Nancy Lyman Roelker. *One King, One Faith: The Parlement of Paris and the Religious Reformations of the Sixteenth Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996. Pp. xiv, 543.

Mack P. Holt. *The French Wars of Religion, 1562–1629*. "New Approaches to European History." Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Pp. xiv, 239.

Religion and religious questions were at the very heart of French culture and society in the era of Renaissance and Reformation. A careful reading of these two recent works bolsters such an interpretation of early modern France and thus challenges the views of any *seiziémiste* who would pass quickly over religion in order to focus solely on institutional, political, economic or social history, in isolation from religion. Roelker examines in detail the religious mentality of the members of one of the most important political institutions in sixteenth-century France, the Paris *parlement*. Holt offers an overview of the Wars of Religion in France, and presents a vigorous defense of such nomenclature for the French civil wars of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Though its author died in 1993, *One King, One Faith* will certainly serve for many years to come as a major contribution to our understanding of how France, by the 1560s, was split into three rival groups: Huguenots, Ultramontanists, and conservative, Gallican centrists. Roelker shows convincingly how the robe lawyers and others who made up the *parlement* formed a bastion of Gallican sentiment. The *mentalité parlementaire* rejected any kind of religious change; if Protestants were seen as posing a threat to the time-honored traditions of the French Church, Catholics zealous for implementation of the Council of Trent and for exaltation of papal authority were feared as an even greater challenge. The *parlement* promoted "juridical nationalism," *i.e.*, a glorification of traditional French laws and institutions, including the "liberties" of the Gallican Church that protected it from domination by the papacy. France was believed to be already the most Christian kingdom, governed by the most Christian king. Why upset this happy state of affairs by tolerating Protestant innovation, or by adopting a foreign version of Catholicism, that was promoted by Spain, Trent, the papacy, and the Jesuits? Even if the Church needed reform it was for the anointed King of France to carry it out in his realms.

Roelker's earlier works had included an edition of Pierre de L'Estoile's journal, a diary that had been kept by this prominent member of the *parlement*. Many other primary sources are also skillfully mined by Roelker in formulating her depiction of religious mentalities. In addition to L'Estoile, her sources include Étienne Pasquier and various members of the de Thou family. Roelker demonstrates how the *parlement* was nearly destroyed in the decade 1584–94, when the "extremist" Catholic League dominated Paris. Yet a kind of remnant survived, to achieve vindication in 1594 when Henry IV entered the city and restored a "moderate" Gallican Catholicism. Such vindication was shaken, however, by Henry's 1598

Edict of Nantes granting a degree of toleration to Huguenots. L'Estoile and others recorded the speeches made in the *parlement*. Though the Paris *parlement* eventually registered the Edict, thus giving it force of law, opposition remained strong to a religious diversity perceived as incompatible with the unity of one king, one faith.

Readers of this book may find its author excessively sympathetic to her protagonists and their prejudices. The author gives no significant opportunity for alternative voices from the sixteenth century to speak to us: no rebuttal to the *parlement's* rejection of Huguenots, on the one hand, and Jesuits, on the other, is allowed. From this work one could draw the conclusion that Huguenots, as innovators in a context where tradition was healthy, did not deserve toleration, while Jesuits, as regicidal foreigners and papal zealots, merited expulsion. Yet why should the *parlement's* polemics be taken at face value and even as gospel truth?

Holt is neither particularly hostile nor particularly sympathetic to any of the individuals or groups he studies. Voices from all sides of the confessional divide, and from all political and social milieux, are represented; none is excluded.

Insisting that religion in early modern France was the "fulcrum" upon which the civil wars balanced, Holt nevertheless cautions that the term "religion" referred to a body of believers rather than of beliefs. Thus the "Wars of Religion" had less to do with theology than with conflicting models of Christian society. Citing Virginia Reinburg's scholarship, he argues that the Mass, for average Catholics, was experienced as a communal rite of greeting, sharing, giving, receiving, and making peace. This factor is not forgotten by Holt when he considers the violent reaction of many Catholics to Calvinist elimination of the Mass. Popular zeal for purging Protestants from the social body, through massacre and ritualized murder, outdid even the fanaticism of the Duke of Guise.

Askillful weaver of narrative and analysis, Holt shows how Henry IV definitively "pulled the rug" from under the Catholic League in the 1590s. The author offers excellent caveats on the Edict of Nantes: it did not introduce a systematic policy of religious toleration; it allowed for temporary religious co-existence while preserving the goal of religious unity; reason of state did not henceforth take precedence over religion; the "underlying principle" of Henry's actions was restoration of one king, one faith, one law. By extending his study to 1629 and the peace of Alais, Holt is also able to demonstrate that Louis XIII and Cardinal Richelieu maintained Henry's religious policies, policies that allowed a limited degree of religious difference but dealt severely with Protestant military challenges to the monarchy.

Roelker and Holt both offer masterful probings of complex and fascinating issues. Among the questions that emerge from their work are these: was early modern religious zeal intrinsically incompatible with toleration of religious diversity? Did moderation of such zeal lead toward toleration? To what extent did toleration of religious diversity have to wait for the triumph of modern religious apathy?

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