of the Age of Enlightenment. Meanwhile, the falling price and ready availability of fashionable dress created a “confusion of ranks” that undermined social hierarchies based on appearances.<sup>44</sup> Objects carried a range of meanings, and they often helped to drive cultural change.

Although more attention has been paid to the objects themselves than to those who produced them, artisans too were part of these cultural trends, and none more so than those who migrated from place to place. The German craftsmen who brought their woodworking skills to Paris created the secretaires and writing boxes. Indeed, artisans sometimes invented such objects and introduced new styles, although innovation was more often a process of adaptation than of creation from scratch. Nevertheless, the many thousands of tramping artisans were, as much or even more than many other travellers, important “cultural intermediaries”.<sup>45</sup> As they moved around, they took ideas, knowledge, and skills with them; they picked up new techniques and passed them on, and through their work disseminated new social practices and cultural understandings.

None of this was confined to Protestant artisans, in Paris or elsewhere. Yet it is worth asking about the specifically religious dimension of migration, both for those who moved and for the receiving society. If we think about the religious boundary that Protestant artisans crossed when they went to live in Paris, one that had been reinforced by the wars and persecutions of the seventeenth century, it is likely that the growing toleration of the Age of Enlightenment facilitated their movement. Might the reverse also be true: that their presence in the city contributed to greater acceptance of religious difference? Certainly, we find close contact between Protestant and Catholic immigrants. François Vandercruse, for example, was born in the Catholic region of Ghent and his wife was buried in the Catholic parish in Paris. Yet their son was a witness at the burial of the French Protestant furniture-maker Pierre Migeon in 1758 and later became guardian to the children of another cabinet-maker, Martin Carlin, whom we find attending a Lutheran wedding in 1771.<sup>46</sup>

It would be naïve to take this suggestion too far. There were many places in eighteenth-century Europe where different religious groups coexisted but where conflict was endemic. In any case, it is likely that most of the Paris population never consciously encountered a Protestant.

<sup>43</sup> Locker, “Prussian factory.” Although out of date in approach, still useful is Réau, *L'Europe française*.

<sup>44</sup> Chartier, “Urban Reading Practices, 1660-1780,” 221-2. Goodman, *Becoming a Woman*, 161-244. Golinski, *British Weather*, 108-36. Golinski points out that these meanings might be ambiguous. Roche, *Culture of Clothing*. Auslander, *Taste and Power*.

<sup>45</sup> Roche, *Humeurs vagabondes*, 1003.

<sup>46</sup> Roinet, *Vandercruse*, 15, 24. Archives nationales, Paris, Minutier Central, VI 786, 16 April 1771.

There were other factors, political, cultural, and religious, that played a far more significant role in changing attitudes to religious difference.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, it is certain that the presence of Swiss Calvinists and German Lutherans in Paris, who did form direct and apparently cordial relationships with their neighbours, workmates, and clients, helped to make Paris the cosmopolitan place that it became in the final decades of the Old Regime.

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<sup>47</sup> Garrioch, *Huguenots of Paris*, 187-274.

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