The parlements (French: parlement, [pɑʁlɑ̃]) was a provincial appellate court in medieval France. Established in 1250, there were 13 parlements, the most important of which was by far the Parlement of Paris. They were not the provincial supreme court, but rather provincial high courts which heard appeals from the lower courts of record. Each was composed of a dozen or more appellate judges, or about 1,100 nationwide. They were the court of final resort within the judicial system, and typically wielded much power over a wide range of subject matter, especially taxation. Laws and edicts issued by the monarchy were not official in their respective jurisdictions until the parlements gave their assent by publishing them. The members were generally the local nobility, and could also include the crown's nominees of the gown who had built or inherited their office, and were independent of the King.

In 1770-4 the Chancellor, Maupuex, tried to abolish the Parlement of Paris. However, when King Louis XVI was crowned in 1774, it was reinstated. The parlements spearheaded the aristocracy's resistance to Louis XIV, and the French provinces with long histories of self-government, they worked primarily for the benefit of their own class, the French nobility. Alfred Cobban argues that the parlements were the chief obstacle to any reform before the Revolution, as well as the most intense enemies of the crown. The parlements became the constitutional forum to a royal weapon, used to force registration of edicts.

Originally, since 1250, there was only the Parlement of Paris, served from the King's Council in 1307, from then on with sessions in Paris, and with the lower courts from the King's Council, including an officials in their own parlements and each provincial council had some kind of deliberative prerogatives.

In the 13th century, the parlements acquired judicial functions, then the droit de remontrance against the king. The early parlements were on the confidence of the parlement's judges that their role included active participation in the legislative process, which brought them into conflict with the Crown.

The parlements eventually became the last bastion of the Ancien Régime, as the lit de justice evolved during the 18th century from a forum for public commentary on royal edicts to a royal weapon, used to force registration of edicts.

French constitutional history predates the revolution by many centuries. The king's council, a royal body consisting of representatives from all the provinces, was first established in 1307. In 1353, the king's council was replaced by the parlement of Paris, which was only the parlement of Paris.

9.1 The Parlement of Paris
9.2 The Parlement of Paris

In the 14th century, the parlements were the court of final appeal in a number of important cases, such as the marriage of the royal princesses.

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Role leading to French Revolution

After 1715, during the reigns of King Louis XV of France and King Louis XVI, the parlements repeatedly challenged the crown for control over religious and political matters.

The parlements had the duty to review all royal edicts and laws. Some, especially the Parlement of Paris, repeated challenges to the crown for control over religious and political matters.

The parlements could pass arrêts de réglement or jussion, which they disagreed until the king held a lit de justice or sent a lettre de justice. These edicts were meant to implement the king's will on certain matters, usually in response to a crisis or a rebellion.

The parlements could also reject certain royal edicts, which were then sent to the Constitutional Council of France for review.

The parlements' power to reject royal edicts was a significant aspect of the Ancien Régime, allowing the parlements to play a role in the governance of France.

In the years immediately before the start of the French Revolution, the parlements repeatedly challenged the crown for control over religious and political matters. They were restored after the death of King Louis XV, in 1770.

A furious battle resulted and after Chancellor René Nicolas de Maupeou suppressed the parlements in 1770, their extreme concern to preserve Ancien Régime institutions.

In their Remonstrance against the Edict suppressing the Corvée (March 1768), the parlements repeated their challenge to the crown for control over religious and political matters. They wanted to preserve the parlements as a check on the crown's power, but the crown was determined to suppress them.

The beginning of the proposed radical changes began with the Protests of the Parlement of Paris against the Edict suppressing the Corvée (March 1768). 

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parlement

In French language usage, **parlement** means parliament as in English, but it also means council, assembly or meeting, and thus it means more than merely meaning the role of the parliament under the Ancien Régime. See also

**Further reading**

**The Parlement of Paris, 1574-1789**

Provinces are free to determine their own levels of public services, and each province has been true to its economic and cultural interests in its own fashion. Rise of Provincial Power. Confederation. Canada's original constitutional arrangements were far from those of a perfect or ideal federal state.

The scope of provincial legislative power was broadly defined in the Constitution as "generally all matters of a merely local or private Nature in the Province." Every Provincial Act needs to be adopted by the Provincial Parliament, recorded by the Provincial Governor, countersigned by the Chief Executive Director of the Province of Vienna, and published in the Official Gazette of the Province of Vienna ("Landesgesetzblatt für Wien"). The role of the federal authorities in provincial legislation is defined in the relevant federal-level provisions (Articles 15/10 and 97/2 of the B-VG, the Austrian Federal The Western Cape Provincial Parliament (WCPP) is the legislature of the Western Cape province of South Africa. It is located at 7 Wale Street in Cape Town. The Provincial Parliament, along with the other provincial legislatures of South Africa, exists by virtue of Chapter 6 of the Constitution of South Africa and Chapter 3 of the Constitution of the Western Cape. It is unicameral, and consists of 42 members elected by a system of party-list proportional representation.