

The École Royale Militaire

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Résumé ou extrait : This book explores the Paris Ecole Militaire as an institution, arguing for its importance as a school that presented itself as a model for reform during a key moment in the movement towards military professionalism as well as state-run secular education. The school is distinguished for being an Enlightenment project, one of its founders publishing an article on it in the Encyclopédie in 1755. Its curriculum broke completely with the Latin pedagogy of the dominant Jesuit system, while adapting the legacy of seventeenth-century riding academies. Its status touches on the nature of absolutism, as it was conceived to glorify the Bourbon dynasty in a similar way to the girls school at Saint Cyr and the Invalides. It was also a dispensary of royal charity calculated to ally the nobility more closely to royal interests through military service. In the army, its proofs of nobility were the model for the much debated 1781 Ségur decree, often described as a notable cause of the French Revolution.

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