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Abbreviations

ACP  Archives du Carmel de Pontoise
AN   Archives Nationales
BN   Bibliothèque Nationale
BPF  Bibliothèque du Protestantisme Français
BMP  Bibliothèque Municipale de Poitiers
BPR  Bibliothèque de Port Royal
BSHPF Bibliothèque de la société de l'histoire du Protestantisme français
DBF  Dictionnaire de biographie française
HUA  Het Utrechts Archief
Mss. Fr. Manuscrits français
Nouv. Acq. Nouvelles Acquisitions
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INTRODUCTION

Kathleen Perry Long

In a speech given at Orléans at the 1560 opening of the Estates General of France, Michel de L'Hospital spoke words that ring ominously for the history of France and of the world:

[W]e cannot deny that religion, good or bad, creates such a passion in man that a greater one cannot exist.

…It is folly to hope for peace, repose, and friendship between people who are of different religions. And there is no opinion so deeply held in the heart of men as the opinion of religion, nor one that separates them so much from each other.…

We have experienced it today and see that a Frenchman and an Englishman who are of the same religion have more affection and friendship for each other than two citizens of the same city, subject to the same lord, who are of diverse religions. This is the extent to which the unity caused by religion surpasses that caused by country. On the other hand, the division caused by religion is greater and wider than any other. It is what separates the father from the son, the brother from the brother, the husband from his wife. *Non veni pacem mittere, sed gladium* [I have not come to make peace, but war]. It is what keeps a subject from obeying his king, and what causes rebellions.1

This volume explores the history of religion in France from two fundamental perspectives: the assessment and renegotiation of the relationship between

Unless otherwise noted, all translations are the author's.

1Michel de L'Hospital, “Harangue prononcée à l'ouverture de la session des États généraux à Orléans le 13 décembre 1560” (“Discours d'Orléans”), in *Discours pour la majorité de Charles IX*, ed. Robert Descimon (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1993), 83–84: “Mais aussi ne pouvons nier que la religion, bonne ou mauvaise, ne donne une telle passion aux hommes que plus grande ne peut estre. C'est folie d'esperer paix, repos et amitié entre les personnes qui sont de diverses religions. Et n'y a oppinion qui tant perfonde dedans le cœur des hommes que l'opinion de religion, ny qui tant les separe les uns des autres…. Nous l'experimentons aujourd'hui et voyons que deux Francois et Anglois qui sont d'une mésme religion ont plus d'affection et d'amitié entre eux que deux citoyens d'une mésme ville, sujets a un mésme seigneur, qui seroient de diverses religions. Tellement que la conjonction de religion passe celle qui est a cause du pais. Par contre, la division de religion est plus grande et loingtaine que nulle autre. C'est ce qui separe le pere du fils, le frere du frere, le mari de la femme. *Non veni pacem mittere, sed gladium*. C'est ce qui elongne le sujet de porter obeissance a son roy et qui engendre les rebellions.”

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church(es) and state over the course of the last four hundred years, offering a variety of models for resolving the tensions caused by religious differences; and the elaboration of individual religious identities relative to the state and to religious institutions. These two perspectives allow us to sketch out the personal and institutional accommodations of religious diversity, as well as some of the personal and institutional causes of religious violence.

Religious debates in France are not at all new. Over the course of the last decade or so, the fifteen hundredth anniversary of the baptism of Clovis and the four hundredth anniversary of the Edict of Nantes (the edict permitting French Protestants to practice their religion to some limited degree) have passed, as has the hundredth anniversary of the Dreyfus affair, the two hundredth anniversary of the Concordat between the regime of Napoleon Bonaparte and the papacy, and the sixtieth anniversary of the Vélodrome d’Hiver, the first massive roundup of Jews in France. The fall of 2001 saw the first official recognition of the massacre of Algerians in Paris that took place on the night of 17 October 1961 under the watch of Maurice Papon, then prefect of police in Paris, and secretary general of the Gironde during the Nazi Occupation when he was responsible for the deportation of thousands of Jews. The centennial of the Law of 1905 separating church and state has passed, as has the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Algiers. In this context, historians of France have been reexamining its religious history, which reveals rich diversity and intractable differences. Many solutions to the problems raised by religious difference have been tried: persecution and massacre, but also tolerance, assimilation and integration, laïcité and republican universalism, and pluralism or multiculturalism. While some of these approaches are linked to a very precise period, their roots can be found in earlier periods and their significance extends much further than their own time. This collection of essays is very much focused on the interactions between diverse religions, as well as between religion and secularism, but it is also focused on interactions between historical periods, differences as well as resemblances. In particular, the essays examine not only how the major minority religions in France—Protestantism, Judaism, Islam, and even Jansenism, a major dissenting branch of Catholicism—were treated by the state and by the Catholic Church, but also how they perceived themselves in the context of religious tensions and Catholic hegemony. The essays also deal with the importance of secularism, or its particular avatar in France, laïcité, for religious diversity in France. Today, by far the largest religious minority is Muslim. It is impossible to accurately count the number of Muslims in France; various estimates hover around 4 million, although this may be well short of the actual number. This significant presence is testing the flexibility of the secular model of

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society established by the Law of 1905. The recent law (2004) banning Muslim headscarves and other conspicuous religious symbols in French schools is a sign of this confrontation between the secular state and its religiously diverse population. The resulting tensions recall previous conflicts over public displays of religious adherence, such as the riots that erupted periodically over the course of the sixteenth century when Protestants refused to doff their hats as processions carrying images of the Virgin Mary or of Christ passed in front of them, or when they gathered to sing the Psalms. In order to allow the reader to place these essays in their historical context, this introduction will give a brief overview of religious issues and events in France from the late sixteenth century up to the present day.

The concept of tolerance, debated in France from the sixteenth century on, is still hotly discussed in terms of intégrisme, assimilation (both terms evoking the desire for Muslims and others to adapt to the French culture), and le droit à la différence (the right to be different). These terms highlight the question of religious identity and its expression and repression enfolded in the notion of tolerance itself. The religious “other”—whether Jewish, Protestant, Jansenist, or Muslim, depending on the period of French history under discussion—is tagged and marginalized as such, and set aside; but under the regime of tolerance, it is untouched. Nonetheless, this marking of the other, which in France often took the form of geographic or social isolation (this latter in the form of exclusion from certain professions and from political activity), poses a menace. The Protestants were granted fortified towns known as places de sûreté, where they could gather in the event of renewed hostilities after the Edict of Nantes, as well as precise places to worship; the Jews gathered in particular neighborhoods and were eventually forced into transit camps; the Muslims, concentrated first in the bidonvilles, or shantytowns, surrounding most large cities in France, and later in the banlieux, have been easily identified and targeted. Before the 1685 Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in particular regions of France known to harbor large numbers of Protestants, suspected families were targeted for dragonnades, a practice in which soldiers were billeted with these families to harass and perhaps convert them.3 In the Second World War, particular quartiers, or neighborhoods, of cities and towns in France were more frequently subjected to the rafle because they were known to have significant Jewish populations. Beyond these more obvious examples of religious violence, marginalizing of the religious other can both enable the eradication of the other, or itself be enabled by cultural effacement, as Jean Baubérot points out:

Four hundred years after the Edict of Nantes, Protestantism enjoys total freedom…and nonetheless is regularly reduced to silence implicitly by the

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RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES IN FRANCE
media, which speak of “the Church” for “the Catholic Church” and which attribute the title “leader of Christianity” to the pope.4

Such effacement, whether by means of violence or of cultural constructions of religious practices, has profound and complex implications for religious identity, which is the primary focus of this anthology. Faced with violent menace, such as massacres or dragonnades, many Protestants feigned conversion, outwardly practicing a faith that inwardly they rejected. This duplicity saved them and may have enabled them centuries later to save some Jews, as was the case in the village of Le Chambon during the Vichy regime as well as of a number of Protestant communities in the Cévennes.5 But this double identity also increased the distance between social practice and personal belief, undermining the sense of community that the king and his officers attempted to enforce. This separation of public and private becomes a crucial basis for the elaboration of laïcité, as Steven Hause demonstrates in his essay on the contribution of French Protestants to the elaboration of secular models of government and education over the course of the nineteenth century. It is also a crucial element of the current debate over pluralism versus integration (intégrisme).

The added complexity that forced conversion brings to the question of identity is the inevitable suspicion that the Jewish conversos, a number of whom moved to France, as well as converted Protestants, were not truly Catholic. This lingering suspicion echoes the later difficulty Jews encountered in their attempts to assimilate into French culture,6 as well as the invasive and extended nature of the seventeenth-century dragonnades to control suspected Protestants. Under these circumstances, the newly converted become “the enemy within,” sometimes seen as more menacing than their more recalcitrant coreligionists.7 This attitude, extending from the Middle Ages, informs the willingness on the part of many

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7 This issue has been brought up by James Carroll in Constantine’s Sword: The Church and the Jews (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2001), 346.
Introduction xvii

Whereas French Jews often identified themselves as French before they did as Jewish, in the eyes of the Catholic Church, this Jewish lineage could never be effaced.

One of the legacies of the French monarchy is a complex relationship between religion and national identity. Denis Crouzet points out in his article, “A Law of Difference in the History of Difference: The First Edict of ‘Tolerance,’” that although the framers of the so-called January Edict of 1562 envisioned a France eventually reunited under the aegis of one true religion, the edict calls for a suspension of the debate (and of the wars) over which religion is “true” in the interest of civil peace. The edict envisions a primarily political solution to the religious differences wreaking havoc on France; civil order is by necessity and in a limited way valued over religious “truth.” While bringing Protestantism to some degree under the protection of the Crown, the January Edict also makes the authorities of the new religion answerable to the royal officers and thus places the churches themselves under government scrutiny. This subordination of church to state, even if only applicable to Protestant synods, marks a new conception of the relationship between spiritual and governmental institutions, and is significant for later renegotiations of the relationship between church and state (such as the Civil Constitution of the Clergy in 1790). This, more than any protection or tolerance of Protestantism, is the contribution of the January Edict to the tangled history of church and state in France.

The elaboration of a complex relationship between church and state is retraced by Christian Jouhaud in his article on “Religion and Politics in France during the Period of the Edict of Nantes (1598–1685).” The victory at La Rochelle in 1628 gave new life to the Catholic cause, and the parti dévot was able to call for the rejection of any policy that would privilege national interests over religious ones. But more Gallican-minded Catholics proposed that no spiritual or temporal power could release the king’s subjects from their loyalty and obedience to him. Jouhaud presents Richelieu and Mazarin, the cardinal-ministers who largely governed France for forty years, as negotiating the shoals of these two views. Richelieu succeeded in defining a vision of the state’s present, temporal salvation that freed its subjects to seek their own spiritual salvation. But he also inscribed the sacred as a matter of state that justified secrecy in the elaboration of policies and blind obedience in the enforcement of those policies; the sacred rests hidden at the center of temporal policies. This elaboration of the raison d’état reinforced the mechanisms of absolutism and possibly prevented the evolution of a constitutional monarchy.

The cardinal-minister held personal responsibility for sins committed by officials working in the interests of the state; this system of spiritual patronage bound officials to the minister. But Jansenism, with its emphasis on solitary contemplation,
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Contributors

CARMEN BERNAND is professor of anthropology at the University of Paris, X, a member of the Institut de France, and author of many articles and books on South America and religious questions in the context of anthropology, including *De l’Idolâtrie: Une archéologie des sciences religieuses* (with Serge Gruzinski); *Les Incas, peuple du soleil; Histoire du Nouveau Monde* (with Serge Gruzinski); *Pindilili: Un village des Andes équatoriennes; La Solitude des Renaissants: Malheur et sorcellerie dans les Andes*; and *Buenos Aires, 1880–1936*.

JOCELYNE CÉSARI is a research associate in the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University, where she has served as a chair of the seminar “Islam in the West” and where she is now coordinator of the Provost Interfaculty Program on Islam in the West. She has published thirteen books and more than fifty articles in European and American journals. Her most recent book, *European Muslims and the Secular State*, was published in 2005. She has published multiple articles in European and American books and journals. Césari received her PhD in political science from the University of Aix-en-Provence in France and has served as a senior research fellow and associate professor at the French National Center for Scientific Research at the Sorbonne, Paris, since fall 1992. She has received grants to write the reports “Islam and Fundamental Rights” and “The Religious Consequences of September 11, 2001, on Muslims in Europe” for the European Commission.

DENIS CROUZET is professor of history at the University of Paris, IV, the Sorbonne. He has authored numerous books, including *Les Guerriers de Dieu: La violence au temps des troubles de religion; La Nuit de la Saint-Barthélémy: Un rêve perdu de la Renaissance; La Genèse de la Réforme française: 1520–1560; La Sagesse et le malheur: Michel de l’Hôpital, Chancelier de France; Jean Calvin: Vies parallèles; Charles de Bourbon, Connétable de Bourbon*; and *Le Haut Coeur de Catherine de Médicis*. He is the author of hundreds of articles, particularly on the Wars of Religion in France.

BARBARA DIEFENDORF is professor of history at Boston University, and is the author of three books on early modern France, *Paris City Councillors in the Sixteenth Century: The Politics of Patrimony; Beneath the Cross: Catholics and*
Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris; and From Penitence to Charity: Pious Women and the Catholic Reformation in Paris. She is coeditor of Culture and Identity in Early Modern Europe, 1500–1800: Essays in Honor of Natalie Zemon Davis and has authored a number of journal articles and book chapters on the social, political, and cultural history of early modern Europe.

STEVEN C. HAUSE is professor of history, senior scholar in the humanities, and codirector of European studies at Washington University in St. Louis. He is the author and coauthor of three previous books on the history of the women's rights movement in modern France, which have won four research prizes: Women’s Suffrage and Social Politics in the French Third Republic (with Anne R. Kenney); Hubertine Auclert, the French Suffragette; and Feminisms of the Belle Epoque (with Jennifer Waelti-Walters). He is coauthor with William Maltby of a series of books on the history of western civilization, the latest being Essentials of Western Civilization: A History of European Society. His essays on various aspects of modern European history have appeared in numerous journals, including American Historical Review and French Historical Studies.

CHRISTIAN JOUHAUD is director of studies at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes des Sciences Sociales, as well as director of research at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique. He has authored a number of books, including Mazarinades: La Fronde des mots; La Main de Richelieu ou le pouvoir cardinal; La France du premier XVIIe siècle (with Robert Descimon); and Les Pouvoirs de la littérature: Histoire d’un paradoxe. He is editor and coeditor of a number of volumes on seventeenth-century history and also author of more than a hundred articles on early modern history and culture. He is currently preparing two book-length studies: one on the “journée des dupes” (November 1630) and one on the French seventeenth century as a preconstructed object.

KATHLEEN LONG is professor of French at Cornell University and author of articles and books on Renaissance literature and culture, including Another Reality: Poetry and the Imagination in the Works of Ovid, Petrarch, and Ronsard; High Anxiety: Masculinity in Crisis in Early Modern France (edited volume); and Hermaphrodites in Renaissance Europe (forthcoming). She is currently preparing a book-length study of literary representations of religious violence.

KEITH LURIA is professor of history at North Carolina State University. He is the author of Sacred Boundaries: Religious Coexistence and Conflict in Early Modern France and Territories of Grace: Cultural Change in the Seventeenth-Century Diocese of Grenoble, as well as of numerous articles on religion in seventeenth-century France.


DUANE RUDOLPH, who translated Denis Crouzet’s, Christian Jouhaud’s, and Carmen Bernand’s essays, is an assistant professor at the University of Hawai’i. He is currently revising a book-length study on Renaissance dystopias.