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**François-Marie Arouet** ([Template:IPA-fr](/wiki/Template:IPA-fr); 21 November 1694 – 30 May 1778), known by his [*nom de plume*](/wiki/Pen_name) **Voltaire** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en);[[1]](#cite_note-1) [Template:IPA-fr](/wiki/Template:IPA-fr)), was a French [Enlightenment](/wiki/Age_of_Enlightenment) writer, historian, and [philosopher](/wiki/Philosophy) famous for his wit, his attacks on the established Catholic Church, and his advocacy of [freedom of religion](/wiki/Freedom_of_religion), [freedom of expression](/wiki/Freedom_of_expression), and [separation of church and state](/wiki/Separation_of_church_and_state).

Voltaire was a versatile writer, producing works in almost every literary form, including plays, poems, novels, essays, and historical and scientific works. He wrote more than 20,000 letters and more than 2,000 books and pamphlets. He was an outspoken advocate of several liberties, despite the risk this placed him in under the strict censorship laws of the time. As a [satirical](/wiki/Satire) [polemicist](/wiki/Polemic), he frequently made use of his works to criticize intolerance, religious dogma, and the French institutions of his day.

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## Biography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

François-Marie Arouet was born in Paris, the youngest of the five children of François Arouet (19 August 1649 – 1 January 1722), a lawyer who was a minor treasury official, and his wife, Marie Marguerite Daumard (c. 1660 – 13 July 1701), whose family was on the lowest rank of the [French nobility](/wiki/French_nobility).[[2]](#cite_note-2) Some speculation surrounds Voltaire's date of birth, because he claimed he was born on 20 February 1694 as the illegitimate son of a nobleman, Guérin de Rochebrune or Roquebrune.[[3]](#cite_note-3) Two of his older brothers—Armand-François and Robert—died in infancy and his surviving brother, Armand, and sister Marguerite-Catherine were nine and seven years older, respectively.[[4]](#cite_note-4) Nicknamed 'Zozo' by his family, Voltaire was baptized on 22 November 1694, with [François de Castagnère, abbé de Châteauneuf](/wiki/Fr:François_de_Châteauneuf), and Marie Daumard, the wife of his mother's cousin, standing as godparents.[[5]](#cite_note-5) He was educated by the [Jesuits](/wiki/Jesuits) at the [Collège Louis-le-Grand](/wiki/Collège_Louis-le-Grand) (1704–1711), where he was taught [Latin](/wiki/Latin), theology, and [rhetoric](/wiki/Rhetoric);[[6]](#cite_note-6) later in life he became fluent in [Italian](/wiki/Italian_language), [Spanish](/wiki/Spanish_language), and English.[[7]](#cite_note-7) By the time he left school, Voltaire had decided he wanted to be a writer, against the wishes of his father, who wanted him to become a [lawyer](/wiki/Lawyer).[[8]](#cite_note-8) Voltaire, pretending to work in [Paris](/wiki/Paris) as an assistant to a notary, spent much of his time writing poetry. When his father found out, he sent Voltaire to study law, this time in [Caen](/wiki/Caen), [Normandy](/wiki/Normandy). Nevertheless, he continued to write, producing essays and historical studies. Voltaire's wit made him popular among some of the aristocratic families with whom he mixed. In 1713, his father obtained a job for him as a secretary to the new French ambassador in the Netherlands, the [marquis de Châteauneuf](/wiki/Fr:Pierre-Antoine_de_Châteauneuf), the brother of Voltaire's godfather.<ref name=P36>Pearson, p. 36</ref> At [The Hague](/wiki/The_Hague), Voltaire fell in love with a [French Protestant](/wiki/Huguenot) refugee named Catherine Olympe Dunoyer (known as 'Pimpette').<ref name=P36/> Their scandalous affair was discovered by de Châteauneuf and Voltaire was forced to return to France by the end of the year.[[9]](#cite_note-9)[thumb|Voltaire was imprisoned in the](/wiki/File:Bastille_1715.jpg) [Bastille](/wiki/Bastille) from 16 May 1717 to 15 April 1718 in a windowless cell with ten-foot thick walls.[[10]](#cite_note-10) Most of Voltaire's early life revolved around Paris. From early on, Voltaire had trouble with the authorities for critiques of the government. These activities were to result in two imprisonments and a temporary exile to England. One satirical verse, in which Voltaire accused the [Régent](/wiki/Philippe_II,_Duke_of_Orléans) of incest with his own daughter, led to an eleven-month imprisonment in the [Bastille](/wiki/Bastille).[[11]](#cite_note-11) The [*Comédie-Française*](/wiki/Comédie-Française) had agreed in January 1717 to stage his debut play, [*Œdipe*](/wiki/Oedipe_(play)), and it opened in mid-November 1718, seven months after his release.[[12]](#cite_note-12) Its immediate critical and financial success established his reputation.[[13]](#cite_note-13) Both the Régent and King [George I of Great Britain](/wiki/George_I_of_Great_Britain) presented Voltaire with medals as a mark of their appreciation.[[14]](#cite_note-14) He mainly argued for religious tolerance and freedom of thought. He campaigned to eradicate priestly and aristo-monarchical authority, and supported a constitutional monarchy that protects people's rights.[[15]](#cite_note-15)[[16]](#cite_note-16)

### Adopts the name "Voltaire"[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

The author adopted the name "Voltaire" in 1718, following his incarceration at the Bastille. Its origin is unclear. It is an [anagram](/wiki/Anagram) of *AROVET LI*, the Latinized spelling of his surname, Arouet, and the initial letters of *le jeune* ("the young").[[17]](#cite_note-17) According to a family tradition among the descendants of his sister, he was known as *le petit volontaire* ("determined little thing") as a child, and he resurrected a variant of the name in his adult life.[[18]](#cite_note-18) The name also [reverses the syllables](/wiki/Verlan) of [Airvault](/wiki/Airvault), his family's home town in the [Poitou](/wiki/Poitou) region.[[19]](#cite_note-19) [Richard Holmes](/wiki/Richard_Holmes_(biographer))[[20]](#cite_note-20) supports the anagrammatic derivation of the name, but adds that a writer such as Voltaire would have intended it to also convey its connotations of speed and daring. These come from associations with words such as [*voltige*](/wiki/Equestrian_vaulting) (acrobatics on a trapeze or horse), [*volte-face*](/wiki/Volte-face) (a spinning about to face one's enemies), and *volatile* (originally, any winged creature). "Arouet" was not a noble name fit for his growing reputation, especially given that name's resonance with *à rouer* ("to be beaten up") and *roué* (a *débauché*).

In a letter to [Jean-Baptiste Rousseau](/wiki/Jean-Baptiste_Rousseau) in March 1719, Voltaire concludes by asking that, if Rousseau wishes to send him a return letter, he do so by addressing it to Monsieur de Voltaire. A postscript explains: "*J'ai été si malheureux sous le nom d'Arouet que j'en ai pris un autre surtout pour n'être plus confondu avec le poète Roi*", (I was so unhappy under the name of Arouet that I have taken another, primarily so as to cease to be confused with the poet Roi.)[[21]](#cite_note-21) This probably refers to [Adenes le Roi](/wiki/Adenes_le_Roi), and the 'oi' diphthong was then pronounced like modern 'ouai', so the similarity to 'Arouet' is clear, and thus, it could well have been part of his rationale. Indeed, Voltaire is known also to have used at least 178 separate pen names during his lifetime.[[22]](#cite_note-22)

### ''La Henriade'' and ''Mariamne''[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

Voltaire's next play *Artémire*, set in ancient Macedonia, opened on 15 February 1720. It was a flop and only fragments of the text survive.[[23]](#cite_note-23) He instead turned to an epic poem about [Henri IV of France](/wiki/Henri_IV_of_France) that he had begun in early 1717.[[24]](#cite_note-24) Denied a licence to publish, in August 1722 Voltaire headed north to find a publisher outside France. On the journey, he was accompanied by his mistress, Marie-Marguerite de Rupelmonde, a young widow.[[25]](#cite_note-25) At Brussels, Voltaire and Rousseau met up for a few days, before Voltaire and his mistress continued northwards. A publisher was eventually secured in The Hague.[[26]](#cite_note-26) In the Netherlands, Voltaire was struck and impressed by the openness and tolerance of Dutch society.[[27]](#cite_note-27) On his return to France, he secured a second publisher in [Rouen](/wiki/Rouen), who agreed to publish [*La Henriade*](/wiki/La_Henriade) clandestinely.[[28]](#cite_note-28) After Voltaire's recovery from a month-long [smallpox](/wiki/Smallpox) infection in November 1723, the first copies were smuggled into Paris and distributed.[[29]](#cite_note-29) While the poem was an instant success, Voltaire's new play, [*Mariamne*](/wiki/Hérode_et_Mariamne), was a failure when it first opened in March 1724.<ref name=P64>Pearson, p. 64</ref> Heavily reworked, it opened at the *Comédie-Française* in April 1725 to a much-improved reception.<ref name=P64/> It was among the entertainments provided at the wedding of [Louis XV](/wiki/Louis_XV) and [Marie Leszczyńska](/wiki/Marie_Leszczyńska) in September 1725.<ref name=P64/>

### Great Britain[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

In early 1726, a young French nobleman, the [chevalier de Rohan-Chabot](/wiki/Chevalier_de_Rohan-Chabot), taunted Voltaire about his change of name, and Voltaire retorted that his name would be honoured while de Rohan would dishonour his.[[30]](#cite_note-30) Infuriated, de Rohan arranged for Voltaire to be beaten up by thugs a few days later.[[31]](#cite_note-31) Seeking compensation, redress, or revenge, Voltaire challenged de Rohan to a duel, but the aristocratic de Rohan family arranged for Voltaire to be arrested and imprisoned in the [Bastille](/wiki/Bastille) on 17 April 1726 without a trial or an opportunity to defend himself.[[32]](#cite_note-32)[[33]](#cite_note-33) Fearing an indefinite prison sentence, Voltaire suggested that he be exiled to England as an alternative punishment, which the French authorities accepted.[[34]](#cite_note-34) On 2 May, he was escorted from the Bastille to [Calais](/wiki/Calais), where he was to embark for Britain.[[35]](#cite_note-35) In England, Voltaire lived largely in [Wandsworth](/wiki/Wandsworth) with acquaintances including [Everard Fawkener](/wiki/Everard_Fawkener).[[36]](#cite_note-36) From December 1727 to June 1728 he lodged at Maiden Lane, [Covent Garden](/wiki/Covent_Garden), now commemorated by a plaque, to be nearer to his British publisher.<ref name=P82>Pearson, p. 82</ref> Voltaire circulated throughout English high society, meeting [Alexander Pope](/wiki/Alexander_Pope), [John Gay](/wiki/John_Gay), [Jonathan Swift](/wiki/Jonathan_Swift), [Lady Mary Wortley Montagu](/wiki/Lady_Mary_Wortley_Montagu), [Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough](/wiki/Sarah,_Duchess_of_Marlborough), and many other members of the nobility and royalty.[[37]](#cite_note-37) Voltaire's exile in Great Britain greatly influenced his thinking. He was intrigued by Britain's [constitutional monarchy](/wiki/Constitutional_monarchy) in contrast to French [absolutism](/wiki/Absolute_monarchy), and by the country's greater support of the freedoms of speech and religion.[[38]](#cite_note-38) He was influenced by the writers of the age, and developed an interest in earlier English literature, especially the works of [Shakespeare](/wiki/William_Shakespeare), still relatively unknown in continental Europe.[[39]](#cite_note-39) Despite pointing out his deviations from neoclassical standards, Voltaire saw Shakespeare as an example that French writers might emulate, since French drama, despite being more polished, lacked on-stage action. Later, however, as Shakespeare's influence began growing in France, Voltaire tried to set a contrary example with his own plays, decrying what he considered Shakespeare's barbarities. Voltaire may have been present at the funeral of [Isaac Newton](/wiki/Isaac_Newton),[[40]](#cite_note-40) and met Newton's niece, [Catherine Conduitt](/wiki/Catherine_Conduitt).<ref name=P82/> In 1727 he published two essays in English, *Upon the Civil Wars of France, Extracted from Curious Manuscripts*, and *Upon Epic Poetry of the European Nations, from* [*Homer*](/wiki/Homer) *Down to* [*Milton*](/wiki/John_Milton).<ref name=P82/> [thumb|left|Pastel by](/wiki/File:Maurice_Quentin_de_La_Tour,_portrait_de_Voltaire_(1735)_avec_agrandissement.jpg) [Maurice Quentin de La Tour](/wiki/Maurice_Quentin_de_La_Tour), 1735 After two and a half years in exile, Voltaire returned to France, and after a few months living in [Dieppe](/wiki/Dieppe), the authorities permitted him to return to Paris.[[41]](#cite_note-41) At a dinner, French mathematician [Charles Marie de La Condamine](/wiki/Charles_Marie_de_La_Condamine) proposed buying up the lottery that was organized by the French government to pay off its debts, and Voltaire joined the consortium, earning perhaps a million [livres](/wiki/French_livre).[[42]](#cite_note-42) He invested the money cleverly and on this basis managed to convince the [Court of Finances](/wiki/Court_of_Finances) that he was of good conduct and so was able to take control of a capital inheritance from his father that had hitherto been tied up in trust. He was now indisputably rich.[[43]](#cite_note-43)[[44]](#cite_note-44) Further success followed, in 1732, with his play [*Zaïre*](/wiki/Zaïre_(play)), which when published in 1733 carried a dedication to Fawkener that praised English liberty and commerce.[[45]](#cite_note-45) At this time he published his views on British attitudes toward government, literature, religion and science in a collection of essays in letter form entitled [*Letters Concerning the English Nation*](/wiki/Letters_on_the_English) (London, 1733).<ref name=P97>Pearson, p. 97</ref> In 1734, they were published in French as *Lettres philosophiques* in [Rouen](/wiki/Rouen).[[46]](#cite_note-46)[Template:Refn](/wiki/Template:Refn) Because the publisher released the book without the approval of the royal censor and Voltaire regarded the British constitutional monarchy as more developed and more respectful of human rights (particularly religious tolerance) than its French counterpart, the French publication of *Letters* caused a huge scandal; the book was [publicly burnt](/wiki/Book_burning) and banned, and Voltaire was forced again to flee Paris.[[15]](#cite_note-15)

### Château de Cirey[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[thumb|upright=1.2|In the frontispiece to Voltaire's book on Newton's philosophy,](/wiki/File:Voltaire_Philosophy_of_Newton_frontispiece.jpg) [Émilie du Châtelet](/wiki/Émilie_du_Châtelet) appears as Voltaire's muse, reflecting Newton's heavenly insights down to Voltaire.[[47]](#cite_note-47)

In 1733, Voltaire met [Émilie du Châtelet](/wiki/Émilie_du_Châtelet), a married mother of three who was 12 years his junior and with whom he was to have an affair for 16 years.[[48]](#cite_note-48) To avoid arrest after the publication of *Letters*, Voltaire took refuge at her husband's château at [Cirey-sur-Blaise](/wiki/Cirey-sur-Blaise), on the borders of [Champagne](/wiki/Champagne,_France) and [Lorraine](/wiki/Lorraine_(région)).[[49]](#cite_note-49) Voltaire paid for the building's renovation,[[50]](#cite_note-50) and Émilie 's husband, the Marquis du Châtelet, sometimes stayed at the château with his wife and her lover.[[51]](#cite_note-51) The relationship had a significant intellectual element. Voltaire and the Marquise collected over 21,000 books, an enormous number for the time.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Together, they studied these books and performed experiments in the [natural sciences](/wiki/Natural_sciences) at Cirey, which included an attempt to determine the nature of fire.[[52]](#cite_note-52) Having learned from his previous brushes with the authorities, Voltaire began his habit of keeping out of personal harm's way, and denying any awkward responsibility. He continued to write plays, such as *Mérope* (or *La Mérope française*) and began his long research into science and history. Again, a main source of inspiration for Voltaire were the years of his British exile, during which he had been strongly influenced by the works of Sir [Isaac Newton](/wiki/Isaac_Newton). Voltaire strongly believed in Newton's theories; he performed experiments in [optics](/wiki/Optics) at Cirey,[[53]](#cite_note-53) and was one of the sources for the famous story of Newton and the apple falling from the tree, which he had learned from Newton's niece in London and first mentioned in his *Letters*.<ref name=P82/>

In the fall of 1735, Voltaire was visited by [Francesco Algarotti](/wiki/Francesco_Algarotti), who was preparing a book about Newton in Italian.[[54]](#cite_note-54) Partly inspired by the visit, the Marquise translated Newton's Latin *Principia* into French in full, and it remained the definitive French translation into the 21st century.[[15]](#cite_note-15) Both she and Voltaire were also curious about the philosophies of [Gottfried Leibniz](/wiki/Gottfried_Leibniz), a contemporary and rival of Newton. While Voltaire remained a firm Newtonian, the Marquise adopted certain aspects of Leibniz's arguments against Newton.[[15]](#cite_note-15)[[55]](#cite_note-55) Voltaire's own book *Eléments de la philosophie de Newton* (*Elements of Newton's Philosophy*) made Newton accessible and understandable to a far greater public, and the Marquise wrote a celebratory review in the [*Journal des savants*](/wiki/Journal_des_savants).[[15]](#cite_note-15)[[56]](#cite_note-56) Voltaire's work was instrumental in bringing about general acceptance of Newton's optical and gravitational theories in France.[[15]](#cite_note-15)[[57]](#cite_note-57) Voltaire and the Marquise also studied history, particularly those persons who had contributed to civilization. Voltaire's second essay in English had been "Essay upon the Civil Wars in France". It was followed by *La Henriade*, an epic poem on the French [King Henri IV](/wiki/King_Henri_IV), glorifying his attempt to end the Catholic-Protestant massacres with the [Edict of Nantes](/wiki/Edict_of_Nantes), and by a historical novel on King [Charles XII of Sweden](/wiki/Charles_XII_of_Sweden). These, along with his *Letters on the English* mark the beginning of Voltaire's open criticism of intolerance and established religions.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Voltaire and the Marquise also explored philosophy, particularly [metaphysics](/wiki/Metaphysics), the branch of philosophy that deals with being and with what lies beyond the material realm such as whether or not there is a God and whether people have souls. Voltaire and the Marquise analysed the Bible, and concluded that much of its content was dubious.[[58]](#cite_note-58) Voltaire's critical views on religion are reflected in his belief in [separation of church and state](/wiki/Separation_of_church_and_state) and religious freedom, ideas that he had formed after his stay in England.

In August 1736, [Frederick the Great](/wiki/Frederick_II_of_Prussia) initiated a correspondence with Voltaire.[[59]](#cite_note-59) That December, Voltaire moved to [Holland](/wiki/Holland) for two months and became acquainted with the scientists [Herman Boerhaave](/wiki/Herman_Boerhaave) and ['s Gravesande](/wiki/'s_Gravesande).[[60]](#cite_note-60) From mid-1739 to mid-1740 Voltaire lived largely in Brussels, at first with the Marquise, who was unsuccessfully attempting to pursue a 60-year-old family legal case regarding the ownership of two estates in [Limburg](/wiki/Limburg_(Belgium)).[[61]](#cite_note-61) In July 1740, he traveled to the Hague on behalf of Frederick in an attempt to dissuade a dubious publisher, van Duren, from printing without permission Frederick's [*Anti-Machiavel*](/wiki/Anti-Machiavel).[[62]](#cite_note-62) In September Voltaire and Frederick met for the first time in [Moyland Castle](/wiki/Moyland_Castle) near [Cleves](/wiki/Cleves) and in November Voltaire was Frederick's guest in Berlin for two weeks;[[63]](#cite_note-63) in September 1742 they met in [Aix-la-Chapelle](/wiki/Aix-la-Chapelle).[[64]](#cite_note-64) Voltaire was sent to Frederick's court in 1743 by the French government, as an envoy and spy to gauge Frederick's military intentions in the [War of the Austrian Succession](/wiki/War_of_the_Austrian_Succession).[[65]](#cite_note-65)[thumb|*Die Tafelrunde* by](/wiki/File:Tafelrunde.PNG) [Adolph von Menzel](/wiki/Adolph_von_Menzel). Guests of Frederick the Great at [Sanssouci](/wiki/Sanssouci), including members of the [Prussian Academy of Sciences](/wiki/Prussian_Academy_of_Sciences) and Voltaire (third from left) Though deeply committed to the Marquise, Voltaire by 1744 found life at the château confining. On a visit to Paris that year, he found a new love—his niece. At first, his attraction to [Marie Louise Mignot](/wiki/Marie_Louise_Mignot) was clearly sexual, as evidenced by his letters to her (only discovered in 1957).[[66]](#cite_note-66)[[67]](#cite_note-67) Much later, they lived together, perhaps platonically, and remained together until Voltaire's death. Meanwhile, the Marquise also took a lover, the [Marquis de Saint-Lambert](/wiki/Jean_François_de_Saint-Lambert).[[68]](#cite_note-68)

### Prussia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

After the death of the Marquise in childbirth in September 1749, Voltaire briefly returned to Paris and in mid-1750 moved to [Prussia](/wiki/Prussia) to the court of Frederick the Great.[[69]](#cite_note-69) The Prussian king (with the permission of Louis XV) made him a chamberlain in his household, appointed him to the [Order of Merit](/wiki/Pour_le_Mérite), and gave him a salary of 20,000 [French livres](/wiki/French_livre) a year.[[70]](#cite_note-70) He had rooms at [Sanssouci](/wiki/Sanssouci) and [Charlottenburg Palace](/wiki/Charlottenburg_Palace).[[71]](#cite_note-71) Though life went well at first[[72]](#cite_note-72)—in 1751 he completed [*Micromégas*](/wiki/Micromégas), a piece of science fiction involving ambassadors from another planet witnessing the follies of humankind[[73]](#cite_note-73)—his relationship with Frederick the Great began to deteriorate after he was accused of theft and forgery by a Jewish financier who had invested in Saxon government bonds, on behalf of Voltaire, at a time when Frederick was involved in sensitive diplomatic negotiations with [Saxony](/wiki/Electorate_of_Saxony).[[74]](#cite_note-74) He encountered other difficulties: an argument with [Maupertuis](/wiki/Pierre_Louis_Maupertuis), the president of the [Berlin Academy of Science](/wiki/Berlin_Academy_of_Science), provoked Voltaire's [*Diatribe du docteur Akakia*](/wiki/Doctor_Akakia) ("Diatribe of Doctor Akakia"), which satirized some of Maupertuis's theories and his abuse of power in his persecutions of a mutual acquaintance, [Johann Samuel König](/wiki/Johann_Samuel_König). This greatly angered Frederick, who ordered all copies of the document burned.[[75]](#cite_note-75) On 1 January 1752, Voltaire offered to resign as chamberlain and return his insignia of the Order of Merit; at first, Frederick refused until eventually permitting Voltaire to leave in March.[[76]](#cite_note-76) On a slow journey back to France, Voltaire stayed at [Leipzig](/wiki/Leipzig) and [Gotha](/wiki/Gotha) for a month each, and [Kassel](/wiki/Kassel) for two weeks, arriving at [Frankfurt](/wiki/Frankfurt) on 31 May. The following morning, he was detained at the inn where he was staying by Frederick's agents, who held him in the city for over three weeks while they, Voltaire and Frederick argued by letter over the return of a book of poetry. Marie Louise joined him on 9 June. She and her uncle only left Frankfurt in July after she had defended herself from the unwanted advances of one of Frederick's agents and Voltaire's luggage had been ransacked and valuable items taken by the agents.[[77]](#cite_note-77)

### Geneva and Ferney[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[thumb|Voltaire's](/wiki/File:Château_de_Voltaire_à_Ferney_3.JPG) [*château*](/wiki/Château) at [Ferney](/wiki/Ferney), France

Voltaire's slow progress toward Paris continued through [Mainz](/wiki/Mainz), [Mannheim](/wiki/Mannheim), [Strasbourg](/wiki/Strasbourg), and [Colmar](/wiki/Colmar),[[78]](#cite_note-78) but in January 1754 [Louis XV](/wiki/Louis_XV_of_France) banned him from Paris,[[79]](#cite_note-79) so instead he turned for [Geneva](/wiki/Geneva), near which he bought a large estate ([*Les Délices*](/wiki/Les_Délices)) in early 1755.[[80]](#cite_note-80) Though he was received openly at first, the law in Geneva, which banned theatrical performances, and the publication of [*The Maid of Orleans*](/wiki/The_Maid_of_Orleans_(poem)) against his will soured his relationship with Calvinist Genevans.[[81]](#cite_note-81) In late 1758, he bought an even larger estate at [Ferney](/wiki/Ferney), on the French side of the [Franco-Swiss border](/wiki/Franco-Swiss_border).[[82]](#cite_note-82) Early the following year, Voltaire completed and published [*Candide, ou l'Optimisme*](/wiki/Candide) (*Candide, or Optimism*). This satire on [Leibniz's](/wiki/Gottfried_Wilhelm_Leibniz) philosophy of optimistic determinism remains the work for which Voltaire is perhaps best known. He would stay in Ferney for most of the remaining 20 years of his life, frequently entertaining distinguished guests, such as [James Boswell](/wiki/James_Boswell), [Adam Smith](/wiki/Adam_Smith), [Giacomo Casanova](/wiki/Giacomo_Casanova), and [Edward Gibbon](/wiki/Edward_Gibbon).[[83]](#cite_note-83) In 1764, he published one of his best-known philosophical works, the [*Dictionnaire philosophique*](/wiki/Dictionnaire_philosophique), a series of articles mainly on Christian history and dogmas, a few of which were originally written in Berlin.[[33]](#cite_note-33) From 1762, he began to champion unjustly persecuted people, the case of [Huguenot](/wiki/Huguenot) merchant [Jean Calas](/wiki/Jean_Calas) being the most celebrated.[[33]](#cite_note-33) He had been tortured to death in 1763, supposedly because he had murdered his eldest son for wanting to convert to Catholicism. His possessions were confiscated and his two daughters were taken from his widow and were forced into Catholic convents. Voltaire, seeing this as a clear case of religious persecution, managed to overturn the conviction in 1765.[[84]](#cite_note-84) Voltaire was initiated into [Freemasonry](/wiki/Freemasonry) the month before his death. On 4 April 1778 Voltaire accompanied his close friend [Benjamin Franklin](/wiki/Benjamin_Franklin) into *Loge des Neuf Soeurs* in Paris, France and became an [Entered Apprentice](/wiki/Entered_Apprentice) Freemason. "Benjamin Franklin … urged Voltaire to become a freemason; and Voltaire agreed, perhaps only to please Franklin."[[85]](#cite_note-85)[[86]](#cite_note-86)[[87]](#cite_note-87)

### Death and burial[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

In February 1778, Voltaire returned for the first time in over 25 years to Paris, among other reasons to see the opening of his latest tragedy, *Irene*.[[88]](#cite_note-88) The five-day journey was too much for the 83-year-old, and he believed he was about to die on 28 February, writing "I die adoring God, loving my friends, not hating my enemies, and detesting superstition." However, he recovered, and in March saw a performance of *Irene*, where he was treated by the audience as a returning hero.[[33]](#cite_note-33)[thumb|left|House in Paris where Voltaire died](/wiki/File:Voltaire-last-house.jpg) He soon became ill again and died on 30 May 1778. The accounts of his deathbed have been numerous and varying, and it has not been possible to establish the details of what precisely occurred. His enemies related that he repented and accepted the last rites given by a Catholic priest, or that he died under great torment, while his adherents told how he was defiant to his last breath.[[89]](#cite_note-89) According to one story, his last words were, "Now is not the time for making new enemies." It was his response to a priest at the side of his deathbed, asking Voltaire to renounce Satan.[[90]](#cite_note-90) However, this is also disputed as originating from a joke first published in a Massachusetts newspaper in 1856, as only later being attributed to Voltaire by Robert E. Lucas in 1955 upon giving his banquet speech for receiving the Nobel Prize in Economics.[[91]](#cite_note-91)[[139][139]](#cite_note-139)[[140]](#cite_note-140) Here he called Mohammed a "poet", and furthermore he was not an illiterate.[[141]](#cite_note-141) as a "legislator" who "changed the face of part of Europe, one half of Asia",[[142]](#cite_note-142)[[143]](#cite_note-143)[[144]](#cite_note-144) In the chapter VI, Voltaire finds similarities Arabs and ancient Hebrews, that they both kept running to battle in the name of god, and sharing the passion for booty and spoils.[[145]](#cite_note-145) He thus compares "the genius of the Arab people" with "the genius of the ancient Romans".[[146]](#cite_note-146)

#### The drama ''Mahomet''[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The tragedy *Fanaticism, or Mahomet the Prophet* ([Template:Lang-fr](/wiki/Template:Lang-fr)) was written in 1736 by Voltaire. The play is a study of [religious fanaticism](/wiki/Religious_fanaticism) and self-serving [manipulation](/wiki/Psychological_manipulation). In the play, the character Mahomet orders the murder of his critics.[[147]](#cite_note-147) When Voltaire wrote in 1742 to [César de Missy](/wiki/César_de_Missy), he described Mohammed as a "deceitful character."[[148]](#cite_note-148)[[149]](#cite_note-149) On 20 January 1742, Voltaire wrote to Frederick the Great stating that he had decided to write a play on Mohammed so as to combat religious fraud. He wrote that Mohammed was "whatever trickery can invent that is most atrocious and whatever fanaticism can accomplish that is most horrifying. Mahomet here is nothing other than [Tartuffe](/wiki/Tartuffe) with armies at his command."[[150]](#cite_note-150)[[151]](#cite_note-151) In 1751, Voltaire performed his play *Mohamet* once again, with great success.[[152]](#cite_note-152)

Satire

According to [Will Durant](/wiki/Will_Durant), when *Mahomet* was performed for the first time in August 1742, a section of the Christian clergy had complained that it was "a bloody satire against the Christian religion."[[153]](#cite_note-153) Others who agreed with this assessment were [Desfontaines](/wiki/Pierre_Desfontaines) and [Freron](/wiki/Louis-Marie_Stanislas_Fréron). After the fourth performance of the play, it was withdrawn by Voltaire after [Cardinal Fleury](/wiki/André-Hercule_de_Fleury) advised him to do so. According to some commentators, when Mahomet's fanatical disciple Seide hesitates to carry out Mahomet's instruction to kill sheik Zopir, the wording in Mahomet's rebuke was reminiscent of language used by the Christian priesthood. In Durant's assessment, the play was an attack on any religion's endorsement of violence, and to illustrate the point Durant refers to a letter written by Voltaire to Frederick the Great in which Voltaire mentions the assassinations of [William of Orange](/wiki/William_the_Silent), and [Henry III](/wiki/Henry_III_of_France) and [Henry IV](/wiki/Henry_IV_of_France) of France as examples of crimes originating from piety.[[154]](#cite_note-154) Commenting on Voltaire's *Mahomet*, [Malise Ruthven](/wiki/Malise_Ruthven) has observed: [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

In a letter to Frederick the Great, Voltaire clarified that the historical Mohammad was not guilty of the treachery that formed the basis of his play *Mahomet*.[[110]](#cite_note-110)

### Hinduism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

Despite the criticism of Abrahamic religions, Voltaire had a positive view of [Hinduism](/wiki/Hinduism);[[155]](#cite_note-155) the sacred text [Vedas](/wiki/Vedas) was remarked on by him as follows:

The Veda was the most precious gift for which the West had ever been indebted to the East.[[156]](#cite_note-156)

He regarded Hindus as "[a] peaceful and innocent people, equally incapable of hurting others or of defending themselves".[[157]](#cite_note-157) Voltaire was himself a supporter of [animal rights](/wiki/Animal_rights) and was a [vegetarian](/wiki/Vegetarianism).[[158]](#cite_note-158) He used the ancient times of Hinduism to land what he saw as a devastating blow to the Bible's claims and acknowledged that the Hindus' treatment of animals shown a shaming alternative to the immorality of European imperialists.[[159]](#cite_note-159) Voltaire was highly critical of religious superstitions, and deployed the Hindu practice of [Sati](/wiki/Sati_(practice)) in his novel [*Zadig*](/wiki/Zadig) to condemn self-immolation when it is done "to gratify vanity and in deference to religious prejudice".[[160]](#cite_note-160) Voltaire, however, held that suicide can be just and reasonable when an individual suffered from incurable disease or expects to experience great pain.[[161]](#cite_note-161)

## Views on race and slavery[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

Voltaire rejected the biblical [Adam and Eve](/wiki/Adam_and_Eve) story and was a [polygenist](/wiki/Polygenist) who speculated that each race had entirely separate origins.[[162]](#cite_note-162)[[163]](#cite_note-163) According to William Cohen, like most other polygenists, Voltaire believed that because of their different origins blacks did not entirely share the natural humanity of whites.[[164]](#cite_note-164) According to David Allen Harvey, Voltaire was often invoking racial differences as a means to attack religious orthodoxy, and the Biblical account of creation.[[165]](#cite_note-165) His most famous remark on slavery is found in *Candide*, where the hero is horrified to learn "at what price we eat sugar in Europe" after coming across a slave in [French Guinea](/wiki/French_Guinea) who has been mutilated for escaping, who opines that, if all human beings have common origins as the Bible taught, it makes them cousins, concluding that "no one could treat their relatives more horribly". Elsewhere, he wrote caustically about "whites and Christians [who] proceed to purchase negroes cheaply, in order to sell them dear in America". Voltaire has been accused of supporting the slave trade as per a letter attributed to him.[[166]](#cite_note-166)[[167]](#cite_note-167)[[168]](#cite_note-168) In his *Philosophical Dictionary*, Voltaire endorses [Montesquieu's](/wiki/Montesquieu) criticism of the slave trade:[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

## Appreciation and influence[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

According to [Victor Hugo](/wiki/Victor_Hugo): "To name Voltaire is to characterize the entire eighteenth century."[[169]](#cite_note-169) [Goethe](/wiki/Goethe) regarded Voltaire to be the greatest literary figure in modern times, and possibly of all times.[[170]](#cite_note-170) According to [Diderot](/wiki/Diderot), Voltaire's influence on posterity would continue far into the future.[[171]](#cite_note-171)[Template:Refn](/wiki/Template:Refn)

[Napoleon](/wiki/Napoleon) commented that till he was sixteen he "would have fought for [Rousseau](/wiki/Rousseau) against the friends of Voltaire, today it is the opposite...The more I read Voltaire the more I love him. He is a man always reasonable, never a charlatan, never a fanatic."[[172]](#cite_note-172) [Frederick the Great](/wiki/Frederick_the_Great) commented on his good fortune for having lived in the age of Voltaire.[[173]](#cite_note-173) [Catherine the Great](/wiki/Catherine_the_Great) had been reading Voltaire for sixteen years prior to becoming Empress of Russia in 1762.[[173]](#cite_note-173)[[174]](#cite_note-174) In October 1763, she began a correspondence with him which continued till his death.The content of these letters has been described as being akin to a student writing to a teacher.[[175]](#cite_note-175) Upon Voltaire's death, the Empress purchased his library which was then transported and placed in [The Hermitage](/wiki/Hermitage_Museum).[[176]](#cite_note-176) In England, Voltaire's influence affected Godwin, Paine, Mary Wollstonecraft, Bentham, Byron, and Shelley.[[170]](#cite_note-170) [Macaulay](/wiki/Thomas_Babington_Macaulay,_1st_Baron_Macaulay) made note of the fear that Voltaire's very name incited in tyrants and fanatics.[[177]](#cite_note-177)[Template:Refn](/wiki/Template:Refn)

In his native Paris, Voltaire was viewed as the defender of [Jean Calas](/wiki/Jean_Calas) and [Pierre Sirven](/wiki/Pierre-Paul_Sirven).[[170]](#cite_note-170) Although he failed in securing the annulment of the execution of [La Barre](/wiki/François-Jean_de_la_Barre) for "blasphemies" against Christianity despite a protracted campaign, the criminal code that sanctioned the execution was revised during Voltaire's lifetime.[[178]](#cite_note-178) In 1764, Voltaire successfully intervened and secured the release of Claude Chamont for the crime of attending [Protestant](/wiki/Protestant) services. When [Comte de Lally](/wiki/Thomas_Arthur,_comte_de_Lally) was executed for treason in 1766, Voltaire wrote a 300-page document absolving de Lally. Subsequently, in 1778, the judgement against de Lally was expunged just before Voltaire's death. The Genevan Protestant minister Pomaret once said to Voltaire: "You seem to attack Christianity, and yet you do the work of a Christian."[[179]](#cite_note-179) And Frederick the Great would note the significance of a philosopher capable of getting judges to change their unjust decisions through his influence commenting that this alone is sufficient to ensure the prominence of Voltaire as a humanitarian.[[179]](#cite_note-179) Most of the architects of modern America were adherents of Voltaire's views.[[170]](#cite_note-170) According to Will Durant:[Template:Quotation](/wiki/Template:Quotation)

## Voltaire and Rousseau[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

Voltaire's junior contemporary [Jean Jacques Rousseau](/wiki/Rousseau) commented on how Voltaire's book [*Letters on the English*](/wiki/Letters_on_the_English) played a great role in his intellectual development.[[180]](#cite_note-180) Having written some literary works and also some music, in December 1745 Rousseau wrote a letter introducing himself to Voltaire, who was by then the most prominent literary figure in France, to which Voltaire replied with a polite response. Subsequently, when Rousseau sent Voltaire a copy of his book [*Discourse on Inequality*](/wiki/Discourse_on_Inequality), Voltaire replied, noting his disagreement with the views expressed in the book:[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

Subsequently, commenting on Rousseau's romantic novel [*Julie, or the New Heloise*](/wiki/Julie,_or_the_New_Heloise), Voltaire stated: [Template:QuoteVoltaire](/wiki/Template:Quote) speculated that the first half of *Julie* had been written in a whorehouse and the second half in a lunatic asylum.[[181]](#cite_note-181) In his *Lettres sur La Nouvelle Heloise*, written under a pseudonym, Voltaire offered criticism highlighting grammatical mistakes in the book.[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

In reviewing Rousseau's book [*Emile*](/wiki/Emile,_or_On_Education) after its publication, Voltaire dismissed it as "a hodgepodge of a silly wet nurse in four volumes, with forty pages against Christianity, among the boldest ever known."However, he expressed admiration for the section in this book titled *Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar* calling it "fifty good pages...it is regrettable that they should have been written by...such a knave." [[182]](#cite_note-182) He went on to predict that *Emile* would be forgotten after a month.[[181]](#cite_note-181) In 1764, Rousseau published *Lettres de la montagne*, containing nine letters on religion and politics. In the fifth letter he wondered why Voltaire had not been able to imbue the Genevan councilors, who frequently met him, "with that spirit of tolerance which he preaches without cease, and of which he sometimes has need". The letter continued with an imaginary speech delivered by Voltaire, imitating his literary style, in which he accepts authorship for the book *Sermon of the Fifty*—a book whose authorship Voltaire had repeatedly denied because it contained many heresies.[[183]](#cite_note-183) In 1772, when a priest sent Rousseau a pamphlet denouncing Voltaire, Rousseau responded with a defense of Voltaire:[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

In 1778, when Voltaire was given unprecedented honors at the [Théâtre-Français](/wiki/Comédie-Française),[[184]](#cite_note-184) an acquaintance of Rousseau ridiculed the event.This was met by a sharp retort from Rousseau:[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

On 2 July 1778, Rousseau died one month after Voltaire's death.[[185]](#cite_note-185) In October 1794, Rousseau's remains were moved to the [Panthéon](/wiki/Panthéon), where they were placed near the remains of Voltaire.[[186]](#cite_note-186)[Template:Refn](/wiki/Template:Refn) In May 1814, during the [Bourbon Restoration](/wiki/Bourbon_Restoration), the remains of Rousseau and Voltaire were secretly retrieved from the Panthéon by some religious fanatics, and buried in a dumping ground near Paris; the remains are now untraceable.[[187]](#cite_note-187) [Louis XVI](/wiki/Louis_XVI_of_France), while incarcerated in the [Temple](/wiki/Temple_(Paris)), had remarked that Rousseau and Voltaire had "destroyed France", by which he meant his dynasty.[[188]](#cite_note-188)[Template:Refn](/wiki/Template:Refn)

## Legacy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[thumb|right|Voltaire, by](/wiki/File:Voltaire_by_Jean-Antoine_Houdon_(1778).jpg) [Jean-Antoine Houdon](/wiki/Jean-Antoine_Houdon), 1778. [National Gallery of Art](/wiki/National_Gallery_of_Art) Voltaire perceived the French [bourgeoisie](/wiki/Bourgeoisie) to be too small and ineffective, the [aristocracy](/wiki/Aristocracy) to be parasitic and corrupt, the commoners as ignorant and superstitious, and the [Church](/wiki/Catholic_Church) as a static and oppressive force useful only on occasion as a counterbalance to the rapacity of kings, although all too often, even more rapacious itself. Voltaire distrusted democracy, which he saw as propagating the idiocy of the masses.[[189]](#cite_note-189) Voltaire long thought only an enlightened monarch could bring about change, given the social structures of the time and the extremely high rates of illiteracy, and that it was in the king's rational interest to improve the education and welfare of his subjects. But his disappointments and disillusions with Frederick the Great changed his philosophy somewhat, and soon gave birth to one of his most enduring works, his novella [*Candide, ou l'Optimisme*](/wiki/Candide,_ou_l'Optimisme) (*Candide, or Optimism,* 1759), which ends with a new conclusion: "It is up to us to cultivate our garden." His most polemical and ferocious attacks on intolerance and religious persecutions indeed began to appear a few years later. *Candide* was also burned and Voltaire jokingly claimed the actual author was a certain 'Demad' in a letter, where he reaffirmed the main polemical stances of the text.[[190]](#cite_note-190) He is remembered and honoured in France as a courageous polemicist who indefatigably fought for [civil rights](/wiki/Civil_rights) (as the [right to a fair trial](/wiki/Right_to_a_fair_trial) and [freedom of religion](/wiki/Freedom_of_religion)) and who denounced the hypocrisies and injustices of the [*Ancien Régime*](/wiki/Ancien_Régime). The *Ancien Régime* involved an unfair balance of power and taxes between the three [Estates](/wiki/Estates_General_(France)): clergy and nobles on one side, the commoners and middle class, who were burdened with most of the taxes, on the other. He particularly had admiration for the ethics and government as exemplified by [Confucius](/wiki/Confucius).[[191]](#cite_note-191) Voltaire is also known for many memorable aphorisms, such as *"Si Dieu n'existait pas, il faudrait l'inventer"* ("If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent him"), contained in a verse epistle from 1768, addressed to the anonymous author of a controversial work on [*The Three Impostors*](/wiki/Treatise_of_the_Three_Impostors). But far from being the cynical remark it is often taken for, it was meant as a retort to atheistic opponents such as [d'Holbach](/wiki/D'Holbach), [Grimm](/wiki/Friedrich_Melchior,_Baron_von_Grimm), and others.[[192]](#cite_note-192) He has had his detractors among his later colleagues. The Scottish Victorian writer [Thomas Carlyle](/wiki/Thomas_Carlyle) argued that "Voltaire read history, not with the eye of devout seer or even critic, but through a pair of mere anti-catholic spectacles."[[193]](#cite_note-193) The town of Ferney, where Voltaire lived out the last 20 years of his life, was officially named [Ferney-Voltaire](/wiki/Ferney-Voltaire) in honour of its most famous resident in 1878.[[194]](#cite_note-194) His [*château*](/wiki/Château) is a museum. Voltaire's library is preserved intact in the [National Library of Russia](/wiki/National_Library_of_Russia) at [Saint Petersburg](/wiki/Saint_Petersburg), Russia. In the Zurich of 1916, the theatre and performance group who would become the early avant-garde movement [Dada](/wiki/Dada) named their theater [The Cabaret Voltaire](/wiki/Cabaret_Voltaire_(Zurich)). A late-20th-century [industrial music](/wiki/Industrial_music) group then [named themselves](/wiki/Cabaret_Voltaire_(band)) after the theater. Astronomers have bestowed his name to the [Voltaire crater](/wiki/Voltaire_(crater)) on [Deimos](/wiki/Deimos_(moon)) and the asteroid [5676 Voltaire](/wiki/5676_Voltaire).[[195]](#cite_note-195) Voltaire was also known to have been an advocate for coffee, as he was reported to have drunk it 50–72 times per day. It has been suggested that high amounts of caffeine acted as a mental stimulant to his creativity.[[196]](#cite_note-196) His great-grand-niece was the mother of [Pierre Teilhard de Chardin](/wiki/Pierre_Teilhard_de_Chardin), a Catholic philosopher and Jesuit priest.[[197]](#cite_note-197)[[198]](#cite_note-198) His book [*Candide*](/wiki/Candide) was listed as one of [The 100 Most Influential Books Ever Written](/wiki/The_100_Most_Influential_Books_Ever_Written), by [Martin Seymour-Smith](/wiki/Martin_Seymour-Smith).

In the 1950s, the [bibliographer](/wiki/Bibliography) and translator [Theodore Besterman](/wiki/Theodore_Besterman) started to collect, transcribe and publish all of Voltaire's writings.[[199]](#cite_note-199) He founded [the Voltaire Institute and Museum](/wiki/Institut_et_Musée_Voltaire) in [Geneva](/wiki/Geneva) where he began publishing collected volumes of Voltaire's correspondence.[[199]](#cite_note-199) On his death in 1976, he left his collection to the [University of Oxford](/wiki/University_of_Oxford), where the [Voltaire Foundation](/wiki/Voltaire_Foundation) became established as a department.[[200]](#cite_note-200)[[201]](#cite_note-201)[[207]](#cite_note-207)\* [*Socrate*](/wiki/Voltaire's_Socrates_(play)) (published 1759)

* [*La Femme Qui a Raison*](/wiki/La_Femme_Qui_a_Raison) (1759)
* *Irène* (1778)

### Historical[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]

* *History of* [*Charles XII*](/wiki/Charles_XII)*, King of Sweden* (1731)
* [*The Age of Louis XIV*](/wiki/The_Age_of_Louis_XIV) (1751)
* [*The Age of Louis XV*](/wiki/Précis_du_siècle_de_Louis_XV) (1746–1752)
* [*Annals of the Empire*](/wiki/Annals_of_the_Empire) *– Charlemagne, A.D. 742 – Henry VII 1313*, Vol. I (1754)
* [*Annals of the Empire*](/wiki/Annals_of_the_Empire) *– Louis of Bavaria, 1315 to Ferdinand II 1631* Vol. II (1754)
* [*Essay on the Manners of Nations*](/wiki/Essai_sur_les_mœurs_et_l'esprit_des_nations) (or 'Universal History') (1756)
* *History of the Russian Empire Under Peter the Great* (Vol. I 1759; Vol. II 1763)

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

[Template:Portal](/wiki/Template:Portal)

* [Classical liberalism](/wiki/Classical_liberalism)
* [Contributions to liberal theory](/wiki/Contributions_to_liberal_theory)
* [List of Freemasons](/wiki/List_of_Freemasons)
* [Mononymous persons](/wiki/Mononymous_persons#France)
* [Boulevard Voltaire](/wiki/Boulevard_Voltaire)
* [Voltaire Foundation](/wiki/Voltaire_Foundation)

## Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

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## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=36)]

[Template:Sister project links](/wiki/Template:Sister_project_links) [Template:Wikisource1911Enc](/wiki/Template:Wikisource1911Enc)

* [*Château de Cirey – Residence of Voltaire*](http://www.visitvoltaire.com/v_desfontaines.htm), visitvoltaire.com
* [*Gabrielle Émilie Le Tonnelier de Breteuil Marquise du Châtelet*](http://www-history.mcs.st-and.ac.uk/history/Biographies/Chatelet.html), School of Mathematics and Statistics, University of St Andrews, Scotland
* [Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)
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* [An analysis of Voltaire's texts (in the "textes" topic)](http://www.bacdefrancais.net/) [Template:Fr icon](/wiki/Template:Fr_icon)
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* [VisitVoltaire.com site with images](http://www.visitvoltaire.com/)
* [Complete listing of current published editions of Voltaire's works](http://www.voltaire.ox.ac.uk/www_vf/ocv/Best_avail_editions.pdf)
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* [Template:Gutenberg author](/wiki/Template:Gutenberg_author)
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* [Template:Fr](/wiki/Template:Fr) [Voltaire, his work in audio version](http://www.litteratureaudio.com/livres-audio-gratuits-mp3/tag/voltaire/) [20px](/wiki/File:Speaker_Icon.svg)

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